

weather report

41°
at noon



Today

- Sunset, 4:26 p.m.
- Tomorrow
- Sunrise, 7:02 a.m.
- Sunset, 4:26 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 39 degrees
- Humidity 27 percent
- Sky mostly cloudy
- Winds northwest 20 m.p.h.
- Barometer 30.03 inches and rising
- Record High 64° (1941)
- Record Low -14° (1924)

Last 24 Hours*

High	41°
Low	19°
Precipitation	none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: clear, low upper teens, winds west 10-15 m.p.h. Tomorrow: partly sunny, high near 50, low near 20, winds west 10 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: mostly sunny, high lower 40s, low upper teens. Sunday: partly cloudy, high lower 40s. Monday: partly cloudy and breezy, high lower 40s, low upper teens. Tuesday: mostly clear, high mid 40s, low lower 20s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets



Noon

- Wheat — \$3.77 bushel
- Posted county price — \$3.72
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Corn — \$2.45 bushel
- Posted county price — \$2.23
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Milo — \$2.22 bushel
- Soybeans — \$5.13 bushel
- Posted county price — \$5.02
- Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
- Millet — \$13.00 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$11.45 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.

Lott fighting for his career

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trent Lott's struggle to remain as Senate Republican leader became further complicated today as GOP colleagues questioned his ability to carry out the job.

Sen. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma says Lott's "ability as a leader dissipates on a daily basis." Inhofe, who had supported Lott, put Lott's chances of being majority leader when the Senate convenes next month at 30 percent, but he predicted Lott would not step aside.

Inhofe also criticized Lott's apology for voting against a federal holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr., saying it was a responsible conservative position. Oklahoma's senior senator, Don Nickles, was the first to call for a new caucus election. A second conservative Republican, Sen. Craig Thomas of Wyoming, suggested change might be inevitable.

The North Stars Christmas program



The North Stars' Christmas program was held Tuesday at the high school auditorium, and the North Elementary fifth-grade choir and band both performed. The choir, directed by Char Avila, presented several Christmas songs and skits. Alyssa Brady (above) was costumed as a reindeer for the "Blitzen Boogie." Eric Roeder, Teather Dautel and Ryan Irvin (top right) were part of the choir singing and watching the director. Brook Redlin, Brice Ritter, Landon Brenner and Lorenzo Delgado (right) played cards around a table as they celebrated "Snow Day."

Photos by Tom Betz
The Goodland Daily News



Sewer system may cost \$3 million to replace

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Daily News

The city may have to spend more than \$3 million to replace its 20-year-old sewage treatment system, an engineering study shows, which eventually could mean higher sewer bills for homes and businesses.

John Roth of Evans-Bierly-Hutchinson & Associates gave the Goodland City Commission a preliminary report on the study Monday.

Roth said the plant has no measuring capability, barely enough capacity for current needs, not enough sludge storage, is too close to the airport and needs a back-up power source. The city is not bringing in as much money as it costs to run the existing system, let alone pay for upgrades, and it's just plain old and outdated.

City Manager Ron Pickman said the city had asked for the sewer study to see how the plant stacks up with new laws and requirements. The city had to do the study to make sure the plant was in line with those laws, he said, and now they may have to do some work to meet those requirements.

"I think every city was advised to do this," Pickman said, adding that cities all across the state are spending a lot of

money to upgrade sewage treatment.

Roth will be back in front of the commission at its second meeting in January, Pickman said, with the final study reports. The preliminary study was looking at keeping the plant where it is, he said, and the final report will look at possible sites to move it and the costs involved.

The wetlands and lagoon where the treated water from the sewage is released attracts birds and other wildlife, Roth said. The Federal Aviation Administration would call it a "hazardous wildlife attractant," he said, as the birds can interfere with planes taking off.

If the city will have to spend over \$3 million on the plant, Commissioner Rick Billinger said, they probably should go ahead and move it away from the airport.

The city has gotten away with having the wetlands so close to the north end of the runway, Pickman said, because it is not officially a wildlife refuge. But the aviation administration could make the city move it, he said.

Measuring the number of bugs, good bacteria, in the plant is not possible with the current plant, Roth said.

