

weather
report

42°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 5:07 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:52 a.m.
• Sunset, 5:08 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 36 degrees
• Humidity 57 percent
• Sky sunny
• Winds west 10 mph
• Barometer 30.12 inches
and falling

• Record High 72° (1934)

• Record Low -13° (1989)

Last 24 Hours*

High 30°

Low 15°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly clear, low 20-25,
west wind 5-15 mph. Tomorrow:
Partly sunny, high 45-50, low 20-25,
northwest wind 10-20 mph.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: dry, high 45-50, low 20-25.
Monday: dry, high 40-45, low 20-25.
Tuesday: dry, high 30, low 15.

(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local
markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.79 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.67
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Corn — \$1.92 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.85
Loan deficiency pmt. — 14¢
Milo — \$3.08 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$4.12 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.94
Loan deficiency payment — 96¢
Millet — \$8.00 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$6.30 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.51
Confection current — \$15/\$7cwt.
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.



Senator wants
gas tax break

TOPEKA — Consumers would get a break from local taxes on natural gas bills under a Johnson County legislator's proposal.

Sen. Barbara Allen, R-Overland Park, introduced a bill Thursday to remove local taxes on natural gas while prices are high. She said households could save about \$50 a year under her proposal.

The bill exempts the sale of natural gas from local taxes until July 1, 2002. Natural gas used by residential customers already is exempt from state taxes.

Although Allen said local taxes have created a windfall for cities and counties, her bill recommends replacing revenues to those entities with money from the state's severance tax on natural gas.

However, Gov. Bill Graves included the additional revenue in his recommended budget.

Landscaper to share a love of space

Woman chosen as Solar System Ambassador

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

At the age of 6 months, Shirley Cooper took her first airplane ride with her father, Phay Hussey. The Goodland native said her first words were "plane" and "go fly."

By 2, Cooper said, she was used to the view from above and started to wonder what was beyond the clouds. She said she told her father to fly "above the sky."

He couldn't, of course, but Cooper said that didn't stop her from wondering. With a pilot for a father and a rocket scientist for an uncle, she said, her first love of aviation soon turned to a fascination with space.

"It's the unknown," she said. "It's brand new."

At 56, the co-owner of Ferngully Landscaping and Construction in Goodland remains fascinated and she wants to share what she's learned about space with others. She'll get a chance this year, working for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as a "Solar System Ambassador."

Cooper and 202 other space aficionados across the country were picked last year by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory — a center in California for the exploration of the solar system — to teach their communities about the planets and current space programs.

Like Cooper, the other ambassadors

— including one in Wichita — are intrigued by the mysteries of space and explore it as a hobby. This year's Solar System Ambassadors, she said, are graduate students, homemakers, veterinarians and business people by day.

Cooper said the program, entering its second year, is designed to let people know about NASA's space exploration missions and what scientists have learned about planets, asteroids and other celestial bodies.

She said armed with color slides, brochures, posters and videos, the ambassadors are expected to organize at least four events each year at museums, libraries, schools or anywhere else. Projects include lectures, presentations, plays and planetary shows.

Twice a month, Cooper said, the ambassadors will get training and information from NASA officials and project coordinators, either by chatting on-line or holding a teleconference.

"I love to talk about this stuff," she said, "and I'm eager to find people who want to listen."

Cooper said she plans to start in the schools and colleges. While dates aren't set, she said, she's been in touch with teachers and administrators at Goodland High School, the Northwest Kansas Technical School, Fort Hays State University in Hays and Colby Community College.

The presentation and slide show will

be at night, she said, so parents and others can attend. In her first presentation, Cooper said, she will focus on the Galileo mission to Jupiter, showing pictures and using handouts to explain what scientists have learned. She said you don't have to be a rocket scientist to enjoy it.

"The slides are fantastic," she said. "A person doesn't have to know anything about space to enjoy the slides."

And if you miss it the first time, she'll be around again. Cooper said she plans to be a space ambassador for as long as the program is running.

Cooper said she started immersing herself in the study of space last year when she got hooked up to the Internet. She said she had access to tons of information and could e-mail her questions or opinions to NASA officials.

"Some like soap operas," she said. "Some like bar hopping. I like web surfing." Cooper caught the attention of NASA, and said in September she received an application for the ambassador program by e-mail. She heard in December that she had been picked.

