

weather

report

58°

at noon

Today

• Sunset, 5:31 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:27 a.m.

• Sunset, 5:32 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 44 degrees

• Humidity 47 percent

• Sky mostly sunny

• Winds northwest 22 mph

• Barometer 29.79 inches and rising

• Record High 75° (1936)

• Record Low -11° (1960)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 67°

Low 31°

Precipitation .05 inches

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy; areas of fog; low 30-35; winds west light. Tomorrow: Partly sunny; high 65; winds southeast 15-25 mph; low 35.

Extended Forecast

Friday through Sunday. Friday: chance of rain; high 50-55; low 20s. Saturday and Sunday: dry; high 50s; low 20s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local

markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.23 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.21

Loan deficiency payment — 24¢

Corn — \$1.69 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.85

Loan deficiency payment — 14¢

Milo — \$2.59 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$4.20 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.42

Loan deficiency payment — 47¢

Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$5.70 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.

Bill may end no-bid deals

TOPEKA — Rep. Tony Powell wants to make sure no state agency ever awards a contract like the one Attorney General Carla Stovall gave to her former law firm to handle tobacco lawsuits.

Tuesday unveiled a bill Tuesday requiring state agencies to bid out contracts for outside legal work and the Legislature to review any worth more than \$1 million.

Powell, R-Wichita, said the bill is a response to Stovall's decision in 1996 to grant a no-bid contract to her former law firm to represent Kansas against tobacco firms.

That firm, Entz and Chanay, of Topeka, stands to get \$27 million for its work, with two other out-of-state firms sharing another \$27 million. The state expects to receive about \$1.7 billion over 25 years from a national settlement of lawsuits by 46 states against tobacco companies.

# New bids for water park due Wednesday

By Tom Betz  
*The Goodland Daily News*

New bids on the proposed Goodland water park will be opened Wednesday, and will be on the agenda for the March 6 City Commission meeting, City Manager Ron Pickman said at Tuesday's regular commission meeting.

He said he had gone to Lamar to talk to the city administrator about the pool the city is building there after Commissioner Curtis Hurd had suggested he check out the Colorado project.

"They are building the pool inside the old one, and it is much smaller than what we have been planning," Pickman said. "The new bathhouse Lamar built does look nice and is about the same size as what we are planning, and they used the colored blocks we are considering using. They said the cost of the colored block was cheaper than if they had used the regular block and painted it."

Richard Schwasinger, Distributive

Education sponsor at Goodland High School, was at the meeting with two of his students to talk about Free Enterprise Week and to have Mayor Chuck Lutters sign a proclamation for the week, which is this week.

Tiffany Schwasinger and Ruby Fuentes explained the purpose of Free Enterprise Week and showed the commission a specially designed "Monopoly"-style game which they plan to use to help the sixth-graders understand the importance of local businesses.

Tiffany Schwasinger said the game had been set up with local store names rather than the regular properties, and the "houses" were to be business upgrades and the "hotels" were business renovations. She said they hope to work the game with the students about 12:30 p.m. Monday.

DECA club members will be talking to businesses, putting up signs and handing out brochures this week, as well as showing groups a special com-

puter presentation about free enterprise.

"Our goal is to show people how important it is to support our local businesses and to have people shop in Goodland," Fuentes said.

The commission approved a resolution supporting a request from Mesner Development Co. of Central City, Neb., to request that the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing allow the use of housing tax credits to help finance a rental project in Goodland.

Eighteen low-income units would be built in duplexes at 12th Street and Cattletrail.

Steve Riebel of the First National Bank said the project had been first proposed last year by Retro Development, but that the developer had changed to Mesner and the company was asking the state to allow the tax credits to be used as part of the financing for the housing development.

Riebel said the properties would

have attached garages and would not be subsidized housing. He said the monthly rent is expected to be about \$350 on a two-bedroom and \$425 for a three-bedroom. He said the utilities would be the responsibility of the renter.

The commissioners also approved a resolution to encourage Congress to remove a moratorium on sales tax of Internet sales, and to recommend that Congress pass a law authorizing state and local governments to collect sales taxes on good and services sold through any medium.

Commissioner Rick Billinger was asking if businesses with sales tax licenses in Goodland were collecting sales tax on any sales that would be considered through the Internet.

Pickman said that not only are Internet sales exempt under the present law, so are most mail order and phone sales. He said the current system is a hardship on the local businesses, which

do pay sales tax, and that this effort would help to balance the field and help states, cities and counties collect sales tax to help pay for community improvements.

Commissioners also approved resolutions amending the electric utility tier rates, amending the Uniform Building Code and designating three banks in the city as depositories for the city funds.

Mayor Lutters appointed, and the commission approved, Rich Wiegman with Kansas Claims Service to fill an unexpired term on the Airport Board.

The commission also approved an amendment in the demolition program to cover the removal of asbestos in commercial buildings.

The next regular commission meeting will be 5 p.m., Monday, March 6, in the commission room upstairs of the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

## Plan offers health care to families

By Janet Craft  
*The Goodland Daily News*

HealthWave, a program for Kansas families with limited incomes, provides health insurance at little or no cost for children from birth to age 19.

The program covers checkups, shots, office visits, dental care, pharmacy, hospital care, vision, hearing, prenatal care and delivery, mental health and substance abuse treatment.

