

weather report

29°
at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 6:51 a.m.
• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 36 degrees
- Humidity 42 percent
- Sky overcast
- Winds north 12 m.p.h.
- Barometer 30.32 inches and falling
- Record High 74° (1965)
- Record Low 1° (1955)

Last 24 Hours*

High 29°
Low 15°
Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: partly cloudy, low upper teens, winds northeast 5-10 m.p.h.
Tomorrow: mostly cloudy, high lower 40s, low near 20, winds west 10-15 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

Friday: mostly sunny, high lower 50s, low lower 20s. Saturday: partly cloudy, high lower 40s. Sunday: mostly clear, high lower 40s, low upper teens.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

- Wheat — \$3.78 bushel
- Posted county price — \$3.76
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Corn — \$2.43 bushel
- Posted county price — \$2.23
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Milo — \$2.20 bushel
- Soybeans — \$5.15 bushel
- Posted county price — \$5.07
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Millet — \$14.00 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$12.00 cwt.
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 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.

Senators don't believe Saudis

WASHINGTON — Despite Saudi Arabia's assurances that terror groups were not being bankrolled by Saudi charities, two key senators are urging the Bush administration to investigate possible financial links to the desert kingdom's royal family.

The Saudis took the diplomatic offensive Tuesday and announced new actions to deny money to terror groups. At the same time, the foreign policy adviser to Crown Prince Abdullah, Saudi Arabia's de facto monarch, disputed allegations that his government had done a poor job keeping money from terrorists.

The adviser, Adel al-Jubeir, said at a news conference the kingdom was being maligned in a way that borders on hatred.

The State and Treasury Departments issued statements praising Saudi Arabia's efforts.

Stuckey's fire still being investigated

By Rachel Hixson

The Goodland Daily News

Investigators are still looking for the cause of a fire on Saturday night that burned the Stuckey's Restaurant in Brewster to the ground and haven't ruled out arson.

The fire was reported at 9:35 p.m. and Brewster and Sherman County fire fighters spent more than six hours battling the huge blaze, which also leveled an apartment attached to the restaurant.

Investigators and an arson dog scoured the site on Sunday and Monday looking for evidence of what started the fire. Officers say the fact there have been at least three fires at Stuckey's recently and the building was up for sale makes the blaze

suspicious.

Mike Baughn, Thomas County undersheriff and Brewster mayor, said he hasn't had time to talk with people investigating the fire to find out the results. He said deputy Brian Diercks and the state fire marshal's office in Topeka are doing the investigation.

Baughn said the fire marshal's office sent out an arson dog to sniff the scene for accelerants that someone could have used to start the fire. Samples from the scene may have been sent to a laboratory to be analyzed, he said.

"I don't know whether they found anything suspicious," Baughn said, noting that an arson dog is usually brought out when there is a large fire.

Mike Cameron, spokesman for the fire

marshal's office, said the investigation isn't finished, but when it is a report will be sent to the Thomas County Sheriff's Department.

Baughn said there are a few factors that make the blaze suspicious. There have been at least three fires at Stuckey's recently, he said, and the building had been for sale for at least three months.

Five days before Saturday's fire, he said, Brewster and Sherman County fire fighters were called to Stuckey's to put out a fire in the restaurant's office. He said that fire was likely caused by a cigarette being thrown in the trash can before it was fully extinguished.

Before that, Baughn said, there was a fire in the grill area that employees put out themselves and wasn't reported.

The Brewster restaurant's former manager who now runs the Stuckey's in Grinnell said there was a fire at the Brewster Stuckey's while she worked there. She said a clothes dryer malfunctioned and caught on fire. The dryer was replaced, she said, because the manufacturer found it was defective.

Baughn said officers felt the Stuckey's fire warranted a full investigation.

"When you have three fires in a short time," he said, "and the building is up for sale, it makes you want to do the fullest investigation possible."

Baughn said Jacob Koch, 19, the restaurant's cashier, was the only employee in the restaurant when the fire started, and was not injured. He said

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Officials opposing state cuts

City may join suit challenging Graves

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

City Commissioners agreed Monday to join a League of Kansas Municipalities effort to oppose Gov. Bill Graves' recent budget cuts because they will mean the state will keep \$155,000 it owes to the city.

City Manager Ron Pickman said the state organization is considering filing a lawsuit challenging the governor's authority to cut funds that are collected by the state, but which are supposed to be returned to the cities and counties.

