

**weather
report**

86°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 7:37 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:47 a.m.
• Sunset, 7:40 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 64 degrees
• Humidity 13 percent
• Sky partly cloudy
• Winds calm
• Barometer 29.75 inches and falling

• Record High 94° (1959)
• Record Low 21° (1967)

Last 24 Hours*

High 80°
Low 43°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, 30 percent chance of thunderstorms, low 40-45, northeast wind 15-25 mph. Tomorrow: Cloudy, 50 percent chance of rain, high mid 50s, low 35-40, northeast wind 10-20 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday and Friday: chance of rain, high 50, low 40. Saturday: chance of thunderstorms, high 60, low 40s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local
markets**

Noon

New wheat — \$2.95 bushel
Current wheat — \$3.95 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.86
Corn — \$1.84 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.70
Loan deficiency payment — 29¢
Milo — \$2.93 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$3.84 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.74
Loan deficiency payment — \$1.16
Millet — \$6.00 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil new crop — \$5.90 cwt.
Oil current crop — \$6.60 cwt.
Loan deficiency prmt. — \$3.21
Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$14 (new crop)
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigo 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.

Bush to cut nuclear arms

WASHINGTON — President Bush intends to make deep reductions in U.S. nuclear weapons, perhaps without negotiating reciprocal cuts by Russia, officials say.

The administration sees these reductions as one element of a new national security strategy that includes a global missile defense.

Bush will spell out his vision for security in a speech today at the National Defense University — eight months since President Clinton used the same venue to say that the technologies needed for a shield against ballistic missiles were not mature enough to commit to building one.

Just hours before his speech, Bush called Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss disarmament and nuclear weapons.

Bush has said he wants to not only accelerate work on missile defenses but also broaden it.

Setbacks delay placing big painting

Government, weather, death slow progress

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

People working to put a gigantic replica of a Van Gogh sunflower painting on an 80-foot steel easel in Goodland have been forced to push back the date the tourist attraction will go up.

When organizers started planning the project in March 2000, they thought the huge replica — painted by Canadian artist Cameron Cross — could be towering over Goodland before the end of the year.

But that was before Cross had trouble getting a work visa, a four-month delay; before cold, snowy weather slowed progress on the painting, a one-month delay; and before winter made it impossible to mount the sculpture, at least a three-month delay.

Planners thought they were on the road last week as a contractor from

Winona agreed to start work to place the painting — but they ran into the latest setback: The 69-year-old contractor died on Wednesday.

Darin Neufeld, an engineer working to put up the attraction north of the Cherry Street-Business U.S. 24 junction, said he heard the news Thursday and started looking for a replacement Friday. He said Monday that he would check all possibilities before making a decision.

Neufeld, with Evans, Bierly, Hutchinson and Associates, said Bob Bartell, owner of Bartell Drilling and Machine Works, was going to drill three 26-foot deep holes on the site this week. Bartell died at the Logan County Hospital in Oakley.

The plan was to fill the holes with concrete the same day, Neufeld said, and in a month — the time it takes for

the cement to cure — the giant painting could be lifted into place.

He said Ric Schlosser, a Goodland man who is related to the owner of Schlosser Concrete, has agreed to pour the concrete.

Neufeld said once a 100-foot crane lifts the attraction into place, the easel's three legs, which will have 35 feet between them, will be attached to the cement-with 8 1/2-inch diameter bolts.

After the concrete is poured, he said, Gary Farris, owner of Farris Manufacturing, which built the 30,000-pound steel frame and easel, will go to work assembling the attraction.

The painting will link Goodland to Altona, Alberta, in Canada, and Emerald, Australia, where Cross has erected two other giant replicas of paintings in



Canadian artist Cameron Cross worked on the giant replica of a Van Gogh piece at the fairgrounds in November. Problems have delayed plans to hoist the attraction this spring. Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

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The jungle library



Librarian Marcia Smith helped third graders at Central School Thursday match up words with their meanings in the library. Third- and fourth-graders have met their goal of reading 2,200 books by May 1, earning them a banana split party which is to take place Friday, May 18. To

celebrate the event, Karen Colip, Central's library technician, decorated the library in a jungle theme with palm trees, vines, stuffed monkeys, tigers and at least one parrot. She kept track of the books by hanging paper bananas on a paper tree. Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Leader meets officials

Hospital wants help applying for credits

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

The Sherman County commissioners met Jay Jolly, new administrator of Goodland Regional Medical Center, during Monday's meeting.

Jolly came with Brenda McCants, director of patient services, and Dale Shields, director of human resources, to seek county support for an application for tax credits to help with the hospital's capital campaign, Commitment to Excellence.

Shields told commissioners that the capital campaign is a joint program of the Northwest Kansas Hospital Foundation and the medical center to raise \$1 million for equipment and to establish an endowment for future needs and recruiting. He said there is a challenge grant of \$500,000 which would bring the total goal to \$1.5 million.

