

weather report

70°

noon Tuesday

Today

• Sunset, 7:13 p.m.

Thursday

• Sunrise, 6:20 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:11 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 63 degrees

• Humidity 47 percent

• Sky clear

• Winds light and variable

• Barometer 30.35 inches

and rising

• Record High today 104° (1931)

• Record Low today 40° (1961)

Last 24 Hours*

High Monday 72°

Low Tuesday 46°

Precipitation —

This month .33

Year to date 18.53

Above Normal 1.96 of an inch

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, high near 82, low around 53, and a south wind at 5 and 10 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: Mostly sunny, high near 83, low near 54, and south wind between 5 and 10 mph. Friday: Partly cloudy, high near 80, low near 53. Saturday: Mostly sunny, high near 79, and low around 53. Sunday: Mostly sunny, high near 79, low around 53. Monday: Mostly sunny, high near 81.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.21 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.37

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Corn — \$2.20 bushel

Posted county price — \$2

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Milo — \$1.85 bushel

Soybeans — \$4.50 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.57

Loan deficiency pmt. — 12¢

Millet — \$6.50 hundredweight

Sunflower

NuSun crop — \$11.25

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



Cowgirls take seventh

Senior Stephanie Shelton crossed the finish line 15th in the junior and senior girls race at the Goodland Invitational cross country meet Thursday. The Cowgirls finished seventh. See story, photo on Page 12.

Closure plan spares Goodland

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

A proposal to close a third or more the Natural Resources Conservation Service offices in northwest Kansas has drawn attention from farmers, but officials in Goodland say no decision has been made to close any office.

The plan would cut seven jobs at the state conservation office in Salina, plus close offices in Hoxie, St. Francis, Oberlin and Gove. Offices in Sharon Springs and Tribune would be combined.

Offices in Goodland, Colby and Atwood would take on new duties, Goodland covering Cheyenne County, Atwood for Decatur and Colby for Sheridan.

Fred Hall, manager of the Sherman County office, said Tuesday he was at a meet-

ing in Salina last week when the proposal was discussed.

“There was no decision about who would serve which county,” Hall said. “We understand this is a proposal to meet the budget for future years, and not a decision that will happen tomorrow.

“If it were to happen, it would be over an extended period of time. There are lots of other issues involved that will take time.

“Nothing has been finalized at this point. All the players have to have time for their input, and that includes the conservation districts, farmers and the counties. There are a lot of players here.”

The 18-county northwest Kansas area is headquartered in Hays. Dan Meyerhoff is the regional manager.

Meyerhoff agreed with Hall that the clos-

ings are not likely to happen overnight.

“At this time, it is strictly a proposal,” Meyerhoff said. “The state office is creating at steering group made up of partners and agencies that we work with and take a look this fall at alternatives. We are supposed to have a final proposal together by the end of the year.”

Meyerhoff said today, there is a conservation office in every county, but that could change.

“I won’t second guess what they might put together,” he said.

He said the proposal is a cost cutting measure because of shrinking budgets.

“We need to take a look at how we get service to our farmer clients,” he said. “It might save some staff positions. Bricks and mortar doesn’t put conservation on the farm.”

Meyerhoff said the changes in technology

have helped bring things closer to the farmer, and there is less need for things to be handled in an office.

“It is true the new technology helps bring the information to the farmer,” he said. “When we go out to the field, we can bring a lot of information that does not have to be maintained in an office.”

Meyerhoff said if there is a consolidation of county offices, the farmer would have the option of which office to use.

“We will work with the conservation district,” Meyerhoff said. “It will have an impact on district operations. We are housed in the same place as the Farm Service Agency, and some may continue to operate depending on the workload.

“This could affect offices in southeast and northeast Kansas, too.”

Boy Scout’s Eagle project landscapes alley area



Aaron Deeds (right) shoveled rock around to level it for his community service project to improve the appearance and drainage of the alley entrance of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 222 W. 13th,

said, he installed weed barrier and rocked the area with stone he got from Troy Porter of St. Francis. The final touch was to plant some grasses and bushes.

He said to finish the project, he needed to create an actual budget and time sheets.

A Board of Review goes over the project, he said. He also has another

at the end of July. Deeds did the project as part of his effort to win the Eagle Scout award. Nathan Deeds helped his brother.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

merit badge to finish.

Deeds is the son of Robin and Carol Deeds. His brothers Dexter and Nathan helped with the work.

To earn the Eagle award, says the

Boy Scouts of America website, a youth has to be a Life Scout for at least six months, earn 21 merit badges, be less than 18 and finish his service project.

Road project sales tax bond sale Tuesday

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Bonds to pay for the \$12 million joint city-county road program will be sold at 11 a.m. Tuesday, with the loan being paid off by a special one-cent sales tax that went into effect in July.

