

weather
report

63°

noon Monday



Today

- Sunset, 4:59 p.m.
- Wednesday**
- Sunrise, 6:59 a.m.
- Sunset, 5:00 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 33 degrees
- Humidity 26 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds northwest 4 mph.
- Barometer 30.12 inches and steady
- Record High today 70° (1935)
- Record Low today -11° (1957)

Last 24 Hours*

High Sunday	67°
Low Sunday	18°
Precipitation	none
This month	.08
Year to date	.08
Normal	.35

The Topside Forecast

Today: partly cloudy, high near 59, low near 27, winds north north-west 10-15 mph. Wednesday: cloudy with a 20 percent chance of freezing rain after 11 p.m., high near 49, low around 26, winds calm becoming southeast 7-10 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: cloudy with widespread fog and a 30 percent chance of snow and freezing rain, high near 48, low around 30. (National Weather Service) Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz. * Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$3.07 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.21
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$1.77 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.70
Loan deficiency pmt. — 25¢
Milo — \$1.45 bushel
Soybeans — \$4.58 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.72
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Millet — \$6 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$11.85 cwt.
NuSun — \$11.95 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



Remembering
Father Girard

Monsignor Armond Girard was part of the Goodland coffee group (above) in 1994. Tom Bush poured him coffee, along with Stella Cebula and Tom Randolph. Story, photos on Page 3.

Vendor questions hospital policy

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

A downtown business owner complains he was treated poorly by Goodland Regional Medical Center in bidding for the purchase and maintenance of copiers.

He has questioned the hospital's purchasing policies, saying that, as a taxpayer, he feels they should be concerned about saving money and about spending money in Sherman County.

Hospital officials, for the most part, declined to comment, saying they are hoping to work things out.

Darrick Leiker, owner of High Plains Office Supply, said in a letter he wrote to the hospital board and the county commission, but has only given to one commissioner, that he tried to save the hospital money on copier purchases but was cursed by the hospital's chief financial officer, Jim Precht. He said he had a dispute with the hospital's purchasing department over the purchase and maintenance of copiers.

(Leiker said he tried to give the letter to hospital board member Patty Eckhardt shortly after writing it, but she was out of town. He said he later offered her copies of the letter for all the board members, but she refused them.)

Leiker said Lisa Velasquez, director of materials management for the hospital, called him a liar and that Precht said he was disruptive and threw him out of the hospital.

Hospital tries to buy in county

Goodland Regional Medical Center has a purchasing policy that is the same as any business would have, Administrator Jay Jolly says.

That includes seeking the highest quality and value at a good price. The hospital does not have a formal policy giving preference to local businesses, Jolly said, but does a considerable amount of buying in Goodland.

After questions in May about Sherman County buying from out-of-county businesses, county commissioners talked about their purchasing policies. Carolyn Applegate, then the Sherman County economic development director, approached the commission with complaints from local business people about the county spending money out of the area.

Applegate said she checked on four major items from the previous year that amounted to \$385,000 that was spent out of the area. She suggested the commissioners encourage department heads to look at how they make buying decisions.

The commissioners met with department heads, who told them they were doing their best to buy from area businesses. One thing that was discussed was that sometimes those buying did not know what local businesses offered, and Commissioner Kevin

Rasure said communication is a key to improving that.

"We need to let them know what you need and let them know who you are calling for," he said. "We are not saying buy local at any price, but we want to be fair and give them a chance where possible."

"Pay close attention to our local businesses," Commissioner Mitch Tiede said, "but watch the prices too."

That policy is similar to the hospital's policy. Officials say the hospital is not required to follow county policy, although it does receive money from county taxes.

The hospital board is independent, Jolly said, but the members are appointed by the commissioners.

The hospital spent about \$800,000 in Sherman County businesses last year, he said, and has about \$500,000 invested in banks here. Besides that, the administrator said, the hospital spent about \$3.5 on salaries and wages and expects to spend about \$4 million this year.

Purchasing is not done on a formula, Jolly said, but the hospital considers any factors a prudent buyer

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"I have never been treated so unprofessionally," Leiker said.

Velasquez said she did not care to comment on the dispute on the record, saying it would be better to let hospital management handle it.

Leiker said he was ready to just let things slide, then he got a letter say-

ing that since he did not submit a bid for the maintenance of the copiers, the contract had been awarded to someone else. He said he had been taking care of the copiers, and he had never been told he needed to submit a new bid.

