

# New location expands car business

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

*The Goodland Star-News*  
Jay Herl hopes his new showroom, which boasts space for nearly 150 new and used vehicles, will make it easy and convenient for people to shop for cars.

Herl, owner of Herl Chevrolet-Buick, said he moved his sales operation across the street from Wal-Mart on K-27 to raise the dealership's visibility and make it more convenient for his customers. "It's a higher traffic area," he said. Last week, Herl's sales operation moved into the south end of the old Gibson's building, where Herl has built a 17,000-square-foot indoor showroom.

The well lit, square space has that new car smell on the inside. The walls are painted white and new gray carpet and tile line the floors. New cars are lined up, displaying their sparkling rims, shiny metal exteriors and information sheets pasted in the windows.

Herl said the interior can hold 35 to 40 cars at one time, a feature he likes because it keeps some of the cars out of the elements. He said an

indoor showroom also allows customers to shop regardless of the weather.

"We've always wanted to have a place where we could store (the cars) inside," Herl said.

The showroom area extends to the outside, where the parking lot is lined with roughly 200 more cars and light trucks.

Herl said part of the reason to move the business was to expand his inventory. He said they have always tried to keep between 80 and 100 new cars on hand, but the old location had limited space.

Although the sales operation have been moved, Herl said they will keep the parts, service and accounting parts of the business at the old location on Main.

"That's our original roots," he said. "It will definitely stay."

The dealership is a family business, opened by Herl's father John on May 1, 1960 and later passed on to Herl. He said he was born and raised in Goodland, where he still lives with his wife Jo, 16-year-old son Jase, 11-year-old daughter Jade, and 18-year-old niece Kelsey.

Although John is 72 years old and semi-retired, he still plays an important role in the dealership.

"He's still involved," Herl said. "He still sells stuff."

Along with the new building and the parts and services office, Herl owns J's Inc., a sister corporation that does car washing and auto leasing in downtown Goodland. He also owns Herl's Quality Auto, a used car lot in Burlington, Colo., and his brother Jon owns J & N Cattle Co., a cattle and horse operation.

The work on the new building took four or five months to complete. Herl said he did indoor renovations while Chuck Wilkens, the building's owner, fixed up the outside.

"We took care of everything inside," he said. "He did everything outside."

Herl said he plans to have a grand reopening for the new location sometime this fall. Until then, he said, he welcomes customers to check out the new location during a promotion to clear out the 2004 models of cars in anticipation of the 2005 models.



The parking lot of the new Herl Chevrolet-Buick dealership across the street from Wal-Mart on K-27 is packed with cars ready to sell. Jay Herl, owner of the dealership, said they will do all of the sales in the new building and keep parts and services at the downtown location.

Photo by Kathryn Gurfinkel/The Goodland Star-News

# Letter asks visitor's board to review expenses

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

*The Goodland Star-News*  
At a meeting Tuesday, Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau Board Chairman Dale Neill replied to a complaint from board member Judy Siruta about travel spending by bureau manager Donna Price.

In a letter sent to the board and to Sherman County commissioners, Siruta argued that all travel should be approved in advance by the board.

She suggested the board decide what travel by the manager is im-

portant and useful for the board's goal of bringing tourists to Goodland. Siruta said she would like to see the actual charges before approving a credit card bill.

"Really," she said. "I was saying that if there is a \$2,000 credit card bill, we should see the charges."

Actual expenses for all trips this year were below \$1,000, however.

In the letter Siruta suggested that Price fill out expense reports and present them at monthly meetings. She argued that employees of other tax-supported boards are required to fill out itemized expense reports

and the visitor's bureau should be no different.

"I think the actual bills should be included," she said.

Since the transient guest tax on motel rooms is paid by the public, Siruta wrote, there should be "public accountability."

"I'm not saying anything illegal is going on," she said. "I never said it; I never meant it."

Copies of the letter were given to the board and to clear up the record on Price's spending, Neill said, he asked for copies of financial reports. The reports outlined the auto

and travel expenses for July of the past four years and July of 1993, highlighting the budget allowance and the year-to-date spending on both items.

