Tuesday, Jan. 3 2006

Volume 74, Number 1 Ten Pages

weather report noon Tuesday

Today Sunset, 4:36 p.m. Wednesday

• Sunrise, 7:07 a.m. • Sunset, 4:36 p.m.

Midday Conditions • Soil temperature 42 degrees

• Humidity 16 percent

 Sky clear • Winds west at 32 mph

• Barometer 29.70 inches and falling • Record High today 63° (2006)

• Record Low today -26° (1959)

Last 24 Hours* High Monday

Low Monday 25° Precipitation .04

.04 This month Year to date .04

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, high near 65 and low near 28. Windy with a west wind at 20 to 30 mph and gusts as high as 45 mph.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, high around 53 and low near 21. Thursday: Mostly sunny, windy, high near 47 and a low around 22. Friday: Mostly sunny, high near 58 and a low near 22. Saturday: Mostly sunny, high around 62 and a low of 23. Sunday: Partly cloudy, high around 58 and a low near 20.

(National Weather Service) Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz. * Readings taken at 7 a.m.



Noon

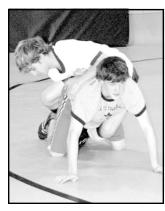
Wheat — \$3.57 bushel Posted county price — \$3.44 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢ Corn — \$1.88 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.85 Loan deficiency pmt. — 9¢ Milo — \$1.53 bushel Soybeans — \$5.30 bushel Posted county price — \$5.38 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢ Millet — \$5.75 hundredweight

Oil current crop — \$6.75 cwt. NuSun crop. — \$7.75 Confection —Call

Pinto beans — \$17 (new crop) (Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)





Cowboys face Colby

Senior Brandon Zelfer (top) practiced a takedown move on sophomore Jordan Albers during the Cowboys' practice Monday at Max Jones Fieldhouse. The team has three matches starting Thursday with a home dual against Colby.

Soldier's death leads top story list

land man in a bomb explosion in Iraq year. was Goodland's top story of 2005.

Goodland mourned the death of Sgt. Derrick Lutters, who was killed vehicles engaged in a bridge and road reconnaissance mission.

Each year, the staff of *The Good*land Star-News takes a look back at the top stories of the past year and ment in June of plans to develop the votes on the top 10. This is not a Goodland Energy Center north of complete list, but rather a selection Caruso, including an ethanol plant,

• The top story went to the death of Lutters, who was awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Hear. He May 1 south of Baghdad, when a was buried on May 13 following a suicide bomber attacked his unit. packed funeral at Max Jones Field-Lutters was a gunner in one of three house. The medals were given to Lutters' parents, Chuck and Marian, before guardsmen carried the casket out of the building.

• In second place was announce-

The death of a 24-year old Good-bad—that happened during the power plant. Area investors put the city of Jimmy McClelland, 44, who failed to produce the money to get project together, and the plants are had been missing for 16 months. expected to be in operation later this

• Third was the blizzard over Thanksgiving weekend that left sections of the city without power, and stranded over 1,000 people at shelters in town. There were two other winter storms, one in January and one in April, that closed I-70 and caused accidents. The blizzard in November was the worst in the area the Goodland Area Chamber of since at least 1997.

of the many stories — both good and biodiesel plant and a coal-fired skeletal remains northwest of the that the Freedom Fest in July had

Goodland, Kansas 67735

• Fifth on the list was the opening here of Elrob/Adronics, an automobile radio antenna manufacturing company from Hays, that moved into the Ed Wolak building in May. The new company replaced Aircraft Seal and Gasket, which had been in the building for about a year, but had not gotten off the ground.

• Sixth was the announcement by Commerce in August that the Cham-• Fourth was the discovery of the ber was over \$20,000 in debt, and

them out of financial trouble. The Chamber approached the Sherman County Economic Development Council asking for \$8,000 to help bail the organization out, and asking to move the Chamber office space rented by the council.

· Seventh was the sentencing of Jennifer Adams, on June 28, to seven years and two months in prison for three counts of felony involuntary manslaughter. The charges were from the deadly crash

See TOP 10, Page 8

Town mourns loss of hero fallen in Iraq

Army officers caught Chuck Lutters, then city public works manager, as he was heading to work that Monday morning.

