

## Aquila sale to Black Hills complete

Aquila customers in Sherman County will not see a lot of changes with the sale of the gas utility completed Tuesday, but in coming months the trucks, signs and bills will be under the name "Black Hills Energy."

The \$940 million cash purchase of five Aquila Inc. utilities in Kansas, Colorado, Iowa and Nebraska by Black Hills Corp. was completed on Tuesday.

"Customers will continue to receive the same trusted coverage and service they have come to depend on," said David R. Emery, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Black Hills Corp. "They will benefit from enhancements to programs and services, including service from Aquila's Lincoln, Neb., call center

and a new call center operating in Rapid City, S.D.

Ivan Vancas, a former vice president of operations for Aquila's Iowa natural gas operation, is the new vice president of natural gas operations for Black Hills Energy in Colorado and Kansas. He will be based in Lawrence.

The 24-hour customer service number for all Black Hills/Aquila customers is (888) 890-5554. The number for emergency services is (800) 694-8989. Aquila customers can continue to access their account information and other online services at aquila.com. Emery said Black Hills plans to integrate the Aquila Web site into blackhillscorp.com in the future.

To serve more than 600,000 more cus-

tomers, Black Hills hired approximately 200 new employees in Colorado, Nebraska and South Dakota. Approximately 1,050 current Aquila employees from the five utilities join Black Hills, bringing the total company's number of employees to 2,200.

"This acquisition is an important milestone in our strategic plan," Emery said. "With this transaction, the company is building a platform for growth based on a foundation of stable cash flow, more predictable earnings and increased efficiencies. It complements the company's existing businesses and substantially broadens Black Hills' regional presence and utility operations."

"The Aquila transaction more than dou-

bles the number of Black Hills employees and increases our utility customer base five-fold. We welcome these new employees and look forward to serving our new customers. I am extremely proud of the Aquila and Black Hills employees and thank them for their hard work and dedication. Their extra efforts have created a successful transition in addition to keeping all of our businesses performing well. We look forward to our future and remain committed to improving life with energy in the communities where we live and serve."

Black Hills announced its intent to acquire the four Aquila gas utilities and one electric utility on Feb. 7, 2007, and began an extensive approval process.

Black Hills' purchase of these assets was

cross-contingent with the merger of Great Plains Energy and Aquila. The Missouri Public Service Commission on July 1, issued the order granting the final regulatory approval needed to complete the transaction, and the order became effective on Tuesday.

All three companies' boards of directors approved the purchase, sale and merger agreements, as did shareholders of Aquila and Great Plains Energy, the company purchasing Aquila's Missouri assets. The transaction received approvals from state regulatory commissions in the four other states involved in the sale and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and passed Hart-Scott-Rodino antitrust review.

## 4-H building floor done

By Tom Betz

ntbetz@nwkans.com

The 4-H building at the Sherman County fairgrounds has a new floor, Steve Duell, fair board chairman, told the commissioners on Tuesday, and he said he had found a man to put a sealing wax coat on the floor.

He said the floor in the bathrooms was finished on Monday, and the main floor was finished on Friday. He said Bob Horton of Wane's Carpet, who installed the new floor, had recommended the floor be waxed before all the fair traffic hit it.

Duell said he talked to Kenny

Grieve and he did the main floor on Saturday. Duell said he got wax from several places, and expected the total cost would be about \$800.

"I am sorry I did not get prior approval," he said.

"It will save the floor," Commissioner Kevin Rasure said. "It needed to be done."

Commissioner Tiede agreed getting the floor waxed was something that had to be done.

He asked County Clerk Janet Rumpel if there was money in the fairground maintenance fund to cover the waxing.

She said it appears there is money to cover the project including the waxing.

He said he did get a purchase order for the four new toilets. He said the old ones fell apart when they were taken out.

"The new ones are handicapped accessible," he said.

Duell said he had a donation for part of the concrete on the new wash rack to help with the growing number of goats, and he said the fair board will pay for the rest.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas thanked Duell for all the work he does at the fairgrounds.

## School board elects president

By Pat Schiefen

pjschiefen@nwkans.com

Chuck Wilkens was elected president of the Goodland School Board for next year. Wilkens is the owner of Wilkens Truck and Tractor and is in his first term as a school board member.

Previous school board president Dick Short was elected vice president. The board had their reorganization meeting on Monday, July 7. Board members LeAnn Friedrichs, Andrew House and Amy Sederstrom were absent.

In other business the board:

- Paid \$248,660 in bills.
- Appointed Pat Juhl as the school board clerk.
- The board will meet at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at the administration building.
- Adopted the policy manual for written policies.
- Adopted a 1,116 hour calendar for next year.
- Designated BankWest to handle the district checking account. BankWest will handle the activity accounts for Grant Junior High, North Elementary and West Elementary. First National Bank will handle the activity accounts for Goodland High School and Central Elementary. BankWest will handle the petty cash ac-

counts for all of the schools.

