

weather report

89°
noon
Thursday



Today

Sunset, 7:36 p.m.
Saturday
Sunrise, 6:05 a.m.
Sunset, 7:35 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 76 degrees
- Humidity 38 percent
- Sky partly sunny
- Winds west 10 mph
- Barometer 30.02 inches and steady

Record High today 101° (1952)
Record Low today 44° (1960)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 87°
Low Wednesday 63°
Precipitation trace
This month 3.01
Year to date 15.70
Above normal 0.85 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, a high near 92, winds out of the east at 5 to 15 mph and a low around 63. Saturday: Partly sunny with a 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, a high near 80, winds out of the east at 5 to 10 mph and a low around 63.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: Mostly sunny with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, a high near 84 and a low around 63. Monday: Sunny with a high near 87 and a low around 62.

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

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$7.34 bushel
Posted county price — \$7.55
Corn — \$7.04 bushel
Posted county price — \$7.31
Milo — \$6.66 bushel
Soybeans — \$12.58 bushel
Posted county price — \$12.81
Millet — \$5 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$31.50 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, views from your Goodland Star-News



Truck parking sparks lively talk

By Tom Betz

nt.betz@nwkansan.com

City zoning ordinance says truck parking in residential districts is prohibited, but research by city officials found about 30 trucks being parked on private property mostly in residential areas around the city to cause a lively discussion at Monday's meeting.

City Manager Doug Gerber said the issue had come up at the previous city meeting, and he had put the item on the discussion agenda to get some direction from the commissioners.

He said he had the police chief and building inspector to find examples of truck parking around the city, and said they had found about 30 examples. He said he had pulled the relevant sections of the city code and zoning.

He said he was hoping the commissioners could find an idea of how to deal with the situation to meet the needs of the people involved. He said at least it was a place to start and they would try to put something

Tallahassee man to be police chief

City Manager Doug Gerber said Wednesday the city has hired Clifton (Cliff) Couch of Tallahassee, Fla., to be the police chief for Goodland.

"Cliff is excited to move to Goodland," Gerber said, "and will begin his duties as the new Police Chief on Thursday, Sept. 8."

Couch has been a Violent Crimes Detective with the Leon County Sheriff's Office in Tallahassee.

He joined the Leon County Sheriff's Office in 2003, and has served as a Narcotics Detective, a School Resource Officer, Uniformed Patrol Deputy and a member of the SWAT Team.

Prior to joining the Leon County Sheriff's Office, Couch served in the United States Marine Corps and was honorably discharged as an E-5.

Couch has a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Psychology and a Master of Public Administration, both from Florida State University.

Gerber said Couch was chosen from more than 60 nationwide applicants for the position. He was interviewed by two separate interview panels, each consisting of City staff, elected officials and community leaders.

Gerber said Couch is about 32 years old and said he apparently is close to getting married, but had no specific details. Gerber said they cannot ask those questions in the interview, but he will learn when Couch comes to Goodland to start work.

He asked what the city people had found around town.

Brian James, fire chief and building inspector, said he had found some and made sure they are all in residential areas.

Chief Joni Showalter said she had found a few on the street, but most in the driveways.

Mayor John Garcia said he had driven around and found some grain trucks parked off the street. He said there is a fine line the city needs to follow to ensure they are being just in the decision.

Gerber said Finley had a good point about private property, but said the city regulates private property all the time.

"I feel until it becomes a nuisance of a problem I don't know that we should be saying what you can or cannot park on private property," Finley said.

"If you take that logic is my neighbor's demo derby car a nuisance," Gerber said.

See CITY, Page 5

Police busy with several burglaries

Goodland police are investigating a burglary at Northwest Tech that happened sometime on Sunday at the Student Union, where a quantity of iPad2s and the Automated Teller Machine were taken.

Police Chief Joni Showalter said Tuesday she would not discuss the details of the ongoing investigations, but said anyone who may have information about this burglary or a number of other recent burglaries can call the police department at (785) 890-4570, the Sheriff at (785) 890-4835 or Crime Stoppers at (785) 899-5665.

Showalter said people need to be aware of how important it is to safely secure homes, businesses, shops, garages and vehicles.

"More often than not these are crimes of opportunity," she said, "and securing our property is the best deterrence."

"The Goodland police and the Sherman County Sheriff are taking precautions to deter any further incidents. We ask everyone to be aware and report any suspicious activity or behavior."

