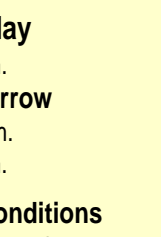


**weather
report****49°****at noon****Today**

- Sunset, 4:24 p.m.
- Tomorrow**
- Sunrise, 6:59 a.m.
- Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 34 degrees
- Humidity 25 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds southwest 21 mph
- Barometer 29.72 inches and falling
- Record High 74° (1988)
- Record Low -9° (1963)

Last 24 Hours*

High	49°
Low	14°
Precipitation	—

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy and windy; low 20; winds south 10-20, shifting northwest 20-30. Tomorrow: Partly sunny and windy; high 35-40; winds northwest 20-30; low 10-15.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday through Friday. Wednesday: dry; high 35-40; low 10-15. Thursday: dry; high 40-45; low 10-15. Friday: dry; high mid 40s; low 15.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local
markets****Noon**

Wheat — \$1.98 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.90
Loan deficiency payment — 55¢
Corn — \$1.54 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.59
Loan deficiency prmt. — 40¢
Milo — \$2.17 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.81 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.88
Loan deficiency payment — \$1.01
Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$5.55 cwt.
Loan deficiency prmt. — \$3.89
Confection current — \$11/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$15 (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.****Custody fight
threatens talks**

HAVANA — A custody dispute over a 6-year-old boy threatens to poison the atmosphere at today's U.S.-Cuba immigration talks, even as Cuban-Americans stream into Havana this Christmas on daily flights set up under recent immigration accords.

U.S. officials want the talks, which are held twice a year, to focus on issues such as methods for issuing visas. But they fear discussion may be dominated by Cuban protests over the case of little Elian Gonzalez.

Others wonder if the talks will even get to a conclusion.

"The Cubans may walk out of the talks," said Nelson P. Valdes, who heads Albuquerque-based Cuba Research and Analysis.

The State Department has said the boy's return is in the hands of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and Florida courts.

Cowgirls take Topside

Boys 2nd after battle in last game

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

It was an all Kansas-Nebraska finish at the 11th annual Topside Tip-off Saturday at Max Jones Fieldhouse, as the Goodland Cowgirls faced the Morrill, Neb., Lady Lions in the girls championship while the Goodland Cowboys faced the defending champion McCook Bison in the boys division.

The Cowgirls were behind at the half, but in the second half they dominated the game to win the championship 62-45 in their first appearance in the finals since 1995. To reach the championship, the Cowgirls defeated the Holyoke Lady Dragons on Friday, 48-39. The win brings the Cowgirls' record to 3-1 and gives them a three-game winning streak to build on.

To reach Saturday's championship, the Cowboys had to use some hot shooting in their second-round game Friday against St. Mary's of Colorado Springs to erase a 13-point deficit and win 69-65. Unfortunately the Cowboys fell behind early against the Bison in the final game, and were not able to shoot their way back, losing 85-50. The Cowboys' season record stands at 2-2.

Finishing in third place in the girls division was McCook, who defeated Holyoke, 49-33 Saturday afternoon at Max Jones Fieldhouse. The McCook Lady Bison got out in front early, and were leading 28-14 at the half. Holyoke was outscored 12-0 in the third. Holyoke outscored McCook 19-9 in the final quarter to cut the final margin to 16.

It was a very defensive struggle in the boys third-place game between the Burlington, Colo., Cougars. and St. Mary's Pirates.

The two teams played very good defense and the Pirates held a one-point lead through three quarters. In the final quarter, the Cougars managed to hit a few more baskets, including a three-pointer by John Penny and squeeze out a 40-38 win.

Fifth place in the girls division went to the Burlington Lady Cougars as they defeated the Wray Lady Eagles, 50-42. Finishing seventh were the St. Mary's Lady Pirates, as they defeated the Yuma Lady Indians, 54-39.

Fifth place in the boys division went to the Yuma Indians, as they defeated their neighboring rival the Wray Eagles, 77-71. Seventh place went to the Holyoke Pirates as they defeated the Morrill Lions, 68-62.

Jennifer Weinmeister of the Morrill Lady Lions tied the record for the most three-pointers in a Topside Tip-off tournament with eight. She ties Amanda Gordon of Holyoke, who set the record last year.

The 1999 All-Tournament Teams were announced following the boys championship game Saturday.

Goodland's Nick Rubio and Luke Stone were named to the boys team along with Nathan Kleine of Yuma, Creed James, Nate Bennett and Preston DeVaughn of McCook, Adam Einspahr of Holyoke, Ben Bloise of St. Mary's, Dallas Welp of Wray, and Andy Bastian of Morrill.

