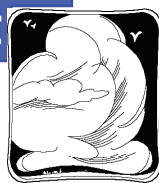


## weather report

**30°**  
noon  
Thursday



### Today

• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

### Saturday

• Sunrise, 6:59 a.m.

• Sunset, 4:25 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 33 degrees
- Humidity 75 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds northwest 5 mph
- Barometer 30.22 inches and steady
- Record High today 66° (1962)
- Record Low today -16° (1963)

### Last 24 Hours\*

High Wednesday	25°
Low Wednesday	14°
Precipitation	none
This month	.64
Year to date	14.70
Below normal	4.87 inches

### The Topside Forecast

Today: Cloudy with a 70 percent chance of snow, a high near 25, a low around 9, winds out of the east at 10 mph, and a possible accumulation of one to three inches. Saturday: Mostly sunny with a high near 30 and a low around 13.

### Extended Forecast

Sunday: Mostly sunny with a high near 37 and a low around 16. Monday: Mostly sunny with a high near 41 and a low around 19. (National Weather Service) Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz. \*Readings taken at 7 a.m.

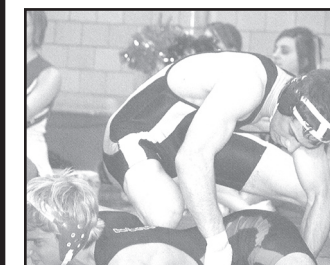
## local markets

### Noon

Wheat — \$8.89 bushel
Posted county price — \$9.02
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Corn — \$3.88 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.96
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Milo — \$3.67 bushel
Soybeans — \$10 bushel
Posted county price — \$10.57
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Millet — \$7 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$17.90 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Confection — \$30/\$19 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$25 (new crop)
(Markets by Scouar Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

## inside today

More local news, views from your Goodland Star-News



## Cowboys place seventh

Cowboys Senior A.J. Stephens tried to flip over a Hoxie Indian during the Goodland vs. Hoxie dual at the Colby Invitational Wrestling Tournament, held Friday and Saturday. The Cowboys finished third in their pool, and seventh in the tournament. See photo, story on Page 10.

# Rumors fly about tickets given to hunters

By Sharon Corcoran

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Rumors abound. The state game warden supposedly has written as many as 35 tickets in one weekend, driving some out-of-town hunters to vow that they'll never come back.

One landowner said that he feels the conservation officer here is "too active." Others said he writes tickets for violations that "don't mean anything." But no one seems to want to make any accusations for the record.

The truth? A check of court records show just 10 fish-and-game tickets written in Sherman County this fall, with seven fines paid. All of the seven paid went to out-of-state hunters. Most were for hunting from a vehicle, long considered both unsafe and illegal.

Officer Mike Hopper said he is just doing his job, upholding the law and protecting wildlife — something he admits he's passionate about.

Sherman County District Court records show seven fines paid so far this hunting season, and Hopper said he has written three tickets that have not been settled in Sherman and one that is pending in Cheyenne County.

So far paid in the court are four fines against a Colorado party for violations on Nov. 3: Gregory James Hill, 56, Aurora; Bradley

## Rattlesnake story won't die

Apparently, some hunting rumors refuse to die.

One heard recently is that Wildlife Conservation Officer Mike Hopper gave a ticket for hunting without a license to a man who shot a rattlesnake in the road. Someone said he heard the rumor at the eye doctor's office.

Hopper said he heard that story three years ago from some hunters he was writing tickets to. The men complained they heard he arrested someone for shooting a rattlesnake in the road.

Hopper said he asked when it was supposed to have happened and found it was

during a time when he was living in Wyoming. He said the hunters were sure he was the one who did it and wouldn't believe that he wasn't even in Kansas at the time.

Hopper said he was surprised when told the story is still circulating and had been made to sound recent.

The game warden said he wouldn't write a ticket for shooting a rattlesnake or even a couple. If you're indiscriminately killing wildlife, he said, then that's different — you would get a ticket.

He said he has had questions about

See SNAKE, Page 9

Jacob Hughes, 21, and Donald Rex Hughes, 55, Lakewood; and David Rhine Kirchner, 58, Englewood, all for \$216 for "general violations."

Paid for violations on Nov. 11 were Larry C. Losch, 26, Sherman Dale, Pa., and Pedro J. Saldarriga, 28, Morrison, Colo., \$216 each for "taking or dealing in wildlife," and Jacob T. Versailles, 22, Georgetown, Colo., \$216 for "methods of taking wildlife."

Hopper said the fines on Nov. 3 were all for

pursuing game with a motor vehicle, as were Versailles' and Losch's. And Saldarriga got a ticket for shooting hen pheasants, he said. The court record says all pleaded guilty, and none went to court to fight the tickets.

If the hunters felt the tickets weren't deserved, Hopper pointed out, they have a right to fight them in court, yet none of them did.

