

weather report

43°
at noon



Today

- Sunset, 4:33 p.m.
- Tomorrow**
- Sunrise, 7:07 a.m.
- Sunset, 4:33 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 33 degrees
- Humidity 35 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds north 18 m.p.h.
- Barometer 29.99 inches and falling
- Record High 71° (1921)
- Record Low -13° (1990)

Last 24 Hours*

- High 57°
- Low 22°
- Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: mostly clear, low lower 20s, winds southwest 5-10 m.p.h.
Tomorrow: partly sunny, high mid 50s, low mid 20s, winds south 10-15 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

New Years: mostly sunny, high upper 40s, low upper teens. Thursday: mostly clear, high upper 40s. Friday: partly cloudy, high mid 50s, low near 20. Saturday: partly cloudy, 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 — \$3.47 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$3.50
 - Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
 - Corn — \$2.42 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$2.25
 - Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
 - Milo — \$2.19 bushel
 - Soybeans — \$5.16 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$5.11
 - Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
 - Millet — \$10.00 hundredweight
 - Sunflowers
 - Oil current crop — \$10.50 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.

Iraq priority over N. Korea

WASHINGTON — Time remains to find a diplomatic resolution to North Korea's development of nuclear weapons, and the situation hasn't reached the crisis stage, Secretary of State Colin Powell says.

At the same time, preparations for war continued in the confrontation with Iraq, which some key senators said ranks far behind North Korea as a threat to the United States.

Powell, making the rounds of the Sunday television talk shows, said the United States was working with other countries to pressure North Korea into reversing its decision to restart its weapons program and expel U.N. inspectors monitoring its main nuclear complex.

Indeed, Powell objected to calling the North Korean problem a crisis.

Islamic militant kills three missionaries

JIBLA, Yemen (AP) — A suspected Muslim extremist, hiding his gun cradled like a baby, slipped into a Southern Baptist hospital in Yemen today and opened fire, killing three American missionaries and seriously wounding a fourth, officials said.

The suspected attacker, a Yemeni, was arrested, and a Yemeni official said security forces were searching for a militant cell that may be targeting foreigners and secular figures in the country.

Americans have been repeatedly warned by the U.S. State Department be cautious in Yemen, a country where central government authority is weak

in tribal areas, guns are plentiful and Muslim militants have found refuge. Yemen, the ancestral homeland of al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden, has been a key front in the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

The gunman entered the complex of Jibla Baptist Hospital in the town of Jibla hiding a semiautomatic rifle under his jacket to make it resemble a child, officials and the missionary organization said. He slipped past a security check where visitors are supposed to leave their weapons.

The attacker entered a room where hospital director William E. Koehn was holding a meeting and opened fire, said

a statement from the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board, based in Richmond, Va.

Three people were killed instantly with shots to the head, Yemeni officials said. The gunman then headed to the hospital's pharmacy and shot and wounded the pharmacist, Donald W. Caswell.

The Mission Board identified the dead as Koehn, 60, of Arlington, Texas, who had planned to retire in October after 28 years of service; purchasing agent Kathleen A. Gariety, 53, of Wauwatosa, Wis.; and Dr. Martha C. Myers, 57, of Montgomery, Ala.

Caswell, 49, of Levelland, Texas,

was shot in the abdomen and hospital officials said he was in critical condition. His father, D.C. Caswell, said his son was recovering after surgery.

The killings are "a crime unacceptable in any religion. This contradicts Islam," said a Jibla woman who gave only her first name, Fatima, and said she used the hospital. "They cared for us and looked after us. I can't even count the number of children they treated and saved."

Jack Graham, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, called the three victims "martyrs" who were "killed in the line of duty."

Speaking from Plano, Texas, Gra-

ham said that aside from providing humanitarian aid, the missionaries were "there because they're Christians and they have no doubt been sharing their faith."

In San'a, the capital, U.S. Ambassador Edmund J. Hull told The Associated Press that U.S. officials did not envision a general evacuation, but "we will assist American citizens in Jibla if they wish to leave."

Hull said U.S. security personnel and investigators was sent to Jibla, 125 miles south of San'a, to help the Yemeni authorities.

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Doctor responds to story

By Patty Decker

Colby Free Press

Two Colby doctors who have been at odds with the town's hospital say that having no surgical coverage over the holidays in Goodland and Colby is a lot more serious than hospital officials make it out to be.

