

## weather report

**51°**  
at noon



### Today

• Sunset, 6:49 p.m.

### Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:33 a.m.  
• Sunset, 6:47 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 61 degrees
- Humidity 80 percent
- Sky cloudy
- Winds northeast at 10 mph
- Barometer 30.31 inches and rising
- Record High 95° (1970)
- Record Low 30° (1983)

### Last 24 Hours\*

High	57°
Low	46°
Precipitation	.08 inch
Month	.09 - .96
Year	3.43 + 3.43

### Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: clear skies and fog, low near 40, light winds.  
Tuesday: sunny, high near 75, south winds at 10 mph.

### Extended Forecast

Wednesday through Friday: dry, lows 45 to 50, highs near 85.  
(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

## local markets

### Noon

Wheat — \$2.21 bushel  
Posted county price — \$2.17  
Loan deficiency payment — .28¢  
Corn — \$1.60 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.56  
Loan deficiency pmt. — .43¢  
Milo — \$2.24 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$4.04 bushel  
Posted county price — \$4.07  
Loan deficiency payment — .82¢  
Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$6.30 cwt.  
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$2.85  
Oil new crop — \$6.30 cwt.  
Confection current — ask  
Pinto beans — \$18 (new crop)  
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and Prairie Pea and Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

## afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press



1 p.m.

## Coast to get more rain

TARBORO, N.C. — More rain expected tonight could worsen the North Carolina flooding caused by Hurricane Floyd that already is blamed for billions in damage. State officials today said 1,500 people remained stranded by the high water. Throughout the weekend, 1,000 or more others had been rescued from rooftops by helicopters and boats. The flooding has virtually shut down the eastern third of North Carolina — an area twice as big as the state of Vermont — with towns inundated and highways blocked by high water. At least 29 people were confirmed dead and others were missing after 20 inches of rain inundated North Carolina's coastal plain. They were among 55 deaths blamed on the huge storm on its path from the Bahamas into New England.

# Economic indicators remain strong

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Sherman County ranks in the top 20 of all Kansas counties and has moved ahead of Thomas County based on the 1997-98 Strength Index report released Thursday by two Kansas State University researchers.

The report, which combines measures of wealth, employment and income, ranks Sherman County 15th in the state with a Strength Index of 2.93 while Thomas County ranked 18th with a rating of 2.86.

In this year's report, economists David Darling and Donald Howard note that eight of the top 10 ranked counties had grown in population. In order, those counties are Johnson, Saline, Ellis, Haskell, Shawnee, Douglas, Miami, and Sedgwick. Nine of these had a strength index of better than 3, and the leader was Johnson County with a 4.4 score. Saline County was second at 3.31.

The Strength Index is the sum of the Wealth Index, Employment Index and the Personal Income Index.

Statewide, the Strength Index average is 2.59, and in northwest Kansas Cheyenne County, 2.80; Sheridan, 2.92; and Scott, 2.88, joined Sherman and Thomas in having higher averages.

"This is good to see," said Ron Harding, executive director of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce. "This report shows there is continued growth in our area despite the loss of some of our larger businesses. I don't know if the next report will be as positive after the loss of the grocery store and Gibson's, but I think it will not be as bad as many people would expect."

Harding says he does not expect a dramatic drop in the sales tax figures and other indicators because most of this is being absorbed within the business community.

"Of course, if we were to continue losing both businesses and population that could lower the figures," he said. "I am very pleased to see that we have moved ahead of Thomas County on this list

and believe this shows the changes in economic patterns that have accompanied the recent growth with the continued expansion of the Northwest Kansas Technical School and the influx of employees for the prison in Burlington, Colo."

Counties that rank high in the strength index and also have experienced population growth seem to show up in clusters, Darling said. They are located in southwest, central and northeast Kansas.

"The logic," Darling added, "is that job creation has been most dynamic in those areas where the population is growing."

Quoting philosopher/mathematician Bertrand Russell, Darling adds: "Change is inevitable but progress is not."

"All communities should be proactively planning for the future and continuously seeking ways to improve the quality of life. But sometimes the challenges are difficult."

Wichita County, in western Kansas, is a good example of economic strength not being reflected by population growth. The county's strength index is a sturdy 3.17, the fourth highest in the state. Yet, the county's population has decreased by 115 residents from 1990 to 1998, according to 1998 U.S. Census estimates. This year's report uses data from 1997 and 1998.

Darling also uses data gathered for the report and other statistical bulletins to help community development leaders measure and monitor economic progress.

"The most obvious way to do that is to attract people back into the community," he said. "Many rural places will only grow in the future if net migration is positive, given the rate of natural growth. There has to be a reason for people to stay there or move in."

"It may be through job creation or creating an environment for retirees. There is also what's called a succession program that matches people who want to run a business with business owners who want to retire."

Looking at the individual components, Sherman County had a wealth index of .85, which is above the statewide average of .76.

The wealth index is a measure of the relative wealth of people living in the county. The index is the sum of the assessed value of residential property, mobile homes and motor vehicles used for personal use, divided by the county population to reach a wealth index.

Thomas County has a wealth index of .88 and Cheyenne County had .83. Wallace County has .69, Gove is .68, Rawlins is .61; Sheridan .87; and Logan is .76. The highest wealth index was Johnson County at 1.79. Scott County was ninth in the state at .97.