For the past three years, the numbers show that spending has come in below the allotted amount for auto and travel. Last year as of July, \$969 of the \$4,000 auto and travel expenses budget had been spent. This year so far, \$986 has been spent from a budget allowance of \$2,750.

Board members agreed not to address the letter formally and to allow Price to continue travel

within her budget.

"I think this is a total shame," said board member Evelyn DeVol.

Siruta said she sent the private letter to Neill and to the county commissioners out of concern, but never expected it to become public.

"I didn't want it public," she said. "It was a private letter. I do not want to cause any trouble."

Price declined to comment, saying she thought the board should have gone into a closed session Tuesday to discuss the letter. She said she didn't want to embarrass the board or any of the members.

Neill went on to say that some of the board members who collect the taxes at their hotels do not stay for the entire meeting. When Siruta left the meeting for a doctor's appointment, he commented that members who are not able to stay for a full meeting should be removed from the board.

The board agreed, though, to change meeting times from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to accommodate more members.

The group will meet at the Buffalo Inn Restaurant at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 21.

# Realtors support economic effort

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*  
Goodland real estate agents came to a meeting of the Sherman County Economic Development Council Tuesday and expressed support for the way the office staff is handling real estate contacts.

The meeting ended with the real estate brokers and council members pledging to work together and communicate better in the future.

Council Chairman John Garcia welcomed the Realtors, saying they had been invited to resolve any issues between the real estate board and the development office.

Last June, Sherman County Economic Development Director Carolyn Applegate was notified by the Kansas Real Estate Commission that a complaint had been filed by the Goodland Board of Realtors charging she had been showing real estate without a license.

The complaint was handled by David Pierce from Topeka, and in October he sent a letter to Applegate and the Goodland Board of Realtors saying there was nothing to the complaint and she had been cleared.

"Maybe we need to review the protocol for handling contacts," Garcia said. "I believe Goodland is on the rebound, and we all need to get on the same page."

"We are working to try to make a difference, and with renewed spirit to achieve good things for Goodland."

"I have no complaints," said Tom

Harrison of Homeland Realty.

"I have no problem with Carolyn driving people by and look at properties. If they want to see a property, she always calls and lets me handle that."

"I do not agree with her being turned into the state last year."

"I had the listing for the New Trail truck stop, and she bent over backwards to help send people to me. I had leads from that I would not have had, even though it was a local group who ended up buying it."

"She is not trying to sell property. On the eBay thing, Marvin Selby and the school board have the right to go out of the city to list the Edson gym. The Realtors could have done that. She gave Selby the name of the guy in Salina. This is not selling real estate."

"She sometimes is a little overzealous getting information out to the public, but I understand that, because when I make a sale I want to tell everybody."

"I have nothing negative to say, and I am pleased with what she is doing."

"I have no problem," said Charlene Cole of Cole's Real Estate. "She has called me and I have had contacts thanks to her calls."

"On the eBay thing I did not get excited. I could have done that, too, but I do not do eBay, so I didn't, and I didn't want to list the Edson gym. Is there a Realtor in Goodland who does eBay? I don't know of any."

"She is not showing property, and

I have no problem if people want to look."

"We are blossoming with change," said Donna Swager, Chamber of Commerce president and manager of Wheat Ridge Acres. "There seem to be people who want to defend territorial things and people who do not want to do things to improve the community."

"We have decided at the Chamber that if you have an issue, you have to bring it to the board where it can be discussed."

"That is why we are having this meeting," said Steve West, a council member and president of Western State Bank.

"I agree with Tom (Harrison)," said Robert Jones of Jones Land Co. "I wondered about a few leaks, but things worked out and there was no problem."

"Sounds like we have been doing the right thing," said Harlan D. House, a council member and farmer and rancher. "We tend to get upset when we get turned in."

"The problem is that the issue was sent to the real estate commission rather than coming to the Realtors' board," said one of the agents.

"We want to see it done right and to get things moving forward," said Dave Daniels, a council member and city commissioner. "It would be best to come to the council if there is a problem."

