

weather report

84°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 7:27 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:03 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:28 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 53 degrees

• Humidity 11 percent

• Sky partly cloudy

• Winds northwest 30-37 mph

• Barometer 29.60 inches

and falling

• Record High 87° (1987)

• Record Low 18° (1953)

Last 24 Hours*

High 81°

Low 33°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy, low 45, northwest wind 10-20 mph. Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, 30 percent chance of thunderstorms, high 75, low 40, light wind.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: high 70s, low 40. Sunday: thunderstorms likely, high 65-75, low 40s. Monday: chance of rain, high 55-65, low 35-40.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.81 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.73

Loan deficiency payment — 0¢

Corn — \$1.90 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.82

Loan deficiency payment — 17¢

Milo — \$3.03 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$3.76 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.72

Loan deficiency payment — \$1.18

Millet — \$6.00 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$6.45 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.08

Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$14 (new crop)

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, 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.

Officials can't agree on plane

BEIJING — U.S. and Chinese negotiators ended two days of talks with no sign of agreement today on the return of an American spy plane or Beijing's demand to end surveillance flights near its coast.

The chief U.S. negotiator described the second day of talks today as productive but neither side would give details. The Americans had threatened to break off the meeting Wednesday, saying Chinese negotiators wouldn't seriously discuss the return of the U.S. plane.

"The sides have agreed to keep in touch, and future talks will be held at a time and place to be determined through diplomatic channels," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue told reporters. The U.S. Embassy refused to say whether the talks were finished, or give other details.

Pilot plans visit to hometown

By Rachel Miscal

The Goodland Daily News

Jeff Vignery, the Navy pilot held in China for 11 days this month after a military plane accident, plans to visit Goodland sometime in the next two weeks, with friends and community leaders planning a big homecoming celebration.

Vignery, a lieutenant junior grade who was detained on Hainan Island with 23 other crew members of a Navy spy plane after it collided with a Chinese fighter jet, has told friends that he and his wife Julie plan to travel from the Naval Air Station in Whidbey Island, Wash., to Goodland before the end of



Standoff U.S.-China Goodland prepares homecoming for pilot Jeff Vignery.



the month.

A group planning the ceremony wants to present Jeff, who has parents, Ron and Judi, and other family living here, with a key to the city. They want to invite Gov. Bill Graves and lawmakers

who represent this area, have the high school band and choir perform and have people who are close to the 27-year-old speak. They hope to hang yellow ribbons and welcome-home banners and signs around town and along

the highway and release navy blue and yellow balloons at the ceremony.

The homecoming planners met twice this week, with Dan Hayden, Jeff's classmate and friend, saying Wednesday that he could be home next weekend, though there are no concrete plans. Hayden said the pilot, who has been bombarded with calls from reporters since he returned Saturday, wants a short ceremony and doesn't want to give any more interviews.

"He wants to get back to a normal life," he said.

Ron Harding, executive director of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce, said, though, that Jeff may never

get his old life back.

"That's gone," Harding said. "He's a hero now."

The group's first two meetings have basically been brain-storming sessions, with people throwing out ideas. The planners have scheduled another meeting for Monday.

The group has talked about holding the ceremony at Gulick Park, behind the courthouse at Eighth and Caldwell, in the afternoon and setting up a platform with a sound speaker and a limited number of chairs. They are planning to ask Dick Short, the school board

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Jeremy Stefan, driving Goodland High School's electric car (right), maneuvered the race course at Hays on April 5 to take first place in the novice class after completing 74 laps. Stephan and five other high school students built the car. Photos by Dennis Friedrichs

Students build winning electric car

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

Five Goodland High School students built an electric car and then raced it this month in Hays, taking first place in their division.

Brandon Nemecek, Tim Franklin, Jeremy Stefan, Kyle Whisler and Bryan Mai entered the car they built in the Kansas ElectroRally Race on April 5. Stefan was picked to drive.

Their teacher, Dennis Friedrichs, said he came up with the idea for the project after attending a technology workshop at Fort Hays State University in October.

Franklin, Mai, Stefan and Whisler went to the Hays race, but Nemecek was sick. Whisler, Franklin and Stefan are seniors and Mai and Nemecek are juniors.

The car took first place in the novice category after completing 74 laps. This was the third year for the rally.

