

**weather report**

**33°**  
at noon

**Today**  
• Sunset, 5:12 p.m.  
**Tomorrow**  
• Sunrise, 6:48 a.m.  
• Sunset, 5:13 p.m.

**Middy Conditions**  
• Soil Temperature 36 degrees  
• Humidity 92 percent  
• Sky cloudy  
• Winds southwest 13 mph  
• Barometer 30.03 inches and falling  
• Record High 67° (1934)  
• Record Low -8° (1936)

**Last 24 Hours\***  
High 58°  
Low 31°  
Precipitation none

**Northwest Kansas Forecast**  
Tonight: Cloudy, 20 percent chance of rain, low 30s, south wind 15-25 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy, 50 percent chance of snow, high 40, low 15-20, south wind 15-25 mph.

**Extended Forecast**  
Thursday: chance of snow, high upper teens to lower 20s. Friday: dry, high 25-35, low 5-15. Saturday: dry, high 40s, low 10-20.  
(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local markets**

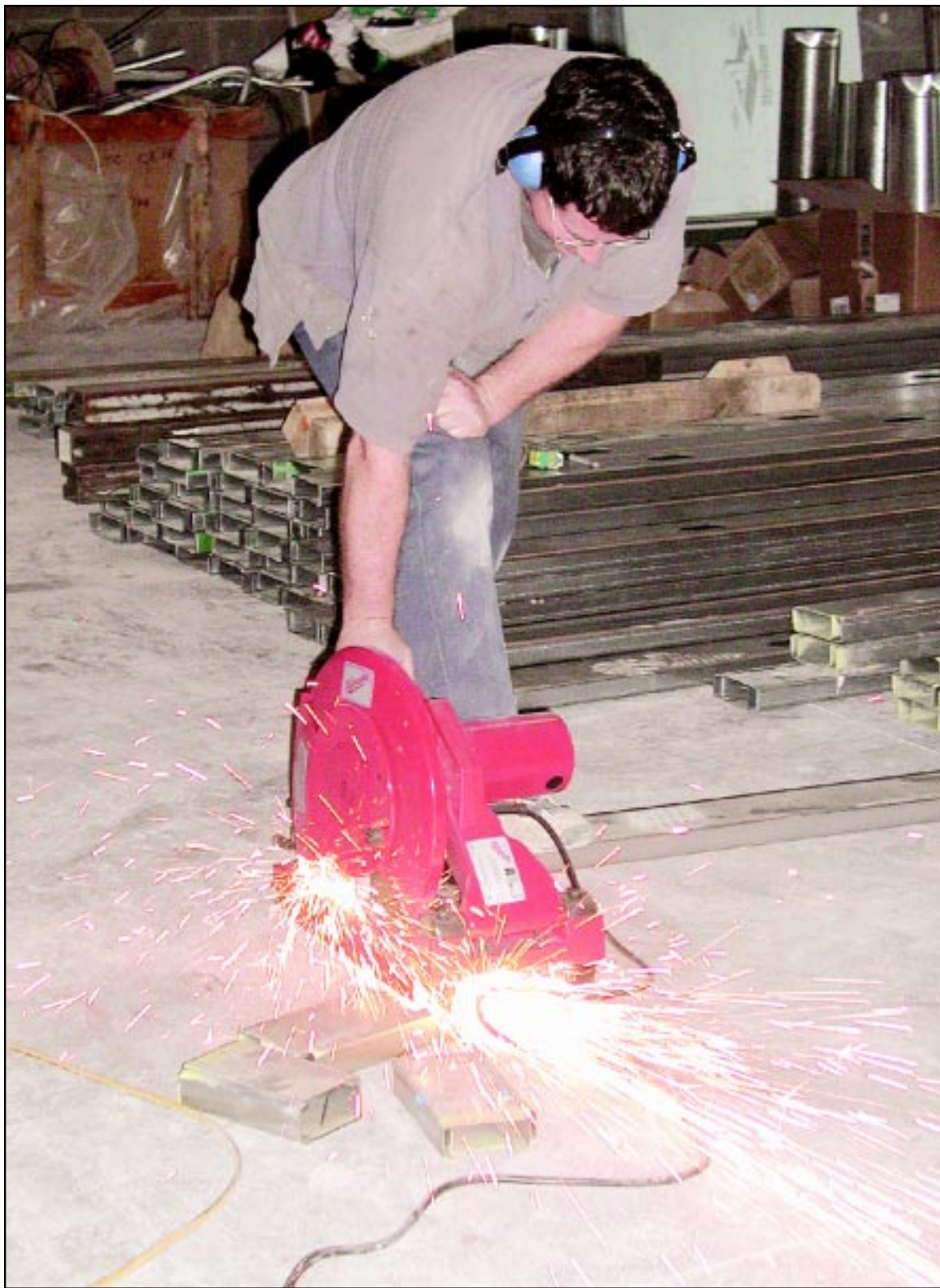
**Noon**  
Wheat — \$2.76 bushel  
Posted county price — \$2.67  
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢  
Corn — \$1.92 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.86  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 13¢  
Milo — \$3.09 hundredweight  
Soybeans — \$4.09 bushel  
Posted county price — \$3.95  
Loan deficiency payment — 95¢  
Millet — \$8.00 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$6.25 cwt.  
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.51  
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.**

