

weather report

83°

noon
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 8:02 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 5:25 a.m.

• Sunset, 8:03 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 72 degrees

• Humidity 24 percent

• Sky clear

• Winds East at 12 mph

• Barometer 29.99 inches

and falling

• Record High today 96° (1942)

• Record Low today 27° (1992)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 87°

Low Thursday 48°

Precipitation —

This month .97

Year to date 4.11

Average -2.09 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy, high near 94, low near 59. Windy, south wind at 15 to 25 mph, gusts 35 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: High near 99, low near 56. Sunday: Mostly sunny and hot. High near 97, low near 52. Monday: High near 91, low near 54. Tuesday: High near 84, low near 54. Wednesday: High around 88.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400.MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.64 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.57

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Corn — \$2.13 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.07

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Milo — \$1.80 bushel

Soybeans — \$4.89 bushel

Posted county price — \$5

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Millet — \$5.50 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$8.60 cwt.

NuSun crop — \$9.60

Confection — Call

Pinto beans — \$15.50 (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



Swim team hits the pool

The Goodland Swim Team began practice on Tuesday afternoon. Their first meet is Saturday, June 3, out of town. The home meet in Goodland will be on Saturday, June 10. See photo on Page 9a.

No objections at ethanol hearing

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

A short hearing Tuesday evening on the air quality construction permit for a new 20-million-gallon-a-year ethanol plant at the Goodland Energy Center attracted just a couple of supporters to make formal comments.

The hearing on the E Caruso air permit lasted only about 17 minutes. The only speakers from about 20 people in the audience were Larry McCants, president of E Caruso and the First National Bank, and Fred Osman of Osman Environmental Solutions of Harrisburg, Pa., the consultant who developed the permit application.

Hearing officer Dan Wells, of the

Kansas Department of Health and Environment district office in Hays, opened the hearing. He introduced Jennifer Burgdorfer, a staff engineer from the state office in Topeka, who reviewed the application.

She said the hearing was being held because the plant will exceed federal and state guidelines for dust and ethanol emissions. Burgdorfer said the plans include carbon dioxide and liquid scrubbers to control air pollutants.

"The emissions are not predicted to harm any air in the area," she said, "and the plant will be inspected every year to be sure it is in compliance."

Osman said he had been at the hearing in February about the air

permit for the coal-fired power plant being built by Goodland Energy Resources at the center, about five miles west of Goodland near the rail siding called Caruso.

"I spoke to many of you about the extraordinary air pollution control measures the owners of Goodland Energy Resources employed in an effort to absolutely minimize any air emissions from its boiler operation. I am happy to report tonight the E. Caruso plant will also comply with the same exceptional environmental standards."

He said the plant would use fabric filters, which he described as like a large vacuum cleaner bag. He said all the air that might have dust would be captured and run through the fil-

ters before being exhausted.

For the ethanol, Osman said, the plan would have the latest control equipment to minimize emissions. The ethanol emissions will be collected from the yeast area, the fermentation and beer-well tanks and the distillation tanks and pass through a water scrubber, which he said would remove 98 percent of the ethanol vapors.

Osman said the plant will use a sensitive sniffer, a portable detector, to look for leaking valves and pumps.

"The Caruso facility is proposing controls that will minimize to the extent practicable any emissions that will occur," Osman said. "In conjunction with the Goodland En-

ergy Resources boiler and the planned Kanza biodiesel plant, it will contribute to a comprehensive energy park that will meet every available environmental standard and promote wise use of our natural resources."

McCants told the audience E. Caruso is the project of local investors, some who also invested in an ethanol plant at Campus, a siding east of Oakley.

He said the ethanol plant here will take advantage of steam from the power plant. Distiller's grain left over from the alcohol cooking will not be dried, he said, because that causes other air pollution problems.