Goodland's Ashley Hallagin and Jayci Stone were named to the girls all-tournament team along with Courtney Thomas, Jennifer Weinmeister and Annalee Margheim of Morrill, Linsey

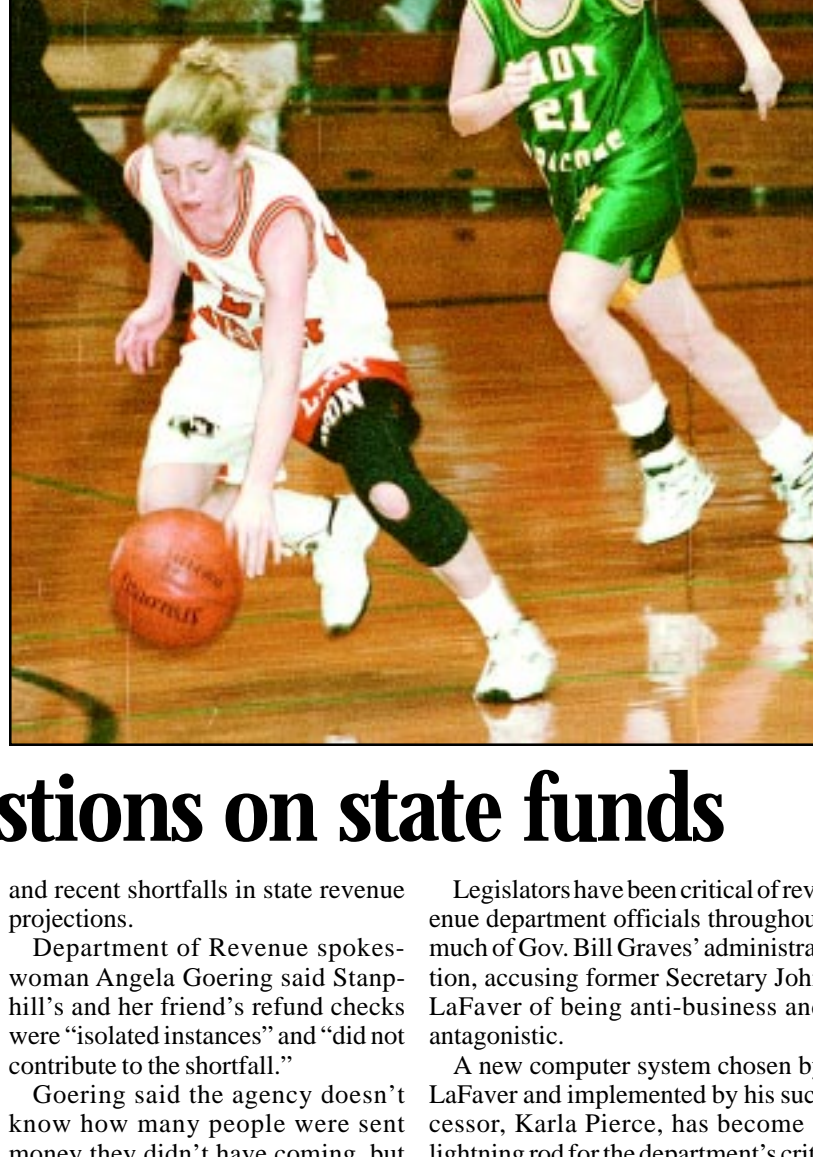


Hot play keeps crowds interested

Holyoke Lady Dragons coach Ted Allen (top) tries to find a new play for his team during a time out in the third quarter of the Topside Tip-off game for third place Saturday afternoon. The Lady Dragons were finding it tough going against the Lady Bison of McCook, who won 49-33. The Lady Bison took an early lead with efforts like this one by Marissa Smith (right), who got a steal and headed up court, being chased by Justie Coyne of Holyoke.

Photos by Tom Betz / Goodland Daily News

Chalfant and Jesse Weber of Burlington, Emily Williams of Wray, Elizabeth Morrill of McCook and Kelly Pottorff of Holyoke.



Refund errors raise questions on state funds

LAWRENCE (AP) — There was good news from the Kansas Department of Revenue for Cindy Stanphill — a refund check for \$112,72.

Only thing is, Stanphill knew she didn't have it coming.

"I'm from Kansas, but I'd been living in Missouri and then, in October, I moved back," Stanphill told *The Lawrence Journal-World*. "So I only had two months' income — November and December — for my Kansas return.

