

The Goodland Star-News



Northwest Tech College changes image

By Tom Betz
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Northwest Technical College has undergone a transformation in the past year that includes a new image, mascot, sports programs and a 'green' house project.

The transformation began with the introduction of Dr. Ed. Mills, who was named the college president a year ago.

Dr. Mills has been working to improve and transform the Northwest Technical College in his first year and the community has been supportive of the changes.

The changes have included adding sports programs in Women's Golf, Men's Wrestling and a co-ed Rodeo Team. The three teams will begin their seasons in the fall, and over the year the coaches have been recruiting and signing team members.

With sports teams Dr. Mills and the college staff decided to reinvent the image and add a mascot. After a contest Mavericks was chosen as the mascot for the Northwest Tech teams and the college. The image change was announced in February and the college adopted new colors of red, white and black with a wild horsehead and initials NT for Northwest Tech.

Mills said the college has started three new programs this year including a hybrid technology program working with electric and hybrid cars in the automotive and collision programs, a biodiesel technology program and a 'Green' construction program rehabilitating a house in town rather than building a new one.

Mills said the new programs are the tipping point for the college and that the addition of wrestling under Steve Lampe and golf under Tammy Neal will bring more excitement and attention to the college. Rodeo Coach Lester Cress hopes to build a strong rodeo team, and has signed eight students to date. He and Brenda Cress with the help of other faculty and staff members of Northwest Tech have been working to get the Boyington Arena ready for the students when they arrive in the fall.

Other academic programs have expanded, and the respiratory therapy program received a gift of an ambulance from the Goodland Regional Medical Center and Sherman County Commissioners in March.

Part of the reinvention effort was the



announcement the college would go wireless in the fall with each student getting an iPhone – that later changed to an iPad – to allow everyone to connect and improve the communications between students and teachers.

The first thing Dr. Mills did was to accept an idea for the carpentry program to remodel an older house in town rather than build a new house as has been done in years past.

With the donation of a house by Dennis and Linda Saint at 1219 Center Ave., the project became a reality that began with a ground breaking in August.

Over the past 11 months the house has been transformed both inside and out plus an expansion to the south complete with new fencing, landscape and a small patio area.

Carpentry Instructor Bryant Nemechek with his crew of carpentry students have learned a lot about remodeling older houses. Students from electrical, welding, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning have all played a part in the transformation as the house has been rebuilt nearly from ground up.

Dr. Mills said he is proud of the work the students have done on the house on Center Ave., and believes people will be amazed at what has been accomplished. He said with the donation of two lots with an old house on the 1300 block of Broadway Ave., the carpentry students will begin



Northwest Tech students have worked on the house at 1219 Center Ave. (above) for the past 11 months. The house has been transformed from the old house (below) and is nearly finished.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News



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Goodland hospital to add dialysis service

By Tom Betz
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Nothing stays the same at Goodland Regional Medical Center, but that is not a bad thing as the hospital continues to adapt to the changing health care scene.

Tina Goodwin, director of marketing and volunteer services, said the hospital has added a Physician Assistant Judy Mago to the emergency room staff in the past year.

Dr. Lisa Unruh, pediatrician, began her practice in October and has been doing well as the only pediatrician in northwest Kansas.

A recently added service is com-

plete pulmonary function testing.

Goodland Regional Medical Center offers complete pulmonary function testing by trained respiratory therapists, Monday through Friday with quick turn around times for results. Test interpretations are provided by pulmonologist, Dr. Kenneth H. Weisiger, an outpatient specialist at the Goodland hospital.

Contact the hospital Respiratory Therapy Department (785) 890-6023 or the Outpatient Specialty Clinic (785) 890-6030 to make an appointment.

Lung function testing has evolved over the past 30 years and Goodland

Regional Medical Center is using the latest computerized equipment to produce meaningful reports for patients. These tests have become a part of routine health examination in respiratory, occupational and sports medicine as well as an important tool for diagnosing various lung diseases.

The hospital administration has been looking at the possibility of adding a renal dialysis service with the closing of the service in Burlington.

The Northwest Kansas Medical Foundation has pledged to help the hospital pay for the equipment for the dialysis unit.

Hospital Administrator Jay Jolly

told the hospital board a meeting with an architect and water treatment specialists is planned for July 14 to review plans for the dialysis clinic and determine the need for equipment.

The hospital had to replace an ambulance in March, and has agreed to turn the ambulance service over to Sherman County by the end of the year. Jolly feels this will be a win for the hospital as it will reduce the money Medicare has been cutting because the hospital has been operating the ambulance service.

Another replacement the hospital approved was the aircraft used to fly specialists to Goodland from Denver

and Colorado Springs.

