

weather report

55°

at noon



Today

- Sunset, 5:11 p.m.
- Tomorrow**
- Sunrise, 6:49 a.m.
- Sunset, 5:12 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 35 degrees
- Humidity 36 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds northwest 7 mph
- Barometer 29.88 inches and falling
- Record High 74° (1963)
- Record Low -22° (1982)

Last 24 Hours*

- High 44°
- Low 30°
- Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, low 20-25, north wind 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy, 30 percent chance of snow late, high 35-40, low 20-30, southeast wind 10-20 mph.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday and Thursday: chance of snow, high 25-30, low 10-15. Friday: dry, high 30, low 10.
(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 — \$2.70
 - Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
 - Corn — \$1.91 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$1.87
 - Loan deficiency pmt. — 12¢
 - Milo — \$3.07 hundredweight
 - Soybeans — \$4.08 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$4.02
 - Loan deficiency payment — 88¢
 - Millet — \$8.00 hundredweight
 - Sunflowers
 - Oil current crop — \$6.20 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.

Israel leader trails in polls

JERUSALEM — A day before Israel's fateful election, Prime Minister Ehud Barak was still trailing far behind challenger Ariel Sharon today, despite his renewed warning that a Sharon victory would plunge Israel into war with the Palestinians.

Palestinians threatened to stage a "day of rage" during Tuesday's election. Protests and a commercial strike were planned in the West Bank, and in the Gaza Strip, the militant Islamic Jihad group threatened to bomb Tel Aviv.

"We will burn the soil under the feet of Barak and Sharon," said Moussa Hassan, an Islamic Jihad activist.

Israeli troops and Palestinians waged a gunbattle today in the West Bank town of Hebron, and an Israeli tank fired 20 shells at the Rafah crossing.

Wet, cold weather helping wheat

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

A warm, dry winter and a hot, parched summer caused last year's wheat crop to grow faster than normal — sending farmers into fields early — and made conditions prime for insects, but crop watchers say things are looking better this year.

With this winter shaping up to be colder and snowier than the past few, the Sherman County extension agent says it's possible the wheat harvest will be more bountiful than last year's — which brought farmers mostly low yields.

"The crop has a better chance of pulling ahead this year," agent Dana Belshe said.

He said last year's mild winter put young wheat plants at a disadvantage by providing a good environment for insects.

"We got hit with insect problems," Belshe said. "A lot of farmers had to spray fields last year."

Above-average temperatures last year allowed green bugs to move in early from the south, he said, but that won't happen this year if the weather continues to cooperate. Of course, Belshe noted, the weather hasn't been behaving perfectly.

"We have some pluses," he said, "but we're also behind in some areas."

The eight or so inches of snow that fell last week brought moisture, Belshe said, which is good, but high winds that accompanied the storm may have

caused some damage.

Lynn Hoelting, general manager of Mueller Grain in Goodland, said the wheat crop, which is now in dormancy, is in good to fair condition after enduring winds last week that were gusting up to 50 mph.

"The snow we got was nice," he said, "but as soon as the wind came up it blew off, exposing the wheat to the wind and cold weather."

Snow not only provides water to the crop, Hoelting said, but protects the plants.

Most of last week's snow, he said, ended up in corn and sunflower stubble fields, not covering the wheat.

After harvesting a crop, many farmers allow the

unused material, or stubble, to remain in the field as a way of regenerating the soil and to catch moisture. But, Belshe said, it's not a complete loss.

The snow will melt in the stubble fields, he said, providing moisture for crops that will be planted this year.

Belshe and Hoelting agree that the wheat crop remains in good shape, but still has a lot of growing to do.

"To make a fearless forecast," Hoelting said.

"It's difficult to do." He said more snow, rain or warmer temperatures could alter the condition of the crop for the worse or better.

"It can change overnight," he said.

Courts, road top agenda

City plans projects with school, county

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland City Commission today will review plans to build a new tennis court at Steever Park and to repair a rough section of old U.S. 24 in the city, both of which are joint projects with the school district and county respectively.

Commissioners will gather at 5 p.m. at the city offices, 204 W. 11th, for the regular meeting.

The Goodland School Board has already approved paying half of the cost of a new tennis court and resurfacing three now at the park.

Including new lights and dirt work, which haven't been bid yet, Superintendent Marvin Selby estimated the project would cost \$160,800.

He said the courts will be reserved for student practices and matches as needed, but open to the public otherwise.

City Manager Ron Pickman collected bids for the project and the lowest was from Southwest Recreational Industries, a track and tennis court construction company from Wichita.

The school board approved accepting that bid last month and this is the first time the city commission has met since.

The city commissioners will review a joint resolution with Sherman County, which says the county will use money raised by a quarter-cent special sales tax to repair a quarter-mile section of Old U.S. 24 in east Goodland.