"There was no way I had that much money coming back for that short a time."

Stanphill, who works in the financial aid office at the University of Kansas, called the Department of Revenue after getting the refund check in June. When she couldn't reach a real person, she sent an e-mail.

A worker e-mailed her back, saying she was right, a mistake had been made, and Stanphill returned the check.

She said a college friend of hers who recently moved from Topeka to Texas had a similar experience, only her refund was for about \$1,500.

Stanphill wonders if there's a connection between the erroneous checks

and recent shortfalls in state revenue projections.

Department of Revenue spokeswoman Angela Goering said Stanphill's and her friend's refund checks were "isolated instances" and "did not contribute to the shortfall."

Goering said the agency doesn't know how many people were sent money they didn't have coming, but that she was sure such instances are rare. She said the agency couldn't say how many checks had been returned by scrupulously honest taxpayers without being provided a list of names to check.

Legislators have been critical of revenue department officials throughout much of Gov. Bill Graves' administration, accusing former Secretary John LaFaver of being anti-business and antagonistic.

A new computer system chosen by LaFaver and implemented by his successor, Karla Pierce, has become a lightning rod for the department's critics.

The Legislative Division of Post Audit recently completed an investigation of the department's operations, due to be made public Wednesday.

Senators on tour of state

Morrison, Clark among lawmakers probing problems

A statewide listening tour on the state's farm economy, organized by a bi-partisan coalition of 17 rural state senators and representatives, will be in Hays and Dodge City on Thursday.

Tour organizers, including Sen. Stan Clark of Oakley, and Reps. John Faber of Brewster and Jim Morrison of Colby, are encouraging the public to give their views on the state's farm picture.

The meeting in Hays will begin at 10 a.m. at the Days Inn Convention Center, 3205 Vine. The lawmakers will wrap up their tour with the meeting in Dodge City at 7 p.m. in the Government Center, Central and Gunsmoke Avenue.

The 17 lawmakers say the goal of the meetings is not only to receive public comment on how they can best address the state's troubled farm economy, but also to provide a forum for an exchange of ideas that hopefully will renew a sense of hope for a more prosperous future.

"We encourage the public to join us for these town meetings," said Sen. Clark, R-Oakley. "The whole purpose of these meetings is to listen to what the citizens, who live this farm crisis on a daily basis, have to say. We need to hear their ideas and advice in hopes of finding solutions," he said.

Each forum will offer two panel discussions on rural economic development and on concentration and anti-trust problems within the agriculture industry. An extended period of questions, answers and public discussion will follow.

At the Hays meeting, panelists for the discussion on rural economic development include David Darling, Kansas State University Extension specialist on community economic development; Bill Bowman, North Dakota state senator; Marci Penner, director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation; and Paul Johnson, a member of a closed cooperative that markets food to 350 households weekly. Joe Aistrup, director of the Docking Institute at Fort Hays State University, will moderate the panel.

Mike Callicrate, a feedlot owner and manager, and Dr. Cap Dierks, a veterinarian and Nebraska state senator and chairman of the Agriculture Committee in that state, will lead the concentration/anti-trust panel discussion. Mark Bannister, department chair at Fort Hays State University, will moderate the panel and lead the open discussion.

Panelist for the Dodge City meeting will be the same, except Luke Schwieterman, a commodities broker, will replace Sen. Dierks on the concentration/anti-trust panel discussion. Broadcaster Larry Steckline, with the MidAmerica Ag Network, will moderate both panels and lead the open discussion.

The lawmakers say they hope to explore many questions that face today's independent family farmers including: What solutions have you found to survive and prosper in rural Kansas? Are negotiated alliances between producers and processors replacing the open market?

What implications does this have for farmers and the rural communities they live in? Can agricultural policy be discussed apart from the organizational structure of the food system?

What are the consequences to farmers and consumers of recent and pending mergers of food processors?

All meeting expenses are being paid by the 17 legislative sponsors and no state tax dollars will be used. The 17 legislators also include: Reps. Bruce Larkin, D-Baileyville; Peggy Long, R-Hamilton; Laura McClure, D-Osborne; Dennis McKinney, D-Greensburg; Gayle Mollenkamp, R-Quinter; Gene O'Brien, D-Parsons; Ethel Peterson, D-Dodge City; Eber Phelps, D-Hays; Tim Tedder, D-Hutchinson and Sens. Don Biggs, D-Leavenworth; Tim Huelskamp, R-Fowler; Edward Pugh, R-Wamego; Harry Stephens, D-Emporia;