

## weather report



**70°**  
noon  
Monday

### Today

- Sunset, 7:46 p.m.
- Wednesday**
- Sunrise, 5:41 a.m.
- Sunset, 7:47 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 56 degrees
- Humidity 51 percent
- Sky partly sunny
- Winds southwest 10-15 mph
- Barometer 30.05 inches and steady

- Record High today 95° (1934)
- Record Low today 28° (1917)

### Last 24 Hours\*

- High Sunday 75°
- Low Sunday 51°
- Precipitation none
- This month 0.18
- Year to date 2.22
- Below normal 1.71 inches

### The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms during the day and 60 percent at night, high near 80, winds out of the south at 15 mph and a low around 49. Wednesday: Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of scattered showers and thunderstorms, a high near 61, winds out of the north at 10 to 20 mph and a low around 43.

### Extended Forecast

Thursday: Partly sunny with a high near 70 and a low around 47. (National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

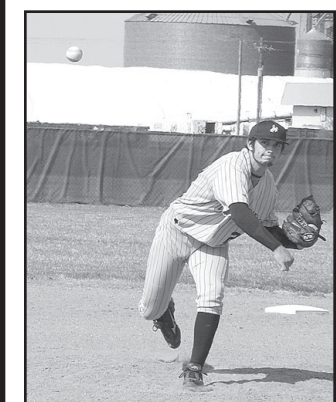
## local markets

### Noon

- Wheat — \$8.00 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$7.92
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Corn — \$5.70 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$5.67
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Milo — \$5.28 bushel
  - Soybeans — \$12.76 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$11.95
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Millet — \$7 hundredweight
  - Sunflowers
  - Oil current crop — \$17.90 cwt.
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Confection — \$30/\$20 cwt.
  - Pinto beans — \$32 (new crop)
- (Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

## inside today

More local news, views from your Goodland Star-News



## Cowboys win a game

Junior Brandon Rome pitched the first game against Holcomb on Thursday, April 24, at home. The Cowboys won a game over Belle Plain 9-7 at Hays on Friday. The Cowboys will be in Lakin on Thursday. See photo, story on Page 12.

# County at-large voting bill passes

By Tom Betz

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Sherman County citizens are one signature away from being able to vote on electing county commissioners at-large after an amended bill unanimously passed the Kansas House and Senate on Saturday.

The bill passed the Senate 38-0 and the House 128-0 during an extended session on Saturday, then moved on to the governor's office for her signature. If the bill is signed, the issue will be on the Sherman County ballot in November.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said Sunday she was pleased that the bill had passed.

The bill passed what appeared to be its

last major hurdle when the Senate approved an amended version 40-0 on March 27, but the House asked for a conference committee because of the Senate changes. The Legislature went into recess in early April, and Rep. Mike Burgess (R-Topeka), chairman of the conference committee, froze the bill because he'd heard all three county commissioners no longer supported it.

More than a dozen people crowded into the commissioners' meeting room April 8 to ask them to join to save the bill. After prodding from the audience, all three signed a letter asking for passage of the bill, allowing an election this fall.

Commissioners always have been are

selected from districts. They must live in the district they represent, and only voters in that district get a vote in commission elections. The bill would allow voters to authorize at-large elections.

The bill passed the house last March, but questions about the language kept it bottled up in committee until this year, when the commissioners asked Sen. Ralph Ostmeier (R-Grinnell) to try to get it passed. The Senate amended the original House bill and passed it unanimously March 27.

A new hurdle appeared when Burgess questioned the commitment of the commissioners. That prompted the visit to commissioners by taxpayers who want to vote on the issue.

With a room full of voters present in April, people questioned Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas about their apparent opposition to the bill. The citizens said they wanted a chance to put the issue on the November ballot and let the voters decide.

"The people want a unified effort," said Alan Townsend, a county farmer.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked Tiede why he had told legislators in Topeka he wanted the bill changed to keep the commissioner districts when that was not what the commissioners had voted to support after two open meetings this year and last year.

See BILL, Page 9

# Artist program change causes friction

By Sharon Corcoran

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Artisans displaying their work at the state-run Goodland Travel Information Center have been told they have to join a new program and pay \$250 a year — or move out.

