

'50s-style diner will feature steaks, eggs

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
Steak, eggs, sandwiches and more will be on the menu at the new 1950s-style Goodland Steakhouse Diner late this summer.

"Excellent food and '50s atmosphere," is what owner Tom Blair said people can expect from the new restaurant.

The diner will have a nostalgic feel, he said, but poodle skirts, 45 rpm records, hula hoops and bobbie socks will be optional.

Blair, a Benkelman, Neb., native and owner of the Western KEG sports bar and restaurant there, said he plans to sell his Benkelman restaurant and move to Goodland.

"There's just more traffic," he said of his location behind Taco John's and Goodland Sinclair just off K-27.

Blair said access to travelers on



The Diner-Mite company of Atlanta will send a diner similar to this west this summer to set up the Goodland Steakhouse Diner.

I-70 and K-27 should help his business grow. He plans to have a tall sign to attract people from the highway and said he may put up a bill-

board. Blair said he is looking forward to doing business in Goodland. "It's a town that's on the up-

swing," he said. The diner will serve breakfast, lunch and dinner. Blair said they will specialize in steaks for dinner.

"You're going to be eating the best food between Kansas City and Denver," he said.

The restaurant will have a casual bar, he said, serving beer, whiskey, specialty wines and mixed drinks.

The diner will have seating for 120, 85 in the front and 40 in a back smoking section near the bar.

Blair said the restaurant will be a Happy Days model restaurant made by Diner-Mite Diners of Atlanta. The company builds ready-made diners that come with grills, coolers and other equipment. The Georgia company will ship the diner in pieces and assemble it here.

Blair said he chose the type of restaurant because he likes the 1950s-style diners in Denver.

"They just real neat," he said, adding they are easy to keep up.

The diner, he said, will look like the Penny's Diner in Sharon

Springs but will hold more people. Blair plans to hire about 25 full- and part-time waitresses, cooks and other staff from this area.

"I'm gonna run it 100 percent," he added, saying he wants to live in Goodland, too.

Blair said he and his wife Rosemary will move to Goodland after he sells the restaurant in Benkelman. He is moving not only for the business, but he has family in town.

County Treasurer Shelby Miller is a first cousin on his father's side — Blair's father and Miller's mother were brother and sister. He said the late Jim Blair, a double cousin of his father — his cousins were two sisters who married two brothers, making the cousins double — started the first radio and television station in Goodland, KWGB, which is now KLOE.

West air conditioning will wait till next year

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
It's hot air for one more year for students at West Elementary after the Goodland School Board tabled a plan Monday to air condition the school.

With school finance tied up in a court battle and time short, the board agreed to seek bids next year to start the work next summer.

Glen Strait, owner of Strait Associates Architects in Colby, has been working on the project and came to the board Monday with plans.

"We're basically ready to go to bid," he told the board.

The plan would fit each pod, or four-classroom section of the school, with two air conditioning units. The units would be attached to zone controls that would allow teachers in each room to set the temperature as needed.

The school would need six units for the 12 connected classrooms and one for the preschool, he said.

A unit for the already air conditioned building offices would be on the bids as an alternate. Strait said if the project became too expensive, they could opt out of the office unit.

Superintendent Marvin Selby said the 30-year-old office system should be replaced if possible, but could be held.

Strait said getting bids would take about two weeks and because of the Fourth of July holiday, the board won't meet for three weeks, until Friday, July 8.

"How long will this project take?" asked board member Ron Schilling.

Strait said the job should take about one week per

pod after the contractor gets started, a two- or three-month project total.

He said if the bids take two or three weeks to come in, the work wouldn't start until Monday, Aug. 1.

If the project is delayed until then, Strait said, the work won't be done until October or November.

Selby asked if the work would distract students. "It's not going to be easy working over an occupied space," Strait answered.

Board member Marty Melia said it should like the work will disturb students.

"I don't think we have time this year," he said.

"Would the plan be just as good next March?" asked board member Mike Campbell, adding that most contractors should have work booked through the summer by now.

Strait said the information wouldn't change but some contractors might accelerate the pace to get the work done before school starts.

Schilling said asking for bids wouldn't cost the school anything and someone may be able to complete the work in time.

