

Sign of spring



You know spring is near when you start to see butterflies floating around in the sunshine. This one, however, seems to prefer fluorescent lights, and spent an afternoon last week fluttering around *The Goodland Daily News* office.

Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Scramble for teachers is on

HUTCHINSON (AP) — Companies may be cutting jobs nationwide, but one career seems stable these days in Kansas — that of a teacher.

Graduates of education schools this spring are a hot commodity as district administrators scramble to fill vacancies.

This year's new crop of educa-

tors can afford to be choosy, said Rick Johnson, teacher placement officer at Bethany College in Lindsborg.

Graduates can entertain offers from numerous Kansas schools or consider the signing bonuses and higher salaries dangled by some out-of-state districts, he said.

Next year's budget could prove difficult

BUDGET, from Page 1

worse next year," said Senate Ways and Means Chairman Steve Morris, R-Hugoton. "The governor's going to be put in a box when he presents his budget next year."

Leaders had trouble focusing on the budget Monday afternoon because of an impasse on school finance. But negotiators agreed on those issues Monday evening and both chambers approved the compromise, clearing the way for adjournment.

A 1-cent increase in the tax on gasoline and diesel fuel is scheduled for July 2003 to help finance a transporta-

tion plan. With state revenues trailing expectations now, budget negotiators proposed putting it into effect this July 1, to raise \$16.5 million in the coming fiscal year.

Proponents called the proposal, approved by the Senate last week, a "tax accelerator." They were outnumbered by conservative Republicans and other opponents who said it was simply a tax increase and helped defeat it in two House votes on Saturday.

Motorists already will see a 1-cent increase July 1 in the state's 20-cent tax on gasoline and 22-cent tax on diesel fuel. That was part of the comprehensive transportation plan, adopted in

1999, that included rises of 2 cents per gallon that year, 1 cent this July and 1 cent in July 2003.

At 13 days, this year's "wrap-up" session was the longest ever, surpassing 1991's mark of 12 days. The 1991 session was longer in calendar days, at 103, and the 1990 and 1992 sessions each lasted 100 days.

The budget plan, with the motor fuels tax proposal, anticipated leaving money in the state treasury in fiscal 2002 and carrying it over for the fiscal 2003 budget.

Budget negotiators wanted to make sure the outlines of the 2003 budget were reasonable. They

wanted to provide a modest pay raise for state employees and keep commitments made in 1999 to provide extra money to a newly reorganized higher education system and finance a 10-year \$13.9 billion transportation program.

Legislative leaders blamed the state's budget problems for this year's lengthy "wrap-up session," the longest ever.

On the Net: Budget plan is HB 2283; motor fuels tax bill, HB 2507.

Bills and resolutions: <http://www.ink.org/public/legislative/fulltext.cgi>

City agrees to pay for extras at new pool

CITY, from Page 1

replace Larry Keirns as president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College, and their families to town.

In two change orders for the Steever Water Park, the commissioners approved paying Rhoads Construction an additional \$935 for materials, concrete and labor to widen the sidewalk along the east side of the main pool and for material and labor to install a chain link fence around the slide equipment pit in the pool's mechanical room.

They also agreed to pay Rhoads an additional \$15,306. The amount included a different steel overhead sectional door for \$950, a vinyl soffit for the breezeway at \$783 and submersible sewage ejector pumps which cost \$13,573.

City Manager Ron Pickman said Charlotte Linsner, who was to give a presentation on the Topside of Kansas 24-Hour Relay Challenge, was delayed in Hays and was unable to make the meeting.

She asked to be rescheduled for their next meeting. The commission-

ers agreed.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved Don Newell as a replacement for Dean Blume on the Board of Zoning Appeals. His term will go until February 2002.

- Accepted the bid for \$14,727 from Marley Cooling Tower for a new cooling tower at the city's power plant.

- Decided to renew their membership in the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool for \$898.

- Approved payments to Associ-

ated Pool Builders of Bismarck, N.D., for \$37,080 and to Rhoads Construction Co. for \$46,920 for work completed on Steever Water Park.

- Approved a request from Ron Harding, executive director of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce, to park antique wagons, cars or motorcycles on the sidewalks of Main between Ninth and 12th Streets for Goodland's Settlement Day celebration this weekend.

The vehicles would be on the sidewalks Thursday through Saturday.

Kansas winter wheat crop continues to deteriorate

WICHITA (AP) — With thousands of abandoned hard red winter wheat acres already plowed under in Kansas, remaining wheat fields are also faring poorly, Kansas Agricultural Statistics

Service said Monday.

The agency reported in its weekly condition report that 41 percent of the remaining wheat acres are in poor or very poor condition.

Another 34 percent were ranked as fair. About 23 percent were in good and 2 percent in excellent condition.

"It has been fairly consistent throughout the spring — and this should be re-

flective only of the wheat crop still standing," said statistician Eddie Wells.

Last week, 38 percent of the Kansas wheat fell into the poor or very poor category.

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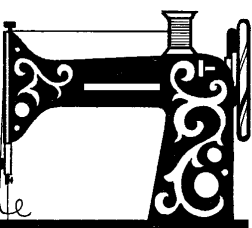
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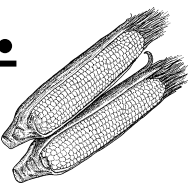
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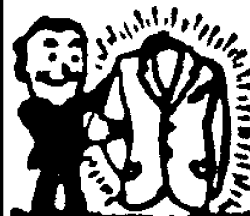
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