

# Veterans clinic to be opened in region soon

The exact location has not been decided, but a new veterans outreach clinic will be opened in the Yuma/Burlington/Goodland area in the next few months the Department of Veterans Affairs announced Monday.

The announcement came from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson in Washington, and local reaction from veterans was they hope Goodland is the chosen location.

Goodland hospital administrator Jay Jolly was in a meeting and unavailable for

comment.

Congressman Jerry Moran has been working with the Denver Veterans Affairs office, and pushing for an outreach clinic to be opened in northwest Kansas. During a visit last week Moran said he knew the outreach clinic was on the list for approval next year, but did not know when the announcement would be made.

"I'm always happy to announce the opening of new VA clinics," said Secretary Nicholson. "By putting health care outpa-

tient facilities in rural communities, we're enhancing veterans' access to VA's world-class health care. The clinic will help ensure these veterans receive the health care they have earned through their service and sacrifices in defense of our nation."

The new clinic will provide basic primary care and mental health services, including medical evaluations and the diagnosis and treatment of conditions that do not require hospitalization or specialty care.

The clinic will be open five half-days a week, with a registered nurse onsite during operating hours.

Telemedicine (the use of telecommunications technology to provide health care from distant locations) will link the clinic with additional services at other VA clinics and hospitals.

Currently, the 4,000 veterans the VA serves in the nine-county area where the new clinic will open are not within an hour's driving distance of a location in

which VA health care is provided.

Because 44 percent of the area's population is 65 or older, it is difficult for many area residents to visit a distant VA facility for care, especially during the winter months Nicholson said.

VA expects the clinic will open within the next few months. The Denver Veterans Affairs operates two medical centers and 11 community-based outpatient clinics in Colorado.

# Deadline nears for county rebate projects

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Business and homeowners with improvement projects have filed applications this year for the county's property tax rebate program, which nearly equaled those filed the first year.

Assessor Terry Ballard told Sherman County commissioners on Tuesday that there have been 31 applications this year, with the deadline coming up on Friday, Dec. 29.

The commissioners approved the latest project Tuesday, a new mini-storage building being built by Kendall Cooper at 19th and Cherry.

Ballard said they approved 38 projects last year, and it appears the average is going to be about 30 a year.

The projects approved and completed last year are coming to the time this month when the county will be sending out rebate checks, he said.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked Treasurer Iris Scheopner if her office is ready to handle the payments.

"I want to be sure we have everything lined up for the tax rebates to get back to the people," Rasure said.

"Yes," Scheopner said, "we will have Infintec, the company that supports the software programs for the county, help us walk through the program."

Rasure said it would be important for Scheopner to make sure the property owners on the rebate list have paid all their property taxes. He said no rebate is to be paid out to any landowner who is delinquent on any Sherman County taxes.

Scheopner said none is delinquent that she knows of.

"I just wanted to be sure we are all on the same page," Rasure said.

Ballard had a list of those who qualify for a rebate. He said property owners have until Wednesday to pay, and said he always tells the people that they cannot be delinquent and keep the rebates.

"I talk with each one about the requirements," Ballard said. "I tell them they would forfeit any future rebates. When the project is done, I check to see they have paid their taxes. After that, someone needs to keep track of that in the future."

Commissioner Mitch Tiede said it would be up to Scheopner to

check this each year.

Scheopner said she understands that if the property owner is delinquent they lose their rebate.

"If one becomes delinquent, let us know," Rasure said, "and we make a determination of what rebate they lose. You have to make sure they are not delinquent on any property in Sherman County."

Rasure asked Ballard how many dollars were involved with the first year's projects.

Ballard said completed projects the first year totaled about \$135,000 of assessed valuation. He said many of the projects started this year are under construction.

"I expect this year to be much larger," Ballard said. "Some of the projects are not completed yet, and will be eligible this year. I expect about 20 projects for next year that will be completed and entitled for rebates."

"Everybody seems very happy with the program. I know some would have built either way, but once they found out about the program, it gave them an incentive to go ahead and not wait."

"I think it is a great program. We are not losing tax dollars; we are getting new tax dollars."

Rasure said the incentive program was one of the things brought up at the Shine on Sherman County "community conversation" in October.

"It was evident that not all people know this is out there," Rasure said. "People are finding out there is a program that helps. This is the second year of a three-year program. If we are going to extend this, we have to make sure everyone wants to do that next year."

"I think it would be better to start early next year," Ballard said, "rather than wait until the middle of the year."

Ballard said the county needs to create more public awareness, adding that will be a bigger project with the changes approved this year by the state Legislature.

Ballard said the new laws exempt all newly acquired commercial and industrial equipment from personal property taxes and raises the limit on personal property to \$1,500 for new commercial and industrial property purchased before July 1.

Ballard said the new law went into effect in July, and that commercial

and industrial equipment purchased after July 1 has no personal property tax.

"The state has now said the exemption is for all acquired equipment and includes used equipment purchased after July 1," Ballard said. "That is definitely going to take the taxes down. It is an incentive for the business owner."

