

weather
report

70°

at noon

Today

• Sunset, 5:29 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:30 a.m.
• Sunset, 5:30 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 39 degrees
• Humidity 16 percent
• Sky sunny
• Winds calm
• Barometer 29.96 inches
and falling
• Record High 73° (1935)
• Record Low -05° (1953)

Last 24 Hours*

High 65°
Low 14°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy; low 35;
winds southwest 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy; chance of rain;
high 60-65; winds northwest 10-20
mph; low 35.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday through Friday.
Wednesday: chance of rain; high 50-
55; low 35. Thursday and Friday: dry;
high 50s; low 25-35.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.32 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.23
Loan deficiency payment — 22¢
Corn — \$1.75 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.88
Loan deficiency payment — 11¢
Milo — \$2.69 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$4.35 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.37
Loan deficiency payment — 52¢
Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$5.75 cwt.
Loan deficiency prmt. — \$3.92
Confection current — \$13/\$8 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$12 (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.

Candidates
trade charges

DETROIT — Republican presidential hopeful John McCain accused George W. Bush today of running a campaign by “character assassination” in the television ads Bush is running leading up to Tuesday’s Michigan primary.

Bush, saying he was “taking nothing for granted” in Michigan after his big weekend victory in South Carolina, focused on his economic proposals in a Detroit speech today. But he also took time to answer back to McCain’s ridicule of his claim to be a reformer.

McCain had said Sunday, “Gov. Bush is the governor of a state that has the most liberal campaign contribution laws. ... If Gov. Bush is a reformer, I’m an astronaut.”

Bush said today that he is setting the pace in an important area — posting contributors’ names on the Internet almost as fast as their checks come in.

City marshals forces for big air battle

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland City commission plans to talk about how to fight the recent decision by Great Lakes Aviation to discontinue its United Express flights to Renner Field in April at its meeting Tuesday.

City Manager Ron Pickman has been planning the city’s response.

“I have been gathering some numbers which I think the Department of Transportation should review before the decision becomes final,” Pickman said. “I do not know how the department

officials arrived at some of the figures they quoted.”

Pickman said there had been some indication that pressure was applied by both Hays and Salina to change the service.

The city has 20 days from the date of the order to file a response, and Pickman said he would review the response with the commissioners before sending it out.

Pickman will also update the commission on the swimming pool project. At the Feb. 7 meeting, Commissioner Curtis Hurd suggested that Pickman talk to the Lamar, Colo., city manager

about how that city had managed to build a new facility for under \$2 million.

Pickman was visiting with the Lamar city manager when both cities found they had received similar letters about the air service termination.

The commission will hear from several students from the Goodland Distributive Education class asking for a proclamation about Free Enterprise Week in March.

The commission will also consider several resolutions, including one to support establishing a sales tax on Internet commerce, and one amending the electric utility tier rates.

There will also be an appointment to the airport board.

Pickman plans report on the cable television rate increase being planned by Eagle Communications because of the recent renegotiations which returned Denver Channel 9 to the Goodland Cable system. Cable officials said the increase will be 52 cents per month, or \$6.24 per year, to pay the increase for having the Denver channel. That brings the mostly rate for basic service to \$34.12, tax included.

The meeting will begin at 5 p.m. upstairs in the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

Wrecker lifts big rig for rescue

Firemen, emergency medical technicians and a wrecker from Goodland had to be called early Friday to rescue a passenger trapped in an overturned semi-trailer rig on I-70 about two miles from the Kansas-Colorado line.

It was one of two accidents near Kanorado that night. The Kansas Highway Patrol said first crash involved a 2000 Peterbilt semi-truck which was eastbound shortly after 12:30 a.m., when its driver, Kelly Henderson, 41, lost control.

The truck slid sideways across the median and into westbound lane, overturning in the ditch on the north side of the highway. A passenger, Henderson’s 19-year-old son, was pinned in the sleeper where he had been napping.

McB’s Wrecking of Goodland was called to lift up the truck, as the victim could not be cut out of the cab by the Goodland Fire Department. After a few attempts, the wrecker lifted the truck high enough for Sherman County emergency medical technicians to get the youth out.

He and his mother were taken by ambulance to Goodland Regional Medical Center.

The young man had cuts, bumps and bruises from the accident. He was admitted overnight for observation and released later that day.

The other accident happened at 1:42 a.m. at milepost 2.5. The driver, Ginger S. Jones, Colorado Springs, was westbound on I-70. The patrol said she lost control of her 1998 Ford Escort and it rolled one and a half times, coming to rest on its top in the north ditch. Neither the driver nor the passenger in the car was injured. Both were wearing seat belts.

Alex’s Radiator and Repair of Goodland was called to tow the car to town.