Leiker said he worries about the

hospital not trying to get the best prices on things and not buying from in-county businesses when possible. He claims other local businesses have been "blackballed" from doing business with the hospital, citing a dispute between the hospital and a print shop, the Prints and

the Paper, as an example.

Kay Thornburg, owner of the printing business, said she doesn't want to talk about the problem, since she hopes things will be resolved with the hospital.

Thornburg said she still does business with the hospital, though not as much as she used to. She did say she agrees with Leiker that since the hospital is supported by taxes, it should support county businesses.

Hospital Administrator Jay Jolly said he thought there was a big misunderstanding with Leiker but that his information is second-hand, since he wasn't there when the incidents took place.

"We have a vendor who feels he didn't have a shot," Jolly said, adding that the business did stay local. "We try to do what we can with local business."

Jolly said the hospital bought the copiers on a national contract and that Sharp, the machines' manufacturer, decided which vendor would deliver them.

Once the copiers were on the way, Jolly said, the hospital asked for bids on the maintenance from Topside Office Products and from High Plains. It is in the hospital's best interest to have bids from both, he said, but Leiker said he never received the bid request.

"I don't know what happened on that," Jolly said.

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Deadline today; primary March 1

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The election filing deadline is noon today, and the latest information from the county clerk is that there will be a primary on Tuesday, March 1, at least for the Kanorado mayor' seat.

Three people have filed as of Monday for Kanorado mayor: Mayor Bob Helderman has filed for re-election; the other candidates are Dennis Korbelik and Bob Handle.

With three candidates, there will be a primary to reduce the number to two, County Clerk Janet Rumpel said.

For three seats on the Kanorado City Council, Greg Pettibone, Frank Hernandez and Nora Clements have filed, bringing the total number of candidates to five. Deb Fahey and Linda Handle had previously filed.

The Rev. Chat DeJong of the Goodland Bible Church has been the only one to file for the Goodland School Board. There are three positions open, and current members Ron Schilling and Mike Campbell have said they will not run again. Dick Short of Short and Son is expected to file by the deadline.

Three people have filed for the Goodland City Commission, Clerk Mary Volk said Monday. Dave Walker, who works at the Kit Carson Correctional Facility, Gary Far-

ris of Farris Manufacturing and Josh Dechant of Bankwest. Conrad Pettijohn, who owns PJ's Home Improvement, has taken out an application, but has not filed.

Commissioner John Garcia of Garcia's Home Furnishings says he has not made up his mind, but may file by the deadline.

All voting in both elections will be done at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in Goodland; under county policy, there will be no polling place in Kanorado.

"I have filed with the secretary of state that we have one polling place in Sherman County," Rumpel said Monday. "The primary election will be held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in Goodland, even if the only contest is the Kanorado mayor."

Voters must be registered by Monday, Feb. 14. Voters may register from 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. Monday-Friday at the courthouse, 813 Broadway, and from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday at the city clerk's office in the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

Voters must be U.S. citizens age 18 or over by election day. They need to register if this is their first election or if they have moved or changed their names since the last time they registered.

Visitor's bureau might move office

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

The Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau talked at its monthly meeting last Tuesday about this year's budget, upcoming events and a possible office move that would include sharing a secretary with the Goodland Chamber of Commerce and the Sherman County Economic Development Council.

Bureau officials and the Chamber director talked about possibly joining the economic development group in the same building, with the three sharing one secretary.

Possible sites suggested for the offices include the Opera House Plaza, 1002 Main, the current location of the Chamber office, and the Southwestern Bell building at 10th

and Main, used by the county for storage.

Informal, closed-door meetings have been scheduled, including representatives from all three groups, but not a quorum from any, to discuss the office and secretary sharing.

"All three should have the same focus, marketing Goodland," said Chamber President Donna Swager.

Responding to concern about the "bickering and backbiting" that had happened with the three working together before, Chamber Manager Courtney Warden said, "We are all grown women."

Visitors bureau members said they understood that two offices are open in the plaza building, allowing the bureau and economic develop-

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Cowboys fall to Redskins



Freshman Jance McKee (No. 35) tried to grab a rebound from Liberal's Martrelle Patterson during the third period of the Cowboys' game against the Redskins on Friday in the Colby Community Building. Liberal won the game 62-42 and went on to beat Scott City 67-54 in Saturday's championship game of the 2005 Orange and Black Classic. Story, photo on Page 12.

Photo by Greg Stover/The Goodland Star-News