

weather report



49°

10:30 a.m. Thursday

Today

- Sunset, 4:38 p.m.
- **Saturday**
- Sunrise, 7:07 a.m.
- Sunset, 4:39 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 35 degrees
- Humidity 33 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds west 7 mph
- Barometer 30.12 inches and falling
- Record High today 68° (1965)
- Record Low today -21° (1912)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday	62°
Low Wednesday	25°
Precipitation	none
This month	none
Year to date	none
Below normal	0.05 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny with a high near 46, winds out of the north at 10-15 and a low around 20. Saturday: Partly sunny with a 20 percent chance of show at night, a high near 42, winds out of the south at 20 to 15 mph and a low around 23.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: Mostly sunny with a 20 percent chance of snow showers, a high near 38 and a low around 20. Monday: Sunny with a high near 50 and a low around 27. Tuesday: Sunny with a high near 54 and a low around 25.

(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

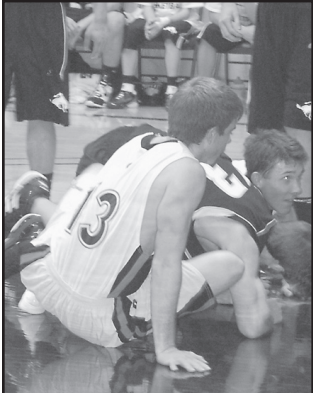
local markets

10:30 a.m.

- Wheat — \$6.49 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$6.58
 - Corn — \$6.27 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$6.30
 - Milo — \$5.96 bushel
 - Soybeans — \$10.67 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$11.44
 - Millet — no bid
 - Sunflowers
 - Oil current crop — \$28.30 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



Cowboy fall by 7 points

The Goodland High School varsity team lost 64-57 to Colby in a road game Tuesday. The Cowboys are on the road again tonight, facing Hugoton. The games begin at 3:45 p.m.



City, fire board far apart on joining

By Kevin Bottrell

kbottrell@nwkansas.com

In the latest round of discussions about consolidating the Goodland Fire Department and Rural Fire District 1, the fire district board brought a resolution for consolidation to the city commission Tuesday but the idea was largely dismissed.

The fire board rejected an agreement the city sent them and brought the resolution before the commission as an alternative. Rural Fire Board Member Daryl Cloyd said the resolution was modeled off the consolidation between DeSoto and Johnson County.

“We felt like, ‘Why reinvent the wheel,’” he said.

Cloyd coined the name “High Plains Fire District,” for the consolidated district, but said it was a suggestion.

Under the new resolution, the city and Rural Fire District 1 would become one district stretching between the Kanorado and Brewster coverage areas. It would be managed by a fire district board with three members from the city and two from

the outlying areas. Cloyd said none of these board members could be officers of the county or city.

Based on an initial calculation, said City Manager Doug Gerber, the mill levy for the combined district would be 4.615 mills, a slight decrease for the city and a slight increase for the rural district. The mill levy for fire protection would stay under a five-mill cap, he said, anything above that would have to go to a public vote.

The benefits, Cloyd said, are the fire service will be just as good, but with some lower costs in administration. The three chiefs would become one with several assistants or coordinators. The city would be able to sell an excess rescue truck, because the combined district would have more than enough rescue units.

A consolidated department would mean a larger pool of firefighters to draw on, he said, allowing for better personnel management.

Commissioner Bill Finley asked what would happen to the

insurance rating under consolidation. ISO, a company that provides insurance ratings, has the city at a 5 and the rural fire district at a 9.

Gerber said the city may be about to go down to a 4. If a consolidation plan goes through, he said, the city’s rating would extend out into the district for 5 miles from the city limits. People inside that radius would save on their fire insurance. However, he said, some insurance companies don’t use ISO ratings when figuring insurance.

Finley said there are some good points made with the fire district’s plan, but one of his primary concerns is not seeing savings where he would like and some expenses down the road. One expense coming up is the need for a new rural fire station.

Cloyd said there is currently not enough room for the rural department to house all its equipment, and some are parked

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Jacob and Leslie Ries of Goodland welcomed their new baby Grayson Jeremiah Ries. Grayson was born at 1:36 a.m. Sunday, making him the first baby born at Goodland Regional Medical Center in 2012.

Photo by Larry Harper/The Goodland Star-News

Goodland welcomes 2012 New Year’s baby

By Kevin Bottrell

kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Sometimes Goodland Regional Medical Center has to wait for days, even weeks, to welcome the first baby of the new year; but 2012’s first birth came just about 1 1/2 hours after midnight.

Grayson Jeremiah Ries was born at 1:36 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 1, 2012. His parents, Leslie and Jacob Ries of Goodland, said they checked into the hospital at 10:30 p.m. Saturday. Jacob said he wasn’t sure for a while whether the baby would come on Dec. 31 or Jan. 1.

