

# The Goodland Star-News

**MIDWEEK**  
**Tuesday, Dec. 14**  
**2004**

**75¢**

Volume 72, Number 99

Sixteen Pages

Goodland, Kansas 67735

## weather report

**34°**

noon Monday



### Today

• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

### Wednesday

• Sunrise, 6:59 a.m.

• Sunset, 4:24 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 35 degrees
- Humidity 40 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds northwest 15 mph
- Barometer 30.60 inches and steady

- Record High today 66° (1962)
- Record Low today -16° (1963)

### Last 24 Hours\*

High Sunday	48°
Low Sunday	31°
Precipitation	none
This month	.02
Year to date	21.38
Normal	19.57

### The Topside Forecast

Today: mostly sunny, high around 48, low near 22, winds south southwest 6-11 mph. Wednesday: partly cloudy, high around 45, low around 23, winds north northwest 7-11 mph.

### Extended Forecast

Thursday: partly cloudy, high around 43, low around 19. Friday: mostly sunny, high around 43, low around 19. Saturday: mostly sunny, high around 55, low around 22.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.



Friday's special guest Kathryn Wedermeyer (above) told kids in Karen Stone's and Pat Stindt's kindergarten classes at West Elementary School about the Christmas baskets put together by Genesis. The students later pitched in to help carry sacks of food they'd collected for the food bank. Tristan Sharon, a student in Stone's class, (left) strained to carry one of the heavier sacks to Wedermeyer's car.

Photo by Kathryn Burke/The Goodland Star-News

## Kindergarten classes show spirit of giving

By Kathryn Burke

*The Goodland Star-News*

The spirit of giving is built right in to the lesson plans of West Elementary School kindergarten teachers Pat Stindt and Karen Stone.

Friday, after a week-long food drive for the Genesis Christmas baskets, students gave sacks of food to the program.

Kathryn Wedermeyer of Genesis visited the classes to collect the food

and teach the students about the program. She told them how volunteers collect and sort the food and how important Genesis is to those who need a little help.

Students got involved, naming the foods they like to eat during the holidays and talking about what others will have in their baskets.

In a letter sent home with students, Stindt asked families to collect the non-

perishable food and bring to school Dec. 6-10 for Genesis. She said the community service project replaced the students' normal gift exchange.

Instead of the excitement of opening gifts, Stindt said, she wanted to teach students about giving and helping others.

"I want to share with the students," she wrote, "that there is more to Christmas than just receiving gifts."

## Company begins production, keeps lease

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*

Since the California firm has begun production and hired several employees, city commissioners agreed last Monday that Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp. can keep its rent-free lease on the Ed Wolak building.

In October, City Manager Ron Pickman told the commission the company had not started production and the building insurance had been canceled. He said the company was in breach of the lease, and said the commission should consider terminating the contract.

Commissioners decided then it would be better to give Aircraft Seal time to begin production and to get new insurance. The commission tabled the lease question until the first meeting in December.

Monday, Pickman told the commission the firm had new insurance and the plant has been in production since Oct. 27.

The city invested over \$500,000 in remodeling the old IGA building on 10th, which it bought from Bankwest for \$80,000. The California firm has thousands of dollars worth of equipment in the plant, but owner Herb Menold said lack of local investment kept him from starting production until October.

Roy Dixon, the operations manager for the plant, said the plant has three employees and is producing parts for an aircraft rear door seal. He said they shipped 87 pieces on Monday, making about 400 in the past six weeks.

Dixon said they plan to hire three more people in January, when new equipment becomes operational, and after they are trained, three more will be hired in February or March. He said plans are to hire three more in May, but anything beyond that will depend on the needs of the production.

City Commissioner John Garcia said he had heard the people hired so far were not from Sherman

County, and wondered if local people are being considered.

Dixon said of the original employees, one was from Colby, but had lived in Goodland before, and would be moving back to Goodland this week. The other person was from Sharon Springs.

He said he felt it was important that the company was bringing not just jobs to Sherman County, but bringing people to the city to work.

Mayor Rick Billinger told Dixon he was glad to see the insurance had been taken care of. Pickman said all the questions had been satisfied.

The commission went on to other business on the agenda, taking no action on the lease. The contract which began in January grants Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp. free rent for two years.