The Employment Index measures the people in the county participating in the labor force. Strong economies will have high rates and counties with low employment indexes will have either high rates of unemployment or high percentages of retirement age people.

Sherman County has an employment index rate of 1.14, which is the second highest in the state. Thomas County is close with a rate of 1.12, which is also the rate for Johnson County.

Wallace County's employment index is .83; Cheyenne County 1.04; Gove .88; Rawlins .92; Sheridan 1.06; and Logan 1.08.

The third component is the Personal Income Index, which measures the relative level of income in the county. Based on a comparison with the Kansas per capita income in 1997, was \$24,014. This is higher than most counties and for 92 out of the 105 counties this was below 1.0. Sherman County's personal income index was .94 while Thomas County was at .86. It is this difference which really gives Sherman County the edge over Thomas when the components are added to reach the Strength Index.

Wallace County's personal income index is .76; Cheyenne .94; Gove .88; Rawlins .83; Sheridan 1.0; and Logan .83.

Comparing the Strength Index against population growth trends, the authors note, it is unusual to find several counties in Northwest Kansas ranked very high while the population continues to show a slow decline based on the census estimates for 1998.

## New beef program sells directly to consumers

BREWSTER — The rebel Kansas Cattlemen's Association has made "a new, complete beef program from producer to consumer," including rancher-owned packinghouses and distribution facilities, one of its primary objectives.

"This is a revolutionary new concept of raising cattle, feeding, processing, and marketing beef directly to the consumer," said Elroy Heim, a St. Francis feedlot manager and association director. "With this tightly controlled system, the producer will know at the time the bulls are turned out with the cows when the steaks from their calves will be ready for grilling and when the pre-cooked pot roast and sliced roast beef will be ready for dinner."

The association was formed in Brewster last year after members became dissatisfied with the old-line Kansas Livestock Association, which they alleged was in the pockets of big packinghouse firms and multinational trading companies. Members claim the packers area able to manipulate prices and even threaten producers who buck them. Now, they want to bypass the big firms and deal directly with consumers, saying that will benefit both groups.

"Cattlemen already own the ranches and feedyards which represent more than 85 percent of the total assets necessary to produce a consumer-ready beef product. We will now coordinate and implement rural and locally friendly packing, processing and distribution facilities to sell direct.

"Instead of the consumer getting the high-priced, lower-quality leftovers, which is the case today at most retail food stores, they can now buy the best, and know where and how the beef was produced. We intend on literally connecting the producer with the consumer."

"Unfortunately, the consumer is paying dearly for beef today at the same time the cattle producer is being driven out of business with low cattle prices. We think KCA has found a solution with this new program."

Association Chairman Mike Schultz, a Brewster area cattleman, agreed.

"I believe producers everywhere must step off the treadmill and circumvent the current failed system of meat packing and distribution," he said. "This is a win-win program for both producers and consumers. A fair level of income to the farm and ranch gate will be restored, and the consumer will have the absolute best eating experience ever."

"Cattlemen have all heard someone say, when eating a great steak, 'I sure wish I could buy this kind of beef at home,'" said Brewster Angus breeder Dave Bowman. "We will now be able to put the very best of the beef on all of America's barbecue grills and dining room tables."

For information contact, Bill Bowman, a North Dakota state senator and project coordinator, (877) 694-2906

## Bill would require uniforms

TOPEKA (AP) — A Senate leader wants to make it a requirement that student attending public schools in Kansas wear a uniform.

Senate Majority Leader Tim Emert, R-Independence, has filed legislation that would require local school boards to adopt dress codes.

"I think so much of the problem we have in schools now is based on peer pressure, and so much of that is based on material purchases," he said.

For students, he said, it is a matter of "whether I've got the right logo on my chest, when what we're here for is to learn."

In a growing number of public schools, uniforms already are required. In Wichita, 20 of the 101 schools and

alternative school sites in the district have "standardized dress codes," spokeswoman Laurie Dove said.

Wichita's uniform policy covers one high school, as well as middle and elementary schools.

"In the main, it's working out well," said state Sen. Barbara Lawrence, R-Wichita, chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee. "There are a few who have not appreciated the change. It's the kids who initially find it hard to accept."

She said Emert's proposal would receive an early hearing when lawmakers convene in January.

The dress code at the Andale school district is being studied by the American Civil Liberties Union.

## County hears Western Prairie update

Duane Cheney, executive director of the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area, will present an update on the present projects and future plans to the Sherman County commissioners at their regular meeting Tuesday.

The commissioners will also consider approving a contract with the City of Goodland for library services for

next year.

They will have a conference call with Blaine Davis of Architecture Plus, about changes to the handicap renovation project at the courthouse which have not previously been approved by the commissioners.

The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. in the commission room on the first floor of the Sherman County Courthouse.

## Cowboys mangled by Tigers



Goodland's Matt Schields (23) carried the ball against Ulysses Friday in the Cowboys 7-24 loss. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Daily News



Goodland High School marching band members await the halftime, when they presented their show as the Cowboys took a break from playing the Ulysses Tigers at Cowboys Stadium. The band performed "Eye of the Tiger" as their first selection at half time, and received a warm ovation. Please see story and additional photo on Page 6. Photo by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News