

weather
report

61°

noon Monday

Today

•Sunset, 6:25 p.m.

Wednesday

•Sunrise, 6:48 a.m.

•Sunset, 6:23 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 55 degrees
- Humidity 45 percent
- Sky clear
- Winds southeast 14 mph
- Barometer 30.40 inches and falling

- Record High today 95° (1947)
- Record Low today 23° (1932)

Last 24 Hours*

High Sunday	79°
Low Sunday	46°
Precipitation	none
This month	.01
Year to date	17.19
Normal	17.58

The Topside Forecast

Today: mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after noon, high around 67, low near 49, winds south southwest 14-36 mph.
Wednesday: mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers, high near 63, low around 45, winds south 13-30 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday-Sunday: mostly sunny, high 70s, low upper 40s.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.89 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.96
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$1.93 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.74
Loan deficiency pmt. — 21¢
Milo — \$1.56 bushel
Soybeans — \$4.58 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.60
Loan deficiency pmt. — 8¢
Millet — \$4.75 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$10.60 cwt.
NuSun — \$10.70 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Confection — \$19/\$13 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$25
(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



Cowboy win
makes it 5-0

Senior tailback Lane Winter got stopped for a short gain by three Oakley defenders during the third quarter of Friday's battle of the undefeated. Winter was the game's leading rusher with 97 yards. Story, photos on Page 11

Hospital gets \$880,000 infusion

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

Goodland Regional Medical Center is \$880,000 richer, thanks to a law to even the playing field for hospitals who treat more Medicaid and Medicare patients than most.

The hospital received \$720,000 from the state for the 2004 and 2005 fiscal years, Chief Financial Officer Jim Precht said, and a \$160,000 settlement for 2002.

The \$720,000 is compensation available to hospitals that treat a disproportionate share of Medicaid and Medicare patients. The \$160,000, he said, came from an application filed by the accounting firm of Johnson, Wendling and Roe on behalf of the hospital based on its 2002 cost report.

The hospital paid the firm \$15,000 in January to seek reimbursement as a Medicare Sole Com-

munity Provider, expecting to get about \$230,000. Most such requests are turned down, Precht said, and appeals may take up to two years. But the hospital received over half the amount it asked for with less than a year's wait.

Hospital board members cheered the announcement from Administrator Jay Jolly about the \$720,000 at the board's regular meeting Monday, Sept. 27. The \$160,000 arrived Friday.

The hospital's switch to critical access status is paying off, Jolly said.

At the hospital's board meeting, Debbie Hickman, director of patient care services, identified some equipment needs.

Some are things that need to be replaced soon, she said; others need to be thought of as the hospital sets

next year's budget.

The hospital needs 15 intravenous pumps, Hickman said; six of the existing pumps are fine, but nine need to be replaced.

The last upgrade was in 1999, she said, and two new pumps were added in 2002. As technology advances, she added, the hospital will be expected to have newer pumps that better manage medication. They help save on medication errors, she said.

The pumps can be hung and set on a timer, Jolly said, saving steps and time for the nursing staff. That can reduce their workload, he said, and the nurses have plenty to do.

Dr. Travis Daise has already requested a baby scale for the nursery, Hickman said, that will cost just over \$5,000, including a built-in warmer.

It's hard on premature babies to be put on a cold scale, she said.

The hospital needs bed and chair alarms, Hickman said, for confused patients who try to crawl out of bed and wander around. Three alarms are needed, she said, and cost about \$50 each. A memorial donation made to the hospital could pay for those, said Dale Schields, director of human resources.

Hickman said the hospital had been approached by someone who wants to donate for a chair scale to weigh the elderly. It will cost about \$1,500, she said, but will probably be taken care of by donations.

The hospital needs a fetal heart monitor, Hickman said, and defibrillators.

In other business:

•The hospital received television equipment for the board room from

the Voluntary Hospital Association to get educational programs for staff.

That way, the hospital doesn't have to send them "to Timbuktu" for training, Precht said.

•Jolly said the new dietitian, Sarah Linten, is settling into the job.

•The administrator said he has met with a group of community leaders who are interested in working with the hospital in the Kansas Rural Health Works Program, a national initiative administered through the Kansas Rural Health Options Project.

The program will study the impact of rural health care, Jolly said, and only two Kansas counties will be chosen. He is trying to get Sherman County a spot.

•The next meeting was set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 25.



Denver fraternity flies in for Sunday picnic here

Four of 15 airplanes (above) that visited the Goodland airport Sunday started to taxi out to the end of the runway in preparation for their trip back to Denver. About 40 members of the Metropolitan State College of Denver chapter of Alpha Eta Rho visited Goodland for lunch and a little recreation for their fall semester fly-in. Alpha Eta Rho is a professional aviation fraternity with chapters throughout the country. Chapter President Eric May said the trip was a combination training flight and social event.