In other business, the commission:

- Approved the reappointment of Marsha Schilling to the City/County Recreation Board for a three-year

term. Schilling is one of two Sherman County representatives on the board, and her reappointment had been recommended by the county commissioners.

- Approved payments to Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates for engineering work on the airport runway lighting project. A payment of \$4,196 was approved on the Kansas Department of Transportation share of the airport project, which is installation of runway lights on the crosswind runway. A payment of \$2,536 was approved for engineering on the Federal Aviation Administration portion of the runway lighting project.

- Approved payment to Strukel Electric of \$84,829 for work completed on the airport runway lighting project. The total project cost is \$401,686, and with the latest payment more than half of the project has been completed. Pickman said a total of \$321,908 has been spent, which includes \$56,585 in material

on site for use on the main runway.

- Approved request for reimbursement from the state for \$23,427 on the runway lighting project and from Federal Aviation Administration for \$21,221.

- Approved an engineering contract with Evans, Bierly for an upcoming project at the airport to improve the runway safety area at the east end of the crosswind runway. The total project is estimated to cost \$304,985, with the federal share \$290,462. Pickman said this project is being proposed for next year, but the city was asked to begin the process. Pickman said the commission was not committed to any money at this time, but would have an official notification early next year. The engineering contract is for \$25,000 for design engineering and a maximum of \$30,000 for construction services.

- Received notification that the

See CITY, Page 5a

## inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



## Cowgirls finish second

Whitney Archer scored two points during the first half of the Cowgirls' game against the McCook Lady Bison on Friday, the second day of the Topside Tip-Off. Goodland won 43-26, but lost to Ottawa in the championship Saturday, 44-42. Photos, story on Page 11.

## Last chance to win \$50 prizes

This is the last week to collect your tickets for the \$2,000 grand prize drawing in the Christmas on Us contest, and there are three \$50 instant prizes remaining to be won.

The big drawing will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday on 11th Street west of Main. Ticket holders must be present to win the grand prize of \$1,500 and second prize of \$500.

George Van Vleet was one of seven instant winners who collected \$50 in scrip on Friday. Van Vleet, who got his winning ticket from Garcia's Furniture and Appliance, said he was not sure what he and his wife planned to spend it on yet.

There are 10 winning numbers in today's *Goodland Star-News*, and the first three to bring their winning ticket to *The Star-News* office will collect a \$50 instant prize.

The instant prizes are part of the Goodland merchants' seventh annual "Christmas on Us" promotion, which will spread a total of \$2,500

around to 12 lucky shoppers this month.

Participating businesses are handing out one ticket for every \$10 a customer spends, with a limit of 250 tickets per transaction. If you ask at *The Star-News* office, we'll give you one free ticket each week.

The customer takes half of each ticket and the other half is dropped into gift-wrapped collection boxes, which are emptied once a week into a large barrel. *The Star-News* staff picks up tickets each week.

Instant winners have until 5 p.m. Friday to bring their tickets to office, 1205 Main, and collect \$50. The scrip can be spent only at participating businesses. Winning tickets are not included in the grand prize drawing.

All of the \$50 instant winners will be given out during the month.

It's simple enough, but there are a few rules.

- You must be 18 to participate.
- Employees of participating



Van Vleet

## County voting system part of pilot program

By Kathryn Burke

*The Goodland Star-News*

The election of 2000, especially in Florida, left the country divided and questioning the fairness of our voting system.

Congress realized there were problems with the voting system and pushed for change, passing the Help America Vote Act, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2002.

Last Tuesday, the program came to Sherman County as software experts and representatives from the Kansas secretary of state's office descended on the courthouse to check out the voting system here.

The county was chosen as one of nine test pilots in the state to be the first to implement voting changes, said Brian Henson, coordinator for law for the secretary

of state's office.

When it is implemented, said Henson, the new system will check and double check voters, comparing identification, Social Security numbers and drivers license numbers against felony, death and voter-history records. It will prevent people from voting twice and help organize advanced or absentee voting.

"It will verify that people are people," he said, "and that they are who they say they are."

County Clerk Janet Rumpel, who serves as the county election officer, said the only part of the process that will change for voters is at the polling place. With the new system, she said, voters will feed their ballots into a machine that will immediately count the

See VOTING, Page 5a