So far, area artists, unable to deal with state standards, have chosen the latter, moving their works out.

The Kansas Travel and Tourism Division is pushing TakeKansasHome.com, a two-year pilot program that will allow vendors to display products at the center west of Goodland and sell them through a web site. The state has another travel information center at Belle Plain, but the program is being tested at the Goodland center before deciding whether to expand into other sites owned by the state.

Artists had been allowed to display examples of their work with their business cards at the center, said Donna Price, director of the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and then travelers would contact the artists and buy from them. With that arrangement, she said, the state didn't get a cut of the sales.

The new program has not gone over well with artists who make a few things by hand, she said, as opposed to making things in bulk. Some have found the fee a challenge, she said, and most have problems with the program's requirement that all orders be shipped within three days.



Mona Carver, supervisor at the Goodland Travel Information Center, arranged photographs by Dale K. Cole of Salina in the TakeKansasHome.com gift shop Thursday. The photos are among the works of Kansans displayed at the center for sale on the web site as part of the state Travel and Tourism division's pilot program.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Before, they displayed samples of their art, she said, and then people would order custom-made pieces. There is no way to finish a painting or hand-make a doll in 72 hours, she said.

Often visitors came to Goodland to meet with the artist after stopping at the travel center, Price said, and

that was a boon to businesses here. Once travelers came here to meet with an artist, she said, they usually stayed for lunch or dinner and shopping, sometimes even overnight.

"I know they did that to meet an Oakley artist, too," she said. "They went out into the country to look her up. It was good for all of northwest

Kansas and had an impact for the whole state.

"The items were by extremely talented people who represented Kansas well."

Goodland artist Marilyn Cooper, owner of WindWoman Originals, said she is disappointed in the program.

"Everyone is taking advantage of Kansas west of Hays except the people who live here," she said. "People in Topeka don't know anything about what goes on out here. They forget we are even here."

The center also displayed miniature replicas of the Victorian Ennis-Handy House in and of the bronze "Buffalo Bill" sculpture in Oakley, Price said. Both highlighted area attractions, she said, but now those things are gone, and no artists from this area plan to display their work.

The web site is maintained by Free Bird Business Solutions, which has a contract with the state. The business is owned by Claudia Larkin, former director of the department's Travel and Tourism Division.

Vendors interested in displaying their work can get an application from the travel center, which is on I-70 at mile marker 7 between Kanorado and Goodland, or e-mail Larkin at clarkin11@cox.net. They will have to submit a sample to be evaluated by a selection committee, a compact disk with three high-resolution images (300 dpi) taken from different angles of the product and a \$40 nonrefundable application fee.

If an item is chosen, the sample sent in will be displayed at the center; if not, it will be returned in the original shipping package. Products must carry a wholesale

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## Take Home Kansas seen as positive move

Though some area artists are unhappy, a spokesperson for the state Travel and Tourism Division says the TakeKansasHome.com program is good for artisans, travelers and the state.

The supervisor of the state Travel Information Center west of Goodland said she has heard positive comments about the on-line gift shop program, which features mostly artists from eastern Kansas.

The program helps both the artisans and travelers, said Regina Nicol, finance and visitor services manager of the division, part of the state Department of Commerce.

"What we recognized through research," she said, "is that the artist and the food producer didn't always have a way to get their products out there."

The service enhances the travel

experience, she said, since visitors can buy authentic products from Kansas while they are here and have things shipped to their home. Buying these things on-line doesn't take away from the experience, she said; it is easier to handle products when they are sent home. Travelers don't have to worry about whether it's packaged well or taking it out of the car when they stop for the night and putting it back in when they're ready to leave.

And once the program gets off the ground, she said, the gift shop and web site will include information about the places where the items are made and will encourage shoppers to visit those areas.

