

weather
report

57°

noon Monday

Today

• Sunset, 7:34 p.m.

Wednesday

• Sunrise, 5:53 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:35 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 51 degrees
- Humidity 52 percent
- Sky mostly cloudy
- Winds northwest 20-30 mph.
- Barometer 29.73 inches and steady
- Record High today 90° (1953)
- Record Low today 22° (1994)

Last 24 Hours*

High Monday	63°
Low Monday	29°
Precipitation	.04
This month	1.42
Year to date	2.01
Normal	3.15

The Topside Forecast

Today: partly cloudy and breezy, high around 61, now near 32, winds northwest 15-38 mph.
Wednesday: partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers, high around 58, low around 39, winds north 8-30 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers, high around 60, low around 39.
Friday: slight chance of showers (National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings compile at midnight.

local
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$3.05 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.01
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$1.86 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.88
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Milo — \$1.58 bushel
Soybeans — \$5.71 bushel
Posted county price — \$5.76
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Millet — \$5 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$9.60 cwt.
NuSun — \$10.60 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



Cowgirls
lose to Colby

Goodland pitcher Jordan Frazier wound up to throw a pitch in the third inning of the Cowgirls' second game against the Lady Eagles of Colby on Friday. Photos, story Page 12.

Volunteers take cleanup to streets



By Kathryn Burke

The Goodland Star-News

Volunteers wearing orange vests and carrying bright blue bags dotted the green grass along K-27 Saturday for the final day of the citywide cleanup.

Nineteen volunteers, ranging from sorority groups to a city commissioner, met at 8 a.m. at the Northwest Kansas Technical College to watch a tape on highway safety before hitting the road.

The volunteers split into four groups. Each chose a side of the highway and got to work. They cleaned from Road 31, south of I-70, to Eighth Street.

The morning started out cloudy and cool, keeping the temperature low for the volunteers.

The majority of trash picked up was paper, but some groups picked up unusual pieces, like a piece of bread and some discarded cash.

One group fanned out along the fence along the old Apple Trail Truck Stop parking lot, where they picked up insulation and other debris caught in the

barbed wire. Others combed the ditches for discarded paper cups and fast food bags.

See CLEANUP, Page 9



Clouse



Dick Liess (left) used a stick to pick up a big piece of styrofoam trash along K-27 Saturday morning. Jeanette Foust (above left) and Etta Mae Keirns dug deep, pulling out trash from the ditch in front of Motel 6 and the Super 8 motel. Volunteers left their trash in bags near the highway (right) for the Kansas Department of Transportation to pick up.

Photos by Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News



County wheat crop looks good, so far

By Kathryn Burke

The Goodland Star-News

Up against a four-to-five-year drought and a not-so-optimistic outlook, the wheat crop for this year is holding its own. "It's looking pretty good," said Dana Belshe, Kansas State University Research and Extension Agent. Jeanne Falk, K-State agronomist for Sherman, Cheyenne and Wallace counties with the extension service, agreed. "It's looking better than it has over the past couple of weeks," she said, adding the recent rains have really helped the wheat. "That shot of moisture helped us," said Belshe, adding that the rain was pretty widespread, hitting everyone in the county.

Areas that were starting to see



Belshe



Falk

some drought stress, Falk said, have started to green up and look healthier. "Right now, if we continue to get rain, we'll have a good year," she said. Matt Mehle, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service office in Goodland, said although rainfall amounts are up for the month, they are

1.12 inches below average for the year.

He said a statement issued last month said far northwest Kansas is still officially in a drought.

Because of the extended drought, Falk said, the area doesn't have much subsoil moisture. Without the moisture underneath, the crops depend on rain to stay healthy.

Belshe said the moisture extends about 18 inches right now, but doesn't hit the subsoil.

For now, Falk said, farmers with dryland wheat will just have to wait to see what happens. Most farmers will be praying for rain and cooler temperatures, she said.

"You just don't want those super hot, dry days," she said. "All we can do is hope for more rain."

Mehle said the office is forecasting rain off and on for the week, with the best chance on Thursday.

