

weather report

47°
at noon

Today
• Sunset, 7:19 p.m.

Tomorrow
• Sunrise, 6:15 a.m.
• Sunset, 7:20 p.m.

Midday Conditions
• Soil Temperature 46 degrees
• Humidity 37 percent
• Sky mostly cloudy
• Winds southeast 7 mph
• Barometer 30.37 inches and rising
• Record High 83° (1968)
• Record Low 14° (1940)

Last 24 Hours*
High 64°
Low 32°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast
Tonight: Mostly clear, low mid 30s, winds south 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Sunny, dry, high 70-75, winds south 5-15 mph, low 30s.

Extended Forecast
Thursday: dry, high 70s, low 40s.
Friday: dry, high 70s, low 35-45.
Saturday: chance for rain, high 65-75, low upper 30s.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon
Wheat — \$2.14 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.04
Loan deficiency payment — 41¢
Corn — \$1.73 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.94
Loan deficiency payment — 5¢
Milo — \$2.61 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$4.53 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.57
Loan deficiency payment — 32¢
Millet — \$3.60 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$6.05 cwt.
Loan deficiency prnt. — \$3.30
Confection current — \$13/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$12 (new crop)
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigo Co 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 may meet family

MIAMI — Elian Gonzalez's Miami relatives offered today to meet with his father in Florida and bring the boy along, saying that would be preferable to Washington "under the glaring eyes of Cuban government officials."
They also demanded assurances that Elian would not be taken from them at the meeting.
In a letter distributed this morning outside Elian's great-uncle's home and addressed to a government's psychiatrist, the family said it would be willing to meet Juan Miguel Gonzalez at a nun's home or "any other neutral place in South Florida."
The letter said that conference could be "followed almost immediately by a meeting to include Elian." A spokesman for relatives said they wanted written assurance that the government wouldn't try to take Elian at that time.

Board opens Max Jones additions

Parents jam session to see kids honored

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Daily News

More than 100 people attended an open house for the Max Jones Fieldhouse expansion Monday, and many stayed for a school board meeting where a number of students were honored.
The Goodland Ambassadors helped open the new junior high gym and toured the new locker rooms as part of the open house marking completion of the expansion project.
Youngsters found a couple of basketballs and broke in the new baskets with a little informal shooting practice.
Refreshments were served from the new concession area on the ground floor, and the board meeting was held in the mezzanine area on the west balcony level.
All members were present and the board went through routine items including the financial reports and approval of bills and transfers while waiting for all the student honorees to gather or return from the track meet.
Mary Porterfield of the Goodland National Education Association handed out copies of the district teachers' newsletter. She said that at a recent Kansas teachers assembly, the Goodland newsletter (edited by Susan Jensen) received a silver award.
Attorney Jeff Mason told the board he was sorry he had missed the strategic retreat held Saturday. He told the board that while he agreed that science and math are important, he felt English was as vital.
"I don't think we need more staff, but need to offer advanced English classes at both the junior high and high school," Mason said.
He suggested a freshman advanced English class, and one at the junior high school to help those who want to perform on a higher level and may be pursuing a career in other than science or math.
The board then honored a large group of students who were involved in DECA, the Kansas History Day program, Family Careers and Community Leaders of America state winners, the Science Olympiad winners, state piano contest winners, state wrestling winners and regional vocal and instrumental music winners.
There were many parents present as board members congratulated the groups on their efforts in the variety of competitions.
Included in the honorees were the two DECA national qualifiers, Tiffany Schwasinger and Ruby Fuentes, and the Parliamentary Procedure team which will be going to the national FCCLA convention. The team includes nine freshmen, Matt Hall, Deanna Livengood, Laura Rice, Michelle Kibel, Alan Cebula, Tom Cotter, Amanda Hoffman, Donald Raymer and Kevin Schulte.
Hoffman was also honored for being selected as a McDonald's Millennium 2000 national student.
Jill Sowers, Nick Parker, Erinn



More than 100 people attended the Max Jones open house Monday evening and afterwards many stayed for the school board meeting, held at the fieldhouse (above), during which students who have been involved in statewide competitions were honored. Included in the expansion of the Max Jones fieldhouse is a new concession area (below) which was used during the open house.
Photos by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News

Hardy and Hoffman were honored for receiving I ratings at the state piano contest.

Superintendent Marvin Selby said the final details of the expansion project are nearly done, and he expects to have it wrapped up soon. He noted that there were no bills to Rhoads Construction in the month list, and said about the only bill remaining was the final hold amount, which will be paid after the work is completed and the building accepted by the district.
On district enrollment, Selby said the total had dropped 33 by the end of March compared to the start of school in August. Selby said this will not be an immediate problem for the district budget because the state gives the district three options for counting enrollment. He said the district can use the new figure or go back as far as two years, whichever number is larger.
However, if the numbers continue to decline, there will be budget problems, Selby said.