Pickman said the late announcement of the budget cuts put the city in trouble because the budget has already been set for the next year, and it would take an increase of six to seven mills of property tax to cover the \$155,000 cut.

"The governor's cuts are an attempt to balance the state budget on the backs of the cities and counties," Pickman said. "While this may not stop all the cuts it may slow them down."

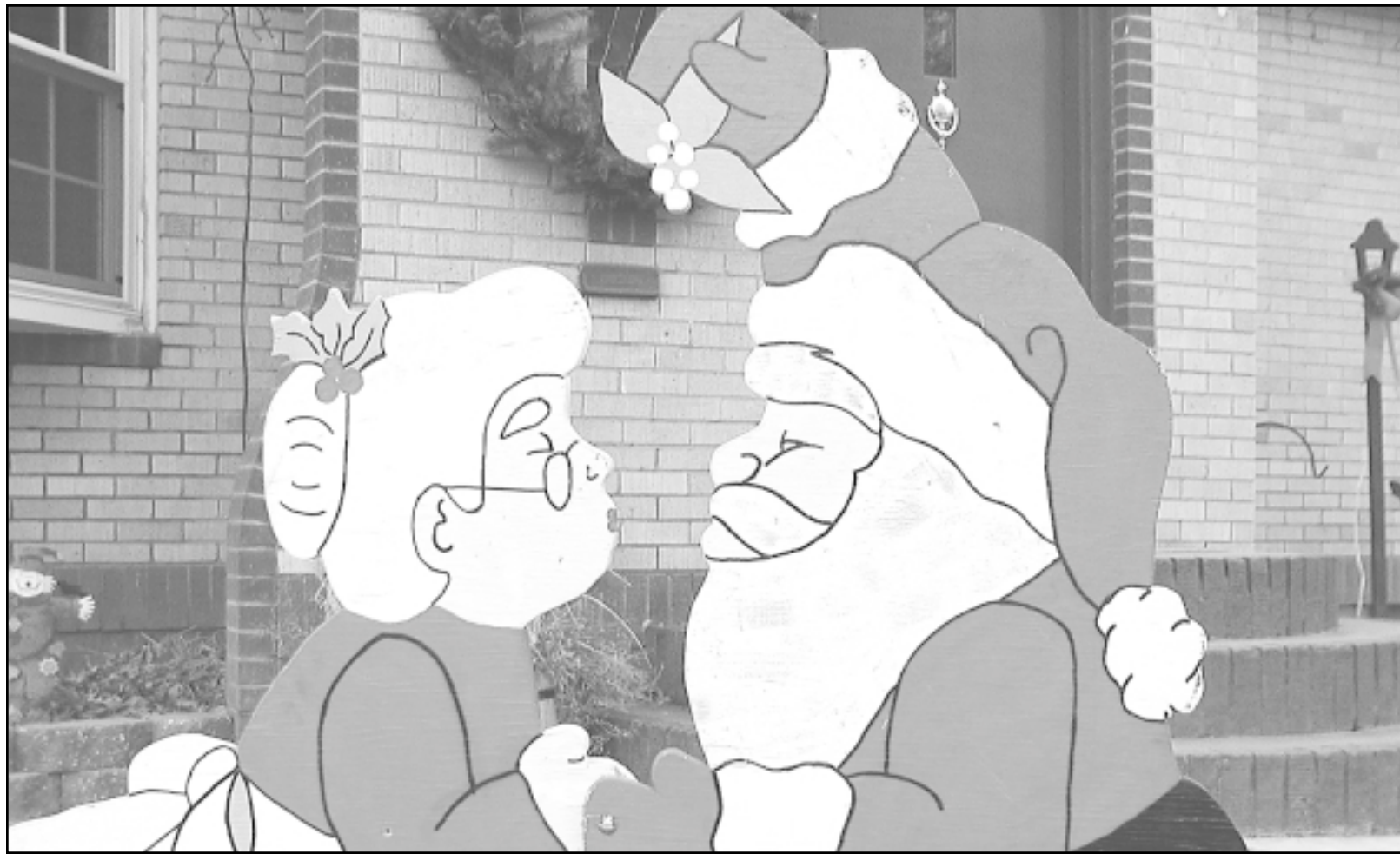
The request from the state organization is for the city to support a potential lawsuit at no additional cost to the city.

Pickman said the cuts do not cover all the funds that come back to the city, but that it is big chunk. The total received from money collected by the state is about \$450,000, he said. Part of the money collected by the state includes the liquor tax and the fuel tax, which is about \$175,000.