See ETHANOL, Page 8a

Events Monday to honor family, soldiers

Memorial Day services are planned in Brewster, Goodland and Kanorado on Monday as people take time to remember their loved ones, especially those who died in service to their country.

Activities will begin at the Brewster Cemetery at 8:30 a.m. (Mountain Time), the Goodland Cemetery at 10 a.m. and the Kanorado Cemetery at 11:30 a.m.

Mayor Mike Baughn, Thomas County sheriff, will speak at the Brewster ceremony. Goodland's speaker will be Pastor Steve Rains of the Calvary Gospel Church, while at Kanorado, Pastor Leonard Cox of the United Methodist Church will speak.

The national anthem will be sung by Goodland High School 2007 senior Michael Smith at each place. Eva Lou Selby will play "Taps" at Brewster. At Goodland and Kanorado, Devin Mangus and Andrew Pettibone will play.

If it rains, the Brewster ceremony will be at the school there. Goodland's would be at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, 824 Main, and Kanorado's at the Methodist Church.



An unknown Civil War soldier's grave at Goodland Cemetery will be decorated with an American flag on Monday.

Goodland Veterans of Foreign Wars members and Boy Scouts will start at 5 to 5:30 a.m., raising flags along both sides of the main drive at the Goodland Cemetery.

The flags, used in

and carried to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, where volunteers will refold them for storage. Veterans from the Civil War, Spanish American War, both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam and

Legionnaires and other volunteers will begin placing flags at 5:30 a.m. Monday. The flags will be taken up starting at 4 p.m. that afternoon. Volunteers are needed at both times.

The full-size flags flown along the main drive will be taken down in the afternoon.

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Businesses, offices to close Monday

Most area businesses will be closed on Monday for Memorial Day, including all government offices.

The Goodland Star-News will be closed. The holiday will delay the Tuesday edition, which will be printed on Tuesday and delivered in the mail on Wednesday.

Banks, schools and offices will be closed, but many fast-food restaurants will be open normal hours.

the Gulf War are buried in the Goodland Cemetery, Squires said.

The history of Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, goes back over 130 years. Gen. John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in a general order on May 5, 1868, proclaimed May 30 as a day to honor the fallen soldiers, sailors and marines from both sides who fought in the Civil War. The order called for the placing of flowers or other decorations on the graves of those who died in the service.

Auditor gives hospital good financial news

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

Hospital officials were jubilant after hearing from an accountant that last year's numbers are looking good following his recent audit.

The hospital ended the year with \$879,000 in operating income, up from \$379,000 in 2004, Roger Johnson, a certified public accountant with Wendling Noe Nelson and Johnson of Topeka, told the hospital's board Monday.

Goodland Regional Medical Center has reduced its own debt and has done better collecting from those who owe it money, Johnson said.

The hospital will be doing something for the department heads, said Jim Precht, chief financial officer; it took a lot of hard work by everyone in the hospital to produce the

profit. Everyone in billing has been working hard the last couple of years, he said.

The biggest adjustment, Johnson said, was on the cost report for the settlement from Medicare. Total adjustments increased the bottom line by just over \$1 million, he said and about \$900,000 was from the cost report.

The hospital received \$500,000 from Medicare for its first year as a critical access hospital, he said, and another \$600,000 last summer. The hospital expects another big check in July.

After adjusting the numbers by \$200,000, Johnson said, for the possibility that Medicare won't pay all of what is expected, the hospital should still get \$850,000 to \$900,000 from the federal health insurance plan this summer.

The hospital reduced bills owed to it by \$600,000, Johnson said, and has reduced the principal and payment of interest on capital lease obligations. And it has increased assets. There has been a big increase in non-current assets, he said, from \$586,000 to over \$1 million and an increase in net assets from \$3.9 million to \$5.2 million.

The hospital has made good improvements internally, Johnson said, and fares well compared with other facilities, especially in income from operations, which was 10 times what some other hospitals showed.