"It's an incredibly complete package," said Carla Deckert, outreach and marketing manager for the program. "That's why it's so exciting for families."

Parents of children who are uninsured and cannot qualify for Medicaid are encouraged to apply. There are no co-payments or deductibles and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

After the federal government passed the Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997, she said, states passed comprehensive health plans. The Kansas program began Jan. 1, 1999, and since then there have been 40 kids enrolled in Sherman County and 3,941 throughout the state.

The goal of the program is to provide affordable health insurance for children who don't have access to any, Deckert said.

The application is a simple four-page form that takes about 20 minutes to fill out. A return envelope is attached, and it is available in both English and Spanish. Those applying only need to include two months' income information.

Forms can be obtained at either the Sherman County Health Department or Goodland Regional Medical Center.

## On tiptoes to please



Members of Cheryl Schwarz's dance class practiced a routine on Tuesday evening at the Goodland Activities Center. They are (from left) Katie Johnson, Christy Studer, Garrett Nemechek, Sydney Winston and Kelsie Hoss (behind Sydney). Schwarz said she is sending a video of

the kids along with some letters to Katlyn Topliff, who was only able to attend four classes before going to Minnesota for a bone marrow transplant.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

## City, Chamber protesting end to Denver flights

By Tom Betz  
*The Goodland Daily News*

Goodland representatives plan to attend a meeting Monday in Dodge City to talk to airline and possibly federal officials about the decision to end service here by April.

The meeting, begin at 9:30 a.m. at the Dodge City Civic Center, is sponsored by the Western Kansas Air Service Communities. City Manager Ron Pickman said there will be representatives from Great Lakes Aviation, which currently operates the United Express service here, and Air Midwest at the meeting to discuss the Essential Air Service program and operational complaints.

At a Goodland commission meeting Monday, Pickman said he had been preparing a response to the notice he received Valentine's Day that the federal subsidy for Goodland was going to be cut. Great Lakes says it will shift the midpoint stop on Salina-Denver flights to Hays, leaving Goodland without any air service.

The city's response has to be based on factual errors, Pickman said, and not on the basis that it would be a hardship to have the service cut. He said demand for travel appears to be higher than what federal officials were told.

“I believe there is quite a difference in the numbers that were sent to the Department of Transportation.... Also, if you take out the flights that were canceled or when people were refused service, the actual average is closer to meeting the proper subsidy level.”

— Ron Pickman  
Goodland City Manager

“I believe there is quite a difference in the numbers that were sent to the Department of Transportation,” Pickman said. “While the information given to the department shows an average of 3.1 passengers per day, the local records are much higher. Also, if you take out the flights that were canceled or when people were refused service, the actual average is closer to meeting the proper subsidy level.”

Pickman said the city would be hearing from customers who have had difficulty getting on flights out of Goodland, or who have experienced delays and other problems with the current air service. Flights often fill up in Salina and passengers here have to go to Denver by highway.

“With what we have gathered so far, we believe there is room for argument,” he said.

Other air travel supporters agreed.

“I feel we need to do what we can to keep it,” said Evelyn Stout, formerly of Arrowhead Travel. “The cost out of Wichita to Denver is high, and it is cheaper to fly through Salina. I think this is ridiculous. We could get along on two trips a day, and that would cut the cost.”

“We have about 30,000 (people) in the trade area and we could do much better if they promoted this. It seems unfair that they are dropping us at the drop of a hat.”

Larry Keirns, director of the Northwest Kansas Technical School, said, “It is important we keep this service. We get a lot of people in here with the school, and flying has been important.”

Because flights are often full, the existing Great Lakes service has driven many customers away, others said.

“I have attempted to use the flights,” said Jean Pettibone, “and have made one connection out of four tries. I chose to drive after that.”

“We are currently planning to hold a meeting in Denver which could have been held in Goodland, but we do not have reliable air service.”

“I don't want to drive. I am 77,” Stout said. “I thought it was a good deal at \$124 to Salina, and since I had relatives there I flew east several times. I don't think that Hays will like this when the planes are full coming from Salina.”

“We have two issues to address,” said Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ron Harding. “One is preserving the Essential Air Service subsidy, and the second is looking for another airline. We may need to partner with Great Bend, Hays or others to get another airline.”

“We need to look at this in the long haul, and remember we have had other air services leave over the past years.”

Commissioners Rick Billinger and Curtis Hurd said they would attend the Dodge City meeting, and both Pettibone and Stout said they would go. Harding said he would also be attending the meeting on behalf of the Chamber and convention bureau. Pickman said he would not be able to attend be-

cause of a scheduled operation which will lay him up for about three weeks.

The manager said he had received a call from Jim Chaddic at Goodland Regional Medical Center, who said the loss of the air service could effect the hospital's ability to keep essential equipment in operation. Chaddic told Pickman that with the air freight available, the hospital has been able to get repair parts flown in within 24 hours. Without the service, he said, equipment could be down for up to three days waiting on parts and the patients could have to go out of town.

“These are important stories,” Pickman said, “but they are not the type of story that the Department of Transportation people want to hear. They are the type of stories we need to tell Sen. Pat Roberts and Congressman Jerry Moran, who will look at these from a different perspective.”

“I think we need to give our state representatives as many of these stories as we can to use when they meet with the Department of Transportation so they can make their point to help keep the service.”

Commissioner Hurd said he thought the letter Pickman had written was good, “but I don't think you were tough enough.”