

Volume 70, Number 97

report

60°

at noon

• Sunset, 7:54 p.m.

• Sunrise, 5:32 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:54 p.m.

• Humidity 59 percent

Sky cloudy

High

Low Precipitation Today

Tomorrow

Midday Conditions

Last 24 Hours*

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: 60 percent chance of rain,

low lower 40s, winds east 10-20

m.p.h. Tomorrow: mostly cloudy with

early fog, high upper 50s, low near

Extended Forecast

70s. Monday: partly cloudy with

chance of showers and thunder-

storms from noon on, high upper 70s,

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

low upper 40s.

Sunday: partly cloudy, high mid

40, winds east 10-15 m.p.h.

87° 45°

.18

• Soil Temperature 67 degrees

• Winds northeast 19 m.p.h. • Barometer 30.06 inches and steady Record High 94° (1996)

• Record Low 27° (1945)

House still looking for tax solution weather

By John Hanna

Associated Press Writer TOPEKA—Republican leaders surveyed the budget wreckage today after a \$257 million package of tax increases failed.

The House voted 66-58 early this morning against a bill to raise \$252 million by increasing sales, tobacco excise and alcohol excise taxes. On Wednesday, the Senate rejected, 21-17, a separate bill to raise wholesale, per-gallon taxes on beer, wine and liquor by \$5.5 million.

The House met later this morning but didn't bring up the tax issue. Still, efforts continued to

come up with a plan that could pass. The Senate imposing deep cuts in the budget for the state's also met briefly.

The plan today couldn't overcome the opposition of conservative Republicans to any tax increase and of Democrats who said a package should include higher income taxes for the wealthy.

The larger of the two tax bills had the support of 54 of the House's 79 Republicans but only four of its 46 Democrats.

Some Democrats and moderate Republicans remained at the Statehouse after the vote, hoping to find a new plan to prevent Gov. Bill Graves from makers scheduled a record 106th day.

2003 fiscal year, which begins July 1.

Both bills were drafted by House and Senate negotiators to eliminate a \$290 million hole in the \$4.4 billion budget legislators passed and sent earlier to Graves for fiscal 2003. Graves plans to cut that budget \$300 million if legislators do not find more money.

House Speaker Kent Glasscock and Senate President Dave Kerr had promised to adjourn the session Wednesday night even if no tax plan passed. Still, with other business remaining, law-

However, Glasscock, R-Manhattan, and Kerr. R-Hutchinson, saw the vote early today in the House as all but settling the tax debate.

"We're presuming that the issue is behind us, and we're moving on," Kerr said. Glasscock said he didn't know whether the

House would vote again on tax legislation. "At this point, I'd have to see some movement,"

he said. Graves, who has promised to call the first special session since December 1989 if legislators don't pass a tax package, said the House vote was "tremendously disappointing."

Economy group starts organizing

Students earn trip

to lake by reading

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News A new economic development program for Goodland and Sherman County began to take form as 21 members of the steering committee met Tuesday at the Elks Lodge.

Schyler Goodwin, spokesman for the committee, said the three main items final say," Rasure said, "but we have for the group are to develop a budget, several boards where we accept recomfigure out how to organize the board and set goals.

said he felt there was an advantage to organizing under the county. That way, he said, they don't have to set up a sepa-

directly with the commissioners. Kevin Rasure, a county commissioner and steering committee member,

mendations from the members. It would work fine with the current com-

The subject of whether to have dues





Noon Wheat — \$2.52 bushel Posted county price — \$2.48 Corn — \$1.90 bushel Posted county price \$1.93

Steve West, of Western State Bank, missioners, but that could change."

rate corporation, and would then work

said the county would support establishment of a board to be recommended by the members and then appointed by the commissioners. "The commissioners would have the

or to accept voluntary contributions

See COMMITTEE, Page 7

Loan deficiency payment — 6¢ Milo — \$1.59 bushel Soybeans — \$4.18 bushel Posted county price — \$4.23 Loan deficiency payment - 69¢ Millet — \$3.25 hundredweight Sunflowers Oil current crop — \$9.35 cwt.

NuSun — \$9.50 cwt. Loan deficiency pmt. — 66¢ Confection current - \$16/\$8 cwt. Pinto beans — \$27

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)



WASHINGTON - Top lawmakers today pushed for tough inquiries after the White House revealed President Bush heard a month before Sept. 11 that Osama bin Laden's terrorist network might hijack American airplanes.

"Was there a failure of intelligence?" asked House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo. "Did the right officials not act on the intelligence in the proper way? These are things we need to find out."

Federal agencies and airlines were quietly alerted last summer that there were "nonspecific" threats of hijackings by al-Qaida, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said. After those warnings were issued, Bush was told of the threats during a CIA briefing while on vacation in his Texas ranch the first week of August, Fleischer said.

on Books," said Library Specialist Marcia Smith, and as a reward for reading 63 books more than their goal of 2,000, the students get to take half a day at the lake.

