

City manager drafts nitrate proposal

By Tom Betz
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In his last manager's report, City Manager Wayne Hill told the commissioners he had drafted a proposal to be sent out to get responses from several places for handling the nitrate problems in the city wells. Hill said Monday he had given a draft to Darin Neufeld, engineer for Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, to look over. Hill said the proposal would be sent to several companies. "It won't go out until after I am gone," he said, "but I wanted to get it done. This will be to places where they have handled nitrate problems. I want you to have this document so you can get ideas on what the city may

have to do." Commissioner Annette Fairbanks asked Hill where things stand with the plan to control the pigeons downtown. Hill said the man from the U.S. Department of Agriculture has seeded several areas with corn, and he was not going to poison the birds before Thanksgiving. "I assume he is going to be back out here," he said. Commissioner John Garcia said he had talked to the man and he was going to follow up. He said he has some businesses where he will be putting the poison. Hill said the agriculture man said any animal that might eat a dead pigeon is not

going to be hurt by the poison. With a smile Mayor Rick Billinger said, "Do you mean we are not going to kill any cats." That brought a protest from Fairbanks and laugh from the others in the room. Fairbanks then asked Hill about the American flag at Pioneer Park. Hill said the ones the city has purchased were destroyed by the winds. "We talked about flying the flag through the spring, summer and fall and not during the winter," Hill said. Fairbanks said she has been asked about it by several people. Commissioner Dave Daniels suggested the city buy one a month and put it up. He

said that way the city would always have a flag available. Billinger asked about getting a great big flag like is seen at some large car dealers. Hill said he did not think that could be done because of the way the flag pole was designed. Garcia said he saw that it was down and wondered about what was happening. Daniels asked about building a metal flag. He said it would turn in the wind like a weather vane. "We need to get something done," Fairbanks said. Earlier in the meeting, the commission amended the agenda to add a closed door session to consult by phone with an attorney. The commissioners with City Clerk Mary Volk and Hill were in closed session for about 10 minutes. No action was taken when they returned. In other business the commission:

- Approved on premise cereal malt beverage license renewals for China Gardens, Pizza Hut and Gambino's, and package sales for cereal malt beverages for Wal-Mart, Travel Shoppe No. 6, Presto Convenience Store No. 14 and Kabredlo's.
- Approved the annual contract between the city and Sherman County to allow county citizens to use the Goodland Public Library. Sherman County pays \$15,000 to the city for this access.

Kids to shop Saturday

By Pat Schiefen
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Kids up to 14 will have a chance to shop for their families from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday at the Goodland Churches Thrift Store's Kids Christmas Shoppe. Anyone will be able to shop after 1 p.m. Manager Jim Powell said the store will restock with new items for a grand opening on Monday with desserts and drinks being served. The store will be open on Mondays until Christmas. Santa's elves will be there to help kids pick out presents for their parents, grandparents and brothers and sisters on Saturday morning. All gifts are \$5 or less and are wrapped free. The elves suggested kids have their list ready when they come to the store. Items available for gifts will include toys, clothing, knick knacks and household items. Store volunteers have been busy cleaning jewelry and making gift baskets filled with health and beauty aids and candles. Anita Coleman is in charge of making the candles from old candles and donated wax. The store has been doing the Kids Christmas Shoppe for six years, said assistant manager Ruth Ontiveroz. They will have punch and cookies for shoppers. After 1 p.m. there will be some bigger items available. They are still accepting gift items for all ages, especially adults. The thrift store is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. Ontiveroz said they have a lot of fun helping the kids pick out their presents.



