

# School board accepts bids

SCHOOL, from Page 1

Ecklund bid because both policies were the exact same coverage. He said the bids were less than the previous quote and that Ecklund was using a different insurance company. He said they would be changing from EMC to Allied, and that it saved about \$6,000.

Selby said they had not expected to bid on the fleet insurance, but with the higher cost they felt it was a good idea. He suggested that the board consider some of the coverage they are using before sending out bids next year.

One area Harkins suggested was the windshields because the vehicles go through a lot of windshields.

After the items on the agenda had been covered, Selby said he wanted to give the board an update on the 2002 budget. He said that he would be asking the board to approve an increase of .625 mills, which would raise the total from 14.049 this year to 14.675 for next year.

He also said the budget would increase the local option budget from \$875,000 to \$960,409.

“To help with the cost there would be a reduction in employment with one less sixth grade teacher and one part-time kindergarten,” he said.

He also said there would be two less teacher aides, and the technology fund would be cut by \$10,000 and the

inservice fund would be cut by \$10,000.

Selby said the general fund would raise from \$6,080,676 to \$6,087,857, without the special education money included.

“I am fairly comfortable with the budget,” Selby said. “We can do 20 percent of the general fund, but will recommend 14.8 percent. That gives us some room for the future and we could raise \$300,000 if needed.”

He said the capital outlay budget would be \$260,000.

The special meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m. and several of the board members accompanied Selby to see the progress at the high school.

# Parole put on hold until 2003

PAROLE, from Page 1

the day the inmate has served his entire sentence. The conditional release date, he said, is the prisoner’s maximum sentence minus good time, awarded when an inmate behaves.

Miskell said an inmate who is released conditionally — as Gomez will be in March 2003 — must follow a set of about a dozen rules, including finding a job and reporting to a parole officer. Each parole-eligible inmate submits a plan to the board of where they will work and live on the outside.

If Gomez, an inmate at El Dorado Correctional Facility, violates the conditions of his release, Miskell said, he will be sent back to prison for an

amount of time determined by the parole board. Like Kernal, he said, Gomez could then have to serve out his maximum sentence, which would be up on June 28, 2022.

The parole board could have granted Gomez parole before his conditional release date, Miskell said, but can’t legally hold him in prison past that date unless he is convicted of another crime or is found to be a danger to himself or others by reason of mental defect.

The board doesn’t release the reasons for its decisions, but Miskell said the severity of Gomez’s crime and his institutional behavior was considered.

Gomez, 36, is being held in the administrative segregation section at El

Dorado, which means he can only leave his cell for five hours each week, and then only in handcuffs and escorted by an officer.

Inmates in administrative segregation, Miskell said, typically aren’t being separated for disciplinary reasons, but because they pose a threat to the operation of the facility in another way.

Gomez’s last disciplinary violation was on March 28, Miskell said, for possession of contraband. Before that, he said, he was found guilty of use of personal property on March 12, violating published orders on Oct. 13, 1999 and relationships with staff in August 1998 — which caused him to lose 90 days of good time.

# Oil production doesn’t mean cheap gas

HUTCHINSON (AP) — Even with the recent drop in gas prices from their soaring levels several weeks ago, Kansans are grumbling about how much they pay at the pump.

But the factors driving gas prices are complex and numerous, depending on everything from where you pump it and how it got there to the various state and federal taxes tacked on along the way.

Fed up with the cost of gasoline in Garden City, Horace Good five years ago launched a campaign for change.

In letters to the editor, the retired school superintendent began listing gas prices on his trips across Kansas.

Everywhere, prices were cheaper. “I felt like Garden City people were being gouged,” he said. “Somebody needed to step forward and say something.”

Today, residents still grumble.

On Wednesday, regular unleaded was selling for \$1.31 a gallon in Garden City, \$1.20 in Wichita. In Topeka, it was \$1.22, and in Kansas City, \$1.21. The low price in Salina was \$1.18.

“People endure it,” Good said, “but they don’t know why.”

It’s not just in Garden City. Frustrated drivers everywhere watch pump prices rise and fall for no apparent reason. Industry experts say it’s a volatile market, and what consumers pay is a product of supply and demand, location, taxes and competition.

On Wednesday, the statewide average for regular unleaded was \$1.24, down from \$1.66 a month ago, providing some relief in the heart of summer vacation season.

## New house



A steady line of people tromped through the open house Sunday afternoon at the three-bedroom house which the Northwest Kansas Technical College Carpentry Department built during the past school year. The house will be auctioned at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 28. Members of the carpentry class were on hand to answer questions about the house and the construction. The house includes a modern network system which allows the homeowner to use a central system for computers, Internet, fax, satellite, multi-line phones and audio/video throughout.

Photo by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News

# Walkers strive to bridge cultural gap

WALKERS, from Page 1

Hays. “He is a very nice man,” Nakayama said. “We went to a small party with him and some people from Hays. He showed up in an antique truck and showed it to us. He also joined us in the march in the parade.”

Nakayama said he tried Rocky Mountain Oysters in Hays. He said they were good.

Morishima and Nakayama both said

they have enjoyed so many things so far that it is hard to recall them all. But they said the Cherry Blossom festival in Washington, D.C., near where they started their walk, was a memorable event for them.

“We’re not so different from American culture,” Morishima said. “People here think we haven’t even eaten pizza, but we have. The environment is different (in Japan), but the culture is very much the same.”

Donna Price, assistant director of the Sherman County Convention and Visitors’ Bureau, said some of the walkers had planned to play softball while in Goodland.

The game was canceled, she said, because after having rain two nights in a row, the field was just too muddy. There was no way they could play on it, she said.

The walkers did take a tour of Goodland.

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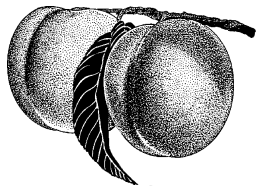
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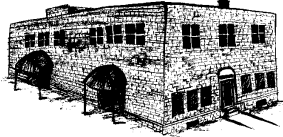
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