

weather  
report

53°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:36 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 7:07 a.m.  
• Sunset, 4:37 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 30 degrees  
• Humidity 30 percent  
• Sky sunny  
• Winds northwest 25-28 mph  
• Barometer 30.30 inches  
and steady

• Record High 63° (1962)  
• Record Low -26° (1959)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 44°  
Low 21°  
Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly clear, low 25-30,  
west winds 10 mph. Tomorrow:  
Mostly sunny, high mid 60s, low 25-  
30, northwest winds 20-30 mph.

Extended Forecast

Friday: dry, high 60s, low 25-30.  
Saturday: dry, high 45-55, low 20s.  
Sunday: dry, high 40s, low 15-25.

(National Weather Service)

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

local  
markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.91 bushel  
Posted county price — \$2.72  
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢  
Corn — \$2.04 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.95  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 4¢  
Milo — \$3.40 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$4.51 bushel  
Posted county price — \$4.33  
Loan deficiency payment — 57¢  
Millet — \$8.75 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$5.85 cwt.  
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.90  
Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.  
Pinto beans — \$15  
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Frontier  
Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean.  
These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon  
wire

Late news  
from the  
Associated  
Press



1 p.m.

Reports show  
need for work

TOPEKA — New report cards for public and private schools show strength in reading and writing skills but also the need for work on math, education officials said Tuesday.

State educators announced the release of the latest report cards for individual schools. They were to be issued Tuesday and available on the Department of Education's Web site, but an error in the data caused a delay, said Kathy Toelkes, department spokeswoman.

The reports should be available Wednesday, Toelkes said. The department didn't release any specific numbers Tuesday.

The state department already had data in a larger report, including specifics on when assessment visits were made to schools. Staff members were able to review the data and draw conclusions.

# City plans to study utility bill hike

By Dana Sulsberger

The Goodland Daily News

Goodland residents and businesses may see an increase in their utilities bill in a few months, as the city commission decided Tuesday to meet in February for a workshop to review utilities rates.

City Manager Ron Pickman said during his report to city commissioners during their regularly meeting on Tuesday — which was delayed from Monday night because of New Year's — that commissioners will be asked to go over the utilities rates.

Pickman said their has been an increase in the cost of electric production, so electricity rates may have to be increased. He said the cost of sewer and solid waste fees should stay about the

same, but federal and state regulations may force the city to improve the sewer system.

The time frame for adjusting rates would be up to the commission, said Pickman. Once the commissioners hold the workshop — which they do annually — the rates would have to be put on the agenda for a regular meeting.

"Our sewer system hasn't been improved since 1986," Pickman told Commissioner Curtis Hurd. The state is suggesting that Goodland have someone come in and study the sewer system, he said, and also do a rate increase study.

He said the city employees would gather information before the February workshop to see what the city may have to do in the future.

The commissioners decided to proceed with a

proposed regulatory review with the consultant company Bucher, Willis and Ratliff, a consulting firm out of Kansas City Mo.

The cost of having the city's building and zoning regulations reviewed will be \$25,000; that is a final step in the four-step process of redoing the regulations. The third step was completed last month with the adoption of a comprehensive plan for the city.

Commissioner Rick Billinger said he was concerned about whether the firm was going to get enough input from the city on the regulations. Pickman said he would be working with them and that the county and city would meet with them.

The corporation will come up with the regulations, he said, based on the comprehensive plan

and input from the city commissioners, the planning commission and the county commission.

"The county commissioners probably aren't aware that we are doing this," said Pickman, "other than what they have read in the paper."

"I think we have argued about this enough before," said Commissioner Jim Mull, who moved to let Bucher continue with the review.

The commissioners had discussed this phase in November when they had adopted the comprehensive plan, but, Pickman said, the money wasn't budgeted for this project until 2001, which is why they had to wait to vote on it.

It will take about five months for the company

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## Finalist drops off short list

### Man to interview with county gets job

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

The interviews hadn't started and already one man was out of the running for the county administrator job.

Chuck Frankenfeld, acting chairman of the Sherman County Commission, said David Chamberlin of Kansas City, Mo. — one of three finalists picked to interview today — called Tuesday night to say he had found another job.

"He probably had interviews lined up in a lot of places," Frankenfeld said.

That leaves two people, including one Goodland man, looking to fill the position the commission created in October.

Frankenfeld said this morning that the interviews would go on, with the commissioners and Randy Allen of the Kansas Association of Counties from Topeka meeting with Tom Betz of Goodland and Roy Ridener of Wichita.

Allen, the association's executive director, helped the commissioners establish the job and find applicants.

Frankenfeld said Ridener, who arrived in Goodland Tuesday night, will tour the area and county facilities before his interview.

Betz is already familiar with the city, as he has lived in Goodland for three years, moving here to work for The Goodland Daily News.

He has reported on the Sherman County Commission meetings for two years and two former commissioners encouraged him to apply.