The commission looked at the resolution, drawn up by Pickman and County Attorney Bonnie Selby, at its last meeting, but suggested minor changes.

The city and county have been wrangling for years over which is responsible for the rough, bumpy stretch, but decided to find a solution after taxpayers who drive on the road complained.

The commission will also consider an agreement, written by Pickman and Selby, between the city and county for repairs and snow removal on roads that straddle the city limits.

Those include North Caldwell, West Eighth Street and a portion of Armory Road.

Commissioners will also consider passing an ordinance that sets limits on where and the amount of time big vehicles, such as recreational vehicles and semi-tractor trailers, can park in the city.

After reading at a previous meeting three conflicting ordinances already adopted, the commission asked the city attorney to draw up a new ordinance.

In other business, the commission will:

- Review bids on a new police car.
- Consider allowing a group to build new hangers at Renner Field. If the commission approves, the city will have to install sewer lines and build a roadway and taxiway to the hangers.
- Appoint new members to the Cemetery Board and the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- Discuss rescheduling the Monday, Feb. 19 regular meeting to Tuesday, Feb. 20.

Flying cakes



Jack Eddleman (above), a Goodland Lion's Club member, flipped pancakes Saturday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, while other Lions served up eggs and sausage. Floyd and Betty Wegner (right) enjoyed the breakfast, an annual fund raiser for the club.
Photos by Rachel Miscall
The Goodland Daily News

Proposals to help students

Lawmakers facing four education plans

By John Milburn

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — School readiness. A suitable education. Accountability. Three hot political phrases with many definitions.

Legislators were greeted this session with no fewer than four major proposals for financing, reforming or otherwise improving public education.

After wading through the details, the House Education Committee plans to meet this week to outline its vision.

That vision is likely to be heavy on accountability and to focus on kindergarten through third grade. What is likely to be missing is a tax increase for existing or expanded programs.

What isn't certain is what defines a suitable education for more than 460,000 students in Kansas.

"If you don't have a vision or a focus, it doesn't matter how much money you put in the formula," said House Speaker Kent Glasscock, R-Manhattan.

Glasscock named Education subcommittees to collect more information, get more players involved and create more enthusiasm for reform.

"If we can accomplish the first part, even assessing a vision and coming to any conclusion together what that vision contains, then we merely have to figure out how we're going to fund it," said Rep. Bob Tomlinson, R-Roland Park, chairman of the finance subcommittee.

A bill drafted by the accountability subcommittee calls for all state agencies with an interest in early childhood education to define school readiness and help create a test to determine a child's abilities upon entering kindergarten.

"We can do better than a fragmented system," Glasscock said.

The same bill would have the Department of Education set a goal that 95 percent of all third-graders be proficient in basic reading, writing and math skills. Local districts would test students and intervene when children aren't performing well enough, including by holding students back.

"When we wait until high school to try to remediate these children it's too late," said Rep. Kathe Lloyd, R-Clay Center, the subcommittee's chair-

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Officials to discuss farm leases on county land

The Sherman County commissioners plan to talk about farm leases on county land when they meet at 8 a.m. Tuesday in the courthouse.

The matter was on the agenda Wednesday, but Commissioners Chuck Frankenfeld and Kevin Rasure decided to have a public meeting. Recently the commissioners decided they wanted to look at changing the leases from cropshare to a cash basis.

At Wednesday's meeting, Frankenfeld said he thought the commission would want to go with a cash lease, but thought they needed to negotiate with farmers who work county land. Rasure

said he thought they should sit down and talk with the tenants.

Frankenfeld said if tenants can't make it to the public meeting, then the commissioners would send someone out to talk with them. County Clerk Janet Rumpel said except for one landowner whose contract came due on Dec. 31, the rest are due on Feb. 28.

County Attorney Bonnie Selby suggested that they should move everything to Dec. 31. She was to contact the tenants about the meeting and then get back with Rumpel so she could let everyone know what was going on.

The commission also is to discuss a

\$1,000 fee request from Trego County for juvenile detention at the center in WaKeeney.

They will also talk about renewing an agreement between Sherman and Sedgwick counties to make mortgage credit certificates available to county residents.

Daryl West, noxious weed supervisor, is to have the commissioners sign an annual report to be sent to the state weed department, which is due by Feb. 15. Each year, West fills out the report, which covers 10 sections of county land. He contacts the property owners and walks the sections to see how many

noxious weeds, such as musk thistle or bindweed, are on that land. The report shows an approximate amount of noxious weeds, plus the chemical disbursements he makes during the year.

Charles Krull, representative for Kansas Blue Cross-Blue Shield, will talk about renewing the county health insurance package.

Kelley Milliken, AFLAC representative, will meet with the commission to discuss a supplemental insurance plan for county employees. Milliken was to meet with the commission on their end of the month meeting on Wednesday, but had canceled.