

weather report

28°

noon Monday

Today
 • Sunset, 5:04 p.m.
Wednesday
 • Sunrise, 6:55 a.m.
 • Sunset, 5:05 p.m.

Midday Conditions
 • Soil temperature 25 degrees
 • Humidity 60 percent
 • Sky sunny
 • Winds northwest at 18 mph
 • Barometer 30.13 inches and falling
 • Record High today 72° (1986)
 • Record Low today -15° (1918)

Last 24 Hours*
 High Sunday 34°
 Low Monday 11°
 Precipitation —
 This month .54
 Year to date .54
 Above normal .14 of an inch

The Topside Forecast
 Today: Partly cloudy, high near 26, low near 13. Scattered flurries.

Extended Forecast
 Wednesday: Partly cloudy, high near 31, low near 10. Thursday: A 30 percent chance snow. Mostly cloudy, high near 20, low around 5. Friday: Saturday: Partly cloudy, high near 25, low near 9. Sunday: Mostly sunny, high near 34.
 (National Weather Service)
 Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
 * Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon
 Wheat — \$4.28 bushel
 Posted county price — \$4.44
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 Corn — \$3.88 bushel
 Posted county price — \$3.67
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 Milo — \$3.65 bushel
 Soybeans — \$6.19 bushel
 Posted county price — \$6.21
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 Millet — \$7 hundredweight
 Sunflowers
 NuSun crop — \$14.25
 Pinto beans — \$19 (new crop)
 (Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



Cowboys beat Oberlin
 Cowboys Travis Angelos (left) and Tanner Smith went after a rebound Friday against the Oberlin Red Devils. The Cowboys won 82-58. Tonight the Cowboys are in Garden City. See story, photo on Page 10.

Veterans office wants proposals

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Three High Plains communities vying for a veterans outreach clinic will be asked to present reasons in February why the Denver Veterans Affairs office should pick their town to open a clinic.

Goodland, Burlington and Yuma, Colo. received word in December their towns were the short list for a new outreach clinic to serve the nine-county area on the eastern edge of Colorado and counties on the western edge of Kansas.

Congressman Jerry Moran said Friday he had talked to Dr. Lawrence Biro, director of the Veterans Affairs Denver region, earlier in the week, and Biro said a decision on the location has not been made.

"He told me the office has received lots of input from people, especially in Goodland," Moran said. "I said I was glad to hear there was interest being shown, and said the people in Goodland had been working on this for several years."

"I told him Goodland would be a great place for a clinic."

Moran said Biro told him the next step would be to ask each of the communities to put together a presentation for the Denver Veterans Affairs about what the community

can do to help open a clinic.

Moran said the request would be sent out to Goodland, Burlington and Yuma in mid-February. The expectation is the communities will be given about a month to provide a presentation to the Denver regional office, and that a decision should be made after those have been reviewed.

Moran said the clinic would be staffed by two people, and would not be a traveling clinic as he first thought.

"Biro said he will be interested in what each community and hospital can offer to assist in opening a clinic," Moran said. "I am pleased with the decision to open a new clinic, and will do everything I can to see Goodland be successful."

"It is a better thing for our rural veterans to have a new outreach clinic, no matter where it is located."

Moran said Biro told him the Colorado communities are putting a push on to have the clinic based in one of their towns.

Moran said he told Brenda McCants, director of marketing and volunteer services at Goodland Regional Medical Center about his conversation with Biro.

Jay Jolly, hospital administrator said Saturday he had not talked to Moran, but knew that McCants had talked to him or someone

from his staff.

"We will be looking for the request from Denver," Jolly said. "It is probably like applying for a grant and we will have to see what they are asking for."

"I think we can do a good job, but part of it will depend on exactly what they are planning to do in the clinic, and if there will be a way to partner with our hospital staff."

Jolly said it would be great if the Veterans Affairs would allow the veterans to use the services and doctors at the hospital. He said the level of service at the clinic would depend on what the two people are who are to staff it whether they are both nurses or a mid-level practitioner and a nurse.

"When we began working on this clinic and had Biro come to Goodland we knew it was going to be several years before it became a reality," Moran said.

Moran helped host a forum at the Goodland Veterans of Foreign Wars hall in August 2004 when over 400 people gathered to talk to Biro about opening a community veterans' clinic.

Dr. Biro said it was the largest veterans meeting he has seen in the seven years he has been working for Veterans Affairs.

At the forum Biro said the top priority was building a new hospital in Denver, and then three community based clinics in Salt Lake

City and two in Montana.

"I am sorry that none of these are out here," Biro said to the audience. "I have to get these open, and then look at the next area to add community clinics."

"It will take some time. Immediately, the answer is that the hospital is there in Denver, and we can handle more veterans."

"We're there. We're working on expanding the service."

The announcement about the new community clinic came from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson in Washington in mid-December.

The agency said 4,000 veterans in the nine-county area, the new clinic will serve, are more than an hour's drive from a government health care. Because 44 percent of the area's population is 65 or older, it is difficult for many to visit a distant facility, especially in the winter, Nicholson said.

Veterans are being urged to call the regional office in Denver at (866) 301-9626 to register their support for the Goodland Regional Medical Center.