"If the state takes all of that money away we will be in deep trouble," Pickman said.

Commissioner Curtis Hurd made the motion to approve a letter to the state municipal organization to include Goodland in the potential lawsuit.

Commissioner Chuck Lutters said it may not stop the cuts, but the protest is a good idea. The motion was approved unanimously.



Spirit shows in front yards

The Christmas Spirit has spread across Goodland. Santa Claus (above) is having a private moment with Mrs. Claus at 402 Caldwell, while peppermint sticks line the sidewalk at 13th and Caldwell (below) and Mary and Joseph lean over baby Jesus at the First Baptist Church.

Photos by Rachel Hixson
The Goodland Daily News



Suit filer's history to be checked

Judge gives lawyer access to medical and police records

By Patty Decker

Colby Free Press

A Goodland judge gave a Colby doctor's lawyer permission to look through the medical and employment records of a hospital employee who claims the doctor sexually harassed her.

At a motion hearing last week, District Court Judge Jack L. Burr ruled Dr. Victor Hildyard's lawyer can collect information about Margaret Ann Staats of Menlo. Burr has been handling the case because the Colby judge is one of Hildyard's patients.

Burr said he intends to reassign the case to another judge. He first got involved after the Citizens Medical Center board suspended Hildyard after Staats made a complaint. Burr blocked the suspension.

Staats later recanted her complaint, but then filed a lawsuit against Hildyard.

During the telephone conference call, Burr said he will allow Hildyard's lawyer, Michael O'Neal of Hutchinson, to gather medical/psychi-

atric records and employment records on Staats for the past 10 years. The conference was between Burr, O'Neal and Staats' attorney, Charles Worden of Norton.

Burr will allow O'Neal access to all law enforcement records pertaining to Staats, which the court would examine in closed session to determine what, if any, records may or may not be relevant.

State law says a plaintiff, in this case Staats, who files a lawsuit alleging injury and damage, places their medical and mental condition in issue and is deemed to have waived the physician/patient privilege. Burr granted the motion.

Although the telephone conference was the first step in the discovery process, state law further says that any orders for records are confidential and will only be used in a lawsuit to prove or disprove certain claims.

With respect to the case being reassigned, Burr said a new judge will be named in the near future, but had no

further comment on why he was removing himself.

Staats filed the lawsuit in October alleging severe emotional distress from the doctor's extreme and outrageous nature. She is asking for in excess of \$75,000 and is requesting the court grant her husband, Troy Kent Staats, in excess of \$75,000 for emotional pain he suffered.

A second lawsuit against Hildyard has been filed by Dr. Duncan Davis, a surgeon in both Goodland and Colby. That lawsuit, filed late last month, names Colby Drs. Hildyard and Raymond Ketting, along with Judith Sears, a board member at Citizens Medical Center for defamation of character issues and is asking for in excess of \$75,000.

Thus far, the only person to have responded to Davis' allegations is Sears through her attorney, Ron Shalz of Colby. In her reply, which was filed last week, Sears is asking that Davis pro-

First big storm drops up to 7 inches in areas

WINFIELD (AP) — Wintry weather closed schools across much of southern Kansas today and challenged motorists who were getting reacquainted with ice and snow.

Snowfall in the season's first significant storm was heaviest in southeastern counties close to the Oklahoma border, with up to 7 inches expected to accumulate by tonight.

The storm blasted into southwestern Kansas from Oklahoma on Tuesday, dropping at least 3 inches of snow in Liberal before slowly tapering off in western sections and spreading into east-central and southeastern Kansas.

Troopers with the Kansas Highway Patrol reported few injury-causing accidents on the Kansas Turnpike, a dispatcher said.

But police and sheriff's departments were kept busy with fender-benders and vehicles that slid into

ditches. In Cowley County, Sheriff's Capt. Don Read said all roads were icy and snow-packed by midmorning, with snow still falling "rather hard." Read said schools were closed in Winfield and Arkansas City.

"You don't want buses out on those roads," Read said.

An accident in northern Cowley County late Tuesday sent one person to the hospital, but traffic problems otherwise consisted mostly of people stranded in vehicles that slid off roads, Read said.

"We usually work a lot of accidents on the first storm of the season because it's the first snow or the first ice, and people aren't accustomed to driving on it since last year," he said.

Forecasters had given residents ample warning of the storm, which may have kept many indoors, Read said.

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