

weather report

46°

noon
Thursday Today

• Sunset, 6:08 p.m.
Saturday
• Sunrise, 5:33 a.m.
• Sunset, 6:09 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 48 degrees
• Humidity 79 percent
• Sky cloudy
• Winds northwest at 10 mph
• Barometer 29.99 inches and steady
• Record High today 87° (1943)
• Record Low today 2° (1987)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 75°
Low Thursday 40°
Precipitation tr
This month 2.23
Year to date 3.21
Above normal 1.26 of an inch

The Topside Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy, high near 55, low near 32. A 30 percent chance of rain and thunderstorms.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Partly cloudy, high near 62, low around 35. Sunday: Mostly sunny, high near 69, low around 38. Monday: Partly cloudy, high near 69, low around 39. Tuesday: Partly cloudy, high near 58, low around 34. Wednesday: Partly cloudy, high near 39.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

Tornadoes miss Goodland, Edson

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

About a dozen tornadoes whirled north along K-27 Wednesday evening from Syracuse to Goodland and on up to Bird City, causing little damage and no injuries reported in Kansas.

The storm swept the plains from Texas to Wyoming, where snow snarled traffic, and Nebraska. It was estimated 65 tornadoes were spawned by the cells in the storm.

Across the border in Holly, Colo., a twister tore through the center of town, killing a 28-year-old woman. To the south, in the Oklahoma panhandle, an Elmwood couple died when winds tore apart their home.

Sirens sounded in Goodland about 6:45 p.m. when a tornado was sighted approaching from the south, but the city was spared as the twister veered to the east.

The storm produced high winds, heavy rain and hail as it passed over Goodland, heavier rain and hail on the east side of town. The National Weather Service office here reported a total of 1.69 inches of moisture overnight. The storm with the tornado produced .63 of an inch of rain and hail, and following thunderstorms added more rain through the night.

Southeast of town, Police Officer James Gillespie and Deputy Sheriff Jason Showalter were south of I-70 at the east Goodland exit, watching a wall cloud about seven miles east when a funnel dropped out and appeared to touch ground.

Showalter and other deputies rushed to Edson and followed the tornado as it moved north, growing as it went. The storm, seen through lightning flashes in the dusk, had grown to at least a quarter-mile wide as it approached Bird City.

Sarah Johnson, a meteorologist at the weather station, said Thursday storm assess-



A tornado touched down near Edson about 7 p.m. Wednesday, and grew to nearly a quarter-mile wide as it went north brushing the east side of Bird City. The tornado was spotted by Police Officer James Gillespie and Sherman County Sheriff Deputy Jason Showalter south of I-70 at the east Goodland exit about 10 miles west of Edson.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

ment teams were out north and south of town surveying the twister's track. She said some damage had been reported in and near Bird City. A grain bin was hit east of Weskan, and a team was checking damage south of Sharon Springs.

Reports from the Bird City area said the power was out as poles snapped. The tornado spared the town, passing just east, but dropped some large hay bales onto U.S. 36.

In Edson, the power was out because at least two transformers shorted. Midwest Energy crews responded to repair the damage.

Johnson said a weather service employee, not from the Goodland office, who was following the tornado, reported transformer flashes in Edson.

Another tornado was spotted on the ground two miles east of Edson about 8:30 p.m. moving north. Spotters followed that storm north; it was the second one to go east of Bird City.

Wallace County Sheriff Larry Townsend said he watched a tornado develop north of Sharon Springs and followed it as it headed north and crossed into Sherman County.

A tornado warning was issued for the Kanorado area about 7 p.m. with reports of a tornado moving north from the Weskan area. That twister dissipated before reaching the town.

Sherman County dispatch called for the Kanorado fire department to sound the sirens there, but it took some time before anyone could find the switch. A sheriff's deputy said the city employee who usually handles that job was out of town at a water school. He later told central dispatch he had located the key if sirens were needed later.

Kelly James, another meteorologist with the Weather Service here, said the office had over 30 reports of large hail. Law officers in Benkelman, Neb., reported hail about softball size.

The long line of storms stretching from the Texas panhandle to Nebraska. In Holly, four-

See **TORNADO**, Page 5a

Five vie for school board seats

Five candidate are running for four seats on the Goodland School Board, current board members Jane Philbrick and Andrew House, plus John Hendrich, Chuck Wilkens and Travis Blake, a write-in candidate.

Members Fritz Doke and Marty Melia decided not to run again.

Travis Blake, 30, whose name is not on the ballot, says he was asked to run by several people and after some thought decided to do it. The main reasons he said he is running is a love of education and children and to give people a choice.

Blake has been campaigning through advertising, flyers and word of mouth. He and his family have lived in Goodland for about two years.

