

weather report

32° at noon

Today

Sunset, 5:04 p.m.

Tomorrow

Sunrise, 6:55 a.m.

Sunset, 5:05 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 36 degrees

• Humidity 72 percent

• Sky cloudy with blowing snow

• Winds northwest 34-39 mph

• Barometer 29.74 inches and rising

• Record High 72° (1986)

• Record Low -10° (1979)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 33°

Low 20°

Precipitation .01 inch/Snow .4 inch

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Cloudy and brisk with snow flurries, low 15-20, northwest winds 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Partly cloudy and windy, high 35-40, northwest winds 20-30 mph, low 15-20.

Extended Forecast

Thursday through Saturday: Dry, high 35-45, 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 — \$2.77 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.73

Loan deficiency payment — 0¢

Corn — \$1.84 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.84

Loan deficiency pmt. — 15¢

Milo — \$3.03 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$4.06 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.96

Loan deficiency payment — 94¢

Millet — \$8.25 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$6.05 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.66

Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$14

(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.

Bush offers elderly a plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush offered a quick fix today for helping the elderly get prescriptions and said a broader Medicare overhaul will come later. To criticism that his plan doesn't go far enough, Bush said he's open to compromise.

The president didn't reveal the cost of the prescription drug proposal he sent Congress on Monday. Aides said the dollar figures would come when he presents a budget.

He and Republican leaders of the House and Senate were meeting today to discuss the budget and tax cuts.

Bush promoted his proposed 10-year, \$1.6 billion tax cut at the Oval Office swearing-in of Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, saying it would help the nation "regain the momentum in our economy."

# Snow, cold of winter settle in

## Blizzard-like weather closes roads, schools

By Rachel Miscall  
*The Goodland Daily News*

High winds and blowing snow closed highways, schools and government offices today as the National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning for the tri-state area.

Bob Boyle, a weather service specialist in Goodland, said the strongest wind gust so far was 51 mph recorded just after midnight. He said there was a report of a 70 mph gust near Limon, Colo.

Boyle said the winds, blowing 30 to 35 mph from the north, are forming drifts — some as tall as five feet — around Sherman County and causing dangerous driving conditions.

He said light snow should continue to fall today — topping off the seven inches that accumulated this weekend — but said the real problem is the wind.

"It can push you right off the road," Boyle said, adding that it should die down this evening and pick up again Wednesday, though not as fast.

The Kansas Highway Patrol closed I-70 west to the border this morning, but kept the eastbound lanes open. Colorado officials closed the road from there to Limon, however.

Semi-trailer trucks quickly filled the Wal-Mart parking lot and were parked behind fast-food restaurants today, as drivers were unable to continue west.

Troopers also closed K-27 from Wheeler in Cheyenne County south to Sharon Springs as visibility was reduced to almost nothing on the highway. Old U.S. 24 remained open this morning, though visibility was reduced and a huge drift blocked one lane about a mile west of the K-27 junction.

The Goodland School District canceled classes, along with the Northwest Kansas Technical School and most districts in the area.

The county closed its offices and a few Goodland businesses hung signs in their windows saying, "Closed due to weather."

There were no reports of weather-related accidents this morning, but the police department reported a few drivers had gotten their cars stuck in snow drifts.



Joel Weis, 9, rode his board down a pile of snow Sunday in the parking lot of the First Christian Church at Eighth and Arcade. His parents are Ryan and Kim Weis.  
Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Boyle said an intense low pressure system — which was centered over the northwest Kansas and northeast Colorado area but has now moved over Iowa and Missouri — and a high pressure system over western Colorado were driving the strong winds.

"The high pressure is like the top of a mountain," he said, "and the low pressure is a valley. The wind is like water going down hill."

As the high pressure moves in from west later this week, Boyle said, the winds will die down and temperatures will rise a bit.

However, he said, snow is forecast to return early next week.



Damon Finley swept snow off his car at 813 Eustis on Sunday following a storm.  
Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

# At times, city crew can't find room for tons of snow

By Rachel Miscall  
*The Goodland Daily News*

When a storm drops tons of snow on Goodland streets, it's up to city workers to figure out where to put it all.

Ed Wolak, Goodland public works director, said once it has stopped snowing, workers clear driving lanes by pushing the snow into the center of streets.

When roads are clear for motorists, he said, the city crew uses a huge snow blower and trucks to haul the snow to city property. Wolak said they pile it up near the railroad south of 18th Street, by the old wye on Cherry Street

and around the north water tower, but sometimes it gets to be too much.

"If it keeps snowing every week," he said, "we could run out of places to put the snow. It has happened that way before."

He estimated that the crew might have to move more than 500 tons, four tons at a time, just from this week's storm.