The city's sewage treatment is done by an activated sludge process, he said,

where bugs eat what we consider contaminants. With that type of system, he said, it is important to keep track of how many bugs there are, and with the current plant, there is no way to do that.

After treatment, Pickman said, what remains is sludge that is high in nitrogen and can be used as fertilizer. The current plant only has 30 days of sludge storage, Roth said, but there are months it won't be possible to get out to the farmers' fields with the sludge. The plant should have 60-90 days of storage, he said.

Most of the equipment at the plant is 20 years old, Roth said, which is a good life-span for a sewage treatment system.

"Nothing lasts forever," he said.

Roth said it is time to plan for the next 20 years. The plant has barely the capacity to keep up with current needs, Roth said, and if the population grows, it won't be able to keep up.

He projected a 40 percent increase in population to be sure the new plant could keep up for the next 20 years.

The plant needs a stand-by power source, Roth said, because if the power goes off, untreated sewage could get out. While the power is out, Pickman said, the sewage would keep coming in,

as there is no way to shut it off, but the equipment wouldn't be working to treat it.

If the sewage isn't treated, he said, it will contain a high level of nitrates which will get into the water.

"We have already lost one water well because of high nitrates," the city manager added.

Along with updating the equipment, Roth says the method of billing for sewer treatment needs to be changed. He suggests one charge for residential accounts and another for non-residential and a volume charge.

The city could determine each account's sewer usage for the year, he said, by averaging the water usage for December, January and February. During those months, he said, people are not watering lawns, filling swimming pools or washing cars. The water used in those months will mostly go to the sewer, he said.

Roth suggested applying for a state loan with a 20-year payment plan and 3 percent interest. The loans are first come, first served, he said, and there are no requirements to meet.

The old plant has served the city well, he said, but it is time to move on.

Chamber contract canceled

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

The Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau board voted Wednesday to cancel the current management contract with the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce.

Details of the action have not been released, but Chamber Co-Chairman Dane Scherling, director of Koons Funeral Home, said he had heard about the decision this morning and would be talking to Chamber and Convention and Visitors board members to learn the details.

Convention and Visitors Bureau board secretary Danny Whalen, of Dairy Queen, said he could not comment on the details, but when asked about the board making a motion to cancel the management contract he said, "Yes."

Chamber Executive Director Ron Harding said he did not know the details of the letter being sent to the Chamber board, but was aware of the action as he was at the meeting.

"We would have to change our operation," Harding said, but that he did not know exactly what that might mean until he had discussed it with the Chamber board.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau has been contracting the management with the Chamber since 1991. The visitors bureau is funded by a special tax on motels and restaurants that was established in 1990, and is to be used to encourage tourism and advertise Sherman County.

Before this year, the Chamber office and Harding were responsible for Chamber, economic development and tourism efforts, and Harding was paid from Chamber dues and visitor's tax money.

The effort has fragmented this year, with a new county Economic Development Council taking over that field. The new group is to get \$100,000 in city and county development money budgeted for next year, though the Chamber never got that much. Now the office apparently has lost another chunk of its income, leaving it with only Chamber dues.

Donna Price, who had worked under Harding on tourism efforts, will stay on with the visitor's board.

Bush to say Iraq violated resolution

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration will formally declare Iraq has violated a U.N. resolution on disarmament, setting the United States on a course toward possible war with Saddam Hussein early next year, senior officials said today.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said President Bush's decision is not an immediate trigger for war but the beginning of an intense diplomatic campaign to convince allies that Saddam has violated a U.N. resolution requiring him to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction or face possible military action.

Bush is not likely to decide whether to go to war until late January or early February, the officials said, and will use the time until then to bolster his case against Saddam.

The president's decision, to be announced by Secretary of State Colin Powell, represents a turning point in the standoff with Iraq. One senior White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the decision signals that Bush is "ramping up" toward war.

Indeed, as many as 50,000 U.S. troops may be deployed in early January for duty in the Persian Gulf area. The officials said Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld had not yet signed the deployment order. More than 50,000 U.S. troops are already in the Gulf region.