

weather  
report

59°

noon  
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 7:35 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 5:52 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:36 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 41 degrees
- Humidity 43 percent
- Sky mostly sunny
- Winds west at 10 mph
- Barometer 29.97 inches and falling

- Record High today 90° (1953)
- Record Low today 22° (1994)

Last 24 Hours\*

High Wednesday	46°
Low Thursday	30°
Precipitation	—
This month	2.05
Year to date	5.26
Above Normal	2.05 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: A 20 percent chance of showers before noon. Partly cloudy, high near 63, low around 47.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Mostly sunny, high near 77, low around 45. Sunday: Sunny, high near 81, low around 48. Monday: Mostly sunny, high near 82, low around 48. Tuesday: Mostly sunny, high near 78, low around 47. Wednesday: Partly cloudy, high near 75.

(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local  
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.72 bushel  
Posted county price — \$4.73  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Corn — \$3.53 bushel  
Posted county price — \$3.46  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Milo — \$3.28 bushel  
Soybeans — \$6.26 bushel  
Posted county price — \$6.33  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Millet — \$7 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
NuSun crop — \$16.10  
Pinto beans — \$25 (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



Goodland  
relays today

Junior Grant Wilkens launched an attempt in pole vault at the Norton Invitational Monday. He finished third with an 11-foot, 6-inch, leap. Goodland will host to the Tri-State Relays at 2 p.m. today. See story, photo on Page 11.

# Storm spawns batch of tornadoes

By Tom Betz

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A slow-moving thunderstorm spawned at least a half dozen tornadoes Monday evening, the National Weather Service office in Goodland said, tracking northeast from Sharon Springs to Herndon and on into Nebraska.

At least two tornadoes caused damage, and weather experts were out looking for signs of more. Flooding was reported in the Herndon area on the Beaver Creek and near McCook, where water washed over the railroad.

Jerry Killingsworth, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland, said the first tornado struck five miles southeast of Brewster about 8:50 p.m., destroying a grain bin and causing some minor damage

to a house and trees.

The second, about 13 miles south-southeast of Atwood, rated an EF1, at the lower end of the Enhanced Fujita scale. Tornadoes are rated 0-5 on the amount of damage they cause.

The tornado tore the roof off a house, snapped six power poles and damaged some outbuildings.

Killingsworth said the second twister was later than the first, between 9 and 9:30 p.m. Wet roads and flooding have made it difficult to do damage assessment, he said, adding that forecasters are looking for signs of more tornadoes.

“We think there were ... up to a half-dozen,” he said.

The storm spawning the tornadoes started at Sharon Springs and went along a line northeast to Herndon, then into Nebraska, passing east of McCook. Radar indicated rainfall of up to 5-6 inches along the mostly rural path of the slow-moving storm, with some flooding reported between Herndon and McCook.

A strong supercell thunderstorm formed south of Sharon Springs about 6 p.m., Killingsworth said, and the first of several tornadoes were sighted on the ground 3 miles east of Sharon Springs at 6:50 p.m. by a trained weather spotter.

The tornado was moving slowly northeast and described by a weather service employee as a column about 8 miles northeast of Sharon Springs. The tornado was described as going

into a rope formation about 7:12 p.m. The employee reported the tornado lifted at 7:18 p.m.

The storm continued to move slowly northeast growing in size and intensity as it neared the Sherman County line about 7:30 p.m. In the growing darkness the weather spotters were unable to confirm if the tornado had reformed, but based on the radar images the tornado could have been rain wrapped and not easily visible.

The storm moved northeast into Thomas County, and Jim Engel, Thomas County emergency manager, reported the tornado damage five miles southeast of Brewster at 8:50 p.m.

See STORM, Page 11

## Slow-moving rain soaks Tri-state area

Thunderstorms that developed along a slow-moving weather front dropped over three inches of rain in eastern Colorado and northwestern Kansas on Monday and Tuesday.

Brad Mickelson, meteorologist at the National Weather Service office in Goodland, said Thursday morning the storms dropped 3.35 inches of rain in Stratton, Colo., over a two-day period through 7 a.m. Wednesday.

He said that was the highest amount from official reporting stations. He said Yuma, Colo. reported 3.72 inches from Saturday through Wednesday.

Goodland reported .02 of an inch on Monday, and a total of .39 for Tuesday and Wednesday, putting the total moisture for the year to date at 5.26 inches. April's total moisture is 2.05 inches, which Mickelson said is .91 inches above normal for the month and 2.05 inches above normal for the year.

Meteorologist Jerry Killingsworth Thursday morning provided other area rain reports compiled for all the storms from Saturday through Wednesday:

Goodland, 1.40 inches.

Atwood, 5.08 inches (two miles southwest).

Colby, 2.22 inches (one mile southwest).

Sharon Springs, 1.27 inches.

Burlington, .91 inches.

Benkelman, 1.86 inches.

Oberlin, 2.31 inches.

St. Francis, .56 inches (eight miles northwest).

Mickelson said the number of storms appears heavier than normal, and that the area may be in for a record number if the trend continues.

He said the weather history for Thursday snow began in the evening in 1994 and continued into the next day. The storm left five inches of snow in Goodland and dropped temperatures near 30 degrees.

The forecast for today includes a 20 percent chance of showers before noon. Partly cloudy, with a high near 63. Breezy, with a north wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.

It'll be warmers over the weekend, with the high about 77 Saturday and 81 on Sunday. Temperatures should cool to the mid-70s by next week.

## Balloon carries card more than 150 miles

A card attached to a balloon that was released at the Goodland Weather Bureau's open house on Saturday, Oct. 28, came back through the mail after a 150-mile trip to southern Kansas.