**House holds lottery's fate**

TOPEKA — A bill to extend the Kansas Lottery's life faced a final House vote after members added amendments that the agency's top official said would hurt sales and cost the state money.  
Passage on final action would send the bill to the Senate.  
The legislation would continue the lottery's operations until July 1, 2008, six years past its current shutdown date under state law of July 1, 2002.  
As amended Monday, it would ban lottery advertisements on the Internet and credit-card purchases of lottery tickets and require that the video Keno games be played five minutes apart instead of the current four minutes.  
The House also added a proposal to dedicate \$4 million in lottery revenues to lower airfares from Kansas airports.



Construction work goes on at the student fitness center being built at the Northwest Kansas Technical School. John Dunlap with the Court Co. of Memphis cut pieces of metal Monday afternoon to be used as supports in the walls of racquetball courts his firm is installing. Photos by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

**Fitness center closer to done**

*Technical students to be working out on campus by spring*

By Janet Craft  
The Goodland Daily News

Students at Goodland's Northwest Kansas Technical School are getting closer to having a fitness center, with completion expected in April.

The facility, being built on the south end of the campus, will have two racquetball courts, a gym, a weight training and exercise room, an aerobics room, men's and women's restrooms with showers, a manager's office and a front lounge.

Director Larry Keirns said there will be a grand opening when the center is done.

"It's coming along nicely," he added.

Keirns said weather hasn't delayed work because the construction crew has enclosed the building.

Miller's Construction of Goodland is the general contractor for the



Efrain Rascon applied plaster to a ceiling in the fitness center.

project. Owner Mike Miller said his workers should wrap up the dry-walling this week and start painting

in the front half of the building next week.

Other employees were installing metal framework to attach metal that will line the walls of the gym above the concrete portion, he said. The painting on the gym is complete.

Miller said work on the floors in the gym and racquetball courts is to start on March 15. El Paso Flooring Co. of Colorado Springs will do the job.

Students of the technical school's electricity department are doing all the electrical work, Miller said.

The Court Co. of Memphis just started building the two racquetball courts on Monday, which should take about five days to complete.

Goodland Sheet Metal employees are working on the heating and air conditioning systems at this time.

Miller said most of the outside work is finished.

**Lottery defendant pleads guilty**

TOPEKA (AP) — A former Kansas Lottery employee has pleaded guilty to 80 felony counts, admitting that he altered computer records and tickets to steal prize money from the agency.

Richard Lee Knowlton, 56, of Topeka, agreed to repay the lottery nearly \$63,000 — the amount the attorney general's office says he stole over 18 months, ending in March 2000. He acknowledged his guilt and admitted that public statements he made about his case were false.

Knowlton's case was scheduled to go

to trial April 30 on 268 counts of theft, computer crime and official misconduct. Prosecutors agreed to drop 188 counts in exchange for his guilty pleas to 40 counts of computer crime, 39 counts of felony theft, and one count of official misconduct.

In Shawnee County District Court on Monday, Knowlton answered questions from District Judge Marla Luckert in a soft, barely audible voice. He remains free on bond pending sentencing, scheduled for March 5.

Because of Knowlton's lack of a

criminal record, he could be placed on probation, although Assistant Attorney General Stephen Maxwell said the maximum sentence could be 2 1/2 years in prison.

Before Monday's hearing, Knowlton had acknowledged altering some lottery tickets — but claimed he did so as part of an effort to bring flaws in the agency's security to the attention of his bosses. In his plea agreement he admitted that was a lie.

Knowlton and his attorney, Joel Jay of Topeka, both declined to comment.

**Storm piles 3 feet of snow on east**

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — Schools were closed today across parts of New England as the region dug out from a nor'easter that piled up as much as 3 feet of snow, stranding some highway travelers for hours and tying up air travel.

The mayor of Springfield, Mass., declared a state of emergency and asked businesses to stay closed until 4 p.m. today to allow weary crews to clear away more than 22 inches of snow.

The storm, occasionally punctuated by unusual winter thunder and light-

ning, spread heavy snow from eastern Pennsylvania — where Allentown got 17 inches — across Maine, where Bridgton collected 19.

The western Massachusetts town of Buckland got 29 inches and Putney, Vt., got 28.

