

weather report

84°

at noon



Today

- Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Tomorrow

- Sunrise, 5:24 a.m.
- Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 70 degrees
- Humidity 54 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds southwest 16 mph
- Barometer 26.33 inches and steady
- Record High 104° (1921)
- Record Low 46° (1924)

Last 24 Hours*

High	92°
Low	61°
Precipitation	2.14 inches

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of widely scattered thunderstorms, low 65, south wind 15-25 mph. Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, high 90-95, low mid 60s, south wind 15-25 mph.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday: chance of thunderstorms, high 80s. Thursday and Friday: chance of thunderstorms, high 80s, low 60.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

- Wheat — \$2.63 bushel
- Posted county price — \$2.47
- Corn — \$1.84 bushel
- Posted county price — \$1.62
- Loan deficiency payment — 37¢
- Milo — \$2.92 hundredweight
- Soybeans — \$4.34 bushel
- Posted county price — \$4.22
- Loan deficiency payment — 70¢
- Millet — \$5.25 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$7.70 cwt.
- Oil new crop — \$6.45 cwt.
- Loan deficiency pmt. — \$2.04
- Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.
- Pinto beans — \$16 (new crop)

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

Patients' bill may change

WASHINGTON — House Republican leaders predict that a patients' rights bill passed in the Democratic-run Senate last week will fail in their chamber and that a GOP version is one that President Bush could sign.

Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., said Sunday he and other Republicans would not try to block a vote on a House bill similar to the Senate's, but he offered more hope for a GOP plan that "will be much more balanced."

The Senate version, approved 59-36 Friday with nine Republicans in support, would increase the number of Americans without health insurance coverage because employers might drop for fear of lawsuits over medical decisions, Hastert contended.

The Senate bill promises new health care protections for millions of Americans.

a life CHANGE

Demanding but dedicated director retires

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

People choose lots of different words when describing Larry Keirns, the man who has tirelessly pushed the Northwest Kansas Technical College and its staff towards success.

People may call him demanding, stubborn, domineering and other not so flattering things. But they also use words like passionate, dedicated, hard-working, caring and motivated when talking about a man who made improving education and building an institution his life's work.

In the 35 years that Keirns, 63, has run the college, which opened as a vocational-technical school at 1209 Harrison Ave. 37 years ago, his name has become synonymous with the institution. Anyone who knows him or knows of him won't hesitate to say that the college is close to Keirns' heart.

It's like one of his children. He's nurtured it from its infancy, watched it grow, put lots of time and money into it and stayed awake nights worrying about it.

Mark Smith, chairman of the college's board, said the panel, with 24 members from across northwest Kansas, meets in Goodland on one Saturday night each month. In 35 years, he said, Keirns has never missed a board meeting (though the board rescheduled a session once because Keirns was taking a trip to Australia).

In all those years, Smith added, Keirns has never used all of the vacation days that he had coming.

"His heart and soul was in that school," Smith said.

But as all parents know, there comes a time when you have to say good-bye.

Keirns did that Friday, walking away from a place that has his name written all over it. The board decided earlier this year to name the college's new student fitness center after Keirns, ensuring the name won't be forgotten after the man is gone.

Friends, family, faculty, staff and board members traveled from across Kansas and the country to gather on Saturday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall in Goodland, helping Keirns celebrate the end of his career.

A question on many of their lips was: Will he be able to stay away?



Larry Keirns, former president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College, and others celebrated the opening of the college's new student fitness center in April. The center was named after Keirns, who retired Friday after 35 years on the job. Photo by Eric Yonkey/The Goodland Daily News

President reflects on changing times

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

Larry Keirns, former president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College, said everything imaginable happened in the 35 years that he was in charge — from natural disasters on campus to the student population more than quadrupling.

Keirns, who retired on Friday, said a tornado damaged three of the college's buildings in 1968, a fire gutted the electronics department in 1987 and a snow storm in October

1997 collapsed the student union roof.

"I've had everything in the world happen here in 35 years," he said, adding that not all of it has been bad.