- Appointed Vignery and Mason as attorneys for the school board.
- Designated *The Goodland Star-News* as the official newspaper.
- Appointed Short with Sederstrom as alternate as representative to the Northwest Kansas Technical College.
- Appointed Friedrichs with House as alternate as representative to the Northwest Kansas Education Service Center.
- Appointed Bonnie Smith with Juhl as alternate as the representative to the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System.
- Appointed Superintendent Shelly Angelos as the representative for the Food Service Program. North Elementary Principal Jim Mull would be the alternate.
- Appointed Short and Wilkens as the representative to the Kansas Association of School Board Governmental Relations Network.
- Appointed John Hendrich and House with Jane Philbrick as alternate to the bid committee.
- Appointed Friedrichs and Philbrick with Short as alternate to the policy review committee.
- Appointed Friedrichs, Goodland High School Principal Sharon Gregory, Central Elementary School Principal Harvey Swager,

Superintendent Angelos and Board Clerk Juhl to the insurance committee.

- Appointed Philbrick as the representative to the Professional Development Council.
- Appointed Philbrick and Sederstrom with Hendrich and Wilkens as alternates for the negotiations team.
- Appointed Hendrich and Friedrichs to the calendar committee.
- Appointed House and Sederstrom to the technology committee.
- Appointed Superintendent Angelos as the purchasing agent for the district.
- Appointed the building principals and the superintendent as representatives for the wellness policy.
- Increased private vehicle mileage reimbursement rate to 51 cents per mile.
- Set pay for emergency substitute teachers at \$85 per day and \$100 per day for those with current teaching licenses.
- Hired Mary Allacher as a sixth grade teacher.
- Hired Paula Fisher as a fifth grade teacher.
- Hired Devin Mull as assistant high school football coach.

The meeting ended at 8:16 p.m.

## Recycle for life



Carlee Cooper (left) helped her sister Cassie put a bag of aluminum cans in the recycle stand located in the Dollar General parking lot on Cherry Ave. south of the railroad crossing. The can stand is one of the ways the Paw Wash team raises money for the Relay for Life program that raises money to support cancer research. The Paw Wash team includes members of the Northwest Kansas Animal Shelter. Photo by Jessica Corbin/The Goodland Star-News

## matters of record

### Sherman County Bastille

The following people were booked into the Sherman County Bastille:

- June 1 — 11:30 p.m., Jeffery Paul Rupp, 42, Sharon Springs. Arrested by Wallace County sheriff for domestic battery. Released to other agency.
- June 11 — 12:36 p.m., Daxton Richard Navarro, 20, Goodland. Arrested by city police on a warrant. Released on own recognizance bond.
- June 13 — 9:17 p.m., Kimberly Ann Baxter, 36, Goodland. Arrested

by deputy sheriff for driving while suspended, first conviction. Bond supplied

June 15 — 3:13 a.m., Stefanie L. Keister, 37, Bird City. Arrested by city police for driving under influence and driving on the left side of the road. Released on own recognizance bond.

6:16 p.m., April Lynn Rymel, 45, Redding, Calif. Arrested by state trooper for possession of drugs, 1 prior, and use or possession of simulated controlled substance.

Bond supplied.

June 16 — 8:03 a.m., Patrick Arthur Martin, 27, Colby. Arrested by deputy sheriff for criminal use of weapons, concealed and operate vehicle with no valid license. Time served.

11:25 p.m., Douglas Robert Edleman, 19, Goodland. Arrested by city police for purchase of liquor by a minor. Bond supplied.

June 17 — 12:34 p.m., Bradley L. Slinger, 35, Colby. Arrested by deputy sheriff for driving under

influence, second conviction. Time served.

June 20 — 4:42 p.m., James Gregory Noyes, 47, North Platte, Neb. Arrested by Cheyenne County sheriff for driving under influence. Release to other agency.

7:40 p.m., Danny Dean Studer, 45, Goodland. Arrested by city police on a warrant. Bond supplied.

8:30 p.m., Rose Ann Maes, 43, Littleton, Colo. Arrested by deputy sheriff for driving under influence, third conviction; driving while

suspended, third conviction; transporting an open container; refuse breath test, possession of drugs, first offense. Release to other agency.

10:20 p.m., Larry Dean Hagerman, 41. Security Transport Service. Release to other agency.

10:36 p.m., James Casey Chandler, 37. Security Transport Service. Release to other agency.

11:51 p.m., Jordan Pierce, 18, Independence, Kan. Arrested by city police for liquor purchase for a minor and transporting an open

container. Bond supplied.

### corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate your calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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