

weather report

54°
at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:50 a.m.
• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 39 degrees
- Humidity 39 percent
- Sky clear
- Winds north 15 m.p.h.
- Barometer 30.07 inches and falling
- Record High 76° (1926)
- Record Low -4° (1985)

Last 24 Hours*

High 60°
Low 24°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: partly cloudy, low 20-25, winds southeast 10 m.p.h. Tomorrow: cloudy with chance of flurries, high 25-30, low 15-20, winds southeast 10 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday: cloudy with 30 percent chance of light snow, high 25-30, low 10-15. Thursday: mostly clear, high upper 30s. Friday: mostly clear, high 45-50, low near 20. (National Weather Service) Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz. * Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.06 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.05
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Corn — \$2.53 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.24
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Milo — \$2.25 bushel
Soybeans — \$5.35 bushel
Posted county price — \$5.23
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Confection current — \$17/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$16
(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.

Inspectors see alcohol plants

BAGHDAD, Iraq — U.N. inspectors visited alcoholic beverage plants and a factory that once made parts for now-banned missiles, while Britain charged on Monday that Saddam Hussein uses torture, rape and terror to oppress his people. On the fifth day of the renewed search for weapons of mass destruction, the inspection team went to a Baghdad factory that made guidance and control systems for Iraq's "stretch Scuds." Iraq modified Soviet-made Scuds to longer range and used them in the Persian Gulf War. Iraq is prohibited from having such missiles — which have a range of 400 miles — and inspectors presumably wanted to ensure that the work has not resumed. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said the U.S. is looking for a list of Saddam's weapons programs.

Night fire destroys Stuckey's

State fire marshal's office called to help investigate cause of blaze

By Rachel Hixson

The Goodland Daily News

A charred pile of debris lays where the Stuckey's Restaurant used to stand south of Brewster just north of I-70.

Firemen, law enforcement officers and a dog poked and sniffed around the blackened disaster this morning, trying to figure out the cause of a fire on Saturday night that burned the place to the ground.

Not much information was available this morning, as Brewster and Thomas County fire fighters were busy investigating the cause of the blaze, but a glance at the site told most of the story. No one has been reported injured in the fire.

Tom Aschenbrenner, former Brewster fire chief, said he believes the fire started about 9:30 p.m. Mountain Time on Saturday.

The building was completely leveled, he said, and Thomas County law officers and firemen are helping to investigate.

Ken Griffith, Sherman County Rural fire chief, said fire fighters here were called to help about 9:30 p.m. He said they left Brewster about 2:15 a.m. on Sunday. He said there was an apartment attached to the restaurant that was also destroyed.

The state fire marshal's office was called in to help investigate, Griffith said.

Sally Michael, a correspondent for The Goodland Daily News in Brewster,



Stuckey's Restaurant, south of Brewster on I-70 about 18 miles east of Goodland, was leveled by fire on Saturday night. This morning, investigators used a dog to help find out how the fire started. The first

said she found out about the fire when she and her husband went to Stuckey's about 7 a.m. on Sunday for breakfast and discovered it was no longer there. She said there were fire fighters and law officers at the site all day Sunday.

"It's a big vacancy in our town," Michael said. She said she's heard the restaurant's grill had caused fires before, but there had never been any major damage. The manager of the Stuckey's in

report of the fire came from a "911" call at 9:35 p.m. Mountain Time from the alarm company serving the store.

Photo by Sheila Smith/The Goodland Daily News

Grinnell said Sarah Divine managed the Brewster restaurant. Divine wasn't available this morning, as her phone has been disconnected. Mike Baughn, Thomas County un-

dersheriff, said the first report of the fire came from a "911" call at 9:35 p.m. Mountain Time from the alarm company serving the store. Baughn said the entire area has been secured as a crime scene.

Rancher asks officials to remove culvert

Sherman County commissioners listened Wednesday to attorney Ron Vignery describe the history and problems Vernon Isaac is having along County Road 52, where his corrals have been located since 1993.

Vignery said the problem goes back to when the road was elevated in 1998, and the installation of a culvert to allow the water to cross the road. This summer, he said, a rain storm flooded the area around the corrals, and made it difficult for Isaac to get trucks in to load and unload cattle.

He said his client would like the county to remove the culvert and lower the road back to where the water crosses naturally.

County Public Works Director Curt Way said the road had been raised to allow the Goodland school bus to get down the road, and that the spot kept washing out before the road was raised.

Way said Isaac had been consulted when the culverts were put in, and that there were several natural water crossing spots along this stretch of road. He said they have tried working with Isaac,

but have not found a solution. "There ought to be a solution," Vignery said. "Isaac wants it the way it was in 1993. I hope we can work out a solution."

Commissioner Mitch Tiede said he was familiar with the area and the drainage problems, but said he did not have a simple answer.

Commissioners Chuck Frankenfeld and Kevin Rasure were looking at aerial maps of the area, and said they would ask Way to review all of the options.

