

**weather report**

91°

noon  
Tuesday

**Today**

- Sunset, 8:17 p.m.
- Wednesday**
- Sunrise, 5:27 a.m.
- Sunset, 8:16 p.m.

**Midday Conditions**

- Soil temperature 74 degrees
- Humidity 31 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds southwest 6 mph
- Barometer 30.07 inches and falling
- Record High today 106° (1954)
- Record Low today 44° (1931)

**Last 24 Hours\***

- High Monday 96°
- Low Monday 57°
- Precipitation none
- This month .84
- Year to date 10.31
- Below Normal .47 inches

**The Topside Forecast**

Today: Mostly sunny and hot with a 20 percent showers and thunderstorms after noon, a high near 97, winds out of the south at 10 to 15 mph and a low around 65. Wednesday: Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent showers and thunderstorms after noon, a high near 83, winds out of the east at 10 to 15 mph and a low around 63.

**Extended Forecast**

Thursday: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of shower and thunderstorms, a high near 85, winds out of the north at 10 mph and a low around 64.

(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400.MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

## America celebrates independence



### Special letter fireworks salute U.S.A.

The "A" was a bit scraggly, but the "U" and "S" were clearer and the crowd around the Sherman County fairgrounds cheered as the letters appeared in the sky as part of the fireworks display to celebrate the nation's 235th birthday.

A large crowd enjoyed Freedom Fest with the Kiwanis Shack serving lots of burgers and drinks,

Goodland Rotary sliced up about 30 watermelons, 11 carnival rides kept busy for about three hours and The Double Shot band entertained the crowd and had people up dancing before the fireworks show.

The show created by Joe Diaz lived up to being the best fireworks between Hays and Denver.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Goodland office escapes closure knife

By Tom Betz

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Friday morning it appeared Goodland was losing a state governmental office, but apparently a last minute reprieve reversed the decision to keep the office open.

A tip to this reporter said Goodland was on the list of 10 Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services offices being closed with the staffs being told that morning.

Calling the Goodland SRS office Pat Baalman said — in a somber mood — she could not comment, but said she was still trying to digest what was happening. Baalman said she had been directed to give callers the phone number of Rachel Whitten in the Topeka office.

Whitten said she would send out a statement about the closures.

The statement, received a few moments

later, said, "(SRS) is restructuring its offices statewide, a process which will include merging six regions into four, and a reduction of 10 service centers: Coffeyville, Fort Scott, Garnett, Goodland, Lawrence, Lyndon, Marysville, McPherson, Pratt and Wellington."

The statement went on to detail why the changes are being made and gives the information on each of the offices being closed.

Whitten called back within a minute or two to say there had been an "error" and Goodland should not have been on the list. She said it had been a typographical error and the Goodland office was not being closed. When asked what region Goodland would be in when the regions are merged, Whitten said that has not been decided.

As one could imagine a call back to Baalman found her in much better spirits, and glad

to report the office was remaining open. The Goodland office employs eight people.

Whitten would not say why Goodland had been in the original list, but was pleased to be able to correct the information and say the office was remaining open.

The person who had been the original tip called back and said it was something he had never seen. He knew the original list had included Goodland, and this reporter said it was certainly in the list in the original statement from Topeka.

The man said it was possible something had changed to make it cheaper to keep the Goodland office open, such as the building owner agreeing to reduce the rent. He said it was a good day for Goodland, and he had not seen Topeka act as fast in many years.

A lady came into the Star-News office

Tuesday morning and said she thought Rep. Rick Billinger had made some calls to help keep the SRS office open.

Whitten later sent out a revised press release:

"...and a reduction of nine service centers: Coffeyville, Fort Scott, Garnett, Lawrence, Lyndon, Marysville, McPherson, Pratt and Wellington.

"Among the considerations for selecting offices for closure, were caseload size, proximity to other SRS offices, and the ongoing focus on providing services in the most cost efficient means possible."

This is not the first restructuring for SRS going back to 2003-2007, when 61 of 106 local offices were closed.