Goodland Thrift Store assistant manager Ruth Ontiveroz puts ornaments that are for sale on a Christmas tree at the front of the store. The store is gearing up for its Kids Christmas Shoppe from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. There will be helpers for shopping as well as free wrapping. Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Motel has new owner, name and look

By Sharon Corcoran
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A Goodland motel has a new name, a new look and a new manager, as a Tennessee man was brought out west to improve the motel and got the opportunity to learn a little bit about life on the plains. Chris Dickinson, general manager at Motel 6, formerly Economy 9, has made good use of his time in Goodland since May, remodeling the motel, increasing the number of guests staying there and improving its bottom line. And he has had a chance to experience western Kansas winds, see wide open spaces and find out it is possible to get enough snow you have to pay someone to remove it. He said the move here was supposed to be for six weeks, but instead he will be staying two years, but he doesn't seem to mind. "I like it here," he said. "It's a really nice town. I haven't seen some of the major issues, especially

crime, I've seen a lot of places. It's a testament to the town." Dickinson, who got an unlikely start in motel management, said he has worked for nearly every brand of motel there is and moved from motel to motel to improve properties and make sagging motels financially successful. Goodland's Motel 6 opened in June, he said, adding he has been able not only to make it financially successful but to increase the number of guests four-fold. Dickinson graduated from high school in 1982 and from the University of Tennessee with a Bachelor of Arts in geography in 1992. He started in the motel business while in college to have a job, and he found his niche. He was working at a motel when the manager died of an aneurism while the owners were in Texas. He took over management operations until they returned and ended up being promoted.

"Success only comes your way a couple of times in your life," he said, "and you just have to grab it." He rose to the position of general manager and has served at numerous motel chains, including Ramada Inn, Comfort Inn, La Quinta and Shoney's, being general manager at many familiar brands. He is a Boy Scout leader, member of the Red Cross and member of the Pigeon Forge Hotel and Lodging Association, which he says has hundreds of members and promotes lodging and tourism in an area with 32,000 motel rooms and many tourist attractions, including Dolly Parton's Dollywood Theme Park. And he is a new member of the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Dickinson has two children, a son, 18, who is an Eagle Scout, and a daughter, 13, who is a member of the U.S. Olympic developmental soccer team, a national team of youths selected as high-caliber players. He had never driven west of the Mississippi River before coming here and was unfamiliar with what is out here. He had been to Las Ve-

gas but had flown, so his first drive across Kansas was a surprise. You just drive and drive and drive, he said, and the wind here is an experience. He was surprised by the amount of snow here. "I was told I would need to hire someone to remove snow from the parking lot," he said, "and I thought at first they were kidding." Dickinson seems to be immersing himself in life on the plains — he even said he kept the first tumbleweed he found here and plans to make it a Christmas tree. He has a dog Smoky who he calls his assistant manager.



Dickinson

Cutoff Date for Fiscal Year 2009 WHIP Funding Signup

January 30, 2009 is the cutoff date for Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) applications in Kansas to be considered for Fiscal Year 2009 funding. Stop by your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the Natural Resources Conservation Service or local conservation district staff to get more information about helping address your resource concerns.

Office address: 210 West 10th Street, Goodland, KS 67735
Phone: (785) 899-3070 ext. 35
Web site: <http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip>

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High School Holiday Dinner for Senior Citizens

Mrs. Angelos and the USD 352 Board of Education cordially invite you to attend our Holiday Dinner on December 10, 2008.

11:00 AM-Entertainment by GHS Students
12:00 NOON-Dinner at Goodland High School

The members of The Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), National Honor Society (NHS), and Girls' Athletic Association (GAA) will serve as the hosts and hostesses.

Please call 890-5656 if you need transportation. We will also deliver meals to those who are not able to leave their homes. PLEASE RSVP! Enter through the south doors on 13th Street and don't forget: valet parking will be available!

Cutoff Date for Fiscal Year 2009 EQIP Funding Signup

January 30, 2009 is the cutoff date for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications in Kansas to be considered for Fiscal Year 2009 funding. Stop by your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the Natural Resources Conservation Service or local conservation district staff to get more information about helping address your resource concerns.

Office address: 210 West 10th Street, Goodland, KS 67735
Phone: (785) 899-3070 ext. 35
Web site: <http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip2009>

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Cutoff Date for Fiscal Year 2009 WRP Funding Signup

December 15, 2008 is the cutoff date for Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) applications in Kansas to be considered for Fiscal Year 2009 funding. Stop by your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the Natural Resources Conservation Service or local conservation district staff to get more information about helping address your resource concerns.

Office address: 210 West 10th Street, Goodland, KS 67735
Phone: (785) 899-3070 ext. 35
Web site: <http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp>

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corrections

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