For one thing, said Dr. Victor Hildyard, it's the second time in less than three months that Colby's hospital has been without surgical coverage. Both the surgeon and the only doctor who does cesarean section deliveries were gone for the week.

Last week, Kevan Trenkle, chief financial officer at Citizens Medical Center, said the lack of surgical coverage would mostly affect patients needing cesareans. Hildyard and his associate says they believe the impact goes much further. They say there could be problems with emergency room situations involving car accidents and trauma cases as well.

Dr. LaDonna Regier, Hildyard's associate, said that the lack of surgical coverage this week has not only been a "bad situation," but also is unfair to both obstetric patients and emergency room patients alike.

The hospital board has tried twice to ban Dr. Hildyard after allegations of abuse surfaced. He in turn has sued the hospital, and his patients amassed in protest outside a board meeting. A judge allowed him to continue working while the issue is being settled.

Dr. Hildyard, who does family practice and obstetrics at Colby Medical and Surgical Center, also disagreed with comments from the clinic manager at the rival Family Center for Health Care.

"Citizens Medical Center is not a typical hospital facility up and down the Interstate," he said. "The hospital has a responsibility to the patients of Thomas County and northwest Kansas to provide the services that the active medical staff has repeatedly requested."

He said the hospital's board and administration have repeatedly denied requests for on-site surgical and anesthesia services, saying that not having them can compromise quality care.

He said that the medical staff has been told at every staff meeting through November that the hospital facility would not provide "locum tenens" re-

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Testing out the new toys



Kids were busy Friday afternoon, taking advantage of Christmas break, their gifts and the good weather. Zach Foster, (left) 12, rode his bike in Chambers Park as Jonathan Gomez, 10, (below) tried out tricks on a skateboard he got for Christmas. Zach's younger brother, Matthew, 10, (above) was also riding a new skateboard. All the boys attend North Elementary School.

Photo by Michelle L. Hawkins
The Goodland Daily News



Hospital facing tough year, but should end with cash in bank

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Daily News

With state budget cuts and rising unemployment, its leaders say Goodland Regional Medical Center is facing a difficult but not crushing year.

The hospital's finances also are influenced by the obligation to provide care whether or not patients can pay for it, says Administrator Jay Jolly, purchasing equipment to keep up with technology and keeping the emergency room available at all hours.

The hospital's board approved a budget for next year on Dec. 20, that will leave the hospital with a \$339,995 net loss next year if all goes as planned. That seems huge, but administrators

say it's mostly a paper loss. Because the hospital expects to have \$845,000 in depreciation expense, Jolly said, it will have a positive cash flow approaching half a million.

The depreciation represents part of the expense for equipment bought in previous years, which is spread out over the life of the equipment. Cash flow represents when the actual money goes out.

Some of the hospital's recent equipment purchases have been investments for the future, the administrator said, but it's not just recent equipment purchases that affect the hospital's budget.

The large depreciation, said Andy Laue, the chief financial officer, is the

result of spending large amounts in the past on equipment. A lot of hospitals have not kept up with the latest technology that way, he said.

"If we had not done that," Jolly said, "we could be looking at breaking even."

Facing a projected loss of more than half a million dollars by the end of this year, administrators said they have sought ways to increase revenue and cut costs. The hospital raised ambulance fees and began charging professional fees for nurse practitioners in the emergency room in October and increased emergency room procedure charges in November. Those hikes should bring in an extra \$150,000 next year, Laue said.

The hospital expects to bring in an additional \$73,000 for increased radiology and laboratory charges and Medicare inpatient diagnosis-related groups charges. Medicare determines what the length a patient's stay in the hospital should be, according to the patient's diagnosis, and pays accordingly.

Planned changes in room rates and intensive care charges should bring in another \$63,000. The center charges lower room rates compared to other area hospitals, said Laue, less than half of what some charge.

The hospital expects to reduce expenses by \$315,000, including \$191,700 for reduction of work hours. That means possibly not filling seven

full-time positions when they become available over the year and spreading the responsibilities out among others.

The state's budget cuts mean cuts in Medicaid, the federal-state program which helps pay for health care for the poor and disadvantaged, Jolly said, so that means less money paid to hospitals. The hospital is anticipating a 10 percent cut from the program, he said.

Medicare, the federal program which covers the elderly, is already leaving the hospital short, he said, as they have a policy of paying only 83 percent of what they consider to be the cost of care, even when the care actually costs more

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