Selby asked Strait where they would get contractors for the job. Strait said CB Heating and Air Conditioning in Colby and Glassman would likely send in bids.

Melia asked if the school could lock in bids after Christmas for a project at the first of summer next year.

Strait said some contractors could lock in bids if the suppliers would lock in material prices. He told the board he would find out how long in advance companies would make bids.

Administrators learn leadership skills at retreat

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
Goodland school administrators studied leadership and teamwork and got to know each other a little better at a retreat in New Mexico this month.

Sharon Gregory, Central Elementary principal, and Steve Raymer, high school activities director, reported on the retreat at Angel Fire, a ski resort near Taos, at a board meeting Monday.

They said the Southwest Plains Regional Service Center Leadership Renewal Retreat, held Thursday, June 2, and Friday, June 3, helped them get to know each other.

"Thank you for the opportunity to go," said Gregory, adding that the administrators sometimes have trouble getting together during the school year.

She said the retreat gave them a chance to improve leadership skills and learn better ways to work with each other.

"It was a good time for all of us," said Raymer, adding that the group got to know each other better.

The retreat started, he said, when the administrators learned the Kolbe process, a series of questions that separate people based on per-

sonality traits.

Raymer said he was a 'green,' meaning he is quick to start a project without learning all of the details.

The exercise, he said, helped the group understand how to better work with different personality types by understanding them.

Raymer recommended that the school board take the test.

Selby said since they are signing on two new board members, it might be nice to find out how each member operates.

He said the tools he learned will help him deal with other administrators, teachers and students.

The group learned how to determine what motivates employees and to adjust coaching style to those needs.

Gregory said they set up a scenario, putting a principal into the role of a chief executive officer, and had students and parents filling the role of clients.

"It gave you the opportunity to see how others perceive you," she said, adding that participants could then adjust.

Another exercise asked the group to answer questions to determine if

they were conservers or originators.

Raymer said he stood on the originators side while Selby lined up on the conservers side. As they stood there, he said, Jim Mull,

North Elementary and Grant Junior High principal; Shelly Angelos, West Elementary principal; and Harvey Swager, high school principal, all lined up on the originator side.

While the situation was funny, Raymer said, the instructor said it's good to have some balance, with the conservers there to control the originators.

Administrators were in classes from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, June 2, Selby said, and all morning on Friday, June 3. The retreat cost \$150 per participant for the two days, he said, including breakfast and lunch.

The six administrators stayed three nights at the Angel Fire Resort at the rate of \$75 per night.

Selby said the group participated in a golf scramble at the resort for \$90 per person with a shared cart and 18 holes of play. He said everyone who participated paid for the scramble themselves.

Two-year-old case gets continuance

After over two years of delays, a Goodland man who pleaded guilty to aggravated indecent liberties with a child bought a little more time Monday with another continuance of his sentencing.

Kenneth James Petracich, 51, was not in court for the hearing Monday, but was represented by his attorney, Jeff Mason.

Mason asked for a continuance because one of his witnesses, Jeff King, a licensed master social worker with the Center for Substance and Abuse Treatment with Prairie View Inc. could not be in court. King gave Petracich an evaluation, Mason said, and was to appear as a defense witness.

Mason asked for a continuance to

the next motion day, Monday, July 11.

District Judge Jack Burr said as long as Petracich was willing to remain in jail, he would grant the continuance.

County Attorney Bonnie Selby objected, saying the age of the case should be taken into account.

"I think this case needs to be addressed," Selby said.

Before leaving court, Sherman County Sheriff Kevin Butts apologized to the victim's family for the delay.

"It's ridiculous," he commented Wednesday. "I would just like for the (victim's) family to have some closure. To get it over with."

Court reports allege the incident

took place on April 24, 2003, involving a 4-year-old child.

At the time, former Sherman County Sheriff Doug Whitson said Petracich had the child touch him in an inappropriate manner and in an inappropriate location on his body. He said the crime was reported by the parents.

The charges are not the first molestation accusations Petracich has

faced. In May 1990, he was charged in Scott County District Court with two counts of indecent liberties with a child under the age of 16, said Sandy Eitel, deputy court clerk there. He plead guilty and was sentenced to prison. State records show he was released in September 1996.

Petracich is scheduled for sentencing at 10 a.m. on Monday, July 11.



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