

**weather report**

**67°**

at noon



**Today**

Sunset, 6:05 p.m.

**Tomorrow**

Sunrise, 5:38 a.m.

Sunset, 6:06 p.m.

**Midday Conditions**

Soil Temperature 50 degrees

Humidity 21 percent

Sky sunny and clear

Winds NW 13-20 mph

Barometer 29.83 inches

and falling

Record High 87° (1988)

Record Low -3° (1931)

**Last 24 Hours\***

High 67°

Low 33°

Precipitation —

**Northwest Kansas Forecast**

Tonight: Mostly clear; Low 30-35;

Winds NW 5-15. Tomorrow: Increasing

cloudiness chance of thunder-

storms in evening; High 55-60; Low

30s; Winds E 5-15.

**Extended Forecast**

Wednesday through Friday.

Wednesday chance of rain; high

50's; low 30-35. Thursday chance of

rain; high 45-55; low 30s. Friday dry;

high 55-65; low 30's.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local markets**

**Noon**

Wheat — \$2.15 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.01

Loan deficiency payment — 44¢

Corn — \$1.83 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.91

Loan deficiency payment — 8¢

Milo — \$2.78 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$4.57 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.51

Loan deficiency payment — 38¢

Millet — \$3.70 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$6.25 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.44

Confection current — \$13/\$7 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.

**Deal creates new automaker**

FRANKFURT, Germany — DaimlerChrysler AG, seeking a foothold in Asia, said today it would acquire 34 percent of Japan's Mitsubishi Motors Corp. for an alliance that would create the world's third-largest automaker behind General Motors Co. and Ford Motor Co.

The \$2 billion deal creates an automotive juggernaut building 6.5 million vehicles a year and also plugs holes in each company's strategy for survival, giving DaimlerChrysler access to Asian markets and the heavily indebted Mitsubishi a partner with deep pockets.

In a joint statement, the companies said DaimlerChrysler chairman Juergen Schrempp and Mitsubishi president Katsuhiko Kawasoe had signed a letter of intent in Stuttgart to form an alliance regarding the design, development, production and distribution of passenger cars and pickup trucks.

## Large traffic increase at Goodland interchange

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Traffic counts of cars and trucks exiting I-70 at Goodland have jumped by more than 50 percent in the past four years, and new businesses on K-27 are being credited with bringing the increased traffic to the city.

"We can clearly see the favorable impact of the opening of the Wal-Mart Superstore in the increasing numbers," said Ron Harding, executive director of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce. "The increase is very dramatic when you compare the daily average from 1996 with the one released this year. Goodland's traffic has shown an increase of over 2,485 cars per day, for a 51 percent increase over the four years."

The traffic chart shows an average 16 percent increase in traffic on the Interstate each direction over the four years between Goodland and Oakley.

The traffic exiting at the west Goodland (K-27) increased by 10 percent between 1996 and 1998, but took a dramatic jump of 2,115 cars per day in the past two years.

Harding said he has been doing an informal check of license plates in the Wal-Mart parking lot since the store opened in August 1998, and says the

traffic count agrees with his survey that there is an increase in the number of cars stopping which have Colorado license plates, particularly from the Burlington area.

"This is statistical proof that we are seeing increased traffic because of the new store, and that also supports the increased sales tax collections," Harding said.

The daily traffic count might have been even higher, Harding says, if not for the closing of the ramps for reconstruction last year. Again this year the Goodland interchange will be part of a cone zone as K-27 from Commercial Road to the U.S. 24 intersection

is replaced and the medians improved.

This project will begin in the next few weeks, and is expected to take all summer. While sections of K-27 under the Interstate are being replaced, traffic will be rerouted head-to-head on two lanes at a time. The sections will be replaced with concrete rather than the current asphalt based on the Kansas Department of Transportation plans.

The traffic county is expected to suffer a bit this summer while the construction is underway, but Harding does not feel it will be as dramatic as when the ramps were closed for a

month last summer.

Also, the new bridge at Caruso should be open in the next few weeks, giving additional access from the west along old U.S. 24. However, that section of the road is to be resurfaced and chip sealed by Sherman County as part of its maintenance program for the cross-county highway.

Currently traffic is being routed head-to-head on the westbound lanes of I-70 for a six mile stretch east of Goodland. This project began last week and is expected to last through most of the summer, with Koss Construction of Topeka as the contractor.

In contrast to the traffic figures for Goodland, the figures for Colby show a drop of 28 percent from a high point in the 1998 study, and an increase of 11 percent over the figures from the 1996 study. At Colby in 1996, an average of 5,730 cars were counted getting off the Interstate and by 1998 that had risen to 7,975 cars a day. However, the 2000 study shows that number has dropped back to 6,595 cars.

The study was done by the Kansas Department of Transportation in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation. It is updated every two years with figures are from 24-hour counters and continuous counters during the year.

## Last week for free drop of old tires

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

This is the last week for Sherman County residents to bring tires they want to get rid of to the landfill at no charge.

A tire amnesty sponsored by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment began on March 6 and will conclude Friday.

Normally, there is a charge for tires at the landfill, depending on their size, ranging from \$2 to \$40. The fee applies whether they are taken to the landfill or are picked up as part of the city's special-items pickup program.

Only individuals and feedlots are eligible for the amnesty, which does not cover businesses or dealers, and they may not bring in any more than 100 tires each.

