

weather report

83° at noon



Today

• Sunset, 7:31 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:09 a.m.  
• Sunset, 7:30 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 75 degrees  
• Humidity 56 percent  
• Sky sunny  
• Winds east 10 mph  
• Barometer 30.23 inches and falling  
• Record High 105° (1936)  
• Record Low 43° (1928)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 91°  
Low 61°  
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Clear, low 60, winds south 5-15 mph. Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, chance of thunderstorms, high 90-95, low 60, winds south 5-15 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday through Monday: dry, high 90, low 60-65.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.47 bushel  
Posted county price — \$2.17  
Loan deficiency payment — 28¢  
Corn — \$1.55 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.41  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 58¢  
Milo — \$2.39 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$3.82 bushel  
Posted county price — \$3.99  
Loan deficiency payment — 91¢  
Millet — \$7.00 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$5.30 cwt.  
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$4.30  
Confection current — \$16/\$5 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.

Nomination up in the air

TOPEKA— Two state officials who will have a hand in deciding which presidential candidate gets the Reform Party spot on the Kansas ballot are looking to federal officials for help.

Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh and Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer said Wednesday they expect a ruling from the Federal Election Commission to provide some guidance in settling the dispute in Kansas between rival candidates Pat Buchanan and John Hagelin.

Thornburgh, Sherrer and Attorney General Carla Stovall make up the State Objections Board. They expect the board to review the Buchanan and Hagelin claims to the Reform Party nomination.

The secretary of state's decision to leave the matter up to the Objections Board frustrated Buchanan.

Wheat may lose its throne

Crop is still king, but corn is growing

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

For now wheat is still the most important crop in Kansas, but a Kansas State University economist says that may change.

“Wheat is still king in Kansas, but we seem ready to abdicate the throne,” said Brad Lubben, a K-State Research and Extension agricultural economist.

Kansas is the No. 1 winter wheat state, with 363 million bushels produced this year. But this year corn production is expected to be 465 million bushels, surpassing wheat for the first time ever in Kansas.

For Sherman County, the figures will be similar, though wheat acreage still outnumbers corn here 2-1.

Though the wheat harvest usually runs as big as ever, except for a drought-ridden crop this year, the wheat is being produced on an ever-shrinking share of the state's crop land. Lubben said Kansas has lost more than 2.5 million acres from wheat production over the past 25 years.

“Corn production has been going up since the mid-80s and has nearly tripled in that time period,” he said, “and soybean acres have nearly tripled in the past 25 years.”

Both crops have displaced wheat and milo acres, with soybeans taking particular hold in the eastern part of the state.

Sherman County Extension Agent Dana Belshe said that Sherman County has had a reduction in wheat acres and there is more dryland corn here, as across the state.

Belshe said 210,000 acres of wheat were planted in the county in 1990 with 201,000 acres harvested and that same year 42,000 acres of corn were planted and 40,000 acres were harvested.

Reports on wheat production for 1999 show that 174,000 acres were planted and 152,500 were harvested, while corn production reports show that 89,300 acres were planted and 85,700 harvested. Sunflowers were planted in 1999 on 54,300 acres, and harvested on 51,000.

Belshe said this area has seen a steady increase in sunflower planting, and there's an increased use of intensive cropping rotations by farmers.

“We don't have as much fallow as we used to,” he said.

He added that because this was a

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Contest offers fans \$1,000 prize

Beginning Tuesday, fans can enter a two-state regional football contest with a weekly prize of \$1,000 to go for the best score regionally and \$100 to the top Goodland winner.

The Goodland Daily News, along with dozens of newspapers in Missouri and Kansas, will participate in the Power Points 2000 Football Contest.

The weekly contest will feature both National Football League and Big 12 games, featuring a unique twist to the traditional pick-the-winner football contest.

Contestants project the winning teams, but must also rank their selections using a weighted point scale according to their confidence in the picks. There are 16 games weekly, and the 16-point line is the most valuable, the 1-point line the least valuable. Your “surest” guess goes on the 16-point line, your “least sure” guess on the 1-point line.