Kevin Cowan, bond counsel from Gilmore and Bell, and Todd Loescher, a financial advisor from D.A. Davidson, both of Wichita, met with the county commissioners and representatives from the city Aug. 22 to go over the details of the sale.

Cowan said the county, by law, has to sell the bonds at a competitive public sale, and the county approved a resolution setting the date. All bids will be accepted on line through the Davidson auction web site.

Cowan said the bonds will be set up with a twice-a-year principal payment to help speed up repayment and reduce interest cost. The county will make payments on July 1 and Jan. 1, with the first \$30,000 due in July.

Colorado company wins state bid for North Caldwell paving project

A Colorado contractor was the low bidder Tuesday for the county-state North Caldwell project, which will resurface the road from the north entrance to the airport to the junction with K-27.

The Kansas Department of Transportation awarded the bid to Grasser Construction and Paving of Stratton for the low bid of \$347,063, the lowest of the four bids on the project, which covers about three-tenths of a mile.

The other three bidders were APAC Kansas, Shears division, from Hutchison, \$384,673; Western Engineering of North Platte, Neb., \$397,576; and

Venture Corp. of Great Bend, \$415,094.

APAC did the resurfacing of I-70 from Goodland to the state line this summer. The company was the low bidder on a project in Thomas County for resurfacing a half-mile of Willow Street from Franklin Ave. to Country Club Drive for \$607,207.

Western Engineering is working on the section of K-27 from south of Goodland to the Wallace County line.

Venture lost the bid on the K-27 south project last year by \$17,000, but the firm built the new bridge on K-27 seven miles south of town.

Cowan said the county will transfer the money to the state treasurer, who will make the payments.

“Anyone bidding has to deposit 2 percent of the bonds — about \$240,000,” Cowan said. “The county would be able to keep the

money and put in the bank on Sept. 12, then the total of the bonds will come in less the deposit.”

He said the county has the right to accept or reject any and all bids.

“I think it has to be a good reason,” Cowan said, “but you do have the

right to refuse.”

Cowan said they had talked about bond insurance to get a better rating on the bonds, usually AAA, which can save money.

“In the extreme case, if there is a shortfall, you could have the insur-

ance company make a payment and then the county would owe the insurance company,” he said, adding that the insurance will be a bidder’s option, and they will pay the premium.

Cowan said they would set the closing for Friday, Sept. 22, and have the money available to begin paying for projects.

“Can we see the bidding process?” City Commissioner Josh Dechant asked.

“We can set it up so you can watch the open bidding on our web site,” Loescher said.

“Will it show how many bonds they want?” Dechant said.

“They have to take them all,” Cowan replied.

“Do you see the dollars?” County Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked.

“No,” said Loescher, “but the ranking is shown until the bids close.”

“They can fax in their bids?” Rasure asked.

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Raising academic standards school board’s top goal

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The Goodland School Board chose raising academic standards as its No. 1 goal last week as it began refining district goals that came out of “all-board training sessions” in July and early August.

The board set six main goal targets for the district, and will refine those and develop action plans over the next few meetings.

The first goal the board looked at on Monday, Aug. 28, was curriculum and instruction. The goal’s purpose is to “improve student achievement and raise state and local assessment scores ... meeting the man-

dates of No Child Left Behind and Adequate Yearly Progress.”

The board had a list of eight suggestions for the superintendent and staff to work on in that area.

Board member Fritz Duke said he thought the statement about “implementing innovative instructional strategies and teaching techniques” was important, adding that it’s necessary to “maintain focus on reading and math.”

“Raise academic standards,” board member Amy Sederstrom said, “was the most important. If we keep that focus I think everything else will fall into place.”

Duke said some teachers are us-

ing new techniques now.

Board member Dick Short said he thought the school system was going backwards on some things because the new standards are forcing the teachers teach more to the tests.

Board member Andrew House said he did not want to see that happen. He said he felt that it was important to encourage teachers to go beyond the tests.

President Jane Philbrick said there had been some effort to standardize the instruction in subjects from first through sixth grades, but felt not enough of that has been done.

The board agreed that was the top

priority and added three more of the suggestions as sub parts of the action plan.

The include implementing innovative instructional strategies, maintaining focus on improvement in reading and math and establishing a cohesive curriculum based on standards to provide continuity.

Superintendent Shelly Angelos said she agreed that raising academic standards was the top and that the other three items should be included.

“I think those are the core,” Angelos said.

With the agreement of the board, Angelos said she would begin work-

ing with the principals; Sharon Gregory, principal at Central Elementary, who is the district curriculum director and school improvement specialist; the professional development committee and the North Central Accreditation committee, made up of teachers from the various buildings, to implement the plan.

Angelos said the goal was one of six areas the board developed, and over the next few meetings they will address each one. She said the goals include budget and finance, curriculum and instruction, which was discussed Monday, and leadership,

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