"We are not taking a vote," said Astrid Frier, Denver Veterans Affairs office manager Wednesday, "but we are getting a lot of calls especially from the Goodland area. I don't think they have made a decision yet."

Frontier planning merger meeting

Goodland Frontier Equity Co-op members will have an informational meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday at the Goodland Elks Lodge on the proposed merger between Frontier and Oakley-based CO-AG Inc.

CO-AG's meeting was Monday at the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, 703 W. Second, Oakley.

Voting will take place on from 4 to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at the Elks Lodge in Goodland and 3 to 5 p.m. at the service center in Oakley. It will take a two-thirds majority of the members voting of each cooperative for the merger to pass. If approved, the merger would take place on Thursday, March 1.

Both Frontier and CO-AG are farmer-owned cooperatives of roughly equal size. Frontier did around \$46 million dollars in business in the past year and CO-AG did \$43 million.

Frontier and CO-AG have both grain, fertilizer, chemical, custom application, seed, feed, petroleum and shop facilities. Frontier has a convenience store and a Carquest parts store. CO-AG has a man in Salina who helps find markets for grain that is stored on the farm and

an Internet and computer maintenance business in Oakley. They also do aerial crop spraying out of Oakley.

Frontier has elevators in Bird City, Brewster, Goodland and Ruleton, and fertilizer operations in Bird City, McDonald and Atwood.

CO-AG has elevators in Breton, Grinnell, Menlo, Mingo, Page City, Seguin, Winona and Oakley.

Frontier came into being when Goodland Co-op bought out the Brewster and Bird City co-ops in the 1990s, said Brian Linin, chief financial officer. The Atwood petroleum co-op became part of Frontier in July.

CO-AG was formed in 1994 with the merger of co-ops in Grinnell, Menlo and Rexford.

CO-AG approached Frontier in October to look at working together, said Brad Ray, head of information technology for the Oakley-based firm. They had an interim manager and knew he did not intend to stay.

It became apparent that merging would be the best, he said, after the accounting firm Lindburg & Vogel of Hays did a thorough study of the companies and recommended the merger.

County health fair Saturday morning

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

The Sherman County Health Fair will be from 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday at the Goodland Activities Center.

Results will be available for the blood draws done at Goodland Regional Medical Center from Jan. 15 through 19.

There will be an exhibition by former Harlem Globetrotter "Gator" Rivers and door prizes given every hour.

Booths will offer information on everything from diet and nutrition to drug prevention and mentors.

Several hospital departments will be represented at the fair, said Brenda McCants, director of marketing and volunteer services; Dr. Mark Wahlmeier will do glaucoma screenings, and the University of Kansas Medical Center outreach program will have a booth.

The hospital's radiology department will provide carotid artery screenings, and body fat testing and other screenings will be available as well.

"I think we have some great services available to the public," McCants said, "and they're all free except the cost of the blood screenings."

There will be a play area for kids

at the fair, she said, and information for young people on diet, exercise and nutrition.

Rivers is coming out from St. Louis to do an exhibition of his basketball-handling skills. He always supports rural health care, McCants said, and is volunteering his time to be here.

Vendors who have registered so far are Doctors Morrison and Wahlmeier, Regional Prevention Center, Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, TFI Family Services, Koons Funeral Home, Heartland Rural Counseling Services, Northwest Kansas Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sherman County and Currier Drug. To register for a booth, call Steve Jimenez at 890-7242. There is no charge.

The Sherman County Health Care Committee organizes the fair, McCants said, adding that besides herself, members are Jimenez, Goodland Activities Center administrator; Dorendo Harrell, director, and Sheryl Ketter, office manager, of the Sherman County Health Department; LaDonna Frerichs, agent assistant at the Sunflower Extension District; and Sarah Linton, dietitian, and Karen Hooker, director of respiratory therapy, at the hospital.

Wind blown snowscapes



Winds have sculpted the piles of snow at Goodland's Renner Field where the runway lights barely poke out over the blanket of snow. The National Weather Service forecast does not have more than a chance of snow through the rest of the week, but the temperatures will hardly get warm enough to melt more of the existing snow.
 Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

City adds buildings to state's list of conceal-carry restrictions

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The state conceal-carry law has been in effect for less than a month, and Goodland has joined a list of cities passing ordinances adding city buildings and parks to the places where firearms are prohibited.

City Manager Wayne Hill said the state law has a list of public places where carrying of concealed handguns are prohibited, but he said that list did not include some of the city buildings.

The city commissioners talked about posting signs in all the city

buildings to indicate concealed weapons are not allowed when they approved an ordinance at their meeting last Monday.

Commissioner Josh Dechant of Bankwest, said the Kansas Bankers Association was recommending banks post the signs to remind people that concealed weapons are not allowed.

Dechant said it would be good for the city to post signs on the buildings where firearms are not allowed.

Commissioner Dave Daniels asked about posting signs at the city parks, and asked if the ban on con-

cealed weapons could be enforced without posting signs.

"Ignorance of the law is not a defense," City Attorney Jeff Mason said.

Hill said he thought there were existing places at the parks where signs could be posted.

Hutchison, Wichita, Derby and Leawood are among other cities which have passed local ordinances restricting where concealed weapons are allowed.

Hill said the state law covered the