Falk said right now, most of the wheat is past the jointed stage, just above the soil surface.

The plants are now more exposed to damage from a freeze or herbicides, she said.

She said any application of herbicides right now would not be effective. Freeze damage is the biggest danger, she said, when the head of the wheat plant is close to emerging from the ground. Belshe said a freeze Friday and Saturday night may have affected some area fields, but they won't know until later this week.

Any damage to the wheat would affect the yield, with fewer or smaller

kernels leading to a lower weight.

Many wheat plots in the county were planted with the Jagger variety, the most popular in Kansas.

Jagalene, a descendent of Jagger, is the next most popular.

Belshe and Falk agree that the stand looks good for now and farmers will have to wait and see how they fare.

"We'll remain cautiously optimistic," Belshe said.

Falk recommends farmers keep a close watch on the fields and report any suspicion of disease to her. She said farmers can send her samples that she will pass on to the university to identify problems. She will visit farms, too. To contact Falk, call the Northwest Research-Extension Center in Colby at 785-462-6281.

Fixing the roads goes digital

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

A laptop computer could help diagnose problems with Sherman County's road equipment, commissioners were told last Tuesday, track and order parts and speed repairs.

Curt Way, public works manager; Steve Goodman, road and bridge superintendent; and Dustin Daniels of Martin Tractor of Colby, told the commissioners that a laptop in the road and bridge shop could be used for diagnostics and maybe parts ordering for some of the county's Caterpillar equipment.

Daniels said newer equipment has diagnostic fault codes that the computer can read to help determine what is wrong.

"Steve can take the laptop to the field and help read the fault codes," Daniels said.

"This helps reduce the number of trips our repairmen have to make. The fault codes can give us an idea

of what parts might be needed, and that would make the trips more efficient.

"He can go to our web site www.martincat.com and look up details, as well as find parts information. He can even order directly and the parts would be direct shipped from Caterpillar through our company."

"How many machines do we have that will work with this computer?" asked Commissioner Chuck Thomas.

"About all we have," Goodman replied.

Thomas asked if the laptop would work on any of the Caterpillar equipment the county has, whether in road and bridge or at the landfill.

It would take an adapter to use the laptop for Detroit diesel engines Steve Goodman said.

Daniels said the laptop would probably save a trip or two per month that the repairmen are having

to make, and some phone time as well.

He said the annual fee for software would be about \$3,000. Adapters for the different types of engines and vehicles are about \$50 each, he said.

Goodman said he has to call Martin about every two weeks, but they don't always have to come out. He said the average trip costs about \$800.

Way said they have had a repairman out about every two months.

"With this we would save money every year," Thomas said.

"Laptop updates will help on parts," Goodman said, "because our book may be too old."

Daniels said Martin could provide the computer at a cost of \$1,400.

Way said he felt the best thing would be to check in the county about purchasing the computer.

"Is this budgeted in the fund?"

See LAPTOP, Page 9

Potholes pose problems on block of Enterprise

Rebuilding a private stretch of Enterprise Road that runs in front of the Conoco station on K-27 could cost \$70,000 to \$100,000, and city officials are not sure who should pay.

City Manager Ron Pickman told the City Commission Monday that the owner, Service Oil Co. of Colby, is willing to give the road to the city, but does not want to pay for repairs. The stretch is pockmarked by potholes.

Engineer Darin Neufeld said the base under at least half the pavement is shot, and it would take a full reconstruction to fix it. He said the city might be able to resurface the north part, between the station and McDonald's, but the intersection and the area in front of the pumps would have to be rebuilt.

Commissioners asked whether it was a good idea for the city to accept the road and fix it without Service paying the cost.

"What does this do if we do it on his terms?" asked Commissioner Annette Fairbanks said "Where does that leave us in the future, like with the area in front of the old Gibson building where Herl is?"

"It would set a precedent," Mayor Rick Billinger said. "We have to be fair to everyone."

"This is a problem," Commissioner Dave Daniels said, "because the people coming off the Interstate think it is the city's road and judge us by the poor condition."

Pickman said he would talk to the owners about sharing the cost, and let the commission know what he found out.