"As soon as I read about it," she said, "I knew I wanted to do it."

Cooper said memories of flying with her father, a welding machine shop owner who died in 1998, also pushed her to it.

"I want it to be a living memorial to him," she said.



Goodland's Shirley Cooper, one of 203 Solar System Ambassadors picked by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration this year, looked over material Thursday she will use to teach people about space missions and planets.

Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Pumping for education



Valerie Kaup, tri-county coordinator with Farm Bureau, pumped ethanol-based fuel Thursday for customers at Frontier Equity. Farm Bureau is trying to promote the use of the alcohol-gasoline mixture, which she

said is good for both environment and the farm economy and is safe for most cars. It delivers higher performance and octane at a price close to regular unleaded gasoline.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Art contest winner's work to be hung in D.C.

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

Area high school students are invited to enter artwork in an annual art contest which is a joint effort by Congressman Jerry Moran and the Goodland Arts Council.

The first-place winner will have his or her work on display at the U.S. Capital

and will receive \$1,000 to help pay for travel expenses to Washington in June for the unveiling of the display.

Second prize will be \$100 and third prize will be \$50, sponsored by Bankwest of Kansas and Sunwest Banks of Colorado.

This year's Congressional High School Art Competition, "Celebrating

Creativity on the High Plains," is being hosted by the council at the Carnegie Arts Center in Goodland.

The annual competition is held around the 1st Congressional District at sites selected by Rep. Moran, moving from year to year to give all the schools in the district a chance to participate.

Rebecca Downs, executive director of the arts center, said Hays is the next closest arts center, so the council here has expanded the contest to include high schools in 15 counties of north-west Kansas: Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Graham, Greeley, Logan, Nor-

See ART, Page 7

Senate committee rejects bill to cap tax revenue

TOPEKA (AP) — The Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee defeated an effort to limit the revenue generated by the statewide property tax levy for schools.

Meanwhile, the House overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to increase the state sales tax by 1 cent on the dollar for education.

The Senate committee Thursday considered a bill renewing the property

tax levy, and an amendment would have placed a "truth in taxation" mandate on the state.

The amendment would have required annual approval of a resolution stating that the mill levy was generating more revenue than it did the previous year if legislators wanted to spend the extra money.

The committee endorsed reauthorizing the 20-mill levy and a companion

measure continuing an exemption the first \$20,000 of a home's appraised value from the tax.

In the House, the sales tax increase, offered by Rep. Andrew Howell, R-Fort Scott, was defeated 113-3. It would have raised the statewide sales tax to 5.9 percent.

Howell didn't vote for his own proposal and said he offered it to get an early read of House sentiments about a

tax increase.

Some House members said the vote showed how strong sentiment is against a tax increase.

But others warned against reading too much into the vote.

They noted that in early 1999 the House unanimously rejected Gov. Bill Graves' proposed transportation plan, only to see a 10-year, \$13.6 billion plan pass later.

Society talks to county

Members say past will go into print

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

County commissioners got an update on what the Sherman County Historical Society has been doing and what their plans are when two society members talked with them at Wednesday's end-of-the-month meeting.

Evelyn Ward, president of the historical society, and member Clarence Scheopner met with and presented a budget to the commissioners at their month-end meeting.

Ward gave a rundown of some of the events and projects the historical society has done. She told the commissioners that the society's goal is to put as much of Sherman County's history as possible into print.

She said at the society's annual meeting Saturday, members wanted to pursue purchasing a 1907 Queen Anne Victorian house, known as the Handy house, and had decided to take out a loan. The society is working on a grant for the house.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure said he understood there were still some questions on the grant.

Ward said she hadn't seen the questions, but was assured by the state that if the society corrects those things, there would be no problem for the grant to go through.

She said that a group of citizens is wanting to buy a private historical collection, which includes a house, and donate it to the society.

She said the society would like to hire a part-time employee, which would cost \$7,280. She wondered if the county could come up with an additional \$9,000 to cover the cost.

She said the commissioners approved \$3,500 for the society for this year and mentioned that they could increase the mill levy by .2 of a mill, which would bring in \$11,000.

"If (that's) not feasible, we will understand," Ward said.

Rasure asked if the society was looking for a grant to pay for the Handy house.

"How do you propose to pay off the

See COUNTY, Page 7