The hours at the landfill are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. You will have to count the tires and dump them in the correct pile at the landfill, said foreman Margaret Russell.

The department will arrange to pick up the tires from the landfill later.

For questions, call the landfill at (785) 899-4868.

## Spring.... finally time for short sleeves and shorts



Saturday was a day for people to do outside activities as the high temperature for the day was 68 degrees. Cousins Scott and Taylor McClure (above) played on the teeter-totter at the Rainbows and Miracles Playground on the corner of Seventh and Harrison by the First Christian Church. They were in town to visit their grandparents, J.B and Judy McClure. Adults walked and biked (left) by the playground with little ones in tow on Harrison Street.

Photos by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

## American Beauty dominates with five oscar wins

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When "American Beauty" hit theaters last fall, many were surprised when it became a box-office hit and an Oscar front-runner.

By Sunday night, though, it came as no surprise that the sobering satire of suburbia dominated the Academy Awards. In an industry whose recent top honors have mostly gone to splashy epics, "American Beauty" had simply built up too much critical and popular esteem to be denied.

The film won five awards: best picture, best actor for Kevin Spacey, best director for Sam Mendes, best original screenplay for Alan Ball and best cinematography for Conrad L. Hall. The ceremony, which at four hours plus was the longest on record, was seen in whole or in part by an estimated 78 million Americans, with overnight ratings down slightly from last year, according to Nielsen figures released today.

Might the success of the dark yet wildly absurd "American Beauty" herald Hollywood's return to such thoughtful, character-driven films as "Midnight Cowboy" and "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," both best-picture winners?

First-time director Mendes, steeped in such films growing up, hopes so.

"The more of these sorts of movies that get made and the more they get

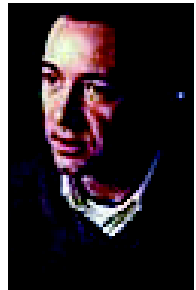
acknowledged by the mainstream, the better," said Mendes, an acclaimed theater director.

Spacey, whose character undergoes a transformation after almost consummating an affair with his daughter's high-school friend, said the movie hit home with audiences because "we got to see all of his worst qualities, and we still grew to love him."

"We get a chance to see characters have experiences that make us feel that we're not the only ones who have those feelings," said Spacey. "We sort of have a collective admission when we see characters do those things that we do."

The best-picture win was sweet revenge for "American Beauty" distributor DreamWorks, the studio co-founded by Steven Spielberg, whose "Saving Private Ryan" lost best-picture honors last year to Disney-owned Miramax's "Shakespeare in Love."

Spielberg, who won for best director last year for "Saving Private Ryan," presented the director's award to Mendes. It was the first best-picture win for DreamWorks, founded five years ago.



Kevin Spacey



Oscar

woman who lived as a man and was killed when her true gender was uncovered.

"I consider myself someone who cares a huge amount about humanity and I think that this movie opens the door to letting people know what goes on in society and hopefully putting an end to intolerance in the future," Swank said.

Other top winners included Angelina Jolie for best supporting actress for her turn as a hospitalized sociopath in "Girl, Interrupted." Michael Caine won his second best supporting actor award for his role as an ether-sniffing abortionist who runs an orphanage in "The Cider House Rules."

John Irving won for best adapted screenplay for the script of his novel "The Cider House Rules." Phil Collins took the Oscar for original song for "You'll Be in My Heart"

from "Tarzan." Pedro Almodovar's "All About My Mother" won for foreign-language film.

The glitzy sci-fi thriller "The Matrix" won in all four categories for which it was nominated — visual effects, film editing, sound and sound-effects editing.

Caustic and kooky, "American Beauty" was a serio-comic tale of suburban lunacy that ran counter to big-picture epics such as "Titanic," "Schindler's List," "Braveheart" and "The English Patient" that have dominated the Oscars.

The Oscars have occasionally gone dark and disturbing in recent years. In 1991, the serial-killer flick "The Silence of the Lambs" was an atypical winner, while Clint Eastwood's anti-hero western "Unforgiven" took top honors the next year.

Shot for \$15 million, "American Beauty" has gone on to top \$108 million at the box office while playing in barely half as many theaters as many top Hollywood movies.

The movie had all the quirks, ties and warts that should have relegated it to the list of critics' darlings and modest box-office successes.

Consider its characters: a middle-aged chump who lusts after his daughter's friend; a shrill wife empowered by her pistol and her farcical fling

with the local real-estate king; a homophobic Marine colonel who tests his son's urine for drugs; and a teen-age video voyeur who peddles pot and philosophizes about a plastic bag dancing in the wind.

Screenwriter Ball said "American Beauty's" triumph taught him to "write what moves you."

## Kansas drivers in 'beltless belt'

MANHATTAN (AP) — Kansas motorists are buckling up more than they used to, but the state still has one of the lowest rates of seatbelt use, according to a national survey.

Kansas is in the so-called "Beltless Belt," a nine-state region with some of the lowest rates of buckled-up motorists in the United States. The distinction is based on 1998 state-by-state surveys compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Among states in the belt, the percentage of seatbelt-compliant drivers and passengers ranges from 52 percent in Alabama up to 58.7 percent in Kansas. The other Beltless Belt states are Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, Kentucky and West Virginia.