Most government-funded hospitals consider it good to break even in operations, he said, and use non-operating revenue, such as taxes and contributions, to buy equipment.

Operating revenue here was \$1.2

million, an 11 percent increase over 2004, Johnson said, and operating expenses were up 7 percent, from \$500,000 to \$700,000.

There was an 8 percent increase in gross revenue, he said, mostly from outpatient services.

A lot of the hospital's improvement has been attributable to collecting accounts receivable, Johnson said; it didn't just write off bad accounts. Allowance for bad debt was overstated by about \$300,000, Johnson said, so that was another positive adjustment.

Hospital officials have been working toward a good audit next year. Precht said he noticed the hospital had been overcharged on workman's compensation premiums. He was able to get the premiums reduced by \$14,000 for this year, and the hospital may be reim-

bursed for 2004 and 2005. The same mistake was probably made then too, Precht said.

The financial officer said he also had been working on natural gas contracts to see if the hospital can get a better rate and reduce its fees. It has been working with two companies, Precht said, Seminole, which is known as Post Rock in this area, and Aquila, which supplies gas in Goodland.

He said he discovered the hospital is on two meters and has been charged a lower volume rate. Since the hospital is going to have some work done, Precht said, he will ask about running all the natural gas through one meter.

The hospital spends \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year on gas, he said, which includes \$5,000 per year in fees.

Murderer of Goodland man to have parole hearing

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

One of the three men who beat an 89-year-old Goodland man to death in 1982 is coming up for his second chance at parole from the Kansas Department of Corrections in August.

Gregorio Gomez Jr., then 17, was one of the three youths who broke into a home at 1618 Sherman, beat Jesus Saavedra with a three-foot-long, quarter-inch steel rod and stole \$1,400.

Former Sherman County Sheriff Jack Armstrong said Saavedra was found at his home, beaten on the head, left arm and shoulder. He died three days later at the hospital.

Gomez, Ronald C. Kernal, then 18, and a juvenile were arrested on June 28, 1982, and charged with burglary and first-degree murder. The 13-year-old was sentenced in

juvenile court, while Kernal and Gomez, who turned 18 on April 11, 1983, were considered adults.

Gomez was found guilty of second-degree murder, and on Sept. 9, 1983, he was sentenced to 15 to 40 years in prison. The court allowed the sentence to run from June 28, 1982, when he and his two accomplices were arrested.

Gomez, now 41, was an inmate in the Kansas Department of Corrections system until he was given a conditional release and supervised parole in Colorado on March 28, 2003. However, he broke parole and was arrested in Oklahoma on May 10, 2005 on a Kansas warrant. He has been at the old reformatory in Hutchinson since May 18, 2005.

Now, he has another chance to be released when he goes in front of the



Gomez

Two remain in prison, one on parole for past murders in Sherman County

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Two men convicted on second-degree murder charges in Sherman County are in prison, while one convicted of first-degree murder is on supervised parole in Nebraska.

Gregorio Gomez Jr., 41, is in the Hutchinson prison, the old industrial reformatory, while Lanny J. Bevington, 34, is in the Lansing prison. Both were convicted of second-degree murder.

Gomez was convicted in 1983 for the beating death of Jesus Saavedra, 89, in June 1982. He was released on parole to Colorado in 2003 but violated his parole and was arrested in Oklahoma in May 2005. He will have a hearing in August.

Bevington, formerly of Brewster, was sentenced to about 19 years in prison for shooting his 27-year-old wife, Kerrie, on Dec. 28, 2003.

She was found dead of a shotgun wound to the



Schlicher



Bevington



Adams

head at 7 a.m. on Dec. 29 by her father, Tom Aschenbrenner, former Brewster fire chief. She was in the cab of a pickup outside the Bevington home about 3 1/2 miles south of Brewster, just inside Sherman County.

District Judge Jack Burr sentenced Bevington on

See MURDERERS, Page 8a

See GOMEZ, Page 8a