Students at the open house got to fill out a card that was attached to the balloon. The card asked that anyone finding the card fill in the location and mail the card back to the child.

The card had been filled out by Peyton Sieck. Peyton, son of Mike and Teresa Sieck, is in Pat Thompson's first grade class at West Elementary School.



Sieck

“It was the first one we've gotten back,” said Scott Mentzer, meteorologist in charge at the weather station. “We launched about 100 balloons on that day. It made it 150 miles. Most don't make it very far.”

The note on the back of the returned card said, “Dear Peyton, I found this balloon on a ranch eight miles south of Greensburg, Kan., while fixing fence. It must have decided it was time to land! Sincerely, Terrell.”

Greensburg is on U.S. 54, about 100 miles west of Wichita.

## Home and garden show will fill Max Jones floor

The 20th annual Home and Garden Show this weekend at Max Jones Fieldhouse will feature booths by more than 20 businesses, with something for everyone.

The show will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Each year, more than 5,000 people come to the show, said Marty Melia, owner of KLOE/KKCI/KWGB radio, which organizes the free event.

They'll find all kinds of home improvement items and area businesses with their products and services on display he said.

Booths registered so far include Cal Spa's, Fotogirl, American Communications, Goodland Greenline, Lifetime Cookware, S&T Commu-

nications, *The Goodland Star-News*, Sears, Bubba's Meat Block, Prairie Rose Floral, Tri-State Spa's, Cochran Farm Supply, Williams Fresh Floral, Sherman County Foundation, Electrolux, Wolf Creek Accents, Northwest Kansas Technical College, Eagle Cable Television and Internet, Creative Curbing, Herl Chevrolet and Fitzgibbons Inc.

Melia said the show is always entertaining.

This will be the 20th year it has been held in the Max Jones. The show has been going for about 30 years, Melia said, and every year is different.

“We get people from all over the area, both exhibitors and attendees. We feel this is truly an area show,” Melia said.

## Robot ramble...



Goodland High School junior Jonathan McClung adjusted the weight in a box for his and Heidi Yonkey's robot in robot ramble for the state Science Olympiad at Wichita State University. Robot ramble is where students design and build a robot capable of performing a task. See story and another photo on Page 9.

Photo by Dennis Friedrichs/Goodland High School

## Thunderstorms interrupt hospital's board meeting

By Sharon Corcoran

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The Goodland Regional Medical Center board meeting Monday barely got started when the members were rousted by storm warnings and hospital officials had to go help move patients to safety.

Most of the items on the agenda will wait until the May meeting, said Administrator Jay Jolly; but a quick noon meeting may be called if a couple of items need to be addressed.

The hospital's May meeting will be delayed until the first week of June, he said, since the last Monday is Memorial Day. It makes sense to wait instead of holding the meeting early, he said, since the auditors will be available in June and their report can be combined with the meeting.

The board met at 6:40 p.m., following a finance committee meeting, and approved the agenda, minutes from last meeting and the financial reports before adjourning the meeting to take cover from the storm.

Board members had the television in the small board room tuned to the weather report while meeting in the adjacent large board room.

They kept one ear on the weather while listening to Chief Financial Officer Jim Precht's report, which showed a small gain for the quarter. When a warning to take cover from tornadoes was issued on television, they quickly approved the financial reports and adjourned the meeting.

Board members went home while hospital officials and staff helped move patients. When there's a tornado warning, but the funnel isn't close, said Administrative Assistant Ericka Wieck, patients (in their beds) are moved from their rooms into the hall and the doors to the rooms are shut.

When the warning was sounded Monday, she said, everyone on duty had to report to the nursing station to help with patient evacuation. If the storm had gotten closer, she said, they would have taken the patients to the basement.

The hospital has about \$900,000 in certificates of deposit, Precht said, money which is not totally committed. It's enough, he said, that in five years the hospital could liquidate its industrial revenue bonds if interest rates go too high.

The hospital used the bonds to refinance over \$1,500,000 in debts in 2004, and they were to be paid over 10 years.

The hospital also has over \$2 million in funded reserves and donation accounts, Precht said.

The hospital's balance sheet for March shows \$3,558,433 in cash and investments and \$2,755,448 in patient accounts receivable less allowances for chargeoffs of \$1,436,500. Factoring in money due from third-party payers, other receivables, inventories and prepaid expenses, current assets total \$272,207, Precht said.

The hospital has \$499,185 in ac-

counts payable, \$512,620 in accrued payroll and withholdings, \$143,320 in current maturities of long-term debt and \$196,916 in deferred revenue, making total current liabilities of \$1,352,041.

There was a \$119,162 net gain on the balance sheet for March, \$114,234 in February and \$253,390 in January.

On the statement of revenue and expenses, the hospital had \$1,401,075 in gross patient revenue with \$507,581 in deductions for \$893,494 in net patient services.

Expenses totaled \$944,059 and included \$350,038 in salaries and wages, \$82,377 in employee benefits, \$123,801 in professional fees, \$247,744 in supplies, \$45,876 in purchased services, \$36,186 in utilities \$14,000 depreciation, \$5,100 lease expense, \$4,571 interest, \$4,347 insurance, (\$2,300) provision for bad debt and \$32,319 other.

The statement showed a \$37,983 loss from operations. With \$32,550 in county appropriations, \$17,728 interest income, \$801 other and \$10 gain on sale of assets, the hospital had \$51,089 net non operating gains and a \$13,106 net gain.

The Goodland Family Health Center had \$135,864 in gross patient revenue, \$26,516 in deductions for \$109,348 in operating revenue.

With expenses of \$117,526, there was an \$8,178 loss from operations, which was also the net loss for March.