County roundup

At their meeting Wednesday, the Sherman County commissioners:

- Heard a complaint about water flooding corrals on County Road 52, and a request to remove the culverts. Story to left.
- Said they would approve a petty cash fund for the Sherman County Economic Development Council. Story be-

- low.
- Approved lowering the interest rate on the micro loan program to 5 percent. Story to come.
- Discussed a potential 20-40 percent increase in employee health insurance costs and talk about having department heads review the current coverage to look for savings. Story to come.

Commissioners let group set up petty cash account

Royal Reid, chairman of the Sherman County Economic Development Council, asked county commissioners Wednesday for permission to set up a petty cash fund in the office.

Commissioners were concerned about accounting for any cash, but Reid said the plan was to not use any cash, but rather to have a checking account at Bankwest so all the expenditures would be recorded.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said she had contacted the county's auditor,

Mark Bauer, about the legality of such a fund, and he suggested the commissioners approve a resolution allowing the establishment of the petty cash fund as well as a fund for accepting grants and donations which could then be loaned out to assist businesses.

Development Director Carolyn Applegate said she had received a check for \$1,000 to help the Topside Tots day care facility, and had received several other donations to the council. She said the petty cash and business

assistance funds need to be established separate from the operating fund.

The commissioners said they would wait for a written resolution from Bauer, but said they would approve the resolution as soon as it arrives. Reid said the council would be holding elections in December, and that there are two council positions open. Larry Harper of Lincare and John Garcia of Garcia's Furniture are the two members whose terms are expiring. They're eligible to be re-elected for three years.

County meeting

At their meeting Tuesday, the Sherman County commissioners will:

- Review the weed mowing contract for next year.
- Meet with Darrel Schrader and Curt Way, county public works manager, to review the

past weed mowing season and the upcoming mowing season.

- Discuss a list of delinquent noxious weed and prairie dog bills and what steps to take for collection.

The commissioners meet at 8 a.m. in the courthouse.

U.S. retailers report solid start to season

NEW YORK (AP) — Sales were solid as the Thanksgiving weekend kicked off the holiday shopping rush, but few were expecting a particularly robust season as consumers worried about job security and shrunken stock portfolios.

Debra Person of College Park, Ga., said the sluggish economy has meant a decrease in her earning power.

"We used to get overtime," she said. "It's been kind of harder this year — I had more bills this year."

Still, shoppers were opening their wallets at stores across the country, lured by retailers offering discounts on televisions, DVD players and other popular gifts.

"It was as expected. It wasn't a bonanza, but it was a good start," said Steve Nevill, partner at Kurt Salmon Associates, a retail consulting firm. But he said this season is still expected to be a difficult one.

Discount stores like Wal-Mart and Target had the greatest success over the

weekend, and online sales were strong. Major department stores and clothing chains generally met modest sales goals, according to analysts' preliminary estimates. Nevill estimated that sales at department stores and mall-based clothing chains were up 2 percent for the weekend from a year ago, while discounters had a 4 percent gain.

"One consistent thing we heard was that only things marked down were selling," Nevill said. "Consumers want a bargain, especially around the holiday."

Shoppers agreed. "We just try to save a little bit of money along the way and see how it works out in the end," said Judy Staley, 59, who was shopping Saturday at the Crabtree Valley Mall in Raleigh, N.C. "Luckily, we saved about 20 percent here," she said, pointing to several bags from K-B Toys, filled with dolls, action figures and other purchases. Home electronics items and kitchenware did well over the weekend.

Researchers trying to find out just how stinky, dusty feedlots are

WICHITA (AP) — Sure, most feedlots are dusty and smell bad. But just how bad, and how dusty?

Researchers at Kansas State University and Texas A&M are trying to find out. A three-year project that began last summer has Kansas State researchers hoping they can determine what kind of organic compounds come off feedlots and what conditions cause an increase or decrease in the smell.

They hope to eventually figure out a way to reduce potential health problems coming from feedlots.

At Texas A&M, the odor side of the research will work to quantify what compounds make up the odors and what conditions reduce or eliminate them. So far, most of the work is being done in the laboratory.

At Kansas State, engineers Pat Murphy, Joe Hamer and Ronaldo Maghirang have built a simulation



chamber that allows them to measure feedlot dust under controlled conditions, using samples of feedlot dirt and manure collected from working lots in western Kansas.

"That's been my contribution: going out to western Kansas with a shovel," Murphy said. "This plastic tub contains the real deal."

The researchers compact and level a feedlot sample to a specified depth, close a glass door to keep dust from escaping and then drop an iron weight on it to simulate a steer's stomping foot. The researchers then use filters to mea-

sure dust particles.

"We know that dust is worse in dry conditions and smell is worse in wet conditions," Murphy said. "What we are trying to learn is whether we can control moisture to keep the dust down without increasing the odor."

By next summer, the scientists hope to do measurements in working feedlots. "We started in the lab, where we can control the conditions," Maghirang said. "Research in field conditions is very different. What we need to do first is make sure that we know what we are measuring."

It won't be possible to eliminate dust in feedlots, Murphy said.

"What we're looking for is a way to control it to acceptable levels with economic feasibility," he said. "We'll be able to answer questions like how much it will help to clean pens more often and how much it helps to use a sprinkler."