## Bush is reviewing economy

By Scott Lindlaw

Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN, Texas — After warning anew of a slowdown, President-elect Bush met with top U.S. business leaders on Wednesday to take stock of the economy as the Federal Reserve cut a key interest rate, a surprise move.

Bush's chief economic adviser, Larry Lindsey, bolted from the closed economic meeting at a hotel to catch a TV report on the development.

"Great! The Fed is always right," Lindsey said after asking reporters the size of the cut and before returning to the meeting to inform Bush and some three dozen company leaders.

The Fed, in an effort to boost a slowing economy, said it was cutting its target for the federal funds rate — the interest banks charge each other on overnight loans — to 6 percent from 6.5 percent, a nine-year high.

It also cut its mostly symbolic discount rate by a quarter point to 5.75. The Fed said it stands ready to cut the discount rate by another quarter point to 5.50 percent on the request of Federal Reserve banks.



Steve Evert, an emergency medical technician, used an exothermic torch to cut a cinder block at the Goodland Fire Department Tuesday, while volunteer firemen Terry Baker (right) and Ryan Weis watched. An anonymous donor gave the \$1,200 tool to the AgraSafe program, which Evert instructs for, and Evert plans to let Sherman County rescue workers use it.

Photos by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

## Anonymous torch to save lives

### Farm safety instructor lets rescuers borrow new cutting tool

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

Someone living in the Goodland area gave a gift that could help save your life one day, and you wouldn't even know it.

The day after Christmas, an anonymous donor gave a \$1,200 exothermic torch to AgraSafe, a farm safety program that teaches classes in Goodland and around the area. Now, one of the program's instructors has decided to let the rural and city fire departments and the emergency medical service in Sherman County use the cutting tool to save lives.

"It might only get used once in the next 10 years," said Steve Evert, an emergency medical technician and AgraSafe instructor in Goodland, "but if it saves a life it'll be well worth the money."

Evert, who volunteers with Goodland's ambulance service, said the person donated the torch to AgraSafe — a program in northwest Kansas that teaches rescue workers how to save people caught in farm machinery — but it will be used by emergency workers when the program doesn't need it.

"It will not only be helpful in doing



New torch

rescue work on farms," said Dean Jensen, Goodland's fire chief, "but when we have to go out on the Interstate and cut a guard rail from around a vehicle. I think it will have real benefits."

Evert said the torch, which can slice through cast iron and cinder blocks and cut under water, will stay at the fire department when he's not

using it to teach.

Jensen planned to buy a similar torch some day, but said he's happy to save taxpayers a few dollars.

"It's an expensive tool," he said, "but there's just so many things that we can use it for."

The donor, Evert said, attended Goodland's first AgraSafe program in November at the Sherman County Fairgrounds and thought the equipment would be useful in training.

Evert said he thought the torch — which is safer for rescue workers and victims because it doesn't leave surrounding metal as hot — could be more useful in real life situations.

Sherman County emergency workers, he said, will use the torch to rescue people from farm machinery and automobiles. Evert said it costs about \$1,000, plus \$200 for extra safety equipment.

There will be a second AgraSafe program in Goodland from 5 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 16, at the Sherman County 4-H building. The program — which will not include much hands-on training — will teach farmers how to handle an accident involving their equipment.

## Leader accepts new deal

### Israel may make move towards peace

WASHINGTON (AP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat gave President Clinton his qualified acceptance of a U.S. formula for a negotiated settlement with Israel and the next move is up to Prime Minister Ehud Barak, a senior Palestinian official said Wednesday.

"He accepted with his interpretations and principles," said Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative here.

Still, much ground remains to be covered for reaching a peace pact.

Clinton made telephone calls Wednesday to first Barak, then Arafat, said White House spokesman Jake Siewert. Both leaders "expressed some reservations" about the U.S. plan but accepted them, Siewert said.

According to Palestinian sources, Clinton told Arafat if he wanted changes it was up to the Palestinians and Israel to try to see if they could be arranged.

The president proposed 12 days of negotiations, and Arafat agreed to lower-level negotiations, said the sources, insisting on anonymity.

In two meetings at the White House, Arafat "presented our position in a positive way," Rahman told The Associated Press. He said Clinton received Arafat's presentation "and it is now up to Mr. Barak."

Several Palestinian officials, speaking on condition they not be identified, said Arafat also agreed to 12 days of intensive negotiations with Israel.

Arafat told CNN "it is important to move the peace process forward."

Clinton administration officials gave no indication after the talks ended near midnight Tuesday that the huge gaps between Arafat's position on key issues and Clinton's outline had been bridged.

## Manager says store won't close

Rumors spreading around Goodland that Alco will be closing aren't true, the store's manager says.

For several months rumors about the store have been traveling by word of mouth around the city, and were even talked about briefly on Tuesday night before the city commission meeting started.

Commissioner Rick Billinger said he had heard that Alco would be closing and he was worried about what that would do to downtown businesses.

The manager, Tom Rush, said today the store has no plans to close at this time. He said the rumors probably were started by a disgruntled ex-employee.