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**local markets**

**Noon**

- Wheat — \$6.87 bushel
- Posted county price — \$6.50
- Corn — \$6.35 bushel
- Posted county price — \$6.27
- Milo — \$6.09 bushel
- Soybeans — \$12.12 bushel
- Posted county price — \$12.56
- Millet — \$5 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$32.15 cwt.
- Confection — no bid
- Pinto beans — \$28

(Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

**inside today**

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



### Elks K-18 even record

Goodland Elks K-18 team used errors like the overthrow at first base to even their record to 3-3 winning a doubleheader over Oakley on Wednesday. See photos, story on Page 10.



### Ice cream social celebrates anniversary

Saturday afternoon more than 60 people showed up for the ice cream social at the Ennis-Handy House to help the Sherman County Historical Society celebrate the 10th anniversary of paying off the house.

Before the ice cream a crowd of about 60 were at the Sherman Theater for a presentation by Joy Hayden of the Goodland National Weather Service, about the events and stories connected with the Re-

publican River flood of May 30, 1935. Several of those attending were survivors of the flood that took more than 100 lives and caused millions of dollars of damage from St. Francis up through Nebraska and back down into Kansas at Concordia.

The afternoon concluded with a visit to the High Plains Museum to visit with Karen Anderson, the new curator, and check out her relocated gift shop.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News



## Post office decides to change truck times

By Tom Betz

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Goodland outgoing mail truck times could move up by three hours with a Post Office decision to move mail processing out of Colby and Hays to Salina.

Citing cost savings and increased productivity, the U.S. Postal Service has decided to shut down the mail processing center in Colby and move this service to Salina it was announced last week. Friday the postal service announced a similar mail processing move would affect the Hays Post Office.

The transition should be completed by October, postal service officials said.

Area mail will still be sorted at the Colby post office for the 677 zip code, but mail heading outside the 677 zip codes — the nine northwest counties — will go to Salina first.

The postal service official said mail for the 678 code will change from overnight to two-day service. Zip codes beginning with 664 to 666, 668 to 672 and 674 to 675 will go from two-day to overnight service.

However, the overnight delivery improve-

ment will only be in effect for mail that makes it to the Goodland post office before the truck leave traveling east.

The key change in the Area Mail Processing plan is the change in collection times to the rural post offices that currently send mail to Colby for processing.

At a public meeting in May Colby Community College, Plains District Manager Rick Pivovar said trucks will have to leave as much as three hours earlier from all post offices in the area so the mail can get to Salina. Some mail carriers, especially those in rural areas, may not be able to make it back to the office in the afternoon to get mail onto the trucks.

The actual outgoing mail truck times were not released in the announcement last week, but at the meeting in May Pivovar had estimated times for the area post offices.

He said Colby would move up by an hour from after 5 p.m. now, to 4 p.m. (Central Time). He said Goodland would move up nearly three hours. The truck now leaves at 4:40 p.m. (Mountain Time), and would change to 1:45 p.m.

Goodland Postmaster Penny Sheldon was asked in May about the change, and said anyone wanting mail to go out the same day would have to have it to the Goodland post office by 1:15 p.m., or earlier, rather than the current 4 p.m. The truck now leaves at 4:40 p.m., but to make the truck, she said, most mail needs to be at the post office about 30 minutes before.

The Postal Service has been looking at closing the Colby center for months, Pivovar said. He said the service did an analysis in March and April that supported closing the facility, saying it would save about \$99,000 a year, mostly in fewer employee hours. Reductions in hours will add up to one full time position, but the hours may be spread over several workers. Workers may be reassigned to the Salina facility or to vacant positions in Colby, but they will have to follow collective bargaining agreements with the American Postal Workers Union, Pivovar said.

"I understand our employees' concern over this move," Pivovar said in a release Monday, "but the consolidation makes sense given the

fiscal realities. The Salina Customer Service Mail Processing Center has the capacity to handle the additional workload and we can realize significant savings by shifting operations there."

The announcement on Friday said the Hays office will lose four positions. One position would be created in Salina, officials said for a net loss of four positions between Colby and Hays.

Pivovar said at the May meeting, the Post Office is in significant financial trouble due to the drop in mail volume, and has been having to make cuts such as reducing staff and closing small post offices.

"Given the drastic 20 percent decline in mail volume the Postal Service has experienced since 2007, we must take action to reduce the size of our mail processing network," Pivovar said. "Consolidating operations and placing our people where we need them is necessary if the Postal Service is to remain viable to provide mail service to the nation."

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