



Waitress Megan Rubio (left) started her morning Monday rolling silverware at the recently remodeled Harvesters Restaurant in the Howard Johnson Hotel in Goodland. Yolanda Talamantez, a housekeeper at the hotel, (above left) made the bed in one of the renovated rooms. The small bright lobby (above right) is now equipped with all new chairs, a couch and tables. The hotel has 78 refurbished rooms, new banquet facilities and a 10,000-square-foot recreation center. The remodel is expected to be completed by late June. Photos by Kathryn Gurfinkel/The Goodland Star-News

Hotel opens after getting a major face lift

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star News

As construction workers move in and out of the newly remodeled Wildcard Lounge at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Goodland, General Manager Drew Rohlman reviews the long list of improvements they have made.

"It's almost what *haven't* we done," Rohlman said, looking around.

Renovations began March 1 when new management took over the hotel.

"(Howard Johnson) is doing a lot of things to upgrade the name,"

Rohlman said.

The first job for crews was to start work on the roof.

They moved on to the hotel rooms, stripping out of all of the furniture and bedding, which was stored in the pool area. Rooms were then remodeled starting with new walls, carpet and lighting. Every detail, from new irons and ironing boards to dryers and telephones, was replaced. Pillows, sheets and towels were modernized. Even smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, radiators and thermostats were upgraded.

"We kept only the bed frames,"

Rohlman said. "We had to repair everything."

Every room was redone, but Rohlman said the new pool-side rooms have extra features. New furniture in the upgraded rooms will include desks for business customers, along with high speed wireless Internet.

"It will have all of the amenities and features you can think of," Rohlman said.

Cribs, roll-away beds, refrigerators and microwaves were replaced with new units. The handicapped room was remodeled.

The bar and restaurant were mod-

ernized with a new computer system, double-sided bar, lighting, stools and a pool-side lounge area.

The restaurant opened June 2 and is open at 6 a.m. for breakfast, lunch and dinner until 9:30 p.m.

"We're still tweaking the times until we see what the demand is," Rohlman said.

A regular menu will be served every day, he said, with the exception of a Sunday lunch buffet. The lounge is open from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Rohlman said plans are in place to repair the pool with new pumps, filter and heaters. New furniture will be added around the deck.

Rohlman said he has added a security system with cameras at the restaurant, lounge, front desk, hallways and parking lot. Rohlman and the Goodland chief of police will have access to the cameras.

"That will be a nice benefit for our guest and staff," Rohlman said.

An almost entirely new staff is sporting new uniforms and roughly 20 jobs have been created.

"It's a 100 percent improvement," said employee Teresa Dickey.

Renovations are still in progress for the upstairs of the hotel, but Rohlman said he expects that work

to be completed by late June or early July.

Rohlman said he plans to make changes on the outside, including a lighted back lot for semi-truck, recreational vehicle and bus parking. He said he wants to put in kennels for guests' pets, a garage for storage and a cleaning station for hunters this summer.

On their first weekend since most renovations have been completed, the Howard Johnson was full of guests for the Slice of Life Golf Tournament. Saturday, the Wildcard Lounge hosted a "Bud Night" with Budweiser giveaways.

Couple receives farming award

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star News

Greg and Amy Sederstrom are proud to carry on Sherman County's farming tradition.

"People tend to forget that agriculture rules in a small community," Greg said.

The couple won the Kansas Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award, an honor he said recognizes the challenges and rewards the couple has faced in farming.

To win the award, Greg, 34, and Amy, 33, had to be members of the Farm Bureau, a grassroots organization they say is important to farmers everywhere.

"It is one of the only and largest (farm) lobbying organizations still left," Amy said.

Greg is the vice president of the county Farm Bureau, a member of the Sherman County Fair Board and the safety chairman for the Farm Bureau. The couple participates with the Farm Bureau in classroom presentations, safety classes for kids, promotion of alcohol fuel and celebration of Food Checkoff Day, the day, Feb. 6, when most people have earned enough money to pay for their groceries for the year.

"The Farm Bureau is trying to educate people on agriculture," Amy said.

The state award is given once a year to honor young farmers based on their operation. Farm Bureau judges review submitted information and choose a winner.

"They score on all areas of your operation," Amy said.

The couple filled out a 15-page application that included data from the last three years of farming. They



Greg and Amy Sederstrom reviewed their past, present and future of their farming operation to win the Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award for the State of Kansas. The couple won the award in November and went to compete at nationals in Honolulu in January.

also had a 20-minute interview with a panel of judges. The award was announced and Greg and Amy were honored at a ceremony at the Farm Bureau state convention in Manhattan in November.

