

weather report

48°

noon Monday

Today

• Sunset, 5:25 p.m.

Wednesday

• Sunrise, 6:35 a.m.

• Sunset, 5:26 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 30 degrees

• Humidity 31 percent

• Sky partly cloudy

• Winds northwest 15-25 mph

• Barometer 30.19 inches and rising

• Record High today 81° (1970)

• Record Low today -15° (1993)

Last 24 Hours*

High Sunday 37°

Low Sunday 18°

Precipitation none

The Topside Forecast

Today: mostly sunny, high near 58, low near 31, winds west 9 - 13 mph. Wednesday: mostly sunny, high near 65, low around 31, winds west 11-14 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: mostly cloudy with 20 percent chance of showers after noon and snow at night, high around 48, low around 24. Friday: cloudy with chance of snow, high around 31, low near 16. Saturday: partly cloudy, high near 43, low around 21.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$3.52 bushel

New crop — \$3.48 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.56

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Corn — \$2.70 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.66

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Milo — \$2.56 bushel

Soybeans — \$7.64 bushel

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Millet — \$6 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$11.95 cwt.

NuSun — \$12.20 cwt.

Confection — \$16/\$9 cwt.

Pinto beans — Withdrawn

(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News

Boys pound Plainsmen

Junior Wade Taylor moved in for an easy two points against the Oakley Plainsmen, 87-54. He celebrated his first start of the season by scoring 12 points. See story and photos on Page 10.



Olympiad team second

By Greg Stover
The Goodland Star-News

Goodland High School's Science Olympiad team will be going to the state competition for the sixth year in a row after finishing in a tie for second place at the regional competition Thursday in Hays.

Goodland students combined for six first-place finishes, two seconds, four thirds, a fourth and three fifths out of the 23 events. The team will be at Wichita State University April 3 to compete for the state title.

Hill City High School won the regional competition, scoring 96 points. Goodland tied with Hays High School for second with 100. Skyline High School in Pratt was fourth and Ness City fifth. The top five teams advance to state.

Teams earned one point for a first-place finish, two for second, three for third, and 13 in events they did not enter.

Seniors Trista Lalicker and Matt Heiter took first in Dynamic Planet, which tested their problem-solving ability and knowledge of earth science. Lalicker teamed up with senior Brittany Redlin for first in

Qualitative Analysis, a two-part event that included a written tests and using chemicals to identify solid compounds.

Redlin teamed up with seniors Kayla Rasure and Megan Leonard and sophomore Aaron Duell to earn first place in Mission Possible, which required them to create a device that demonstrates energy transfers.

Duell and sophomore Kali Rietscheck teamed up to win Tower Building, for which they had to build the lightest possible structure strong enough to support a 15-kilogram weight five centimeters above the testing platform using only materials specified in the rules.

Senior Michael Magnus and sophomore Matt Rohr combined to win Sounds of Music, which involved constructing musical instruments without using any electronic and/or musical components, professional or toy.

Magnus also teamed up with freshman Jared Hall to win Fossils, an event that tested their knowledge of paleontology and geology, which included identifying fossils and rock

formations.

Sophomore Mark Starr and Heiter took second in Remote Sensing, and Rasure and Leonard teamed up for second in Forestry.

Senior Amy Anderson and Rietscheck finished third in Designer Genes, and Anderson and sophomore May Davis took third in Cell Biology. Starr and Rohr teamed up for third in Polymer Detective. Hall and Rohr finished third in Storm the Castle.

Davis and Mangus teamed up to take fourth in Bottle Rocket. Davis also teamed up with Rietscheck for fifth in Write It, Do It. Anderson and Heiter were fifth in Disease Detective. Starr and sophomore Derek Fenner finished fifth in the Wright Stuff, for which they constructed and operated two rubber-band-driven monoplanes.

"The kids worked hard to get where they're at," said Dennis Friedrichs, one of the coaches for Science Olympiad. "They did well at the competition."

Friedrichs is a vocational education teacher. The other coach is Duane Unger, a chemistry teacher.



Sophomore Matt Rohr (above, left) and freshman Jared Hall watched as their catapult fired at the target during the Storm the Castle event at the regional Science Olympiad in Hays on Thursday. Rohr and Hall finished third. Sophomore Aaron Duell (above) built the winning structure for the Tower Building event. Duell and sophomore Kali Rietscheck built the lightest structure entered that could hold 15-kilogram load.

Photos by Dennis Friedrichs/Goodland High School

Nor'West Newspapers win KU news award

The Nor'West Newspapers group, including *The Goodland Star-News*, has won the 2004 Burton Marvin Award for News Enterprise from the William Allen White Foundation at the University of Kansas.

The Marvin award is the only statewide news honor given by the foundation and the William Allen White School of Journalism.

The *Star-News* and its sister papers

won for their special edition, "Rural Schools ... on the Bubble," last spring. The 32-page section, produced by the staff of all six Nor'West papers, examined the condition of school districts across northwest Kansas, including enrollment and budget trends.

It went into the probability of consolidation down the road, and the impact of the last round of school

consolidation on Kansas towns.