It's a good program, said Travel Center Supervisor Mona

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## Artist questions program costs

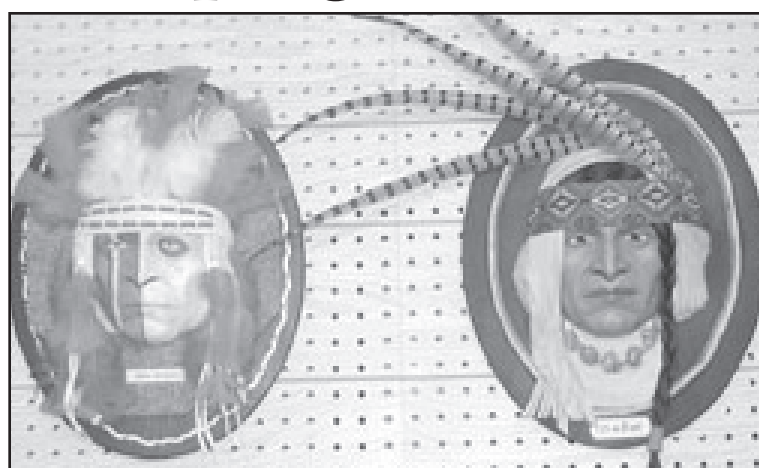
Kansas artists, primarily from the northwest region, had displayed work at the Goodland Travel Information center for free until they were told to make way for a state-sponsored "on-line shopping experience."

Some say they can't afford to participate in the new program, but one Goodland artist may yet join.

TakeKansasHome.com, created by Free Bird Business Solutions and the state Department of Commerce's Travel and Tourism Division, allows Kansas artisans to display a sample of their work at the travel center and sell their wares on-line.

The \$250-a-year fee and the required three-day shipping has caused problems for area artists, and some worry about the impact on tourism in the area of having only eastern Kansas artisans' work at the center.

No one from northwest Kansas is displayed out there now, said Marilyn Cooper, owner of WindWoman Originals, who had displayed her Native American-inspired art. The \$500 for a two-year plan is just not



Native American-inspired masks are among the art Marilyn Cooper sells at WindWoman Originals, her home studio. She had displayed her art at the Goodland Travel Information Center. Cooper's masks are all named and have stories related to Native American experiences to go with them. Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

possible for small artists with the economy the way it is, she said.

"I can't afford it," she said. "My talent will have to go unobserved."

Cooper said another obstacle to joining the program is meeting the three-day deadline to ship orders.

"Every item I make is one of a kind," she said. "If I wanted to make

cookie cutter items, I would have been on eBay years ago."

Cooper wrote a letter to Regina Nicol, finance and visitor services manager of the Travel and Tourism Division, and sent copies to Donna Price, director of the Sherman

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# Annual citywide cleanup planned for Saturday

Goodland Chamber of Commerce Beautification Committee plans its annual citywide clean-up for Saturday.

Andi Nelson, Chamber office manager, said the cleanup will go from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call the chamber at (785) 899-7130 or (785) 821-4694 to volunteer.

People are asked to put trash and junk out on the curb, Nelson said. Anyone who's unable to carry items to the curb can call and ask for a special pickup.

Volunteers will haul the trash to a vacant lot on Caldwell across from Rasure's Do-It Center, but anyone who has a pickup load can

stop by the collection area and get a voucher to take it direct to the county transfer station without a fee.

Nelson said the only fees the county commissioners would not waive is for tires because of the expense to have them hauled away.

The volunteers will gather about 8:30 a.m. at the lot across from Rasure's, she said.

Christie Rasure, a committee member, said the collection will take metal and electronic devices, which will be taken to be recycled.

In a special program for the citywide clean-up, Wal-Mart will be taking recyclables from 8 a.m. to noon that day.

The store will have bins outside the back door for plastic bottles — pill bottles and drink bottles, but not milk jugs — and plastic hangers, aluminum and tin cans, shredded paper and paperback books with the cover torn off.

Laura Pope, store manager, said the items should be separated, and the plastic bottles should be without any tops. She said the bins will be set up so people can drive through and drop their bags in.

She said another part of the drive this year will be recycling those old athletic shoes hiding in closets. She said the store is working with Nike to have used tennis shoes shipped

off and ground up to be reused as surface material for playgrounds. She said the shoes cannot have cleats or any metal parts.

She said the store continues to encourage customers to recycle Wal-Mart shopping bags in a receptacle out front.

Pope said containers in the front parking lot take newspapers and magazines, clear glass and aluminum and tin all the time. The store is trying to get a grant to help the city buy a container for recycling plastic.

"We want to encourage the city and county to recycle plastic," Pope said. "It is the one thing we do not recycle now."