Wolak, who has worked for the city since 1976, said he remembers a winter in the 1980s when 100 inches of snow fell. He said city workers had to get creative when finding places to haul the stuff.

"I know I got tired of scooping snow," he said.

What happens when the city runs out of space?

"We hunt for more space," Wolak said, adding that with this winter shaping up to be the coldest and snowiest in four years, workers could be out hunting soon.

But for now, Wolak said, the crew is busy trying to clear the seven inches of snow that fell this weekend.

Piles of snow more than five feet tall stand in the middle of some streets, but Wolak said with more snow in the forecast and high winds forming drifts

in the roads, it will take at least a week.

"We try to remove it all as soon as we can," he said, "but we have a lot of area to cover. It all depends on the weather."

A National Weather Service forecaster in Goodland said it doesn't look like the weather is going to be much help.

Bob Boyle said the high winds, gusting up to 50 mph, are forecast to die down tonight but pick up again tomorrow. He said another inch or two of snow should fall by the end of the

See SNOW, Page 4

# Huge concrete pile still east of city

By Janet Craft  
*The Goodland Daily News*

What will happen to the mountain of crushed concrete left along I-70 between Goodland and Edson after that section of the highway was replaced last summer?

Chriss McDiffett, district engineer for the Kansas Department of Transportation in Norton said the department has negotiated with the company that did the highway job to use the concrete in a project on part of U.S. 40 at Oakley.

The pile is about halfway between Goodland and Edson along the south side of I-70. The concrete was torn out when Koss Construction of Topeka repaved I-70 between Goodland and Edson last summer. The concrete was

then salvaged and crushed and used as a base for the new section.

What was left over is what the department negotiated for, McDiffett said.

"Out here, rock aggregate is hard to come by," he said, so it makes sense to reuse the crushed concrete rather than haul rock in.

McDiffett said the concrete pile should be moved sometime in the spring, as soon as the weather breaks.

The department plans to replace asphalt on U.S. 40 from the west intersection with U.S. 83 about two to three miles east to the interchange with I-70 at Oakley. The highway runs along the south side of Oakley. Dobson Bros. Construction Co. of Lincoln, Neb., is the contractor.

The concrete will be used in the base, which will be about 8 inches thick. The construction company will tear everything down to the subgrade and then build it back up.

That will involve tearing off the asphalt and taking out the base. Then a new base will be put down and about 10 inches of concrete will be poured over that.

McDiffett said the Oakley project is scheduled to be completed sometime in October or November.

In other highway projects, McDiffett said the department will start taking bids next month on repairing K-27 beginning at the intersection of Business U.S. 24 and K-27 and going north to the Cheyenne County line.



A big pile of concrete left from when I-70 was repaved last summer sits on the highway between Goodland and Edson. It will be used on a highway project at Oakley.  
Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

# Water proposal is made

## Officials looking to keep aquifer filled

TOPEKA (AP)—A proposal to keep the western Kansas economy healthy without pumping the Ogallala Aquifer dry was presented to the House Agriculture Committee.

Kansas Water Office officials outlined a plan Monday for a "two-pool" management policy that calls for establishing a "use" pool and a "conservation" pool within the aquifer.

The two-pools plan is in contrast to Gov. Bill Graves' desire for a policy for zero depletion of the aquifer by 2020. Graves has not defined his policy, deferring to the Kansas Geological Survey to make recommendations.

Some rural legislators, particularly from southwest Kansas, believe a zero depletion policy — mandating that water taken from an aquifer over a certain period of time not exceed the recharge rate — would lead to restrictions that would destroy the economy.

"The water is going to be in existence for 250 years. That's a long time," said Al LeDoux, water office director.

"We need a plan for those places where water is going to be in existence for a long time, and also for those areas where the water is being depleted faster than it is being restored," he said.

The two-pool approach addresses the rate of groundwater depletion, protects water for future generations and leaves management decisions at local level.

In most cases, the usable pool would be larger than the conservation pool. It would be managed as it is now and used up at some time depending on the level of use.

Currently, 99 percent of the water used in western Kansas comes from groundwater, of which 95 percent is used for irrigation, LeDoux said.

Once the usable pool is gone, the aquifer would be managed to sustain the conservation level.

Withdrawals would match inflows, in essence creating zero depletion.

The depth of each pool would be determined by scientific data and local input.

The proposal also provides for helping farmers, ranchers and communities adjust to the economic impact as the usable pool is spent.

# Board will hear reports

The first regular meeting of the year for the Goodland Regional Medical Center board is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. tonight in the board room at the hospital.

On the agenda are reports from the marketing committee and Rural Health Ventures and the financial report. There is to be an update on the Campaign for Excellence, the hospital foundation.

The board has scheduled a short closed session to discuss personnel contracts.

There will be comments from the board members, and announcement of the next meeting date.