

weather report

39°

noon Monday

Today

- Sunset, 7:33 p.m.
- Wednesday**
- Sunrise, 5:55 a.m.
- Sunset, 7:34 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 53 degrees
- Humidity 93 percent
- Sky light rain
- Winds north at 26 mph
- Barometer 30.04 inches and rising
- Record High today 88° (1981)
- Record Low today 22° (2002)

Last 24 Hours*

- High Sunday 85°
- Low Monday 37°
- Precipitation —
- This month .44
- Year to date 3.02
- below normal .07 of an in.

The Topside Forecast

Today: 20 percent of snow showers before 9 am. Partly cloudy, high near 48 and low near 28. North to northeast winds 5 to 15 mph.

Extended Forecast

Wednesday: Partly cloudy, high near 66, low near 37. Thursday: Partly cloudy, high near 77, low near 43. Friday: Partly cloudy, high around 72, low near 42. Saturday: Partly cloudy, high near 69, low near 40.

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

local markets

Noon

- Wheat — \$4.02 bushel
- Posted county price — \$4.01
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Corn — \$2.10 bushel
- Posted county price — \$2.03
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Milo — \$1.72 bushel
- Soybeans — \$4.89 bushel
- Posted county price — \$5.02
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Millet — \$5.55 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$7.35 cwt.
- NuSun crop — \$8.35
- 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.)

inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



Goodland places third

Junior Josh Cech used a flying backhand to return a volley against Jeremy Crosby of Ulysses Thursday during the Goodland Invitational. Cech won the match 8-4. Goodland finished in third place. See story, photos on Page 12.

Hotel gets 90 percent tax break

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The City Commission approved industrial revenue bonds for a Holiday Inn Express with a 90 percent tax abatement for 10 years at a special meeting Monday.

The developers had asked for a 100 percent tax abatement, meaning the project would pay no taxes for 10 years, but commissioners said that might be hard to sell to the public.

"I think we are all behind the project," said Mayor Rick Billinger. "I think some of the commissioners are sitting on the fence because of the 100 percent level. I think it would be easier if it were at 90 percent."

"Is it a deal breaker?"

Mike Woofter of Colby, a partner in the Prairiesky Capital project, said he had just asked Doug Irvin about the 90 percent abatement, and said they could work with that.

"I would agree to that," Irvin said. "We need to get going. I think there will be other businesses asking for 100 percent, and think you will face this again."

The developers had a cost-benefit analysis showed a positive payback to the city, county and school district for the project. Basically, the growth and jobs spurred by the hotel should more than repay the tax break, they said.

City Commissioner Josh Dechant made a motion to approve the bonds with a 90 percent

tax abatement for 10 years. Commissioner Annette Fairbanks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Theron L. Froggatte, an investment banker from Wichita, told the commissioners the cost-benefit analysis was done through the state Department of Commerce. It estimated the net benefit to the city is \$1.25 in income for every \$1 in tax abatement over the 10 years. He said the benefit is higher for the county, with \$8.90 in income for every \$1 in abatement. The school district would see \$1.11 for every \$1 in abatement.

The study estimates the payback time at eight years for the city and nine years for the school district. He said that is when the

amount of benefit received by the city and school district would equal the amount of taxes abated.

He said the county will be paid back in just one year. The figures for the county are higher because all the sales tax collected is considered a county tax, said. He said the cost-benefit figures do not include any of the estimates from the new sales tax that goes into effect in July.

Froggatte said he had gathered the figures and sent them to the state, and they had turned the analysis around in two days.

"I think they are supportive of the other

See HOTEL, Page 10

Electric contract approved

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Interpretation of one sentence in the new power agreement with Sunflower Electric prompted the city commission to delay action until Monday, when it got a clarification from company officials and approved the contract.

The commission held a special session on Monday to consider the agreement, and approved the revised agreement unanimously.

Bob Johnson, a retired McDonald farmer and vice president of Prairie Land Electric of Norton, who is a director of the Hays-based "generation and transmission" cooperative, presented the contract on April 3. He came back Monday with revised language to clarify the city's right to reduce its power purchases.

Mayor Rick Billinger had

See POWER, Page 10

Brick replacement begins



Miller Construction started removing bricks from the intersection of 10th and Main on Monday. It is first of the five intersections on Main Avenue the firm will rebuild this summer. Ben Ramirez was using a shovel to pry up bricks. The Goodland

Police Department is allowing U turns and J turns, Chief Ray Smee said, but asks people to be careful and try not to turn in the middle of the block.

Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

West elementary rooms will be cool for school this fall

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

At a special meeting, the Goodland School Board accepted a bid of \$265,800 from Tatro Plumbing Company Inc. of Garden City to install air conditioning at West Elementary School.

The board's bid committee, Marty Melia and Andrew House, reviewed the bids on Tuesday, April 11, along with the project architect, Glenn Strait of Strait Associates Architects from Colby.

The full board met at noon Thursday, April 13, to go over the bids and

make a decision.

The work involves new heating and cooling for the offices for \$13,900 and individual rooftop units for each classroom, library and gym for \$251,900.

There will 18 three-ton units for the classrooms, a six-ton unit for the

library and a 20-ton unit for the gym. The firm said the work would be done by Aug. 1.

The other bid came from Chad Briney of CB A/C & Plumbing of Brewster, for \$299,334.

The school board first talked about air conditioning West a year

ago. Board members said air conditioning will become more important as No Child Left Behind requirements get tougher, forcing more kids to take summer school classes. The board decided to have Strait seek bids at the March 7 meeting.

Promenade 2006



Whitney Archer (left) was escorted by dapper Jon Beeson and Katrina Cotter was escorted by Cory Yarbrough at the Junior-Senior Promenade on Saturday. Members of the junior and senior classes first had dinner at the Elks Club and then were

bused to the Max Jones Fieldhouse for everyone to see. The theme of the prom was "Something Unpredictable." After the promenade, they were bused back to the Elks for the dance.

Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Plans ready for I-70 celebration

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

You can wave to the convoy as it passes, or you can jump right in and follow it.

A group of cars, trucks and the like, organized by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the individual departments of transportation for the states it travels through, will go from San Francisco to Washington June 15-29, and the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau is trying to rally the county's support for the cause, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Interstate Highway system.

The convoy will go through Goodland on I-70 the morning of Wednesday, June 21, said bureau Director Donna Price at the board's meeting Tuesday, April 18. She is urging people to gather on the overpass next to the Armstrong Addition south of town to wave as it passes. And, she said, anyone who wants can join the convoy.

The Kansas Department of Transportation is planning to hang a banner at the Colorado border and another between Exits 17 and 19 in Goodland, Price said.

The Kansas Highway Patrol will have cars leading the convoy and following it. The expedition will

See I-70, Page 10