When he saw them, he recalled, he knew what was coming. His son Derrick, 24, had been killed in a bomb blast near Baghdad the day before, May 1. "I saw the car coming down the

street," Lutters said, "and when the two Army guys got out, I knew why they were here.

"My heart sank when they said Derrick had been killed." Expressions of sympathy poured

in at the home of Sgt. Lutters' father, and his mother Marion of Burlington, a second-grade teacher. Both towns were stunned by the news of the young man's death.

Both parents said they had talked to Derrick the Saturday before. His mother said he told her he was sorry he would miss Mother's Day. His father said he could sense his son was nervous about the dangerous work he was doing, but was upbeat about serving his country.

The Kansas Adjutant General's tacked the vehicle he was riding in. Baghdad when a suicide bomber at-road reconnaissance mission.



Members of the Kansas National Guard (above) escorted the casket of Sqt. Derrick Lutters in Max Jones Fieldhouse Thursday morning. The front two guardsmen were Specialist Bryan Varney and Staff Sgt. Rick Reasoner. Photo by Tom Betz/ The Goodland Star-News

office reported May 2 that Lutters, Lutters was a gunner in one of three of Burlington, was killed south of vehicles engaged in a bridge and

Lutters was a member of Detachment 1, 170th Maintenance Com- a crane operator. pany, of Goodland, and was as-

Guard's 891st Engineer Battalion as

People lined the streets of Burlsigned to the Kansas National ington and Goodland on Saturday

evening, May 10, as the body was escorted from Denver to Goodland. A special service was held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Burlington.

A procession of about 25 vehicles included Goodland Police, Sherman County sheriff's deputies, Kansas Highway Patrol troopers, Kansas National Guardsmen, Goodland Fire Department, Sherman County Rural Fire Department and the Sherman County Ambulance Service, plus family cars and a Koons Funeral Home hearse. More followed the ambulance and police car at the end of the procession.

The funeral was held Tuesday, May 13, at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Chuck Lutters said goodbye to his

son with a kiss as he leaned over the flag-draped coffin.

Even before 8 a.m., cars were lining up at the Max Jones Fieldhouse for the funeral Mass. The line to get into the packed gym extended into the street as people stopped to pin on ribbons and sign the guest book.

On the floor, the stage was decorated with bunches of red, white, blue and vellow flowers. A photograph of Lutters and a sketch of the fallen soldier were set up to one side.

See LUTTERS, Page 8

Energy center may bring diversity to economy

A new power complex planned west Goodland should be up and running later this year, brining roughly 100 new jobs and providing new markets for farmers.

The complex will include a coalfired power plant, plus plants to produce ethanol and "biodiesel" for motor fuel. Former City Manager Ron Pickman will be the chief operating officer for the project. A group of local investors an-

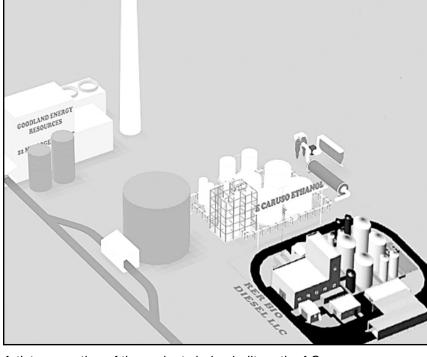
nounced the project on July 5. The three-plant complex will be called the Goodland Energy Center. Mark Justus, owner of ReNewable Energy Resources, said they are looking at a startup date in the summer of 2006

ReNewable, which had been designing a wind farm to help supply power to the city, has a complex of offices on Main Street.

Jerry Fairbanks, general counsel and executive vice president of the First National Bank, said the plants should create from 60 to 100 jobs directly. He said the economic activity might generate another 100 to 200 supporting jobs, including services, trucking, agriculture, rail and more.

First National is part of the investment group through a community development program.

Justus said the three plants will sit on 20 acres east of County Road 14



Artist conception of three plants being built north of Caruso.

