

weather  
report

20°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:36 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 7:07 a.m.

• Sunset, 4:37 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 38 degrees
- Humidity 88 percent
- Sky snow and blowing snow
- Winds north 28 mph, gusting 40-45 mph
- Barometer 30.03 inches and steady
- Record High 63° (1962)
- Record Low -26° (1959)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 44°  
Low 19°  
Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly clear; low 10; winds northwest 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly sunny; high mid 30s; winds southwest 5-15 mph; low 15.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday through Friday. Wednesday: dry; high 40-45; low 15. Thursday: chance of snow; high 30-35; low 15. Friday: dry; high 30-35; low 10-15.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local  
markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.08 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.96  
Loan deficiency payment — 49¢  
Corn — \$1.59 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.71  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 28¢  
Milo — \$2.26 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$3.87 bushel  
Posted county price — \$3.92  
Loan deficiency payment — 97¢  
Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$5.70 cwt.  
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.84  
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.

Board stops  
merger plan

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Kansas City Power & Light board of directors has voted to terminate its merger agreement with Topeka-based Western Resources, ending nearly two years of negotiation and turmoil.

KCPL announced this morning that its board voted at an emergency meeting Sunday to terminate the agreement, originally worth \$2.1 billion. Drue Jennings, KCPL chief executive officer, cited problems with Western's Protection One security subsidiary as a key factor in terminating the deal.

Under terms of the agreement, either party was permitted to terminate the merger if it was not consummated on or before Dec. 31.

KCPL directors had numerous meetings in recent months regarding the merger and Western's sagging stock price, Jennings said.

# Permits required to burn in new year

By Steve Haynes

The Goodland Daily News

If you're thinking about burning some trash or old stumps in Sherman County this year, think again.

You'll need to call the fire chief and get a burning permit under new regulations adopted last year by the Sherman County Commission.

Permits are free, but not having one could be a little expensive: if firemen are called out to your burn, you could be billed the entire cost of the run, which Goodland Rural Fire Chief Ken Griffith says can run over \$300.

Under the rules, Griffith said, anyone outside the city of Goodland who wants to do any open burning must get a permit from their rural fire chief. The free permit is good all year, and it in-

cludes tips and state rules for safe burning.

Once you have a permit, you need to call central dispatch at 899-4575 and tell them when and where. The dispatcher will check the permit log and let you know if conditions are OK for burning, or check with the chief if they are questionable. Dispatch also will notify the fire departments to expect the fire.

The notification is important, says Griffith, because it's dangerous and expensive to have volunteer firemen rushing unnecessarily to put out a blaze. If that happens, and you haven't notified dispatch, you could get a bill from the fire department.

Charges are calculated at \$25 per firefighter and \$25 to \$50 per truck, depending on the distance.

"What that is, is just cost recovery," said the chief, "and, yes, we've had to bill people.

"Burning in a barrel or in an incinerator does not require a burn permit," he added, "but burning in an old pit silo does require one."

Even then, Griffith said, if you want to burn, you need to check the weather. Fires can easily escape a barrel on a windy day.

"You still need to use good judgment," the chief said.

To get a permit, you need to see the chief of your rural fire department. The Goodland rural district covers the county from Road 10 to Road 29, Griffith said. If you live in that area and outside the city, call him at 821-1024 days or 899-6366 nights.

In the Kanorado district, call Chief Jay

Pettibone at 399-2489 evenings, and in the Brewster district, call Chief Tom Aschenbrenner at 694-2213 days. Central dispatch does not have permit forms.

In Goodland, Griffith noted, the city has its own procedure, but Kanorado and Brewster are covered by rural departments.

In the city, said Fire Chief Dean Jensen, you need a permit for any open burning. Permits are good for just 48 hours, he said, and the chief usually inspects the planned burn for safety before issuing a permit.

Burning must be done between sunrise and 6 p.m., he said, and only when the weather permits it to be done safely. There is a fine of up to \$100 for violations. Call the chief at 899-4535 for information.

## Pickup program takes effect

*Residents required  
to call city to remove  
solid waste items*

City Manager Ron Pickman will report on special pickups for solid waste items, such as metal, tree limbs and tires, at tonight's Goodland City Commission meeting.

Under this program, which was adopted in 1999 and took effect Jan. 1, Goodland residents need to call and make arrangements with the city to have these items picked up.

Pickman will present the commissioners with an opportunity to attend the 2000 Municipal League Legislative Conference to be held Jan. 20 in Topeka. The manager will attend the conference and any commissioners may attend also. At the conference, the Kansas League of Municipalities will discuss what will be happening in this legislative year and decide what legislation to lobby for.