The college's campus, Keirns said, has expanded from two buildings to 24 and student enrollment has grown from 105 to 593. He said he has watched 7,276 students graduate from the college, which opened as a vocational-technical school in 1964,

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Those who know him best say it will be tough, but Keirns can let go.

"One of Larry's beliefs is that change is good," Smith said. "He wants to get younger leadership in there and let them have a hand at improving the college. He just thinks it's time."

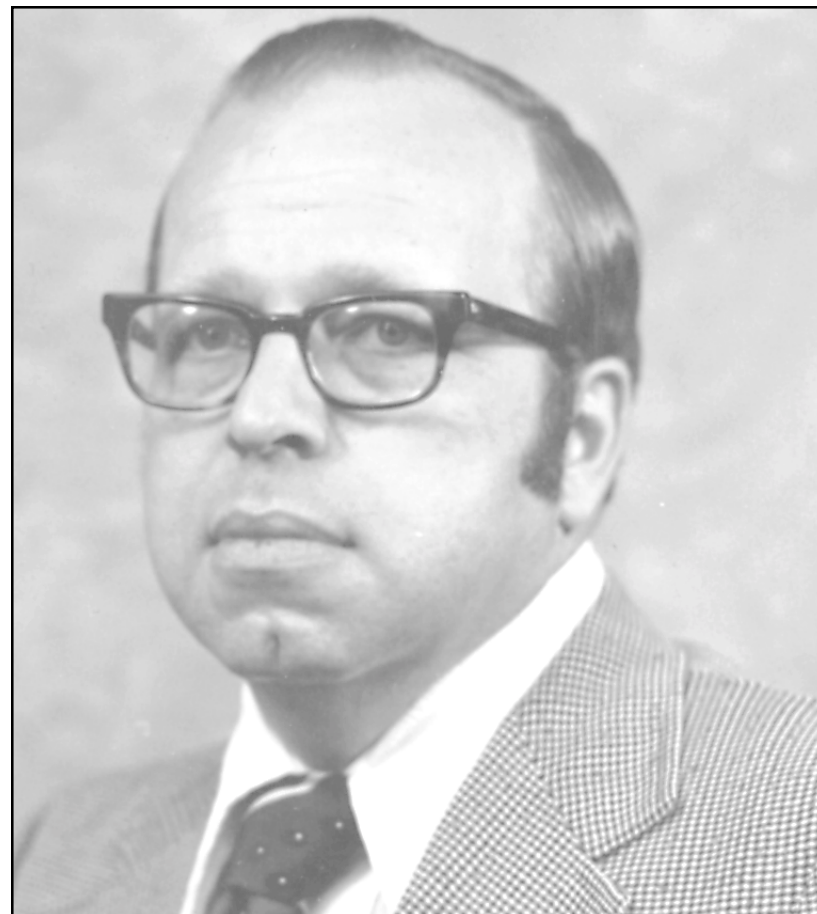
Ken Clouse, 51, the former president of the Northeast Kansas Technical Col-

lege in Atchison, will take over on Monday, after spending a few days in June learning the ropes from Keirns. Clouse's wife, JoAnn, will manage the college bookstore, just at Keirns' wife, Etta Mae, did for more than 30 years.

Glenn "Skip" Sharp, one of Keirns' college buddies at what is now Emporia State University, said Keirns helped



Larry Keirns the day before retirement



Larry Keirns in the early years of his career

him get a job at the technical college and later made him his assistant director. Sharp, who held the position for 30 years, said he's sure Keirns will miss the college, and will be concerned about its future, but thinks he will be able to move on.

"I think Larry has reached a point where he has really accomplished the things he wanted to," Sharp, now dean of students at Colby Community College, said. Those include college status for the former vocational-technical school, the new fitness center, growing programs and the recently received national accreditation as a technical

college.

Sharp said he imagines the retired president will feel a pang of regret when the first day of school comes and he isn't there to watch the new students march in. And again when it comes time for the annual Christmas dinner with the board, and when the new president is handing out diplomas to graduates.

"He will miss it most when those times come," Sharp, who admitted to feeling the same, said, "but it will get easier."