Street), north of the sunflower plant at Caruso.

The plants will have what Justus called a "symbiotic" relationship. Each plant will use products from the others in its production, lowering overall costs.

Justus said the ethanol and

and south of Road 65 (Eighth biodiesel plants will be powered by waste steam already used in the power plant.

He said the steam alone will save the ethanol plant \$3 million per year. Normally, he said, they would need to use natural gas to cook grain to ferment the alcohol.

Justus said, uses some of July 21. the products from the ethanol plant.

Although the processes are not new, Justus said, the plants here will be unique, combing all three.

The Goodland City commission reached out five miles to annex about 90 acres north of Caruso on July 5 at the request of John Golden as president of Kemp Sugar Co., which has owned the property since 1985 when it was bought from Great Western Sugar. The annexation later had to be rescinded when the developers discovered the city had no proper heavy industrial zoning.

"Once the land has been purchased and the project is proceeding,"

Pickman said, "we will be back with a plan to work with the city in a partnership.

Goodland will purchase all the city's power from the new coal-fired plant when it goes on-line year after the commission voted 4-0 to approve an electric purchase agree-The production of biodiesel fuel, ment at a special meeting Thursday,

Sixty hours earlier, the motion failed on a 2-2 vote. Then, at the special meeting, the commission reconsidered the contract and it passed unanimously with Mayor Rick Billinger abstaining because of a conflict of interest as a stockholder in the new company.

There were about 20 people in the audience, and there was a round of applause when the vote was taken and the contract approved.

David and Denise Floyd, who live about a mile from the sunflower oil plant at Caruso, appeared at a city commission meeting on Aug. 1, and questioned whether the plants will be all good for the area and its

A 75-foot-by-100-foot warehouse was the first building being put up by Townsend Construction at the site.

'We are moving along," Pickman said on Tuesday, Nov. 8. "We are getting our permit applications in order and have started the ware-

'We are moving dirt, which is allowed under the existing permits."

The city commission helped push the development. Mayor Billinger, a stockholder in the proposed power

See PLANTS, Page 8

Thanksgiving blizzard strands over 1,000 for two days

Goodland's third biggest weather a have-to situation. The hospital ran off of generators. day, Nov. 28, that trapped more than 1,000 holiday travelers here.

Four inches of snow with winds up to 79 miles per hour shaped drifts the north, south and central loops, all four to eight feet high, closing I-70 from Russell to Denver.

Since there was a thin layer of ice underneath the snow, travel was on Sunday, Nov. 27. Golden West, tough and dangerous. Police re- the National Weather Service, the ported surprisingly few accidents. City Administration Building, Wind chills made being out in the sheriff's office, the armory and the other. The shelters allowed people

story was the weather, espe wind slapped power lines together cially the blizzard on Mon- and took out switches and breakers, leaving parts of Goodland without power from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The areas without power included

fed by Sunflower Electric Power. The main loop from the power plant did not go down after the two hours

Around 1,000 travelers spent Sunday night and all of Monday in emergency shelters. The Goodland Activities Center, Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, Max Jones Fieldhouse and the National Guard Armory all housed people. With the power outages, people were moved from the Activities Center and

church to the Goodland High School. People occupied their time sleeping, reading or talking with each started on Sunday, Jan. 2, with rain,

to bring in their pets, including dogs, cats and a bird.

Volunteers rounded up blankets and fed the refugees. Help came from the Fire Department, Salvation Army, and the Red Cross.

The stranded travelers were patient and good to work with, workers said. The town got a lot of positive feedback.

Another winter storm hit right after the beginning of 2005. This storm

lasted through Tuesday. By Wednesday, the roads were still icy and wind chills called for caution. There were at least 12 accidents when drivers hit the ice and lost control. Another storm on Sunday, April

inch of snow. The winter storm

10 closed I-70 from Limon to Colby. This storm started with rain and then turned into heavy, wet snow. There were no reported accidents. The area got nine-tenths of an inch of moisture, and there was minor damage to which froze and was covered by an trees and power lines.