Blake, pastor of the First Baptist Church, has an elementary education degree from Sterling College and will complete a master's degree in transformational leadership this spring. He was the youth pastor for eight years at Countryside Baptist Church in Hutchinson, working with kids 11 and up.

He said he has no agenda going in but believes he has the leadership skills needed for the job.

"I have the desire to see kids receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for life, not just more education," he said, "and believe



Philbrick



Wilkens



House



Hendrich



Blake

that service done as youth will result in community-focused adults.

"I love people, kids and teachers." He said he would like to see the school board plan for the future and not just react to current problems. He believes that the key to keeping kids busy is to change their attitude from, "what can the world can do for me?", to "what can I do for the world."

His wife Alyson has been substituting for the Goodland Schools. The couple has two children, Brennan, 3, and Audrey, 1.

Alyson has a degree in elementary education and taught in the Buhler schools for four years.

Jane Philbrick, 50, has been on the school board for 12 years, serving the last two as board president.

She got a bachelor's degree in from Kansas Wesleyan University and a master's in from Western Washington University. She and her

husband Brady farm southwest of town; they have two children, Samantha, a freshman at Kansas Wesleyan, and Andrew, a junior at Goodland High School.

"I am passionate about public education," she says, adding that she thinks continuity on a board is important to teachers.

"Declining enrollment effects everything," she said. "We need to make sure we are using funds in a manner that benefits all students."

Andrew House, 41, finished out Danny Whalen's term on the board after Whalen moved to Castle Rock, Colo., in 2005.

He and his wife Gennifer have two children, Ellie, fifth grader, and Drew, a fourth grader, both at Central Elementary School.

House graduated from Goodland High School in 1984 and farms west of Goodland.

"I'm running for school board

because there is nothing more important than educating our kids," House said. "Every issue the board will face is an important one."

Chuck Wilkens, 49, says he thinks that his 31 years of business experience would be an asset to the board.

"I am running because I have kids in school and I believe we need to have good people on the school board," he said. "I am willing to spend the time and energy it will take for the job."

Wilkens graduated from Goodland High School and went to Fort Hays State University. He and his wife Alicia have three sons, Drew, Grant and Brock. Drew is a sophomore at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Grant a junior at Goodland High and Brock is in the eighth grade.

He said he noticed that only two people had filed for the four board seats, so he called a couple of people he knew and suggested they run. They suggested he run, and so he did.

See **SCHOOL**, Page 5a

City, school polls open Tuesday

Tuesday's voters will elect three Goodland City Commissioners, four Goodland School board members and a Mayor and two council members in Kanorado.

Everyone in the county will vote at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, 824 Main. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

School board members Jane Philbrick and Andrew House are seeking re-election. Chuck Wilkens and John Hendrich are running for the open seats.

The Rev. Travis Blake of the First Baptist Church has filed as a write-in candidate. The top four candidates will win four-year terms.

For Kanorado Mayor Dennis Korbelik, a retired farmer, faces Sandra Bagley, cafeteria manager at the Northwest Kansas Technical College.

Gerald Webber, Deb Fahey, Larry Wilkerson and Cody Pettibone are running for council.

Goodland Commissioners are Rick Billinger, Annette Fairbanks and Dave Daniels.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.24 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.32
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$3.71 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.53
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Milo — \$3.46 bushel
Soybeans — \$6.75 bushel
Posted county price — \$6.81
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Millet — \$7 hundredweight
Sunflowers
NuSun crop — \$16.25
Pinto beans — \$25 (new crop)
(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

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Grain truck wreck closes old U.S. 24 east of Caruso

A Suburban pulling a small trailer is thought to have pulled from his driveway on Hwy. 24 and was hit by a semitrailer truck heading east on the highway.

The wreck happened about 4.5 miles west of Goodland about 11 a.m. The Sherman County Sheriff deputy Brad Parker handled the accident.

Sherman County Rural Fire Department helped an ambulance crew from Goodland Regional Medical Center get Leonard Elliott, 88, from his car so he could be taken to the hospital.

Elliott was released from the hospital yesterday morning said Dale Shields, Human Resources Director.

The truck rolled on its side blocking the road and spilling the load of corn it had just loaded. The driver was not hurt. McBee's took care of the vehicles.



Sherman County Rural firefighters and members of the hospital ambulance service worked to free an 88-year old accident victim from his Suburban that was in a wreck with a truck on Hwy. 24 Wednesday.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Cowboys lose opener

Cowboys senior Andrew Pettibone threw the first pitch and opened the baseball season Tuesday. The Cowboys lost the opening game 15-7. The Cowboys are in Garden City today. See photo on Page 10a.

