

Plans moving forward on gas pipeline

Plans are moving forward for the 380-mile gas pipeline that will cut across the southern corner of Sherman County as it runs from Wyoming to north of Greensburg. Last Tuesday, officials from El Paso talk with Sherman County commissioners about the construction process. John Wilson and Lynn Christensen of El Paso said the plans are moving forward as expected, with construction to begin next year about mid-summer. Commissioners Chuck Thomas

and Kevin Rasure were at a meeting in Burlington on the pipeline several months ago, and had an understanding of what the project was all about. The construction plan is to split the project into three sections of about 120 miles each. With three contractors laying the 30-inch pipe, the El Paso officials said, it should be completed by the end of 2004. Rasure said the main concern of the county will be the roads that have to be crossed in the southwestern part of the county.

Curt Way, public works manager, said he had met with representatives of the gas company about the roads. They need to apply to him for a permit to lay the pipeline across any roads. Christensen said he wanted to meet with Way about some of the specific roads, and felt that in some cases it may be better to cut through them rather than boring under. He told the commissioners they would have a traffic plan and signs as required in the state flagging plan.

Way said he would consider allowing more roads to be cut if the company presented an adequate compaction plan. He asked if they would go deeper on boring under the road or cutting through it. Christensen said that was not necessarily true because of the safety requirements of the boring pits. He said it is possible a cut could be made deeper. He said the company plans to have at least four feet from the bottom of the barrow ditch to the top of the pipe.

Wilson said they would have any one road closed for no more than a day, or to provide some way around while the cut is made. Christensen said they are on their timeline, and should be ready to approve the contracts by this time next year. He said all the landowners in Sherman County have been cooperative and are signed up. The construction phase is expected to bring a large crew to the area, and probably give Kyle Railroad some business hauling in the

pipe sections. Christensen said once the contractors are in place, they are expected to lay about two miles of pipe per day, and the whole process should take less than six months. He said the crews will work six 10-hour days, and they will work longer if a special section needs to be completed. The commissioners said they would leave the details up to Way, who met with the El Paso representatives after the commission meeting.

Festival considers a new location

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News

The rattlesnake festival that has been in Sharon Springs for the past 12 years is considering a move, and the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau board Friday endorsed inviting the festival to Goodland. Justin Bentzinger, interim Chamber of Commerce manager, said that Judy Withers of Sharon Springs has approached the Chamber about moving the rattlesnake festival to Goodland. "We have a plan to develop Settlers Day into a spring event," Bentzinger said, "and the rattlesnake festival would be a good draw. "Settlers Day is already on the event calendars even though it did not happen this year. We have been talking to other groups who would be interested in participating, such as the Sunflower Spinners tractor group, who look for places to display their antique tractors. "We know that the snakes are a popular attraction, and think that they could be put up at the fairgrounds, with events to bring people downtown as well."

Donna Price, visitor bureau director, said the rattlesnake people have been looking to move out of Sharon Springs and that this is not the first time they had approached the bureau about moving to Goodland. Price said that the name of the event has been changed from Rattlesnake Roundup to Rattlesnake Festival because it is more of an educational effort and the snakes are not being killed as in the past. She said the group's board will meet Monday, and make a decision about whether and where to move. "We are not the only place they are considering," she said, "but we do have the advantage of the I-70 traffic."

The other locations are south of Sharon Springs, including Ulysses and Lakin.

Arlo Hansen of Sinclair Service Station made a motion to endorse the Settlers Day plan and welcoming the rattlesnake festival. The motion was seconded by Judy Siruta and passed unanimously. Bentzinger was introduced by Chairman Dale Neill. He told the board about upcoming Chamber programs and ask it to continue support of Freedom Fest on July 4. "We are going to look for a different way to raise the money for Freedom Fest," he said. "Rather than going back to the businesses, we are going to charge a \$1 gate admission to see the fireworks, and ask for more money from the city and county.

"We will have Chamber board members flipping burgers beginning at 5:30 p.m. We hope people will buy their burgers and this will help with the cost. "These are the highest fireworks in Kansas. If anybody wants to help, we would appreciate that." After Bentzinger left, the meeting the board approved donating \$500 to the fireworks on a motion by Hanse, seconded by Judy Siruta of Comfort Inn. The vote was unanimous. Bentzinger said they have received over 200 vendor requests for the Flatlander Fall Festival. The Kansas National Guard is planning to have a drug enforcement helicopter at the show in September. "They will have to get permission from the city to land the helicopter on Main," he said. Carolyn Applegate, economic development director, asked the board for a letter of endorsement in the effort to have Goodland named a control city for highway signs on I-70. She said the city's application is

being supported by Rep. Verlyn Osborne, who has felt that Goodland should be a control city because of its location. He will hand carry the papers in Topeka.

"We are the gate keeper for the highway in incimate weather," Applegate said, adding that she has been gathering information for the control city application.

"We have to let the highway officials know the motels and facilities are willing to help handle the needs of the travelers in any type of emergency," she said.

With the designation, Goodland would appear on designated highway signs between Salina and Denver.

Siruta made the motion to endorse the effort, seconded by Hansen. The motion passed unanimously.

Price reported that the guest tax which supports the bureau was up 4 percent through April and was up 36 percent for the month. For the first four months, the guest tax has brought in \$18,327, she said.

In other business, the board:

- Approved changing the distribution of the Goodland Visitors Guide and dropping several locations south on I-35 and in southeast Kansas. Price suggested the change for at least a year because they were not seeing the use in this area as much as along the I-70 corridor. A motion by Elaine Morrow of the Super 8 Motel passed unanimously.
- Heard Price report there had been a good response from the recent FAM tour, which brought travel business people to the city. These are the people who are in contact with the tourists seeking information to plan trips, she said.
- Heard that Price is updating the city web site's calendar of events.
- Approved payment of bills totaling \$9,731. A motion by Siruta and seconded by Marilyn Collett of Butterfly Aviation passed.

Keeping youngsters safe



Kansas Highway Patrol officer Joe Greene checked the safety of Britney Pummer, 2, in her car seat at Wal-Mart on Friday evening as part of the special car seat safety program. Photo by Liz West / The Goodland Star-News


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student of the week



Name: Jennifer A. Enfield
Parents: Marie and Richard Johnson
Grade: Sophomore
Age: 17
We've nominated this student because: of Jennifer's dedication to marketing and DECA. Jennifer and her partner Kelsey Leiker placed third with their Public Relations Project at the Kansas State DECA Career Development Conference. Jennifer is the type of student and club member who completes all her work in an excellent manner and meets the deadlines set for her.

Student Comment: My favorite aspect of school life is block scheduling. I enjoy the fact that I only have to worry about four classes a day, except on Mondays. My favorite classes are art and marketing. I will always remember the dumb things that happen outside of school like "I Smell PIZZA."
Activities involved in at school: DECA, basketball, cross country, Black and Gold Choir, art and FCCLA
My choice of movies, books, and games: I enjoy listening to all types of music. I enjoyed reading "Lord of the Rings." The games I enjoy are the ones that Doug makes up for youth group.
After I leave Goodland High School I intend to ...: attend a college to become a counselor.
And 10 years from now, I think I'll be: Have my own counseling office and help a lot of people solve their problems.
Favorite Quote: "When one door closes, another opens."

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