**Bush selling new tax plan**

*Supporters have own agenda*

By Alan Fram  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republicans and lobbyists say they like President Bush's proposed tax cut, but they won't back down from plans to add their own priorities, even though Bush is promising to defend his proposal "mightily."

"There will be some changes as we go through the process," Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., told reporters today. "I don't have a problem with that, and I don't think the president does."

Beginning a week of selling his tax plan, Bush was visiting a Washington-area small business today to spotlight his argument that his proposal would spark greater economic growth.  
Bush plans to send Congress an outline of his package Thursday, and it is expected to mirror the \$1.6 trillion, 10-year tax reduction program he offered during his campaign for the White House. On Monday, Bush defended it against Democrats who would shrink the measure and Republicans who

would like to expand or otherwise alter it.

"I want the members of Congress and the American people to hear loud and clear: This is the right-sized plan, it is the right approach, and I'm going to defend it mightily," he said at a White House appearance.

Democrats called Bush's plan too expensive, too tilted toward the rich and too risky. They said it would deplete projected federal budget surpluses without leaving adequate funds for a proposed Medicare prescription drug benefit, defense increases and other proposals.

"Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past," Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., said, citing Reagan-era tax cuts that helped produce record federal deficits. "If we do, shame on all of us."

Bush's plan would collapse the five current income-tax rates into four, and lower them. They currently range between 15 percent and 39.6 percent; the new rates would be between 10 percent and 33 percent.

**City settles road, contract on court**

By Rachel Miscall  
The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland City Commission decided Monday to build a tennis court with the school district and sign two contracts with Sherman County to repair and maintain roads.

At the regular meeting, commissioners accepted a \$138,058 contract with Southwest Recreational Industries, a sports surfaces construction company in Wichita, to build the new court and resurface three old ones at Steever Park. City Manager Ron Pickman said the new court will be built east of the existing courts this summer.

Pickman estimated the project's total cost will be \$160,800, including a \$2,671 performance bond and \$20,000 for lights and dirt work, which the city has not taken bids on yet. He said the school board has agreed to pay half.

Pickman said city and school officials received four bids, with two coming in under \$200,000. The low bid of \$125,000 included an asphalt surface that would crack easily, he said, but Southwest offers a "post-tension" concrete surface that is crack resistant and won't heave.

The district will reserve the courts for practices and matches, Pickman said, noting that the city already allows the district to reserve city-owned courts. He said the new courts will be ready for play by the start of the school year.

After years of disputes with the county over a rough section of highway in east Goodland, commissioners signed a joint resolution saying Sherman County will repair the quarter-mile section of Old U.S. 24.

City and county officials have argued over who should repair the road, with the county saying the road is within city limits and the city saying the stretch is legally the county's responsibility.

After people who drive the road complained, officials decided to work something out and the county agreed to pay for repairs with revenues from a quarter-cent sales tax.

The resolution says the sales tax was passed to pay for construction on the part of Old U.S. 24 that runs through Sherman County. Originally, the county plans didn't include the section between Business U.S. 24 and County Road 21, but the resolution extends the tax, saying it will end when repairs are done.

The resolution doesn't say the county

will maintain the section in the future, but an "interlocal" agreement the commission agreed to sign does. Like the resolution, the agreement was written by Pickman and County Attorney Bonnie Selby. Pickman said it was drawn up to avoid future road disputes.

The agreement says the county will maintain Old U.S. 24, including sections inside the city limits — which means the east portion and a 700-foot stretch extending from K-27 west to the city line.

The county will also maintain Caldwell Street from the north edge of Renner Field north to County Road 67 and three other paved and gravel roads that cross the city-county line.

The city agreed to be responsible for construction projects, drainage ditches or culverts, alongside the quarter-mile section of Old U.S. 24, and to maintain Caldwell from 22nd Street north to the

north edge of Renner Field and the part of Eighth Street in Goodland.

The city also agreed to remove snow and mow grass along the portion of Caldwell the county is maintaining and Armory Road, plus mow grass along the west portion of Old U.S. 24 in Goodland.

In other business, the commission:  
• Approved buying a \$22,275 2001 Ford Crown Victoria from Dan Brenner Ford for the police department. Brenner's bid was about \$150 higher than the lowest bid, from Shawnee Mission Ford in Shawnee, but members said they want to buy locally when possible.

• Appointed Tony Kafka and Sharon Mann to three-year terms on the Cemetery Board and Terry Imel to a three-year term on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

• Renewed the city's employee health insurance policy with Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and decided to switch insurance plans, accepting Blue Crosses' preferred provider organization plan. A Blue Cross representative said under the new plan city employees can receive care from the same hospitals, but the city will save money.

• Switched the Monday, Feb. 19, meeting to Tuesday, Feb. 20 because Monday is President's Day and the city offices will be closed.

Members also moved a utility work session from Monday, Feb. 12, to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 20, because Pickman said he needed time to gather information.



Ron Pickman