In talking about the upcoming summer school program, Selby said one class to be offered will include a week visiting a research site south of Manhattan and a second week in Goodland putting together a web site describing the experience. The class, to be offered by Casey Veatch, received unanimous approval from the board.
In other business, the board:
Approved a one-year lease of a small skid loader from White Star of Garden City at a cost of \$3,622 for the year. The equipment is to be used primarily in tearing out the sidewalk and curb on the south side of the football field so the parking can be changed from parallel to angle.
Approved republishing the budget to allow the district to receive an additional \$1,500 in state funds. They set the hearing for 7 p.m., Monday, April 24, the next regular board meeting.
Approved renewal of the Kansas Association of School Board membership agreement and legal service agreement. The total cost is \$7,146, with \$6,246 for the membership and \$900 for the legal services.
Set the first negotiation session between the board and the Goodland teachers for 4 p.m. Thursday at the district office.



Schools set priorities from session

The Goodland School Board unanimously voted Tuesday to have Superintendent Marvin Selby implement nine recommendations from its strategic retreat held over the weekend.
The goals will focus the district on improving math and science programs at the high school, including a major addition to provide new science rooms.
The schools would plan on having fewer, but better paid, non-certified staff, such as teacher aides, and a study would be made of moving the junior high to the high school building. Better communication among board, staff and administration would be stressed.
The list was drawn up after an all-day session Saturday at the Elks Lodge involving board members, teachers and citizens.
There were nine items, with the first being to move the maintenance shop to the bus barn and to clean up under the grandstand and improve the restrooms and concession areas.
Second is to develop a plan to improve the science facilities at the high school.
Third is to try to hire a combination math/science teacher and another counselor for the high school. (Selby said the district is already trying to hire a counselor.)
Fourth was to determine the market value of the Edson gym.
Fifth was to develop a committee to evaluate the cost and feasibility of in the future moving the junior high to the high school.
Sixth was to improve non-certified salaries, and to develop a way to differentiate salary levels to allow for differences in experience or the type of work being handled. Selby also said this might be done by combining some jobs, but this would take some time because there now is no evaluation system for non-certified staff.
Seventh was to evaluate teacher to student ratios to see if there are some classes which are too small.
Eighth was to encourage all staff members to be adaptable to changes facing the district, as enrollment forces shifts in classes and staff assignments.
Ninth was to encourage more communication with understanding at all levels.

Vote cuts 'extra' benefit money

By John Hanna
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Extra money for pensioners wasn't enough to convince Democrats to vote for a plan to divert money from a state benefit fund, even though the plan supposedly has more money than it needs.
Gov. Bill Graves' proposal to suspend payments to the death and disability fund for a year remains a hot political issue even after the Legislature began its traditional 2 1/2-week spring break.
Before legislators recessed early Saturday, Republicans used their majorities in both houses to make sure Graves' proposal passed. The governor considers the diversion critical to his budget.
The fund pays benefits to the families of state and local government workers who die or are disabled. It is administered by the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System board.
Suspending payments to that fund through June 30, 2001, would save the state \$26.4 million and local governments \$6.8 million. Graves used the state's share to help finance general programs, including education and social services.
He and his GOP allies point out that the fund has far more money in it than it needs to pay benefits for a year. Democrats contend the diversion would set a bad precedent and represents a "raid" on the fund.
Graves has complained repeatedly about criticism of the proposal, which he says is necessary to help the state get through a tough financial year.
"We're having to do some things that we otherwise wouldn't do if we had a few more dollars," Graves said during his most recent news conference.
Graves turned to the death and disability fund because of its fat balances. As of June 30, 1999, the fund had \$189 million, even after it paid out \$37

million in benefits for the previous 12 months. Officials of the fund agree that suspending payments won't affect benefits.
The bill that went to Graves also contains a bonus for retirees, a 13th check financed from the settlement of lawsuits the pension fund filed over investment losses during the late 1980s and early 1990s.
The extra checks — to be mailed Oct. 1 — are expected to cost \$19.5 million. Retirees will receive about half of their regular monthly benefit.
A conference committee of three senators and three House members drafted the final version of the pension bill. The Senate approved it, 27-12, and the House passed it, 63-57.
In the mostly party-line voting, all area legislators backed the governor with a "yes" vote, including Stan Clark, R-Oakley, and Reps. Jim Morrison, R-Colby; Gayle Mollenkamp, R-Quinter; and John Faber, R-Brewster.

Wheat crop well ahead of normal growth for year

WICHITA (AP) — Winter wheat appears to be faring better throughout most of Kansas, although it is too early how much damage was done by last week's freeze, Kansas Agricultural Statistics said Monday.
In its weekly crop weather report, the agency said winter wheat condition continues to improve. About 59 percent of the crop was ranked in good to excellent condition, up from the 54 percent just a week ago.
The other 31 percent was in fair condition, with 20 percent ranked as either poor or very poor, the agency said.
Growth is well ahead of normal. Already 60 percent of the crop is jointing, compared to 44 percent a week ago. The average for this time

of year is 40 percent.
Most of the wheat has survived the winter in good shape, with 92 percent of fields showing no freeze damage and 84 percent with no wind damage.
Disease problems are mostly minimal, and pests haven't reached significant levels in most areas.
Meanwhile, spring planting is picking up. Farmers have seeded 3 percent of the corn fields, a bit more than the 2 percent for this time last year. Spring oat planting is 77 percent complete, somewhat slower than the 93 percent usually finished by this time, the agency said.
Pastures are also improving, 60 percent were rated in good to excellent condition compared with 57 percent a week ago.