Under unfinished business, two board appointments will be made tonight for the city Planning Commission.

For new business, the commission will discuss whether the city should participate in the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency Mutual Aid Program. The way this program works, is if a participating town loses electrical power due to a disaster, then others in the area, would help the disabled community to get its power restored. The agency serves as a clearinghouse for participating communities.

The city has received a bill from Allied Inc. for payment on the water replacement project. Approval of the bill is scheduled tonight's meeting. In turn, the city will make a request to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment on its water loan for reimbursement of what is paid to Allied.

The commission will meet at 5 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room at the City Administration Building.



## Ah, Kansas weather

The weather was bleak in downtown Goodland today (above), with icy wind, blowing snow and poor visibility forcing drivers to have lights on at midday. The Kansas Highway Patrol reported area roads open, but icy and snowpacked. There were numerous non-injury accidents, many in the Colby area, and near WaKeeney, visibility was reported near zero. Snow was expected to trail off by tonight, but wind could create some problems. The mercury may dip to near 10 degrees tonight, but Tuesday is expected to be warm and sunny, with a high in the 40s. The day was in sharp contrast to last week, when these boys (left) were playing football in short-sleeved shirts at West School.

Photos by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

# Catfish doing great, thanks to cooperative effort

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

Smoky Gardens Board Chairman Randy Bellamy told Sherman County commissioners Thursday that the channel catfish in the county lake are bigger than they've ever been.

Bellamy said Lynn Davignon, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks fisheries biologist for northwest Kansas, sampled the fish in September and said their quality is the best it's been in years. The change is due to improvement in the habitat and feeding, he said.

This past year, trees were planted in the spring and the fish were fed dog food, one-third of which was donated by Wal-Mart.

Bellamy also told the commissioners how the work on moving mud was progressing. He said what has been dug by Rod Wilkinson with his crane has been moved, but he is running into a problem with the Road

and Bridge department not wanting to provide equipment to haul off the mud.

He said the board wants to know where they stand with the county. Bellamy said they need more trees and a commitment from the county to help.

The board has received a matching-funds grant, he said, but won't get the money until the project is completed.

Commissioner Kenny Davis said the board should write a plan stating what its intentions are and what equipment Road and Bridge Director Curt Way would need to have available for them, then give it to the commissioners.

It was decided that the board should move ahead with digging the mud.

Commission Chairman Gary Townsend said Fred Hall would fill the position on the Communications

Board left by the resignation of Steve Craft. Davis and Commissioner Chuck Frankenfeld approved the appointment.

Townsend said he had talked with Marty Buhl, a salesman with Wagner Equipment in Burlington, about having the Road and Bridge department receive some training in operating equipment. They have a man who can put on a training session with a video and then take the employees out into the country where they can learn to use the equipment.

Davis said he was in favor of getting employees as educated as possible. Frankenfeld liked the idea from the safety aspect of it and felt they needed to follow up on it.

Terry Ballard, county appraiser, made a request for a five-foot folding table and two-drawer file cabinet for extra work space to be used during the busiest part of tax assessment season, from Jan. 1 through May. He

estimated that the furniture would cost \$200. This would be considerably less than the estimate for a desk and folding doors, which would be well over \$1,000.

A bill for fire engine repair at Goodland Motor Co. was presented. Mary Ann Snethen, secretary, said a purchase order was not turned in first. The commissioners said a reminder should be given to county employees to follow procedures.

Rick Billinger of Nationwide Mobile Home Sales, made a request to have several trailers taken off of solid waste removal because they are not rentable. The commissioners said they need to determine whether the trailers in the city or county. If they are in the county, then Billinger would need to move or tear down the trailers, but if they are in the city, then one of the commissioners would need to look at them. A decision was tabled until the determina-

tion could be made.

Townsend said he talked to department heads in mid-December about having evaluations of county employees in by Jan. 4, so that any raises could be given by Jan. 11 or 18.

The farm leases will not be ready until Jan. 4, as Kelly Studer, secretary for County Attorney Bonnie Selby, has been on vacation. Selby and Studer have been working on the leases.

There was one order to correct the tax rolls, which the commissioners all looked at.

The minutes were approved as read, with any changes to be put in as needed, as Townsend wanted to talk to Mark Bauer, auditor for VonFeldt, Bauer and VonFeldt, about the funds for the Good Samaritan Center Health Care Service.

There will be no commissioner's meeting on Tuesday morning, as there are no items on the agenda.