

weather report

63°

at noon

Today

- Sunset, 5:52 p.m.

Tomorrow

- Sunrise, 5:58 a.m.
- Sunset, 5:53 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 43 degrees
- Humidity 21 percent
- Sky Mostly sunny
- Winds northeast 13 mph
- Barometer 29.58 inches and falling
- Record High 81° (1935)
- Record Low -3° (1958)

Last 24 Hours*

High	59°
Low	33°
Precipitation	none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Cloudy, chance of snow, low mid 20s, northwest winds 25-35 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy, chance of snow, high mid 30s, north winds 25-35 mph, low 15-20.

Extended Forecast

Friday: Dry, high 45-55, low 25-35. Saturday: Chance of rain or snow, high 35-45, low 20s. Sunday: Chance of snow, high 30s, low upper teens-lower 20s.

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

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.92 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.83
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Corn — \$1.97 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.92
Loan deficiency payment — 7¢
Milo — \$3.17 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.89 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.95
Loan deficiency payment — 95¢
Millet — \$6 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$6.45 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.16
Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$14 (new crop)
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and Prairie Pea and Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

NATO wants to stop war

MIRATOVAC, Yugoslavia — With NATO helicopters overhead, Yugoslav troops fanned out today into a buffer zone overrun by ethnic Albanian rebels, a deployment the Western alliance hopes will quell violence threatening to escalate into a new Balkan war.

Tensions mounted in the zone as the Yugoslav forces deployed, and fighting erupted in Macedonia.

Columns of trucks and armored personnel carriers with mounted machine-guns moved past fog-shrouded hills, as hundreds of elite troops entered the southern tip of the zone. Entering at Presevo, they moved south toward the villages of Norca, Trnava and Miratovac near the border with Macedonia.

The deployment brings the troops close to rebels who are their sworn enemies and an ethnic Albanian population that deeply resents them.

Some drivers upset by road closing

By Janet Craft
The Goodland Daily News

People from Sherman and Cheyenne counties gathered at Goodland High School on Tuesday night, some angry that the state is closing a highway between the counties for eight months, others curious about the major road project.

The state plans to close K-27 between Goodland and Cheyenne County starting Monday or Tuesday until Nov. 1, saying the project's scope leaves them no choice but to block off traffic.

Donna Binning, a construction engineer with the Kansas Department of



D. Binning



Andy Hall



B. Armstrong

Transportation in Atwood, said the meeting was scheduled because so many people had been calling her office with questions or complaints.

She said the meeting was held to give people information, not for the state to take suggestions on how the project could be changed. Ritchie Paving of Wichita was awarded the contract for the \$11 million project last week.

Binning, another transportation official and Ritchie's project manager, who is living in Goodland, attended the

meeting to answer questions and ease people's minds.

Binning said workers will remove the pretzel north of Goodland, cut down hills, widen the first bridge north of town, fill in low spots and replace a bridge. She said there will be signs posted in Colorado and south of Goodland to let motorists know the road is closed.

Andy Hall, project manager with Ritchie, said he will be living in Goodland and will have a home phone number and a cell phone number for people to call him.

He said he will visit with business

owners individually, adding that he wants to keep access open to businesses.

One man said he had lived in the mountains of Colorado and the state never closed the roads when doing construction or repairs.

Bob Armstrong, assistant district engineer for the state, said the state has closed roads in other parts of Kansas before and it worked well, though motorists were inconvenienced some.

The man, who lives northeast of Goodland, said he was concerned that

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Board decides to build science classrooms

District will pay up to \$800,000 for new classrooms

By Rachel Miscall
The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland School Board on Monday decided to remodel the high school's second floor, creating three new science classrooms and renovating another, but not to touch the vocal room, where members wanted to move two classes.

With the district's architect estimating the project could cost up to \$700,000, the board decided at the regular meeting to pay \$200,000 out of an account set up for building renovations and get money from a bank to pay for the rest.

Members were planning to build new classrooms in the vocal room to accommodate classes lost in the remodeling and move vocal students downstairs to the band room, but decided against it after hearing complaints at the meeting. Administrators had said the vocal room is only used a couple of times each day.

The parent of a vocal student told members that the vocal room is the only one designed for singing classes and practices and that a new, energetic music teacher will help the program grow. Randy Berls, who began teaching music in Goodland last year, said he's heard other complaints, but added that the board should do what they feel is best for the students.

Harvey Swager, the high school principal, said staff could rearrange classes to make room for math and special education students, whose classrooms will be transformed into science classrooms. The board asked Swager to put together different proposals.

Glen Strait, owner of Strait Associates in Colby, presented plans for the new science classrooms and remodeling work in the vocal room, which would be turned into two classrooms, a music office, practice area, faculty



The Goodland School Board on Tuesday held their regular meeting at West Elementary School, visiting different classrooms where students put on presentations. Jerrod Kaup (far left), Katelyn Coon (center) and

Samantha Gutierrez, first graders in Pat Thompson's class, were part of a group that sang songs about the Constitution.

Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

work area and green house.

Annette Fairbanks, whose sophomore daughter, Stephanie, is a vocal student, said though the vocal room is not used much it serves an important purpose, noting that art and music help create well-rounded students.

"We have a beautiful, wonderful

football field that is only used five times a year," she said. "No one would dream of taking that away."

Superintendent Marvin Selby said the district has to make room for the math and special education students somewhere, but no teachers want to give up their space.

After Selby and the board spent over an hour talking about solutions, the superintendent stopped discussion, saying members should concentrate on the new science rooms.

"As an old board member told me one time," he joked. "When the horse dies, dismount."

Before approving the remodeling project, the board gave Strait permission to replace the ceiling and light fixtures over most of the high school's second and first floors. Strait said the project already includes plumbing

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City and county talking trash

Officials discuss solid, yard waste disposal at joint meeting

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Daily News

With spring comes mowing and yard cleanup, and for the city and county the problem of where grass and other stuff ends up.

The Goodland City Commission and the Sherman County commissioners held a two-hour joint workshop on Monday evening to talk about handling tons of solid waste and yard waste and looking for recycling alternatives.

By the end of the joint meeting, held at the city offices, not much had been decided except that another meeting should be held. The group did decide that the county should look into reforming the Solid Waste Committee, seeking out members interested in recycling.

"We wanted to have a chance to discuss this before we face the annual problems that come up every springtime," City Manager Ron Pickman said.

This county plans to open a new landfill this fall, and City Commissioner Jim Mull asked if there will be changes when it opens. County Commissioner Chuck Frankenfeld said he didn't think so.

"The city will not see any differ-

ence," said Curt Way, superintendent of the county road and bridge department. "The citizens will not see any difference as the pickup and transfer station will continue to operate as they do now. The only real difference is that the big trailers will not travel all the way to Garden City."

"Is there less of the debris in our trucks since we went to the extra pickups and the yard waste dumpsters?" Mull asked.

"We still get in about two tons a week of wood, construction debris and other stuff in the trucks," said Margaret Russell, who operates the county transfer station. She said the special pickups for metal and the yard waste system have helped some, but there is still a lot of contamination in the system.

"Perhaps this is going to remain and will not improve unless we went back to single containers for each house," Mull said, "but the city cannot afford this. I think we are going to have to continue to separate the trash and pay for it. It costs the citizens to do this."

Contamination in the material being brought to the transfer station is the main problem, Way said.

"We can put most of this in the trucks that go down to Finney County because

their system can handle it," he said, "but the extra tonnage costs more."

There are possible problems with the new county landfill that some of the things which can be hauled to Finney County cannot be put in the new cell southwest of Goodland. Way said there is a possibility they will have to do more separating of things that go into the new landfill based on the permit requirements from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

"Then comes the compost," he said. "It is worthless if contaminated, and after we gave away several tons of this as fertilizer last year many people said they can't use it because of all the contamination."

The discussion of the compost and yard waste brought up the problem with the city yard waste dumpsters, which are being used by many citizens as convenient places to dump all manner of trash including old oil filters, tree stumps, twine and even engine parts.

The yellow dumpsters were an attempt by the city to help keep grass clippings, leaves and very small branches out of the regular trash containers. However, there has been a constant

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Small towns struggle as populations dwindle

UTICA, Kan. — When Randall and Judy Norton decided to come back to work on the family farm with his father, they knew it would not be easy making a living in this sparsely populated western Kansas community.

Both had graduated with veterinary degrees and built their own clinic on the outskirts of Utica in 1995. He juggles work at the farm and clinic. She mostly handles the vet clinic. The couple, both 37, hoped to beat the census statistics showing a dwindling, aging population in western Kansas.

"There will always be cattle out in this part of the country," she said. "Maybe fewer farmers, but the same number of cattle."

Many farmers simply sold out to neighboring farmers. Their abandoned farmsteads dot the vast prairie landscape broken only by an occasional farmhouse or small community. Meanwhile, the towns that depended on them have shriveled.

Ness County, with a 14.4 percent decline in population since 1990, ranked third highest among the 57

counties which lost population — behind only Graham County with a 16.9 percent decline and Comanche, which dropped 15 percent.

Ness County lost 579 residents, dropping in population from 4,033 in 1990 to 3,454 in the 2000 census.

The Nortons are living in the house his grandfather built in the early 1900s. Their 15-year-old son, James, is a freshman at the local high school but will have to go to a neighboring community when the school closes its doors for good this spring.

Ask them how they are doing, and Judy Norton will tell you things are going "pretty good" right now.

"We are paying the bills anyway," she said. "I don't make what I would make in Kansas City, but the cost of living is a lot less too."

Bonnie Holm can trace her family roots back five generations to her great-great-grandmother. Her daughter, Shanda, graduated from the local high school last fall. But her three younger children will not have that chance.

This is the last year the Utica high school will be open.