As the students built the car to match their plans, they said, they found out that it was harder than it seemed. They had to search for batteries that would meet the specifications and had problems finding the right gear sprockets to match their ratios.

Friedrichs said this is the first time any of his students have done something like this. They started the project around the end of November, going out and lining up sponsors to help pay for the car. They had raised about \$1,800 with \$500 the biggest dona-



Tim Franklin, Jeremy Stefan, Kyle Whisler and Bryan Mai (left to right) posed April 5 in Hays by the electric car which they built during a Visual Communications class at Goodland High School.

tion.

"I was pleased with their efforts," Friedrichs said, "going out and getting sponsors and their work on it."

The boys are students in Friedrichs' Visual Communications III and IV classes, which are technical classes that deal with architectural and mechanical drafting, graphic arts and problem solving. He said they drew

the design and built the car themselves.

Friedrichs said he is always looking for things to spark some interest in his students.

"When you do the same things over and over," he said, "they lose interest."

He said the team worked for three days during their spring break to get the car ready for the Hays race.

Interest-rate cut could save markets from slump

NEW YORK (AP) — The Federal Reserve's unexpected interest-rate cut gave Wall Street a triple-digit rally and one of its strongest performances this year. But the real news may be that the bulls are re-emerging, optimists say.

A day after the Dow Jones industrial average had its third-biggest point gain ever, investors caught their breath and locked in some profits. The Dow was

off 29 points to 10,586 in late morning trading today, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq composite index was up 32 points to 2,112, its third straight day of gains.

Wednesday's performance has a growing number of analysts believing the worst may be over for the markets.

"While we may see some pullback because this has been such a big day, I

do think the trend is upward from here," said Matt Brown, head of equity management at Wilmington Trust. "There's a strong correlation between aggressive Fed action and improved stock market performance."

The optimism comes despite expectations that corporate earnings will continue to be weak for months and a Fed statement Wednesday indicating it is

quite concerned about the economy.

Analysts say stocks will definitely slide again, but what's changed is their confidence. They're more convinced than ever that the stock market is starting to improve.

The Fed said it was cutting rates for the fourth time this year because of "rising uncertainty about the business outlook," among other concerns.

She said staff has suggested the district pay for tuition and traveling expenses, bring classes to Goodland or offer a \$2,000 pay raise for teachers who earn a master's.

"There has to be some reward to entice people," she said.

The board wants to add an item saying the district can offer prospective teachers a \$2,000 signing bonus, hoping to find qualified staff for hard-to-fill spots in math, science, special education and music. With a nationwide teacher shortage, Selby said, Goodland schools are competing with other districts for those spots.

Kathy Russell, head of the board's negotiating team, said the district would decide when to give a bonus — not every new teacher would be offered one — and it could be used for a down

See CONTRACT, Page 3

Teams negotiate contracts

Annual talks focus on pay, safe schools

By Rachel Miscal

The Goodland Daily News

Negotiating teams for the Goodland School Board and teachers' union met once last week and again Tuesday, with each side proposing items for the 2001-2002 agreement, but the big issue — pay — waits on the state Legislature.

Talk has centered around annual salary increases, signing bonuses for new staff, keeping schools safe and problems with the scheduling of required technology classes for teachers.

Negotiators have found common ground on minor issues, including accumulation of sick, personal and bereavement leave and the number of years of experience a new teacher will be paid for, but there are more important topics left on the plate.

The sides haven't touched salaries or raises, waiting for the Kansas Legislature to decide on a school finance package. The amount of state money the Goodland district will get depends on the education bill lawmakers settle on, but school officials say no matter what, the district will lose money because of its declining enrollment.

The four-member school board team has proposed removing one step from the district's salary scale, freezing pay for staff at that level and encouraging teachers to get master's degrees to increase their pay.

Depending on years of experience, staff at the top level — which teachers with a bachelor's degree reach when they complete 45 credit hours — are paid between \$27,600 and \$37,980 a year.

Superintendent Marvin Selby, a member of the board's team, said dropping the step will force teachers to work towards the next level, which is a master's degree. That way, he said, staff will take classes that will help them in the classroom.

Speaking for teachers, Mary Porterfield, National Education Association of Goodland president and head of the teachers' five-person team, said getting a master's is expensive and inconvenient — considering the nearest university is more than two hours away — and doesn't guarantee a better teacher.

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