Dr. Travis Daise did the pre-natal care and will do the post-natal care. However, he was not working at the hospital on Sunday, so Dr. Darren Matchell of Colby attended.

“It was wonderful,” Leslie said. “They have such good staff here.”

Grayson weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. Grandparents are Larry and Judy Harper of Goodland and Bill and Annette Knitig of Goodland.

As the New Year’s Baby, Grayson and his parents received a number of gifts.

From the Star-News’ New Year’s Baby

promotion, the family gets a one-year membership to the Goodland Activities Center, a free newborn session with minimum order from Britney’s Photography, a free large pizza, breadsticks and drinks from Pizza Hut and a one-year subscription to the newspaper. The Star-News also provided a bag of gifts including a diaper bag, blanket, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, washcloths, wipes, baby shampoo and lotion, fleece sleeper, bottle cleaner and nail clippers.

The hospital also had gifts from local merchants including hand-knitted hats and covers from Melody Knudson, Amazing Hair & Nails, a book from Jacque’s Hallmark, a hand-made baby quilt from GRMC Auxiliary, bank and engraving from Mann’s Jewelry, a gift card from Gambino’s Pizza. The hospital gave the couple a blanket, shampoo, bath wash, diapers, a towel and washcloth, pajamas and a onesie.

At a small ceremony Tuesday, Dale Shields, human resources director at the hospital, presented the gifts to the couple. Shields congratulated them on the birth and thanked them for having confidence in the hospital.

Post office closures, police standoff are top 2011 stories

There were plenty of important stories in *The Goodland Star-News* in 2011, and while it may have been tough to choose between them, here are the 10 biggest as chosen by the staff:

1 Post offices in Kanorado and Edson faced the chopping block last year, but so far there has been no announcement of their fate.

The U.S. Postal Service held public meetings in the two towns in October, drawing big crowds. Representing the service was Abilene Postmaster Robert G. Mikulecky, Jr., who said the service is looking for any way it can to save money. Decline in first class mail – to the tune of \$10 billion a year – has forced major cutbacks across the postal service, and it has been examining small rural offices to see which can be closed.

The two towns received a break though when the service announced it would not make any more closure decisions until next year, allowing congress time to try and find a solution.

If the post offices are eventually closed, the areas would go to rural delivery with individual mail boxes. Kanorado box holders would have the option to rent a box in Goodland. In Edson, the mail carrier would come out of Brewster.

At the public meetings, there was a consensus losing post offices would hurt the two towns.

At Kanorado, people expressed disappointment the one’s making the closure decisions usually never set foot in those post offices.

There was disagreement from Edson residents over where their mail should come from. Some said Goodland would be the logical choice since it is in the same time zone and is the county seat. Others said it would be better to support the Brewster Post Office since it could be next on the closure list.

Closing rural post offices wasn’t the only cost saving measure to hit the area.

In March, the service announced it was studying moving mail processing out of Colby and sending it to Salina. All the region’s mail,



Goodland Officer Cody Hanson (left) and Sheriff Deputy Jason Showalter were on watch at 1220 Main on Tuesday afternoon, Oct. 4. The KBI tossed tear gas through an apartment window to make

entry early on Wednesday to arrest Ronald Kernal.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

including mail from Goodland, Edson and Kanorado, was sorted in Colby. It held a public meeting in Colby in May to discuss the study. Citizens, local government officials and postal employees expressed a strong dislike of the proposal, but the service went ahead with the change.

When processing was moved out in September, mail departure times at all the area post offices were moved up so a truck could carry mail to the Salina facility.

The Postal Service wasn’t through with its changes though. Just one day before processing was closed

down in Colby, the service revealed it was looking at consolidating all processing in Kansas – including Salina – to Wichita. The service was looking at sending Colby’s mail to Denver.

Another public meeting was held, and the proposal met with even stiffer local resistance – and outrage in some cases – than before. Citizens expressed concerns about the proposed two- to three-day delivery standard, the economic impact on local people and businesses and whether or not the service was ignoring their concerns.

In mid December, Congress

passed a spending package that, among other things, mandates six-days-a-week mail service and let’s the service off the hook for a \$5.5 billion pre-payment for retirement benefits. Congress is expected to take up more sweeping reforms later this year.

2 The Goodland Police Department had its fair share of excitement this past year. The department also went through the resignation of police chief Ray Smee in May, interim chief Joni Showater and the new chief Cliff Couch’s arrival in September.

A call at noon on June 29 about

a man having a gun turned into a search for explosives. Matthew Krayca, 32, was taken into protective custody and taken to the Sherman County Bastille.

Then-Police Chief Showater said a number of guns were removed from the house, and she said two search warrants were obtained and executed.

She said the police officers found illegal narcotics and apparent explosive material.

The Goodland Police were assisted by a special unit from the

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