

weather report

39°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:25 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 7:01 a.m.

• Sunset, 4:26 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 31 degrees

• Humidity 92 percent

• Sky overcast

• Winds north 12 mph

• Barometer 30.15 inches

and rising

• Record High 79° (1980)

• Record Low -10° (1964)

Last 24 Hours*

High 59°

Low 26°

Precipitation —

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly clear; low 20; winds northwest 5-15 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy and breezy; dry; high mid 50s; winds southwest 15-20 mph and gusty.

Extended Forecast

Sunday through Tuesday. Sunday: chance of snow; high 40; low 5. Monday: dry; high 20-25; low 10-15. Tuesday: dry; high 30-35; low 15-20. (National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon
Wheat — \$2.06 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.89
Loan deficiency payment — 56¢
Corn — \$1.60 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.64
Loan deficiency pmt. — 35¢
Milo — \$2.28 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.83 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.81
Loan deficiency payment — \$1.08
Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$5.60 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$4.12
Confection current — \$11/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$13 (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.

Cubans free four hostages

ST. MARTINVILLE, La. — Two Cubans holding hostages at a south Louisiana jail have surrendered and released one hostage and three inmates, officials said today.

That leaves only Warden Todd Louviere and deputy Jolie Sonnier being held hostage at the St. Martin Parish jail on the fifth day of the standoff, Sheriff Charles Fuselier said. Five inmates were being kept in the warden's office by six hostage-takers, he said.

The surrender and release happened during the night, but was not announced until midmorning. The sheriff said the Cuban rebels no longer have control over any inmates other than the five.

The standoff began Monday. Four hostages were taken at knife-point as they escorted a group of Cuban detainees from an exercise area atop the two-story jail.

City to vote on road pacts, beer licenses

The Goodland City Commission will consider renewal of 12 cereal malt beverage licenses and two resolutions dealing with upcoming street and highway projects at its last regular meeting of the century, starting at 5 p.m. Monday..

The 12 licenses are for those places in town where a person can purchase beer to take out or to drink with a meal, said City Clerk Mary Volk.

Resolutions will be considered which relate to the improvement of K-27 and include provisions

for a new traffic signal at the intersection of K-27 and Business U.S. 24 and a similar resolution outlining state aid for the Cherry Street project.

A third resolution will be considered which describes the boundaries of the city, and Volk said this would include the new property annexed into the city along Eight Street and Kansas Boulevard. She said this is a requirement of the state every year when there have been changes in the boundaries.

Brenda McCants of the Senior Housing Corp. is expected to appear. City Commissioner Curtis Hurd has been asking if the city is going to get back the money invested a couple of years ago when it was going to be a no-profit project.

City Manager Ron Pickman is expected to tell the commission that the bids on the pool project will be delayed until January because there was not enough time for the contractors to develop their proposals.

Appointments are to be considered to the Planning Commission, Electric Board and Plumbing Board. The terms of Diana Spinney and Bryan Hatcher are expiring on the Planning Commission. The term of Glenn Chance is expiring on the Electric Board and Harold Gillihan's term is expiring on the Plumbing Board.

The City Commission meets in the commission room on the second floor of the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

Shaking up some holiday spirit



These first-grade boys played tambourines and sang along with other first graders from West School, as they presented their holiday music program Thursday night from the stage in the school's gym. They sang

Christmas songs and took turns playing instruments and did actions with some of the songs. They were directed by Birkley Barnes, elementary music teacher.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Firm explains ammonia safety plan

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Collingwood Grain held a public meeting Thursday evening at the 4-H building on the Sherman County Fairgrounds to discuss is safety plan and procedures for anhydrous ammonia operations at Goodland, Kanorado and Brewster.

About 15 people attended the meeting, required under new regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency which went into effect in June. Don Phillips of the corporate compliance division of Collingwood Grain and parent Archer Daniels-Midland of Hutchinson, made the presentation.

While neighbors have occasionally complained to city and state officials about Collingwood operations in Goodland, none was present for the meeting.

Phillips said the Risk Management Rule was established in 1996 by Congress to deal with problems dealing with the storage of chemicals and to reduce accidents. Collingwood is covered because of the storage of anhydrous ammonia, he said.

Present from Collingwood were Ed Dwyer of the corporate safety division in Hutchinson and the local elevator managers Brad Cowen, Goodland,; Nate Reed, Brewster' and Glen Teels, Kanorado.

Phillips said part of the new rule was to require companies to develop a risk management plan and to hold public meetings to discuss the program. Collingwood has 71 locations where anhydrous ammonia is stored for retail sale to farmers as fertilizer.

Anhydrous ammonia is a cost effective and reliable way of delivering nitrogen to plants because it is 82 percent nitrogen, Phillips said.

He said it is colorless until mixed

with other chemicals and he mixing can cause a vapor cloud to form. He said ammonia has a distinct odor which alerts anyone in the area to the presence of the chemical.

He said the odor can be smelled with very small amounts of the chemical in the air, and under the Environmental Protection Agency regulations there is not a danger to a person if the level is 50 parts per million over an eight hour period of exposure.

"Studies show a man can be exposed to this level for eight hours a day for 35 years with no adverse health problems," Phillips said.

In higher levels, ammonia becomes an irritant to the eyes, lungs and skin, and a person will develop watery eyes, runny nose and some breathing difficulty. He said washing the affected area is the best treatment because ammonia is absorbed by the water. At 2000 parts per million exposure could be fatal Phillips said.