Information from officials at Northwest Tech College indicate the burglars apparently had done some planning to bring a two-wheel dolly to haul the ATM out to a waiting truck, dragging it through the grass with apparently a tablecloth thrown over to disguise the machine.

A total value of the iPad2s and the ATM have not been determined, but it was estimated there was several thousand dollars in the ATM because Monday was the first day of classes for fall at Northwest Tech.

City celebrates completion of water project



Concerns about nitrate levels in city water wells caused the city to begin a water improvement project that ended up being a \$6 million project. Wednesday the city held an open house and ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of the water project. People were given tours of the water treatment plant by Rich Simon, public works director, and he showed them the computer system that controls the equipment the outgoing nitrate meter (above) shows the reduced level of nitrates in the city water.

Photos by Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News



Farmer requests hearing on replacing cesspool

Tom Betz

nt.betz@nwkansan.com

A Sherman County farmer has sent local and state officials searching statutes and regulations because he asked the Sherman County commissioners to appeal a notice of violation he received saying he had to replace his cesspool.

A hearing is new territory for the Northwest Local Environmental Protection Group that represents 15 counties, and the next step is to be at the meeting of the board at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 14 in Colby.

Farmer Ron Schilling, who lives northeast of Edson, had talked to the commissioners previously about his situation dealing with an order from the Northwest Local Environmental Protection Group to replace his cesspool because it had been modified or failed.

At the request of the county commissioners, Shirley Weber, director of the 15 county group, was at the meeting, as was Steve Skubal, who is the field worker for the local group, and Doug Schneweis of Hays, who is the watershed field coordinator for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Commissioner Larry Enfield opened the discussion saying the county had some questions about the way the code the county ap-

proved in 1993 was being applied.

Schneweis said cesspools have been illegal since 1973 when the state passed the environmental protection law. He said cesspools are considered dangerous because the tops can cave in, and because the untreated sewage is allowed to seep into the ground and could contaminate the groundwater.

Schilling said it was his understanding under the code Sherman County signed in 1993 that his cesspool was grandfathered in unless it failed or he sold the property.

He said the problem began on Memorial Day weekend when the sewer line to his house plugged up and he had to call someone out. He said the plumber came from Colby, and they thought it was the cesspool so they pumped it, but found out that was not the problem and there was a blockage in the line from the house to the cesspool.

Weber said she had been called on that Sunday and the plumber had asked permission to pump the cesspool. She said since they know there is a cesspool on the property they sent Schilling a notice that he has to bring it up to code with a new septic tank.

Schilling said he did not feel he was in violation because his system had not failed and he was not selling the property. Again he

said he felt the existing system was grandfathered in since it existed before the code was adopted in 1993.

County Attorney Bonnie Selby said she had been asked by Schilling to contact the state about the situation, and the first conversation they had with a legal person in the state water office had agreed the system was grandfathered. However, a week or two later, the same attorney sent a letter to Selby saying he had revised his opinion after hearing more from Weber and said the system was in violation of the state laws.

Schilling presented a letter from John Donley, assistant counsel of the Kansas Livestock Association, who said he agreed with Schilling that the cesspool existed prior to the adoption of the code in 1993, and felt it was grandfathered under the provision in the code.

"Additionally, I was unable to find a state statute that your system, as described to me, would violate," Donley wrote.

Weber said the pumping was a modification and that the system has to be replaced. She said she had given Schilling until the end of the year.

Schilling said replacing the system could cost \$10,000.

Weber said by state statute all cesspools are illegal from 1973 on. She said before her group was created no one was out looking for cesspools.

Enfield said that every cesspool in the county is illegal under her interpretation, and said he thinks there are probably several hundred in the county.

Weber said all cesspools are illegal. She said her group does not go looking for cesspools, but when they find one we have to follow the law.

Members of the Sherman County Board of Realtors were in the audience and said they have been telling prospective new owners they do not have to change the system as long as it had not failed.

Selby said it was her opinion the code contradicts the state regulations.

Weber said once the situation is brought to their attention they tell the owner the Soil Conservation District has money to help cost share the replacement.

Sandy Rodgers of the Sherman County Conservation District said they get \$10,000 a year to help, and they allow \$2,500 for each applicant, so they can help four owners per

See COUNTY, Page 5

Triathlon winners

Ace Arteaga was the winner of the special 5K run on Saturday as part of the Third GAC Triathlon. The 5k was added because of the all-school reunion. See photos, story on Page 12.