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Trooper Rich Hageman (above) signaled for Dave Sprecker, Goodland Schools bus maintenance man, to turn a bus' emergency lights on Thursday morning when troopers inspected Goodland school buses at the bus barn east of town. Lt. Kevin Winston (below) gave a thumbs

up to show the driver that the bus' reverse lights worked. Randy Riley (bottom), a bus mechanic, helped the troopers inspect lights, tires and other safety equipment.

Photos by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Buses signal that school is coming

Troopers inspect Goodland's buses before they're filled with kids Monday

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland School District has some of the cleanest and best-maintained school buses that Lt. Kevin Winston has ever seen — and he's seen a lot of the big yellow things.

Every August before the new school year starts, Lt. Winston and other Kansas Highway Patrol troopers inspect school buses here, in Sharon Springs, Weskan and St. Francis and across Thomas, Rawlins and Sheridan counties.

It's their job to make sure the buses can deliver children to school safely.

Lt. Winston and Trooper Rich Hageman were at the district's bus barn east of town on Thursday morning, turning Goodland's school buses inside out.

The officers checked the vehicles' lights, fuel systems, tires, windshields, fire extinguishers, first aid kits and other electrical and safety features.

They said Goodland buses will be some of the last inspected this year, as school has already started in most districts across northwest Kansas. Schools here will open on Monday.

The lieutenant said he's always impressed with Goodland's fleet, which has 41 buses, including 12 Suburbans, two tour buses for out-of-town trips and 27 of the standard yellow-and-black type.

He said the vehicles are usually in perfect shape.

“And I am here to tell you it isn't that way everywhere,” he said, “These guys do an excellent job.”

The troopers did find a few slight imperfections on Thursday.

The white backup lights on one of the tour buses were out, the red flashing lights on route bus No. 24 weren't working and the headlights on route bus No. 3 flicked off when the driver turned other lights on.

Randy Riley, the district's mechanic, said everything was working at 5 a.m. Thursday morning, when he and Dave Sprecker, who is in charge of bus maintenance, checked the fleet. Riley went to work fixing the problems.

Lt. Winston said if a piece of equipment fails the inspection, the district has 10 days to fix the problem and have the bus reinspected. This time,



Riley was able to fix all of the problems before the end of the inspection, which lasted about two hours.

A highway patrol inspection sticker was put on the vehicles' windshields, showing they are fit to take children to and from school.

Bob Harkins, district transportation supervisor, said in the 13 years he's been on the job, the buses have passed with flying colors every year but two. Problems started cropping up last year, he said.

“Last year there was one problem

with a light,” Harkins said, “and this year there were three lights. But they were all minor things Randy can fix.”

He blamed the electrical problems on the fact that the buses haven't been used all summer, and the fog that had hung heavily over Goodland Thursday morning — leaving a damp layer on the buses.

Lt. Winston, the patrol supervisor for this area, said the inspections naturally fall into the hands of the Highway Patrol, which is responsible for vehicle safety across the state.

“We work on both ends,” he said. “We inspect vehicles and help with the advancement of new safety equipment.”

Winston said that districts get the Highway Patrol's two-cents worth when they are considering installing new equipment in vehicles.

“We can tell them how it fits into state law,” he said.

Harkins said school employees and drivers inspect the buses at least twice a day during the school year.

“Every morning and afternoon, they check the lights, oil and tires,” he said.

Goodland native returning to promote book

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

It's a book about a girl's experience of growing up on a farm near Goodland and its author will be in town to sign copies of it on Saturday.

Julene Bair will sign copies of her

book “One Degree West: Reflections of a Plainsdaughter,” from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at Knott Just Books, 1102 Main. Everyone is invited to stop in and visit with her during the signing.

Her book, a collection of personal essays, won the First Series Award for

Creative Nonfiction sponsored by her publisher, Mid-List Press of Minneapolis.

“Each one is a meditative or lyrical description of my ties to family and land,” Bair said.

The essays include meditations on

the environment and men and women's roles in farm life, she said.

“I just am a writer,” she said when asked why she wrote the book. “I just have it in my blood.”

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