Ex-official Bell is dead

LAWRENCE (AP) — Friends of former Kansas Insurance Commissioner Fletcher Bell remember him as a diligent public servant — and a good fast-pitch softball player in his off-time.

“He was a private fellow in some ways, but he was also very gracious and outgoing and very dedicated to making the Kansas Insurance Department a good organization to serve the public,” said Dick Brock, who worked with Bell in the department for more than 30 years.

Bell died Friday at a hospital in Rogers, Ark., of complications from leukemia. He had been living in Bella Vista, Ark., for the past six years.

He spent 20 years as insurance commissioner, retiring in 1991. A dispute over a worker’s compensation award he received shortly after leaving office developed into a full-blown controversy that led to criminal charges, but they were dismissed.

A graveside service for Bell will be conducted at 11 a.m. Thursday at Oak Hill Cemetery in Lawrence.

A Republican, Bell was first elected insurance commissioner in 1970 after working in the department for 13 years.

He is credited with helping bring no-fault auto insurance to Kansas. He also established a toll-free help line for insurance consumers and set up the Kansas Insurance Education fund.

In the 1970s, he received national recognition for attacking improprieties in the way some insurance companies sold policies to elderly Kansans.

Off on a musical adventure



Goodland Ambassador Debbie Martin handed treat bags to Jill Sowers, Amanda Hoffman and Nick Parker (from left) Friday afternoon at Goodland High School. Lynn Hoffman, Amanda’s mother, (second from right) and Kathy Melia, another Ambassador (back), were also present. The students were taking off for state piano competition Saturday at

Wichita State University. Erinn Hardy was also going to the competition, but was not at the sendoff. Sowers, Parker and Hardy are all piano students of GERALYN PARKER, Goodland, while Hoffman is a student of Pat Ziegelmeier, Colby.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Headed for victory



Cowgirl Rita Scheopner throws up a shot over the blocking efforts of a Hoxie Lady Indian Friday. The Cowgirls won the game 41-34, and will play Norton at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Story, another photo on Page 6. Photo by Chris Crutcher / The Goodland Daily News

Heavy nitrogen use may hurt in long run

BETHEL, Minn. (AP) — A University of Minnesota ecologist is warning that the agricultural landscape could turn ugly within 50 years if farmers continue to depend heavily on nitrogen fertilizer.

David Tilman has been studying the long-term effects of nitrogen fertilizer on plots he and colleagues have tended north of the Twin Cities near Bethel for nearly two decades.

On 207 plots, each about 16 yards square, they have measured how plants handle varying levels of nitrogen, a powerful fertilizer that is a key factor in how plants fare.

Over time, a trend has emerged. As more nitrogen is applied to plots, progressively fewer species of plants survive. The ones that do are usually less-desirable, non-native ones such as quack grass, which needs high doses of nitrogen to thrive.

Now Tilman has taken that level of inquiry a step further. As part of a broader effort involving other scientists, he has tried to determine what the world will look like in 50 years assuming farmers continue to adopt U.S. agricultural methods that depend heavily on nitrogen for high yields.

That picture isn’t pretty, he said. Oxygen-starved “dead zones,” such as the one now in the Gulf of Mexico, will become increasingly prevalent and many plants will die off, while fewer — and less desirable ones — will take over, he said. The result will be less diverse and less healthy ecosystems for plant and animal life.

To arrive at that conclusion, Tilman took his own experiments on nitrogen and incorporated them with the best available world population, income and consumption patterns. He already had found that as the amount of nitrogen doubles, species diversity declines

by 25 percent. And as nitrogen levels continue to increase, species are lost at a greater, though less dramatic, rate, leveling off at declines of 40 percent to 70 percent.

“The bad news is that low rates of nitrogen are having more impact than expected,” Tilman said.

To get world food production to double over the past 35 years, farmers have had to use seven times as much nitrogen as they used to, effectively doubling the amount that already comes in from the atmosphere, he said.

“Our estimate is that by 2050, the use of nitrogen will quadruple,” he said.

By then, the world population is projected to increase by almost 50 percent, Tilman said.

It also will become increasingly affluent, resulting in buying power 2.4 times that of today’s population and producing a demand for twice as much food, he said.

Unless agricultural methods are changed or technical adaptations are made, he said, that will amount to three to four times more need for nitrogen.

But society is not without options, Tilman said. For starters, he recommends more efficient ways to use nitrogen, such as timing applications of fertilizer better and doing a better job of removing it from sewage.

Tilman emphasized he isn’t trying to rattle cages or offer gloom-and-doom scenarios. Instead, he said he and his colleagues are part of a growing body of scientists that are raising issues that often have not been addressed.

“Humans now dominate the ecosystems of the world, yet we don’t understand the implications,” Tilman said. “It’s not clear what the wisest path is,” he said. “But if we continue on the current one, we’re going to create a world we really don’t want.”