The hospital board has been looking at the future and considering options to build a new hospital or to remodel the existing hospital that is more than 30 years old. Jolly had suggested doing a feasibility study, but decided to delay that because of the changes coming in the health care field that may influence what the hospital of the future might look like or what the needs will be for Sherman County and northwest Kansas.

The hospital continues to work with the Midwest Cancer Alliance through the University of Kansas Health Center.

Goodland Glass opens shop

Goodland Glass owner, J.J. Howard, went to school for carpentry at the Goodland Technical College in 1992-1993. He has worked and lived in Goodland since 1992.

"We install glass in cars, pickups, farm equipment," he said.

We install windows and doors in homes and businesses. We are a Pella, Silverline, Cascade, Atrium and

View Point Dealer. We offer on site windshield repair. We have been in business since March 1, he said.

They are located at 829 W. Business U.S. 24. Their phone number is (785) 890-5001. We offer free estimates and do after hours emergencies. Business hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays by appointment.

Fixsen Electronics business has moved to Main Ave.

Fixsen Radio and TV started in 1958 and was located on W. 12th for more than 40 years before moving in August to 1516 Main Ave.

The original shop was opened by Wilma and Leroy Fixsen at 604 W. 13th. It was a part time business to start with and soon became full time.

In 1961 the family and business moved to 121 W. 12th. As business

grew over the years, several additions were made to the building.

In September 1996, Randall and Debbie Fixsen purchased the business and Fixsen Electronics was at the 12th Street location until August when the business moved to an expanded location at 1516 Main Ave.

We keep busy selling high definition television, surround sound systems,

two-way radio communications, Dish Network satellite systems, a new television furniture line and repairing many brands of televisions, he said.

After 52 years and wonderful customers, Fixsen Electronics is a thriving business in uptown Goodland, the Fixsen's said. Business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Phone is (785) 899-2164.

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Goodland site selected for grocery store

By Tom Betz
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Work could begin in August to remodel the Ed Wolak building into a grocery store with an anticipated opening date in October based on a recent update from the owner of the Village Markets grocery chain.

"Village Markets Holdings is very pleased to be developing a grocery store for Goodland," said Sam Mancini owner of eight grocery stores with locations in St. Francis, eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska.

"The process does take a while and we are attempting to speed it up as much as possible," he said. Our target is to be open in October. If we can't get it open by October, then we will likely have to wait until March to open it. This remains to be determined.

"The process is slow because we couldn't begin spending money on design and development until we knew whether we had the City's backing or not. We have had overwhelming support by the city staff and the residents. This fact, more than anything, has driven us to want to develop a store in Goodland. It is a good community and we would be proud to operate a store in it.

"Once the city's package was understood and most importantly, we had a site to develop in the Wolak Building at 10th and Center Ave., we were able to begin looking at designs, construction budgets, store forecast and budget and all of the other financial considerations that go into developing and building a store in any community.

"We interviewed three contractors and have chosen one and are trying to finalize this stage of the development. Once this is completed we can submit our package to our bank and would hope to finalize the bank loan.

"Whew, once this is completed and approached, we can begin construction and get on with construction, setting up the store, stocking the store and staffing the store.

"As you can see it is a long process but one we are good at, that we want to do and will be rewarding for the community, our company and our staff. I just wish we could make things move faster! However, in today's economic environment this is hard to do.

"While we do wish things were moving faster, we are satisfied with the progress and will continue to push things

forward as rapidly as possible."

Mancini approached the Sherman County Economic Development Council in the fall about the possibility of opening a grocery store in Goodland.

In November development council Board member Larry Keirns said he and a small committee had met with a potential businessman, and he (Mancini) asked the council to have a feasibility study done to give him information to make a decision in the next couple of months.

Keirns said the feasibility study would be done by Perkins Marketing Company of Northfield, Minn., and the cost would be \$6,500. He said the study would take about 45 days to complete, and would then be presented to the potential businessman for his decision.

The council approved doing the feasibility study and it was completed in December. At the January council meeting City Manager Doug Gerber said he had seen the study and felt it had been worth the money.

He said the study looked at three locations in Goodland for a grocery store, and compared them along with

options to include a pharmacy or not. He said the study indicated the pharmacy was a good addition.

In March Mancini and members of the development council met with the city commission to review a possible lease of the Wolak building for a new grocery store.

The store would possibly employ 10 people full time and 20 on a part time basis, Mancini said. He said he likes to hire local people and train them. The store manager would probably be transferred to Goodland, he said.

The lease from the city is for 10 years at \$1,000 a year, and Mancini has the option for two five-year extensions. In the lease Village Markets has the right to purchase the building for \$50,000, and the city would have a first right to repurchase if the building should cease to be a grocery store.

Mayor Josh Dechant asked Mancini if he was comfortable with the lease.

