

weather  
report

61°

at noon

Today

• Sunset, 7:14 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:22 a.m.  
• Sunset, 7:15 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 53 degrees  
• Humidity 23 percent  
• Sky sunny  
• Winds southwest 19-25 mph  
• Barometer 29.87 inches  
and falling  
• Record High 88° (1991)  
• Record Low 8° (1936)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 83°  
Low 44°  
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, low 40,  
winds northwest 20-30 mph. Tomorrow:  
Partly cloudy, dry, high 55, winds  
northwest 25-35 mph, low 20-25.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: dry, high 70-75, low mid  
30s. Sunday: dry, high 70-75, low 35-  
40. Monday: chance of rain, high 65-  
70, low 35.

(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 — \$2.07  
Loan deficiency payment — 38¢  
Corn — \$1.77 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.96  
Loan deficiency payment — 3¢  
Milo — \$2.68 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$4.56 bushel  
Posted county price — \$4.66  
Loan deficiency payment — 23¢  
Millet — \$3.60 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$6.10 cwt.  
Loan deficiency prmt. — \$3.54  
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.

Father blasts  
U.S, relatives

WASHINGTON — Juan Miguel Gonzalez stood on U.S. soil today and laid claim to his son Elian, the 6-year-old Cuban shipwreck survivor who sparked a four-month international tug of war over his fate.

“I hope I will soon be able to embrace my son,” he said.

Gonzalez said his son had been forced to live for 137 days with “some distant relatives who had never seen him before.”

“I am truly impatient to have him returned to me as soon as possible and go back to Cuba together immediately,” he said through an interpreter in a combative statement accusing U.S. politicians, journalists and Miami’s Cuban community of exploiting the boy.

Elian’s Miami did not believe Gonzalez wrote the remarks himself, said Armando Gutierrez, speaking for the family in Florida.

K-27 project to begin

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Construction signs and traffic cones will begin appearing along K-27 from Commerce Road north to the Business U.S. 24 intersection as the rebuilding of this stretch of highway is ready to begin.

City Manager Ron Pickman said this morning that the contractor will begin putting up the signs and placing cones along the highway over the next week.

“Actual construction is planned to begin on Monday, April 17, with the first part to be the section south of the interstate,” Pickman said. “The contractor, Smith Sand of Garden City, is planning to route traffic so there is always a lane open. If it becomes necessary to close the I-70 ramps, the contrac-

tor believes it will be for about two weeks.”

Part of the project will involve replacing the asphalt under the I-70 interchange with concrete, and the closing of the ramps may depend on how much problem there is with rebuilding the base in this area he said.

Included in the project is the removal of the medians both south and north of the I-70 interchange, and Pickman said these will become center turn lanes.

“Essentially, we will be going to a five lane road where there are medians,” he said.

Along with rebuilding the highway, the project will also include rebuilding the frontage road entrances, which will be widened and replaced with concrete.

The project is expected to take about four months.



The project to remove the medians on K-27 and repave the highway from Commerce Road north to the Business U.S. 24 intersection is to begin in about a week. Drivers will see signs going up in the next few days and traffic cones will appear. Construction is to begin on Monday, April 17, on the section south of I-70.

Photo by Janet Craft / The Goodland Daily News

Murder retrial  
moved to Hays  
on defense plea

By Patty Decker

Colby Free Press

Tod Pabst, convicted of first degree murder in the death of his companion, Phoebe Harkins of Colby, won’t face a Thomas County jury in the new trial ordered Feb. 11 by the Kansas Supreme Court.

Pabst was granted a change of venue, to Hays, in Thomas County District Court on Monday and cash bond was set at \$1 million. Those rulings and seven other motions were either discussed or granted.

The change in location was requested by Pabst’s attorney, Evangelo Arvanetes, of Liberal, who argued that due to extensive press coverage and possible community prejudice, his client would not get a fair and impartial trial in Thomas County.

“In the absence of a change of venue,” Arvanetes wrote in his motion, “there is a reasonable likelihood that the defendant will be denied an impartial jury due to community hostility, press coverage and knowledge about the case.”

Stephen D. Maxwell, Kansas assistant attorney general, said that the state would not oppose the change of venue.

District Judge Glenn Schiffner granted the motion and during a telephone conversation with Kansas Supreme Court Justice Edward Larson, Ellis County was chosen for the new trial scheduled to begin on July 31.

Pre-trial hearings set for 9 a.m. June 16 and 1:30 p.m. July 20 will be held in Thomas County, Schiffner said.

In a motion to close pretrial hearings, including the one on change of venue, Arvanetes said that he wants to protect his client’s rights for a fair trial. Maxwell responded that at this point there is nothing sensitive enough that would deny or jeopardize Pabst’s rights.