"This package of stories represents the newspaper group's dedication to coverage of an issue of overriding public concern, representing a commitment to serve the public and initiative in acting on that commitment," the competition judge said.

Under the ownership and direction of Steve and Cynthia Haynes, Nor'West includes the *Bird City*

Times, *Colby Free Press*, *Goodland Star-News*, *Norton Telegram*, *Oberlin Herald* and *Saint Francis Herald*, ranging in circulation from 489 to 2,160. The news staff for all six papers is eight, and all were involved in the analysis of rural school districts in 12 northwest Kansas counties.

"This award represents a lot of hard work by our staff, from the news department through advertis-

ing and the press," said President Steve Haynes. "They should be proud of this recognition by the White Foundation judges."

The award is named for an early dean of the School of Journalism.

The Marvin award usually goes to a larger newspaper, but judges are allowed to split the award if they feel an effort by smaller newspapers to be worthy.

County buys new pickup for sheriff's office

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County commissioners approved the purchase of a new pickup for the sheriff's department Tuesday to replace a vehicle with over 112,000 miles.

Sheriff Doug Whitson told the commissioners he had two bids, and that they included the trade-in of the white Ford Explorer that Deputy Roger Studer is driving.

The bids were from Dan Brenner Ford on a 2004 Ford F150 for \$17,775 and from Finley Motor Company on a 2004 GMC Sierra 1500 extended cab for \$19,996.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas made a motion to purchase the pickup from Brenner. Commissioner Kevin Rasure seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously with Chairman Mitch Tiede voting in favor.

Curt Way, public works manager, asked the commissioners to approve a bridge inspection contract with Penco Engineering of Plainville.

He said the company will inspect all 72 bridges in the county and have a report on the structural condition by May 31. The cost will be \$45 per bridge for a total of \$3,240.

Way said there are 43 bridges on major routes, and 29 on less used routes, and the report must be sent to the state. He said this report, done every two years, is the basis for getting federal bridge replacement money. The commissioners unanimously approved the contract.

Economic Development Director

Insurance costs up 6 percent

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Cost of the Sherman County employees' medical insurance will go up 6 percent this year, commissioners were told at their meeting Tuesday.

Charles Krull, area representative for Blue Cross and Blue Shield, told the commissioners they had a pretty good renewal, well below the national average of 11 percent.

"We were able to keep the benefits the same," Krull said, "and you have good benefits for your employees and it is affordable."

"You have not had a lot of large claims over the past few years, and that helps keep the costs down. You never know when one of those will surface, but with your reserve in place and the plan you have, that would not be catastrophic."

See INSURANCE, Page 3

Carolyn Applegate gave the commissioners a list of the new officers for the Economic Development Council for this year. She said council Chairman John Garcia was unable to attend because of a death in his wife's family.

The officers for the year are Garcia, of Garcia's Home Furnishing and a city commissioner, chairman; City Commissioner Dave Daniels vice-chairman; Patty Eckhardt of the U.S. Farm Service Agency, secretary; and Kim Bohme of Miller's Electronic and Hardware, treasurer.

Applegate said she had signed her employment contract and job description, but that she and the board were going to update the job de-

scription to make it more accountable and reflect her job more closely.

The commissioners accepted the officers and said they felt the economic development office was doing a good job.

Applegate said she had received the December sales tax figures for area counties and Sherman was the leader with an 18.3 percent increase over the previous year.

She said the micro-loan committee will be meeting this week to review at least one and possibly two applications. A third loan possibility has changed to a small business loan program, and that has been filed in Hill City.

"We are coming down to the end,"

Applegate said. "We have done what we can. We sent out 39 applications, but many of the people found out it was a lot more detail than they thought. It is a very good interest rate at 5 percent, whereas the small business loan is 4.99 percent over prime, but there is less paperwork."

Tiede said he had found a person willing to serve on the Good Samaritan advisory board. Pat Juhl, school board secretary, said she would serve on the board. The commissioners approved the appointment for a three-year term.

Rasure said he had talked to Karen Hooker about the Emergency Medical Council, and she said she

would like to be an alternate.

Rasure made a motion to approve the appointment of Steve Evert and Bruce Gleason as the county representatives to the council and Hooker as the alternate. It was seconded by Tiede and approved 3-0 with Thomas voting in favor.

The commissioners approved reappointment of the 10 members of the Convention and Visitors Bureau board for the year.

The members are Dale Neill, of KOA Kampground; Brenda McCants, Goodland Regional Medical Center; Scott Angelos, McDonald's; Evelyn L. DeVol, Buffalo Inn; Elaine Morrow, Super 8 Motel; Judy Siruta, Comfort Inn; Marilyn Collett, Butterfly Aviation; Arlo Hansen, Sinclair Service Station manager; Robert Hageman, Wendy's; and Don Newell, S&T Telephone.

Daryl West, head of the county noxious weed department, presented his weed management plan and eradication report for the commissioners to approve and send to the state.

He said the eradication report is based on a survey of 10 sections within the county which are selected by the state.

The commissioners discussed the success West is having against some weed varieties and problems with others, such as the amaranth.

The next meeting will be 8 a.m. Tuesday in the commissioners room on the main floor of the Sherman County courthouse, 813 Broadway Ave.