Photos by Greg Stover/The Goodland Star-News

Tech college enrollment down this year

By Greg Stover

The Goodland Star-News

Northwest Kansas Technical College had 272 students enrolled for the fall semester as of Sept. 20, down 65 from last year, and 330 from the college's all-time high of 602 in 1999.

President Ken Clouse said administrators and the college board are concerned about a steady downward trend, which has forced some restructuring, especially in the "under-enrolled" programs.

This has caused a reduction in staff and fewer faculty members in some programs, Clouse said. He said the college's business department cut back two faculty positions and the engineering department one. Communications technology had the biggest cut, seven faculty positions and a secretary.

"Enrollment decreases have obviously had some impact on budget," Clouse said, "which is reflected in

“We are interested in students of any age and will continue to attempt to appeal to all ages - Ken Clouse
Technical College President”

these reductions.”

One of the reasons for this, said Clouse, is the overall economy, and he expects enrollment to improve with the economy.

"When jobs are scarce, then it has an impact on technical college enrollment," he said. "Our programs of study are geared to put individuals directly into the job market. As the economy improves and we experience job growth, enrollment will respond."

Clouse said the college wants to be involved in projects that will help create economic stability and

growth in the community. He said a strong economy, along with community stability and growth, are essential to the future of the college.

Clouse said lower enrollment in most northwest Kansas school districts has an impact. One strategy the college is looking at is to become more attractive to adult students looking for retraining opportunities rather than predominately focusing on high school graduates.

"Of course, we are interested in students of any age and will continue to attempt to appeal to all ages," he said.

Although it will be some time before enrollment gets back to where it was, Clouse said he expects the numbers to start trending up soon. He said the job market has a major impact on the school's ability to attract students. For example, he said, the popularity of communications technology was a major reason for the record enrollment in 1999. For awhile, students had to wait between two and four years to get into this program. Since then, demand for trained workers in that field has all but disappeared.

Clouse said part of the effort to increase enrollment will be more focused recruiting for the under-enrolled programs. He said the engineering, electronics and computer, business, and communications technology programs have been the hardest hit by declining enrollment.

One initiative being worked on is increased scholarships for new students, Clouse said. He said the college has had a hard time competing for students with four-year colleges, and even community colleges, who have much more money available in their endowment funds.

Clouse said between \$10,000 and \$20,000 will be earmarked to get a new scholarship initiative started. In addition to financial incentives, Clouse said the college is considering expanding its recruiting area, increased advertising and getting faculty members more involved in recruiting.

Another initiative under consideration is providing child care for students as a way to attract more adult students who otherwise could not attend.

"Although times are tough right now," he said, "I have a lot of confidence that things will improve."

Corn harvest may begin this week; higher yields expected

By Greg Stover

The Goodland Star-News

While the yields expected by Sherman County corn farmers vary, most agree this year's harvest will be better than last.

Dana Belshe, county extension agent, said harvest of wet corn started last week along with some dryland corn, but with the recent rain, most farmers will not begin harvesting for about another two weeks.

Steve Duell, who farms in western Sherman County, said he expects this year's crop to be a little better overall than last. He said except for those who suffered hail damage

in August, most farmers he has talked to expect a pretty good corn harvest as well.

Duell said about 85 percent of his corn is irrigated, and its harvest should be as good as, if not better, than last year. He said he is not planning to pick corn for another two to three weeks, however, to give the grain a chance to dry down.

Grain in standing crops has to lose moisture content after maturity to a point where it can be harvested and stored. Farmers who bring in grain that's too wet to be stored are not paid as much at the elevator, because the grain has to be dried using natural gas.

Duell said the other 15 percent of his corn crop is dryland which, because of drought conditions, he will not harvest. Instead, he will leave it standing to protect the ground during the winter in preparation for summer wheat planting.

Lynn Hoelting, general manager of Mueller Grain, said the corn crop will be a lot better this year. He said more acres of dryland corn will be harvested this year and expects a "pretty good crop" of irrigated corn.

Hoelting said although Mueller Grain has already received some early corn deliveries,

he does not expect major shipments until next two weeks.

In a report released Sept. 27, the Kansas Department of Agriculture reported that 91 percent of the corn in northwest Kansas is mature and that 25 percent had been harvested for grain, up from 14 percent the week before. For the state as a whole, 94 percent of the corn was mature with 37 percent already harvested for grain.

The report said 72 percent of the topsoil in northwest Kansas had adequate moisture, but only 4 percent of subsoil in the region had adequate moisture.