"The most I've written in one weekend this year was four," he added.

He said this year is unusual in that he has

written fewer tickets than in past years and in that a high percentage of this year's tickets were to out-of-state hunters. He said that normally only about 12 percent of his tickets are written to hunters from out of state.

This year, all the seven paid were to hunters from out of state, and two of the three pending tickets were as well. Hopper said he also forwarded five violations of Kansas hunters to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and it will be up to them whether or not to file tickets. He has also written three tickets to Kansas residents for traffic violations.

Last year, there was one big hunting party that got tickets, he said, and it's not unusual with true poachers to write as many as 15 tickets to just three hunters. Poachers don't usually just have one violation each, he said; if they don't have a license, a lot of times they are also hunting on someone's property without permission, pursuing game with a vehicle, driving while intoxicated, using ammunition that's not allowed for the game they're hunting and even transporting an open container of alcohol.

Thirty-five tickets might be written in one weekend, he said, but only in an area with a lot of hunters and seven or eight game wardens, for example, at Cheyenne Bottoms, near

See TICKETS, Page 9

# \$1,200 drawing Saturday

One lucky person will win the \$1,200 grand prize at 1 p.m. on Saturday in Goodland merchants' big Christmas on Us drawing at 12th Street just east of Main, across from the Sherman Theatre.

Shoppers can continue to gather tickets to win the \$1,200 until about 5 p.m. today. All the tickets will be collected this afternoon to be added to those from the past weeks for the grand-prize drawing.

Ten \$50 instant prizes have been given out over the past four weeks, and the drawing will give someone who is present a Christmas bonus of \$1,200 in scrip to spend at participating merchants.

This include Garcia's Home Improvement, Elliott's Inc., American Communications, Mann's Jewelry, Klip'n Kurl, McClung's Appliance, Orscheln Farm and Home Supply, Antique Warehouse, the Stitch-n-Place, the Conservatory Salon and The Star-News.

Participating businesses will hand out one ticket for every \$10 a customer spends, with a limit of 250 tickets per transaction. If you ask at The Star-News office, we'll give you one free ticket each week. No purchase is required to win.

The customer takes half of each ticket and the other side is dropped into gift-wrapped collection boxes, which are emptied at the end of the week into a large bin.

The contest simple enough, but there are a few rules.

- You must be 18 to participate.
- Employees of participating businesses are not eligible to win at their workplace, but can collect tickets from other sponsors. Star-News employees and their immediate family are not eligible.
- All prizes will be awarded in scrip, which can be spent only at participating businesses.
- Today is last day to collect tickets.

## Snow day fun



Snow closed Goodland schools for a second day on Wednesday, and kids took advantage of the sunny skies around mid-day to sled down the sides of the city pond at Pioneer Park. Sledders

included Coy, Chase and Dusty Johnson; James and Kennedy Dinkel; Derek, Britney and Jacob Brown; and Gerell, Shayla and Sianna Miller.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

# County may create full-time fire chief position

By Tom Betz

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Sherman County commissioners and the Sherman County Rural Fire District board are talking about naming a full-time county fire chief to oversee all three stations.

Creation of the post and how it will be paid for will be one of the items on the agenda for the next commission meeting starting at 8 a.m. Tuesday.

Tom Rohr of Dependable Glass is the new chairman of the rural fire board, and he and Goodland Rural Fire Chief Alan David were at the

commission meeting on Nov. 30 to talk about hiring a full-time chief.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas said he felt it would be good to have one person in charge, but that each station would still have a chief.

"I guess we need to list the specific duties of that person," Thomas said.

"When did we agree to a full-time person?" asked Commissioner Kevin Rasure.

"We have not," Commissioner Mitch Tiede said. "The fire board talked about it and are feeling that is what they want to see — a full time

person — to do the paperwork. He would possibly be a head fire chief and would explain to the fire chiefs what they need to do to get the paperwork done.

"If we are all in agreement about having a full time person, Alan David is interested if we can negotiate something with him."

"How is it going to be paid?" Rasure asked.

"Have to come out of their budget," Thomas replied.

"That is what I am asking," Rasure said. "Where is it coming from?"

"Are you willing to offer this to David?" Thomas asked.

Rasure said the money is the big question for him. He asked if there is really enough work for a full-time person, and noted that the commissioners had talked about the city and county fire departments joining together.

"When they did not have a fire chief and fire department, they did not want to work with us," Thomas said.

"It was more of a takeover than a cooperative effort," Rasure replied.

"Maybe down the road, that can happen," Tiede said. "I think we need to get something done for our county and I'm thinking we are getting lax."

"I don't think we would have a problem filling a 40-hour week, with helping all three departments."

Rasure said he would like to talk about where the money would come from.

Tiede said the commissioners would have to come up with a salary range and find the money in the

See COUNTY, Page 9