Keirns said he's well aware that most

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Festival offers food, fireworks

The annual Sherman County Freedom Fest, which will highlight Wednesday's Independence Day celebration, is expected to be the biggest fireworks show between Hays and Denver.

The evening will begin at 5 p.m. with a barbecue prepared by S&T Telephone employees. Donations will be accepted for the hamburgers and hot dogs, with the money being split between Pioneer Park and the Sherman County Historical Society's Handy House.

The Sherman County Homeowned Carnival will have rides from 5-9 p.m. The rides will be at the regular prices, and any leftover tickets will be usable at the Northwest Kansas Free Fair in August.

After the barbecue, there will be a free watermelon feed sponsored by the Goodland Rotary Club.

There will be live entertainment from 6-9 p.m. at Bill Grey Memorial Park in front of the grandstand pavilion. People are encouraged to bring their lawn chairs to listen to the local talent.

There will be concession stands where fountain drinks and sno-cones will be available.

About 9:30 p.m. or when fully dark, assuming the wind is right, the

Stores close for holiday

While most of us will be celebrating Independence Day on Wednesday, shooting fireworks, going to the lake, laying back in the yard, some will have to work so the rest of us can buy beer, gas and groceries.

Others, like police officers and emergency dispatchers, will be on duty as always. Farmers and elevator workers will be sweating through the wheat harvest.

Numerous businesses in the Goodland area will remain open for the Fourth of July holiday, with most running regular business hours. Wal-mart, Goodland Greenline, Orschelins, and restaur-

ants such as Pizza Hut, McDonalds, and Wendy's will be running normal business hours. Goodland Greenline will remain open late because of harvest, as will area elevators.

Gas stations such as the Cowboy Loop, Presto, and Conoco, will all run normal business hours as well.

City, state, federal and county offices will be closed, as will banks and financial institutions and most downtown businesses. China Gardens, Miller Electronics and Dan Brenner Ford will all be closed.

The Goodland Daily News office will be closed and there will be no paper on Wednesday.

To enjoy the new electronic ground and aerial displays, people are encouraged to be in the grandstand area.

Lawn chairs and blankets should be behind the fence in front of the grandstand for good viewing.

Caution from the organizers is that there cannot be any personal fireworks on the fairgrounds.

Storms flood streets, briefly shut lights off

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Daily News

Thunderstorms last night brought high winds and rain to Sherman County and surrounding areas.

The National Weather Service in Goodland said the town received the highest rainfall in the area with 2.14 inches. Sherman County received varying amounts of rainfall, with only about a third of an inch falling four miles west of Brewster. Reports from surrounding areas include three quarters of an inch in Sharon Springs and 1.22 inches in Wray, Colo.

The weather service said the most severe thunderstorms occurred in Yuma and Kit Carson counties of Colorado and Sherman and Wallace counties in Kansas.

Rainfall began at about 9 p.m. and was followed by high winds, with a peak of 83 m.p.h. 12 miles west of Goodland at 9:25 p.m..

St. Francis had 65 m.p.h. winds, and Colby had 60 m.p.h. winds. There was .05 of an inch of rain in Colby, and no rain reported in St. Francis.

The service said the main problem in Goodland was caused by flooding. Public Works Director Ed Wolak said there were streets flooded in Goodland

and power outages in isolated areas throughout the city. Wolak said the wind caused power lines to clash together, opening breakers and causing a two- to three-minute power outage about 11 p.m.. Wolak said there were brief power outages during the storm and one outage that lasted about an hour following the storm.

City employees cleaned up tree branches in the parks this morning, said Wolak. People who have branches in their yards need to call 899-4530 for pick up, he said, as branches are not picked up with the regular trash.

Ken Griffith, rural fire chief, said his men were called out to the junction of County Roads 72 and 19 for a grass fire caused by lightning. The rain put out the fire before firefighters arrived, however.

Lightning struck a 123-year-old ash tree east of Ruleton, said farmer Ben Duell. Duell said the tree on his son Dan's farm was split in two.

Tom Stewart, operations manager at Mueller Grain, said the weather could stall the wheat harvest up to two days in areas receiving over an inch of rain. He said in areas with three quarters inch or less, farmers may be able to resume harvest this afternoon.