"We are seeing some relief being provided to the taxpayer — everyone except the residential property owner."

Rasure suggested Scheopner should send a letter sent to those who are getting rebates saying they must stay current on their taxes or lose the future rebates.

"I read this to them and point it out," Ballard said. "but you know how people are."

The program allows the residential property owner to receive a rebate on their property taxes of 90 percent of the taxes on the increased value of the improvements for the first three years, then dropping to 20 percent over the next seven years..

For houses that are presently valued at \$25,000 or less, the rebate will be 95 percent for the first five years and 50 percent for the next five years.

Commercial or industrial property has a different schedule depending on how much of an investment is made. For projects up to \$500,000, the rebate is similar to the schedule for residential relief, starting at 90 percent for the first three years, and then dropping by 10 percent a year until it is down to 20 percent the 10th year.

Commercial and industrial investments of \$500,000 to \$3 million will be rebate at 90 percent for six years and drop to 70 percent the seventh year, 60 percent the eighth year, 50 percent the ninth year and 20 percent the 10th year. Commercial investment over \$3 million will have their taxes rebated 90 percent for the first six years and 75 percent for the next four.

Under the rebate program, new projects must be approved before they start, rather than after they are finished, as was done for the first year.

Applications and information about the rebate program are available at the assessor's office in the courthouse.

## Creating Christmas cheer



Volunteers filled boxes of food on Thursday at the United Methodist Fellowship Hall given out on Saturday by the Genesis Food Bank. They gave out boxes to around 135 families. Genesis has been in operation for 23 years.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

## matters of record

### District Traffic

The following fines were paid in the Sherman County District Court:

**Nov. 22** — Thomas L. Snow, dismissed for no liability insurance.

John M. Walters, \$120 for speeding.

**Nov. 23** — Jose J. Becerra, \$126 for speeding.

Gary W. Davis, \$150 for speeding.

Lyle E. Lohrmeyer, \$126 for improper parking.

**Nov. 24** — Daisy A. Hunsinger,

\$156 for speeding.

**Nov. 25** — Xiaoyu J. Hou, \$126 for speeding.

Joseph C. Kane, \$120 for speeding.

Dustin C. Smith, \$132 for speeding.

## corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

## matters of record

### District Traffic

The following fines were paid in the Sherman County District Court:

**Nov. 27** — Amber J. Heasley, \$120 for speeding.

Sharon L. Lorenzini, \$138 for speeding.

**Nov. 28** — Veronica Sandoval, \$126 for no driver's license and \$60 for driving without headlights when needed.

### Municipal Court

These are cases decided by the Goodland Municipal Court:

**Nov. 15:** Nathan H. Smith, Richmond, Va., speeding 51-40, fined \$90, plus \$100 diversion fee.

Jeremiah D. Sims, Tribune, illegal registration, fined \$90.

**Nov. 17:** Monica R. Garcia, Burlington, Colo., minor consuming alcohol, fined \$250, plus \$100 diversion fee.

Joshua L. Lamb, clinging to vehicle, fined \$90.

**Nov. 20:** Jason L. Davis, speeding 44-30, fined \$106, plus \$100 diversion fee.

Houston R. Buell, Wallace, speeding 55-40, fined \$110, plus \$100 diversion fee.

Candice M. Meissinger, speeding 52-40, fined \$98.

**Nov. 21:** Daniel Brandenburg, speeding 60-40, fined \$130, plus \$100 diversion fee.

## "Lending a Helping Hand"



In times of medical emergencies, we all want the fastest medical care possible. However, if the emergency transport vehicle isn't reliable, time lost may be the difference between life and death.

The Northwest Kansas Medical Foundation is requesting financial assistance via their 2006 Caring Kind campaign to help with the purchase of a "Life Line" ambulance to be used in the Tri-State Area.

This is your opportunity to show your support with a tax-deductible gift to the NW Kansas Area Medical Foundation on behalf of a new ambulance!



**Northwest Kansas Area Medical Foundation**  
PO Box 661, Goodland, Kans 67735



## NEW LISTINGS

### 1113 College

Two story home loaded with possibilities! The main floor boasts a large living room, kitchen with appliances, two bedrooms, bath and laundry room. The second floor has three bedrooms and half bath.

Some of the extras include vinyl siding, hot water heat, two window air conditioners, hardwood floors, covered front porch, appliances including stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer. \$55,000. Please call Donna Moore 899-2328 or email donna@goodlandhomestead.com to view this home.



### 802 East 5th

Over 2300 sq. ft. of living space valued priced at \$51,500.

Main floor offers large living room with fireplace, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and full bath. The basement could be used as a rental or for more living space. Basement has big family room, two bedrooms, bath and kitchen area. Central heat and air, single car garage. This property is approved for ExpressPath Financing. Please contact listing agent, Donna Moore, for more information. 899-2328 or donna@goodlandhomestead.com



**Congratulations Debbie Overmiller and Joseph Murray for winning our \$100 Shopping Spree**  
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