

weather report

55°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 5:59 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:47 a.m.
• Sunset, 6:00 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 46 degrees
• Humidity 59 percent
• Sky mostly sunny
• Winds east 8 mph
• Barometer 30.01 inches and steady
• Record High 80° (1988)
• Record Low 2° (1983)

Last 24 Hours*

High 71°
Low 36°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, 20 percent chance of showers, low 35-40, light and variable wind. Tomorrow: Cloudy, 40 percent chance of showers, high 55-60, low mid 30s, east wind 5-15 mph.

Extended Forecast

Friday and Saturday: chance of rain, high 50-55, low 30-35. Sunday: dry, high 60-65, low 30-35.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

Program moves forward

County appoints recycling committee

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

A countywide recycling program took a step toward reality Tuesday when the Sherman County Commissioners appointed a City/County Solid Waste and Recycling Committee.

Each commissioner put forth names at the regular meeting, and three who had been on the original committee agreed to continue serving. Included in the membership are Ed Wolak, city public works director, and Curt Way, county road and bridge supervisor.

The commissioners suggested the new committee meet with both the city and county commissions to discuss objectives.

Members of the committee are old members Jeff Deeds, Gary Newell and Scott Showalter and newcomers Sandy Rogers, Fred Wedel, Tom Betz, Richard Hawks and Dave Daniels.

A target date for the joint meeting is Monday, April 9, in the city commission room.

At the end of the main agenda of Tuesday's meeting the commissioners went into closed session to discuss employee evaluations.

Following the 15-minute session, Commission Chairman Chuck Frankenfeld made a motion to grant an additional two percent base salary raise to all department heads retroactive to January 1. This is in addition to the three percent they already received.

The commission has discussed employee evaluations and salary increases with department heads over the past few weeks. There was no discussion of department head evaluations.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitch Tiede, and with Commissioner Kevin Rasure voting in favor it passed unanimously.

William McKnight, building maintenance, met with the commissioners about having weeds at the county fairgrounds sprayed. He had one bid from Dean Graber for \$1,127, which the commissioners approved.

Commissioner Tiede asked if McKnight asked Daryl West, head of the county noxious weed office, about him doing the spraying. McKnight said he had been told that it would be difficult to add it to West's already busy spraying schedule.

Steve Duell, fairboard chairman, met

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Airborne



Eighth grader Tyson Ruddell jumped over a stack of skateboards after he roller bladed down a wooden ramp Monday afternoon at Grant Junior High School.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Dad says policy is unfair

Parent complains about punishment

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

Grant Deines, father of a high school sophomore, told the Goodland School Board Monday that administrators plan to unfairly punish his daughter for skipping class when his wife had called in to excuse her.

He said the district's policy of judging excused absences — even when a parent has given permission for a student to miss class — is disrespectful and undermines parents' authority.

District administrators said the policy is designed to stop parents from permitting their children to miss school without good reason and to keep students safe. Board members told Deines they appreciated hearing from him, but said they were going to stand behind the administrators' decision.

Deines, father of Jenna Deines, said at the regular meeting that his wife, Debra, called the high school on Friday, March 9 to excuse their daughter so she could catch a ride to the state basketball tournament in Salina.

Deines said his daughter could not find a ride and spent the rest of the school day hanging out with friends, whose parents had not excused them from school, on Main Street.

He said Harvey Swager, high school principal, told him later the group, including his daughter, would be punished for skipping school by serving in-

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local markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.71 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.66
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Corn — \$1.87 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.81
Loan deficiency payment — 18¢
Milo — \$2.99 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.87 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.82
Loan deficiency payment — \$1.08
Millett — \$6.00 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$6.50 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.18
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.

Power plants back online

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—California power regulators hoped to get through today without another round of rolling blackouts as conservation trimmed demand and power plants that had been down for repairs went back online.

A low-level Stage 1 alert was called around 6 a.m. Wednesday as power reserves approached 7 percent.

A Stage 2 alert was likely during the early evening when people return home from work and draw down reserves to below 5 percent, said Jim Detmers, vice president of the Independent System Operator, which oversees most of the state's power grid.