Under the risk management plan, Collingwood had to analyze the consequences of a "worst case release scenario" which he said would be the total release of the largest tank in about a 10 minute period.

Such a large release has never happened, but Phillips said in such a case the employees would try to contain the release and have all non-essential people leave the area immediately. Information would be passed to the local emergency agencies, and assistance would be requested from the fire department and police departments.

In case of a large release, Phillips said people would be told to remain indoors with the windows and doors shut. Also they would be asked to turn off air conditioners, furnaces, clothes dryers and bathroom fans to stop outside air from getting inside.

Phillips said all unloading, transfer and storage systems for ammonia are designed, constructed and installed under the standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and are subject to Kansas Department of Agriculture engineering design requirements.

Collingwood has preventive maintenance programs in place, and there are periodic inspections of critical devices such as excess flow valves, Phillips said. He said Collingwood has been handling anhydrous ammonia since 1967 and has 110 tanks at 71 locations. Each facility is audited on an annual basis and there are also safety inspections by state and local agencies.

Goodland Fire Chief Dean Jensen said he has appreciated the operational procedure followed by Collingwood where they contact the central dispatch when they are going to be mixing the fertilizer.

"This is a great help, and reduces the problems of calls that there is an accidental release," Jensen said. "I have responded numerous times to calls with my air testing equipment and have not found any problems.

Phillips said the annual audit of the Collingwood facilities in Sherman County were completed in November without a problem being found. At that time, Chief Jensen was present and tested the vapor cloud released by the process as well.

"I was there and found no problem at all," Jensen said. "I always respond when there is a call, even if we only find a small leak."

"If you smell ammonia is good to let us know," Dwyer said. "It may only be a small leak or seepage from a valve, but we want to know about it."

Dwyer said one of the problems the company is facing is that people are

stealing anhydrous ammonia for use in making the drug methamphetamine. He said the company is looking at ways to try to prevent this, and has even gone to using video cameras to watch tanks at a few locations.

Phillips said he expects more facilities to have cameras installed over the next few years.

When asked if the public meeting had any relation to a request by Collingwood Grain in Goodland to change their anhydrous ammonia operation, Phillips said there will not be any change in the current operations.

In September, a state inspector from Norton tested the fertilizer mixing operation and said he found no violations.

Sen. Clark wants state to bust big ag corporations

DODGE CITY (AP) — Farmers and cattle producers attending the final hearing of a four-day listening tour of rural Kansas called for stricter enforcement of antitrust laws.

The problem of the agricultural economy is "profit taking at the supplier level," St. Francis cattle producer Mike Callicrate said.

Legislators wrapped up their four-city tour Thursday night with more complaints that monopolies are exploiting market power.

Callicrate is a cattleman and feedlot operator involved in a lawsuit against meat packers for what he considers unfair cattle-buying practices.

Another speaker, Luke Schwietzman, said large corporations force small farmers to accept low prices,

then charge consumers prices that don't reflect the low costs.

Schwietzman was especially emphatic about the role of captive suppliers — producers who sell exclusively to large meat packers. Because farmers lock themselves into deals with the packers, they are not able to get fair prices for their products.

Earlier Thursday in Hays, one legislator offered a three-point plan to help farmers.

Sen. Stan Clark, R-Oakley, said he would shape ideas gathered during the tour into proposals to enforce existing antitrust laws in the agriculture industry; refocus some of the work of the K-State Extension Service; and recommend to Congress a ban on agribusiness mergers.

Weather warmer for prizes

Merchant drawing set for downtown at 1:30 Saturday

Spring-like weather is expected for the big Grand Prize drawing in Goodland merchants' Christmas on Us promotion, which will be held at 1:30 p.m. Saturday in front of the Goodland Chamber of Commerce office.

The National Weather Service said skies should be partly cloudy after a chilly night, with a high in the 50s. No rain is expected Saturday, though there is a chance for snow on Sunday.

Eleventh Street will be blocked off at Main and Center for the drawing, assuming the weather is as predicted. If the weather is bad, then the drawing will be held at Central School, 1311 Main.

Entertainment between drawings will be provided by Goodland High School choirs under the direction of Shelly Cole, including the Chamber Choir and the X-pressos. Church choirs have been invited. Civic groups or clubs who want to sell cookies, hot drinks and the like can just show up.

A big crowd is expected for Saturday's event, possibly matching the more than 1,200 who jammed Central last year. The grand prize will be \$2,000, second prize will be \$400, and third prize will be \$200. All prizes will be in gift certificates and the winning ticket must be present to claim a prize.

No purchase is necessary to enter or win, but distribution of tickets stopped Thursday. Employees of sponsoring businesses are not eligible to win at work, and employees of *The Daily News* are not eligible at all.

Sponsors are Knott Just Books, Collage Ltd., the Corner Garage, Shores Bros., Rasure Lumber Do-It Center, Miller's Electronics, American Communications, Jan's Hallmark, First National Bank, Mann's Jewelry and Julie's Interiors, Gambino's Pizza, Aten Department Store, Orscheln Farm & Home Supply, NAPA Auto Parts, Frontier Equity Co-op.

Elliott's Inc., Fixsen Electronics, Wane's Carpet and Drapery, Latinos Mexican Restaurant, Bowladium Lanes, McB's Corner, Cowboy Loop, Dan Brenner Ford-Mercury, Scheopner's Culligan, Luci's Aquarium, Garcia's Home Furnishings and Appliance, McDonald's and The Daily News.