Mancini said he was OK with the lease, and looking forward to moving ahead with the grocery store project.

Turning to the list of incentives, the incentives include waiver of all city permit fees, inspection fees and utility connection fees; a credit

for six months for utilities for the first year, assistance locating workforce training funds; a utility rebate for six months for any new, full-time employees that move to Goodland to work at the store in the first year and work for the store for a year; signage help near the highway to help advertise the new store; and passing any easements or waiver of restrictions to put a drive-up for a pharmacy on the north side of the building.

Gerber said most of the incentives were in the package the city approved in a policy a couple of months ago.

Dechant thanked Mancini and the Sherman County Development Council for bringing the project together.

Gerber said on Wednesday Mancini has signed the incentive agreement with the city. He said Mancini has the lease, and by mutual agreement he will sign it as soon as he is ready to begin remodeling the building.

"I feel Mancini is sincere in wanting to do this grocery store," Gerber said. "He has indicated he wants to be in Goodland."

As an incentive the development council has approved \$25,000 for Mancini to use for signage.



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Advanced Auto Body will be moving into their new shop and office on Business U.S. 24 in August.
Photo by Josh Harenberg/The Goodland Star-News

Advance Auto Body to expand

After seven years in the business of auto body repair and glass replacement, Jason Finley and his staff have decided to expand to a larger facility to better serve their customers' needs.

The Advanced Auto Body shop opened for business on April 1, 2003, and, thanks to local customer support, has decided to move to a much larger facility in August of this year.

The location of the new shop is 624 W. Business U.S. 24 in Goodland. The plan is to open the new shop and office in August.

At nearly 7,000 square feet, the new facility will house a modern waiting area, new restrooms, 10 additional working bays, two wash bays, a separate glass installation addition, computerized paint mixing equipment and a new frame-straightening machine.

Advanced Auto Body employs Automotive Service Excellence certified technicians, three of whom are past graduates of Goodland High School and Northwest Kansas Technical College.

They are proud supporters of Sherman County and the City of Goodland and would like to dedicate the new facility to the customers who have supported them through the years. They look forward to serving their customers' needs for many years to come and invite everyone to stop by and see their new location.

Currently Advanced Auto Body is at 403 E. 19th. The phone number is (785) 899-5555.

Carnegie Arts Center annual progress report

Beginning next fall, in addition to the Saturday Elementary Art Workshops, the Carnegie Arts Center will be displaying Discovery Stations for the young students. Each month will be a new exhibit. We hope this will encourage our youth to visit more often, said Kay Younger, executive director.

Members of the Goodland Arts Council work with the Shine On Sherman County Beautification Committee members on such projects as the Downtown Art Walk, Arts in the Park, and murals painted on the sides of buildings.

We try to promote all forms of art. The monthly openings are always a venue for people of all ages to perform. This year's entertainment has included dance, vocal and instrumental performances as well as poetry readings and painting to piano music.

As you may have noticed, we have given the Arts Center a face lift. The new paint on the benches around the trees, the door and rail-

ings gives a warm welcome to the public. We thank those who helped make this possible.

In February, the Goodland Arts Council was one of 17 Kansas museums selected to participate in the Hands-on Experimental Learning Project). This project, through the Mid-America Arts Alliance, provides museums with on-site, affordable learning opportunities that further skills in areas critical to successful museums today.

The arts alliance is a regional arts organization serving cultural organizations in its member states of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. They assist with institutional advancement, capacity building, and professional development opportunities for arts organizations and museums. Participants of this program will concentrate on improvements related to nonprofit governance. This is a nine-month program.

Advanced Auto Body

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Eklund Insurance has been in business for over 20 years. We have four agents in our Goodland office and one in our Sharon Springs office, said Jacque Drennan. We have combined experience of over 70 years.

We write quite a range of insurance but especially focus on crop insurance and municipalities. No risk is too big for us to tackle.

Goodland has thought of us as a small agency that writes only home and auto insurance but that might be a side line for us.

Jeanette Ruddell has been with us 14 years and does most of the commercial business for us. Jackie Bowling has been with us 3 years and she writes home, auto and toys. Linda Collins of Sharon Springs has for 20 years written anything you need in Sharon Springs. Jack Eklund is the owner and he passes the information to his girls. He enjoys crop insurance the most. He is a licensed agent so he can answer most any question.

I have been an agent 14 years and

mainly write crop insurance and farms, Drennan said.

Over the past year we increased our commercial lines business by five percent and our home and auto has increased 10 percent, she said.

The thing that sticks out most in our mind over the past year is July 20, when Goodland suffered the major hail storm. We found out our companies handled claims fast and made people very happy with the amount of money they received. Because of this, we have written a lot more home and auto business as the word got out about our claims service. Unlike other companies in the area we have not had any customer canceled due to claims history.