About a half-million customers were hit by Tuesday's blackouts, which snarled traffic and plunged schools and businesses into darkness from San Diego to the Oregon state line.

Banquet brings farmers, city people together

Sherman County farmers and business people will gather at the Goodland Elks Lodge at 6:30 p.m. Thursday for the annual farm-city banquet sponsored by the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce.

The focus of this year's program is the accomplishments of youth in the community and the evening will open

with a flag ceremony presented by Lee, Bart and Adam McCoy, three brothers recently honored as Eagle Scouts. Andra Townsend, a high school senior, will sing the opening number.

Steve West of Western State Bank, will welcome people and Pastor Carol More-Ramey will give the invocation. Marti Melia of KKCI-KLOE-

KWGB, will be the master of ceremonies and invite everyone to enjoy the steak dinner. Dinner music will be provided by Michael Smith, a sixth grader, on the piano.

Following dinner Jason Showalter, a high school senior, will read his Voice of Democracy essay which earned him a trip to Washington, D.C.

The Goodland High School Expressos under the direction of Randy Berls will present a variety of musical selections, including several solos.

The final event of the evening will be the presentation of the Agriculture/Agri-business Person of the Year by School Board President Dick Short., who was the winner last year.

Sherman County man receives probation for incest

A Sherman County man was found guilty last week of aggravated incest and received a sentence of 36 months supervised probation.

Patrick Tagtmeyer, 37, was sentenced March 12 in Sherman County

District Court for an amended charge of aggravated incest.

At his sentencing hearing on March 12, Tagtmeyer first received a sentence of 41 months in prison, but that was suspended and he instead received 36

months post-release supervision.

He is required to complete a sex offender treatment program and pay attorney's fees, court costs and medical and counseling bills for the victim.

In June, Tagtmeyer was arrested and

charged with the rape of his 13-year-old daughter in late May. In September, the charge was amended to aggravated incest to which Tagtmeyer pled no contest. He had been out on bond at the time of the sentencing.

Group forms to improve city

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

Thirty people who make up the Pioneer Park Committee met at Ray's Cafe early Tuesday morning, determined to bring something beautiful out of ugliness.

The ugliness is vacant, overgrown land near the old wye, just north of the Cherry Street and Business U.S. 24 junction. A place committee members called, "a mucky mess," and said attracts mosquitoes and frogs.

The beautiful is a green, tree-lined park — complete with two ponds, a water fountain, walking trail, bridge and picnic area — that the city can't afford to build but many residents want.

The committee, which met for the first time this week, plans to raise \$301,000 to replace the mucky mess with the park by the fall of 2002.

Businesses, families and organizations have already committed to buying nearly \$100,000 of the park's features, though the group, made up of farmers, business owners, six high school students and others, can't legally accept donations yet.

The committee split into subgroups at the meeting, with different members agreeing to handle the financial, promotional and legal aspects. They also listened to a city official tell how the park got started, looked at the park's design and talked about how to muster up more support.

Some members said the community

won't support the project unless local businesses and contractors are given a fair shot at providing park features and doing the construction work.

"It's going to be hard for us to say this is a good thing," said Joni Guyer, owner of Cobblestone Garden Center, "if it's not staying local. You're going to be hitting a brick wall with the locals."

Darin Neufeld, an engineer with Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates who was hired by the city to design the park, said local businesses can put in bids, but that doesn't guarantee the contractor will buy their product or service. He said the state won't allow contractors to only accept bids from certain businesses.

City Manager Ron Pickman said Pioneer Park began as a walking trail and a pond to hold storm water runoff, but grew as people suggested features. As trees, benches, a park pavilion and other features were added, he said, the original price tripled to more than \$600,000.

The park, Pickman told the group, is part of the city's plan to take out the old wye and build a new road connecting Cherry Street and Business U.S. 24 — creating a new entrance to Goodland. The state agreed to chip in for both projects, he said, adding that the Cherry Street section will be built this summer, but the city can't afford the entire park, planned for west of the new road.

The initial cost was \$200,000. Pickman said, but now the park's price tag is \$601,000. He said the state agreed to

pitch in another \$70,000, but even with a total of \$210,000 in state money, the city can only cover half of the cost.