The award included a \$500 certificate for chemicals from Syngenta, use of the Data Translation Network for one year, a cash prize and a trip to the national Farm Bureau conference in Hawaii, where they competed for the national title.

The pair went up against 38 other state winners from around the country. Amy said she was amazed at how farming differs from one area to another.

"It would be hard to judge the nationals," she said.

Although they didn't win, she said they did enjoy their time in Hawaii.

"It was a good experience," said

Greg. "We met a lot of good people."

The conference offered a tour of Hawaiian farms, seminars and breakout sessions on agricultural topics.

The Sederstroms said the highlight of their trip was the main speaker, Gen. Tommy Franks, theater commander for the Iraq war.

"It was motivational and patriotic," Amy said.

The Sederstroms started their career in farming three years after they were married. Greg was working in commercial refrigeration and Amy at a bank. Both had ties to farming, but it was a suggestion from Amy's father that made them switch careers.

A true homegrown farmer, Amy was raised in Goodland on a farm owned by her parents, Norman and Linda House.

"You have to love the lifestyle," she said.

Greg mentored under Norman for two years until the couple began to rent and acquire their own farmland.

"We couldn't have done it without the family," said Amy. "It is so tough because farming is so capital intensive."

Greg and Amy farm one-third irrigated and two-thirds dryland crops, raising corn, wheat, milo and soybeans. They live and farm on land a few miles south of Goodland.

"We're diversified," Amy said.

Amy also works part time at Truck and Tractor Repair.

The couple said they try to use the newest technology. They keep the most current machines on hand and they support crops that are genetically modified, or crops altered at a genetic level to make farming easier. Greg and Amy endorse specialized crops, such as corn for production of the fuel additive ethanol.

"We're definitely supporters of ethanol," Amy said.

The Sederstroms have overcome several challenges in their operation, including drought, but they look toward better days and expansion.

"We're optimists," said Amy.

"We hope to acquire more acres."

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

Paper gets fresh face

An Oklahoman is the newest reporter at The Goodland Star-News.

Kathryn Gurfinkel, who moved to Goodland from Williston, N.D., in November, joined the paper's staff last week.

Her fiancé, Patrick Burke, a forecaster with the National Weather Service, came here when he was promoted from intern to general forecaster.

Gurfinkel has been a speech paraprofessional for the Goodland School District, teaching language and articulation skills to students.

She graduated from high school in Mustang, Okla., in 1997, and earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Central Oklahoma, in Edmond, in 2002.

Her fiancé attended the University of Oklahoma in Norman, where he graduated with a master's degree in meteorology in 2002.

After college, Patrick applied for a job with the National

Weather Service and was offered an intern position in Williston.

They moved to the small, cold town in northwestern North Dakota, Gurfinkel said, where they had to adjust to a new culture.

In Williston, Kathryn got job at

The Williston Herald. She learned how to be a reporter and how to edit newspaper pages.

After six months, she became the editor of the Sunday edition.

The couple plans to be married Oct. 23 in Oklahoma City.

They are still working on the details of the ceremony, but Gurfinkel has picked out a wedding dress and they have chosen a location.

In her free time, the new reporter likes to sit on her front deck reading books.

Although she is notorious for her black thumb, she likes to work on the rose bushes lining her deck.

She enjoys spending time with Patrick, the new friends she has made in Goodland and her cat, Isis.



Gurfinkel

Thank You

The family of Ermyl Borgmann wishes to thank Dr. Austin and all the wonderful hospital staff... staff who are kind and nurturing ... who made her stay more comfortable.

Thank You

Thank you to the City of Goodland employees for their efforts in cleaning up the limbs so quickly after the wind storm over Memorial Day Weekend.

Chad Turner

Thank You

The family of Ruth Gilbert would like to thank everyone for the cards she received for her 94th birthday. She and her family were also very touched by the cards, phone calls and visits during the past several weeks, as well as those who remembered her with food and flowers after her passing.

A special thanks to those who were so caring and compassionate at Wheatridge Assisted Living, the hospital and the Good Samaritan Center. We are most grateful for the beautiful words spoken by Pastor Janet at her service. They uplifted our hearts and continue to do so.

Our appreciation also goes to Circle 5 of the United Methodist Church for the luncheon in her honor.

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