The judge said that he would not preclude a motion to close the hearings at a future date.

On an oral motion to establish bond, Arvanetes asked the court to consider \$100,000 to \$250,000 as a fair amount.

“This crime is serious to the family, to Pabst and to the system,” he told Schiffner, noting that he does not see Pabst as a flight risk.



Tod Pabst

“In the absence of a change of venue, there is a reasonable likelihood that the defendant will be denied an impartial jury due to community hostility, press coverage and knowledge about the case.”

—Evangelos Arvanetes  
Attorney for Tod Pabst

He based his argument on the fact that Pabst had no prior record and that he could live with his mother in Garden City, working in his former profession as a contractor.

Maxwell argued, however, that during the first trial Pabst was held without bond and was convicted of first degree murder based on the evidence.

“First-degree murder is the second most severe crime in Kansas and the likelihood of flight is exceedingly higher than last time,” Maxwell said. “Pabst would have no reason to stay and face these charges.”

Maxwell said the state would ask that he be held without bond or no less than \$1 million cash bond.

“Due to the nature of the circumstances,” said Schiffner, “agreeing this is the second most-severe crime and the weight of evidence in the prior jury trial...with not a great deal to lose...\$1 million cash bond is the order of the court.”

Other motions discussed included access to the crime scene, the home which the couple once occupied north of Colby.

Maxwell said he was not prepared to move forward on that motion since he had not had time to prepare.

Motions that dealt with allowing Pabst to appear at all proceedings without restraints and in civilian clothes were granted in part. Schiffner said that while he would allow Pabst to appear without restraints, he would defer to the Thomas County sheriff regarding its procedures and judgment on that issue.

Pabst was returned to the Thomas County Jail.



Scrubbing  
up profits  
for school

Students in the Office/Computer Technology Department at the Northwest Kansas Technical School washed vehicles Wednesday afternoon in the Wal-Mart parking lot to raise money for scholarships. Jennifer Baker (top) sprayed the soap off of a car, while Sam Hernandez scrubbed the trunk. Sarena Tarman (right) scrubbed the side of a pickup at the car wash.

Photos by Janet Craft  
The Goodland Daily News



Senate panel rewrites records law

By Kelly Wiese

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — With time running out, legislators are scurrying to resolve as many issues as possible.

On Wednesday, those included open records, health insurance plans and tax relief.

Dumping the House version in the trash, a Senate committee drafted a simpler version of a bill to strengthen the state’s open records law and sent it to the floor for debate.

“This is the product of a compromise,” Elections and Local Government Chairwoman Janice Hardenburger told her committee. “I’m really pleased with the product. I think we’ve come with some sensible legislation.”

Last week, Hardenburger, R-Had-

dam, said the House version wasn’t worth salvaging and urged lobbyists for the news media and local governments to bring her ideas for a new bill.

That bill imposes fines up to \$500 against agencies refusing to release public records and requires all governmental bodies to have an information officer to handle requests and decide which records can be made public.

The House version would have created the officer in the attorney general’s office. That bill was based on a proposal from Gov. Bill Graves and Attorney General Carla Stovall.

But the House also weighed down the bill with a host of amendments, many of which restricted access to public records.

Meanwhile, House antics led the

chamber to tentatively approve a bill to give \$260,000 in tax breaks to telecommunications companies.

But it first loaded the measure with numerous tax proposals, knowing senators wouldn’t be enthusiastic about the final product.

It had a cost to the state that no member could calculate, and the bill gives breaks to everyone from teachers to those who slaughter deer and donate the meat to charity.

The bill originally was designed to give some telecommunications companies an income tax credit to offset part of their property taxes.

The House gave its loaded-up bill first-round approval on a 73-36 vote.

See SENATE, Page 7

Bill would tighten  
control on deer herd

TOPEKA (AP) — A bill that lets the Department of Wildlife and Parks better control the state’s growing deer population has been sent to Gov. Bill Graves.

On Wednesday, the Senate voted 34-5 to accept changes the House made to the bill last week.

Under the bill, the department could issue more deer hunting permits to hunters from other states and allow Kansas landowners to purchase and resell at a profit permits for non-Kansans.

It also would require the wildlife agency to set up a telephone hot line so farmers could report crop damage from deer. It would require the agency and the Department of Transportation to draft a plan for reducing highway accidents involving deer.

Legislators are trying to deal with Kansans’ frustrations over crop damage and accidents involving vehicles and deer. The wildlife agency has no firm count of the number of deer in Kansas, but some estimate it could top 400,000.