Pickman said when Rev. Gene Tromble, a retired Methodist pastor, came to him with the idea of forming a fundraising group, he told him to go for it.

"If we take pride in it," Pickman said, "if we take some ownership, we can have something we can be proud of."

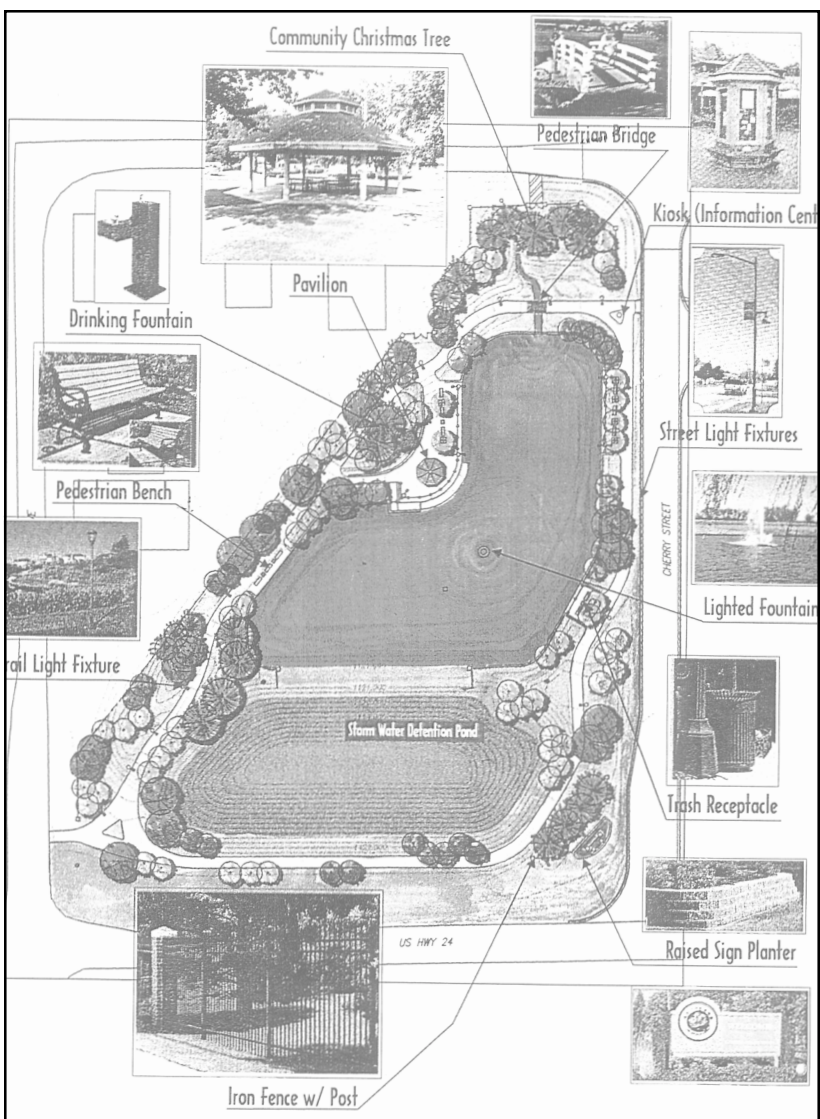
Rev. Tromble, whose family has agreed to try to raise \$38,000 for the park, said the group needs to finish some legal business and make a presentation to the city commission before it can start accepting donations. But, he said, those who do donate money in the future will receive a certificate.

The city is also applying for a state tourism grant, Pickman said, noting that chances are slim as many groups compete for the grant and another group in Goodland is seeking it.

Rev. Tromble said he is concerned because the park plans don't include a restroom. Pickman said a restroom could be added, but noted there will be facilities close by.

He said the city is now building a new swimming pool at Steever Park, about a block north of the old wye; a giant Van Gogh painting will go up across from the park site this spring and organizers plan to build tourist facilities; and there's been talk of a museum being built near the park.

Pickman said other features can be added in the future.



Pictured is the design of the Pioneer Park a group wants to raise money to build in Goodland. The \$600,000 park would include two ponds, a lighted fountain, a waterfall, bridge, ice skating rink, walking trail, picnic shelter, trees and benches.