We feel we had a plan in place that helped our customers get their claim money in a timely manner. From the past to the future our main goal is to provide the best customer service in town. We hope when people enter our Agency they feel welcomed and important as No. 1, she said.

Activities Center offers opportunity for people to be active, healthy

Since 1983 the Goodland Activities Center has worked to offer opportunities for individuals and families to be active and healthy.

The programs for youth have consisted

of everything from soccer, flag football, volleyball and basketball. When the GAC formed a relationship with the City of Goodland adult volleyball and softball worked its way into the forefront along with youth baseball, softball, t-ball and tennis.

These programs are forever changing and adapting to fit the needs of the community. They are gearing up for the Second Annual Goodland Community Triathlon which will be held Saturday, July 31.

Inside the walls of the GAC equipment is constantly being updated to insure our members have the most current and safe equipment. The fitness room is up to four treadmills, two ellipticals as well as several low impact options.



The facility is proud to house not only free weights but circuit weight machines to help guests stay toned

and fit.

They are boastful of their aerobics classes, which our members enjoy free of charge! The experienced instructors offer classes five days a week both morning and night. These classes are great for those who are looking to get back into shape or want to improve their physical condition. They offer

dance, tumbling and Taekwondo for people of all ages.

If you haven't stopped by the gem of Sherman County please make the time to do so. They are in the middle of a paint job and have a new front counter that gives the Goodland Activities Center a welcoming feeling. Stop by 808 Main Ave. in Goodland and visit with Verla, who has been here for almost 25 years, to find out what the GAC can offer you!

Check out the website at www.goodlandgac.com for upcoming programs and deadlines and make sure to find us on Facebook as well or phone (785) 890-7242.

Tri-State Exterminating gets rid of pests

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Northwest Tech students have learned a lot about remodeling an old house over the past 11 months as they rebuilt the 'green' house at 1219 Center Ave. putting on new rafters and framing the rooms inside.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Northwest Tech changes image, adds sports, 'green' house project

COLLEGE, from Page 1

working on a second 'green' project this fall. The Kansas National Guard announced in December the closing of 17 armories around the state including the Goodland armory. A citizen committee considered various options for the armory to be turned over to the city in February. Dr. Mills approached the committee with a proposal to turn the armory over to Northwest Tech so the college could pursue an expansion of aircraft courses from K-State Salina.

The citizen committee agreed that was the best suggestion, and the city commission agreed to lease the armory to the college. When Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, state adjutant general, handed the keys of the armory over to Goodland Mayor Josh Dechant in March the keys were immediately turned over to Dr. Mills. Dr. Mills has met with the K-State Salina people several times about the proposed expansion, and feels the plan is moving forward. He said it will take some time to get the program approved and then to acquire the equipment for the classes.

A collaboration with the Norton community has created Northwest Tech at Norton, and will launch on Saturday, Aug. 21. Classes will begin for the Fall on Aug. 23 with seven classes being offered. The classes are Accounting I, Blueprint Reading, Developmental Psychology, Entrepreneurship, Intro to Business, Precision

Measuring and Statistics. "We are excited about this partnership" said Dr. Ed Mills, President of Northwest Tech. "The Norton Community has been wonderful to work with and their leadership has truly stepped forward to make sure this project came to fruition."

Conservation district has been serving Sherman County farmers for 67 years

The Sherman County Conservation District is in their 67th year of serving the county concerning local Conservation concerns. The District emphasizes education programs for both youth and adults. The District Board has provided scholarships the last five years to deserving Goodland High School graduates who plan on a career in an agricultural related field. The SCCD supported the Conservation Roundup for 300 hundred fourth graders that 85 Sherman County fourth graders attended in Colby in April. Sherman County Conservation District hosted the first "Women In Denim" conference at the Kuhrt Ranch last October with over 50 women from several counties attending. The Conservation District administers the State Water Resources Cost Share Program which brought over \$35,000 to Sherman County for cost sharing with producers on various conservation practices last year. The District looks forward to continued progress in Sherman County.

principal agency for providing Conservation Technical Assistance to private landowners, conservation districts, tribes and other organizations. Conservation Technical Assistance promotes conservation of natural resources to sustain agricultural production in this country. Technical assistance includes design and installation of structural conservation practices like terraces, livestock water pipelines and tanks or tree shelter belts. Management practices are conservation tillage, rotational grazing systems, irrigation water management, wildlife management and grass filter strips. Although the assistance program does not include financial or cost-share assistance, clients may develop conservation plans, which may serve as a springboard for those interested in participating in USDA and other Federal, State or Local financial assistance programs.

During 2009 and 2010 Contracts administered by the Sherman County NRCS office resulted in \$220,980, of conservation practice funding using the EQIP, WHIP and CSP Federal programs.

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