"We need to start fresh," said Joyce Boehme, Board of Realtors president and part of Jones Land

Co. "We need to shop and keep the money here. I think the comment about eBay should not have been said as it was reported in the newspaper."

Applegate said she wanted to apologize for calling the man in Salina a Realtor. She said he is not a Realtor, but rather an Internet advertiser.

"The reason it seemed like a good idea," Applegate said, "was the people from Moreland, who had advertised their school, said they got way more hits than they could need. That has been true here; Cole has had a contact because the Edson building was not the right size."

A question was raised about when the office was turned into the state, and the Realtors said the person who had sent the letter was not at the meeting. They said the state real estate board had looked into the complaint and had cleared the economic development office.

"That is in the past and we should forget it and move on," said Helen Dobbs, of TeHe Enterprises, a former real estate board president.

"Maybe we ought to look at this as a two-way street," Cole said. "Maybe the Realtors should have a representative at the council meetings."

She said the Realtors meet on the first Tuesday of each month at noon at Gambino's, and all the banks are associate members.

"I hope we have a chance to move ahead," Garcia said. He thanked the Realtors for coming.

## 1st Annual Truckers for Christ Christian Revival August 20-22

Cheyenne County Fairgrounds, Cheyenne Wells, Co.

Speakers: Todd Cothran and Sandra Aldrich

Praise and Worship Band: Gabriel Peter

Friday, August 20

5:30-7:30 p.m. - Supper; 7:30-9 p.m. Sandra Aldrich

Saturday, August 21

6:30-8:30 a.m. - Breakfast; 9-11 a.m. - Split groups: Men at

Fairgrounds with T. Cothran and women at High School gym with S. Aldrich; 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - Lunch; 2-4 p.m.

- Split groups: men at Fairgrounds and women at High School; 5-7 p.m. -Supper; 7-9 p.m. - Todd Cothran

Sunday, August 22

7-9 a.m. - Breakfast; 9-10:30 a.m. - Worship w/Pastor Tom

Burch; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Lunch; 1 p.m. - ?? - Concert with Gabriel Peter Band

For questions/reservations: 719-767-5143 or 720-273-5303

Please leave a message.

*Not Just For Truckers Everyone Invited!!*

## Visitor's Bureau places hunting ad

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

*The Goodland Star-News*

The Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau is taking aim at hunters with an ad in Cabela's *Outfitter Journal* magazine.

Tuesday, bureau board members voted to sign up for the \$900 full-color, quarter-page ad to try to sell Goodland as a good place to take a hunting vacation.

Donna Price, bureau manager, said the magazine has a circulation of 120,000 outdoorsmen through direct mail, inserts with purchases, subscribers, stores and newsstands.

The mail listings include Cabela's customers who spend the most money with the company, a Nebraska-based outdoors retailer.

The magazine is given to customers with the purchase of high-end products, she said, and the company sells subscriptions.

The nearest Cabela's store is in Sidney, Neb.

Drew Rohlman, manager of the Howard Johnson's hotel, said by reaching a high-scale market, the magazine would grasp a segment of the population that Goodland is not addressing.

The ad will come out in the magazine's November/December issue that would hit newsstands in October.

Board members discussed hunting seasons to ensure the spot would come out at the right time to attract visitors during active months.

Price suggest the bureau split costs on the ad with the north-west Kansas tourism group next year.

She added that the Kansas Department of Commerce is now promoting hunting under the agritourism section, which offers attraction development grants to spur business.

Board members voted to forego advertising in *Woodall's*, a magazine geared towards campers.

### New Listing



**Bubba's Corner**, 839 Kansas, Brewster, Kansas. This popular restaurant is located in friendly Brewster, Kansas on the corner of Hwy. 24. Hunters and harvesters consider this a must stop to feed their hungry appetities. The sale includes all equipment and accessories to operate as a steak house or family style dining. Priced very affordably to accommodate a mom and pop business. Call Rose Anderson-Koggie at HomeLand Real Estate 785-899-3060 or toll free at 866-899-3060 for all the details.

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Saturday, August 21, 7:00 p.m.

Colby Vet's Club

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Paid by Peterson for Senate, Chris Gordon, Treasurer