The application to the state Department of Commerce and Housing would allow the hospital to issue tax credits for up to \$250,000 in contributions and pledges.

Shields said the credits would be available for anyone contributing or pledging \$250 or more and could be worth up to 70 percent, depending on the amount and details of the contribution.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure mentioned that the program has been used by the Goodland Activity Center and the homeowned carnival group, Sherman County Community Services. The credits don't cost the county anything.

"Hospitals have been hit hard because of the recent budget cuts and reductions in reimbursement," McCants said. "This will enhance what we are already doing. It is a competitive program, so there is no guarantee we will get these. There is no financial commitment on the county's part."

The commissioners unanimously approved signing the letter.

Jolly thanked the commissioners, and said he was happy to be in Goodland and looked forward to working with the people. Today is his first official day on the job.

While the state Legislature continues to grapple with a bill dealing with wireless 911 service, Mary Messamore, head of Sherman County dispatch and emergency management, asked the commissioners to spend \$2,386 to update the software for the E911 system to allow it to handle the additional information which will come with the wireless calls.

Messamore said the upgrade would allow the system to read the longitude and latitude from the incoming calls. She said this is part of Project Locate, a nationwide program to upgrade 911 systems to handle more information

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Pilot, wife and parents visit planning session

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

Lt. j.g. Jeff Vignery, the U.S. Navy pilot who was held in China for 11 days; his wife, Julie; and his parents, Ron and Judi Vignery, dropped in on the welcome-home committee briefly Monday.

The committee met at the Goodland Chamber of Commerce office to finish plans for the ceremony for Vignery, which will begin at 1:30 p.m. Saturday in the Max Jones Fieldhouse.

The Vignerys told the group Jeff is to speak Thursday morning at the National Day of Prayer in Suffolk, Va.

Ron said his son was told by organizers of the national event that they would pay his way, but Jeff told them he wouldn't go without Julie, so the organizers said they would pay her way, too.

Ron said Jeff is to be promoted to lieutenant next month, but that it wasn't because of the China incident; it was already in the works before that.

He said Jeff has been in the Navy for four years and hadn't seen an admiral in all that time, but in the last two weeks,



Standoff U.S.-China Hero returns.



has shaken hands with seven and received their coins from them.

While discussing the details of the celebration, Vignery said he thought his son should talk to the press, and they discussed when and where that should be done.

Judi Vignery said kids from Goodland schools want to see Jeff and get his autograph. She said she thought it was important for Jeff to do this. The committee discussed the idea, but didn't come to a definite decision.

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran notified the committee that he will be at Saturday's celebration. He said he is kicking off a 66-county tour and will be in Colby until noon Saturday before coming to

Goodland in the afternoon. It's not known if Moran will speak.

Dale Shields, human resource director at the Goodland Regional Medical Center, will be master of ceremonies. The Goodland Ambassadors are to greet people and hand out yellow ribbons and miniature American flags.

Don Newell, sales manager at KBSL-TV, said the satellite trucks are to be parked on the south side of the fieldhouse.

It was decided that Vignery's family will be seated on chairs on the gymnasium floor, with the stage on the west end.

The committee plans to decorate the fieldhouse with banners made by

Goodland students and yellow and blue balloons.

Ribbons were put out around Goodland last weekend by Cara Daise and Dan Hayden and 4-H citizenship project members Darrick and Kelsi Ihrig, Jordan Riebel and Darin Richardson.

Classes from Central, West and North elementary schools have made banners which are to be put up at the fieldhouse. Posters made by school children are to be put in yards along Arcade.

Ron Vignery said Jeff had been asked by his commanding officer to have a table at Saturday's event to take orders for caps and T-shirts with the logo of the World Watchers VQ-1, Jeff's squadron, on them. The money would go to a fund to be used by enlisted people in the unit who might need the money for travel or other emergencies.

Ron said he didn't know if people would want to buy them. Several of those at the meeting thought people would and someone was going to check into finding volunteers to handle it.

Budget talks grind on; conflict with Graves continues

By John Hanna

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Legislators are inching toward agreement on a plan for balancing revenue and spending in the new state budget, but some want more flexibility from Gov. Bill Graves.

House and Senate negotiators struggled Monday to close a \$206 million gap between expected revenues and approved spending for the state's 2002 fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Graves has proposed \$117.6 million in tax increases and given legislators a

list of \$12.1 million in reductions he would accept in appropriations already approved for the new fiscal year.

After three days of meetings, the negotiators still didn't have a plan — or any definitive agreements on major issues. Still, they insisted all of the talk-

ing they have done has moved them closer.

"I think the pieces are ready to fall into place," said Sen. David Adkins, R-Leawood.

Graves softened his rhetoric, praising negotiators for "their hard work."