Central Elementary School students met their reading goal this year, and

they get to go fishing at Smoky Gardens

The theme of the third and fourth

graders' reading program was "Hooked

as a reward.

Last year, the project had a jungle theme, and Principal Sharon Gregory kissed Smith, who was dressed in a gorilla suit. The year before, Gregory kissed a real pig.

"This year we decided to draw the line," Smith said. "We won't kiss a fish, and Sharon didn't want to swallow a goldfish."

Dana Belshe, county extension agriculture agent, will help the kids with their fishing, and Mike Hopper, area game warden, will give a nature tour to the kids who don't want to fish.

Since there will only be about 25 poles, not everyone will be able to fish at the same time anyway, Smith said. There will be scavenger hunts and games dealing with the water to keep everyone occupied. The young anglers will get about 25 minutes apiece, Smith said, which she thinks will be long



A sign outside the Central Elemen tary library tells students they met their goal of reading 2,000 books. As a reward, they're going fishing.

enough for some, and not quite long enough for others.

The third graders will fish in the morning, the fourth graders in the afternoon, and the two grades will meet at the lake for hot dogs at lunch.

"The kids put a lot of effort into reading these books," Smith said. "We're glad to give them a reward day like this.'

Music fills air at park concert

Devin Keister (above), a Grant Junior High seventh grader, blew tunes on his tuba Tuesday evening at the annual band concert at Gulick Park. After a barbecue, junior high and high school students played pieces for parents and friends. Manuel Rubio (right) and his son Clayton, 5, enjoyed hamburgers and pickles while listening to Megan, Manuel's eighth-grade daughter, play. The barbecue was a fund-raiser for the band to attend the Alamo Bowl next year. Photos by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News



Drop-out program helps students STEP to success

By Doug Stephens

The Goodland Daily News Goodland High School has cut its dropout rate from 14 percent to nearly nothing in the last seven years, and officials give credit to something called the STEP Lab, an innovative work-atyour-own pace computer setup.

Principal Harvey Swagger said he knew they were losing a lot of kids, and there were people in town without a high school diploma, and he wanted to do something about it.

The result was the STEP Lab, short for Student Tutorial Education Program.

People who have dropped out of high school, or who are a few credits short of being able to graduate, can make up classes at their own pace on computer modules. The school's drop-out rate now stands at about .3 of 1 percent, Swager said, less than one a year from a graduating class of about 70.

"Some kids have a hard time in a traditional school environment," said Jon

Goodland students to head off for future Saturday

It's almost time for seniors to put on speaker has been an outstanding their caps and gowns, march across the stage, and off into their futures. Commencement for the 105th class of Goodland High School will start at 2 will perform, and "Pomp and Cirp.m. Saturday at Max Jones cumstance" and other songs will be mencement and Porterfield said some Fieldhouse.

The speaker will be LouCinda Laughlin, a 1972 Goodland graduate, standing educator award will be prenow a partner in the law firm of Lord, sented by Dale Schields, chairman of Bissel and Brook in Los Angeles. This the Sherman County High School is the fifth year the commencement Alumni Association.

mean they are bad kids; it just means McLean said. "If they have less than 10, what is traditional doesn't work for them.'

The class offers courses in English, science, social studies and math, McLean said. The most a person can earn is about 15 credits, and the school requires 24 to graduate.

"We encourage people to have at McLean, the STEP teacher. "It doesn't least 12 credits before they start here,"

graduate, said teacher Mary Porterfield.

The show choir, the X-Pressos, played by the school band.

Along with the diplomas, an out-

we encourage them to get a G.E.D. or go back to the regular school."

The students go through a study program on the computer, completing exercises and taking a test, McLean said. A grade of at least 80 percent is needed to pass an assignment and move on to the next one, McLean said. Some classes, such as English, require off-

A photographer will take pictures of the graduates, Porterfield said, both before the ceremony and as they cross

the stage. The pictures will be sold after comof the money will be donated to the school.

There will be activities honoring the graduates at 7:30 p.m. that night at the Elks Lodge, including a senior tribute video.

line work like research papers or book reports. The amount of time it takes to get through a whole course depends on the student, McLean said.

"It depends on the individual. It varthrough a class in two to three weeks; some might take four months. It depends on how quickly they understand the material. If they come in and work,

they can get a lot done."

When he decided to start the program, Swager went to Phoenix and examined different "alternative" classes. The program used here was originally developed in Florida, Swager said.

Goodland was the first public school in Kansas to adopt the program, he said, and now several other schools, including Colby and Salina, have a similar class.

"They came and looked at our program," Swager said, "and went back and put in one of their own."

The class started as a drop-out recovery program, Swager said, but it has developed into drop-out prevention as well. Students who are missing credits or have failed a class can take a course in the STEP Lab.

McLean said his classes are pretty evenly divided between kids who are ies greatly," he said. "Some might get coming back to school and those making up lost credits.

"I'd have to guess it's about 60 per-