



Jose Avalos-Robledo of Cillesten and Sons of Wichita was busy Wednesday afternoon attaching signs to posts to be set along the new stretch of K-27 about a mile south of town that should open for traffic on Monday. Manuel Villareal-Perez was cleaning out the post holes drilled by another crew member with a small tractor. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Half of new K-27 south of town to open next week

Drivers heading south of Goodland next week will get to drive on the north half of the new K-27 highway, the Kansas Department of Transportation says. Engineers plan to switch traffic onto the new alignment of K-27 from south of town to the North Fork of the Smoky Hill River, said Construction Engineer Michael Terry of the Area 2 office in Atwood. He said contractor Western Engineering has completed asphalt paving on the north section, and the new road should be open by Monday. "Permanent striping and signing will all be in place, so that drivers will be able to maneuver onto this new section of K-27 by next week," Terry said. "If all goes according to the scheduled work this week, including the temporary seeding, we will make the switch." Terry said a temporary roadway, or shoo-fly detour, is being built at the north end of the project so workers can pave another one-mile section of new alignment within the south city limits of Goodland. "The signing will indicate the shoo-fly detour, which will be in use until mid-September," he said. "The traveling public will have to use the temporary

roadway while more construction is taking place west of the existing roadway." He said the speed limit will be reduced to 50 mph on the shoo-fly, but will be posted at regular speeds on the new section. "The speed limit will be posted back to its original 65 mph limit on the new section," he said, "but we still advise drivers to be aware of the workers who are still out there in the construction zone." The construction of the in-town part of K-27 will be one of the final phases of the paving, Terry said. "As far as the overall schedule," he said, "we are 65 percent complete on the \$14.5 million project, which began last year. The paving operation will be complete by October, yet more grading operations, milling of the old roadway and permanent seeding will account for additional work later this winter." The new roadway has 12-foot driving lanes with three-foot paved shoulders and three-foot turf shoulders. The replaced section of K-27 has no shoulders. For questions, contact Kristen Brands, public affairs manager for northwest Kansas, at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org or Terry at (785) 626-3185 or mterry@ksdot.org.

## Goodland police chief asks city to restore drug task force money

By Tom Betz  
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The only person to speak up during the city budget hearing on Monday was Police Chief Ray Smee, who asked the City Commission to restore money for the Quad County Drug Task Force. Commissioners turned him down, voting to pass the budget as presented, holding the line on spending without a tax increase. During budget work sessions in July, the commission discussed the Money for the five-county task force, which the city has belonged to for about six years, and decided to cut the \$5,000 out of the budget. Chief Smee told the commission Monday he thought the city was getting quite a bit of benefit from the program, and that being part of a multijurisdictional agency helped when he applies for grants. During the budget hearing, Smee asked the commissioners to reconsider the cut. He said after the budget workshop, he had visited with each commissioner individually to explain the program and said they all told him they would look at it again. "I am asking you to reconsider

the Quad County Task Force," he said. "I feel it is an important thing for the city. I did not know until Friday that this also cuts the money for this year, and I am not sure how the task force will be able to continue since they were counting on that money when the grant was approved in May." The only other comment made during the hearing was from City Manager Wayne Hill, who praised City Clerk Mary Volk for her preparation of the budget. Mayor Rick Billinger asked if there were any other comments and the room was silent. Later in the meeting, when adoption of the budget came up, Billinger said he felt it was a good budget. "We couldn't fund everything we wanted to or would like to," he said. "We were able to keep the mill levy at a status quo." He asked for a motion to adopt the budget or for any possible changes. No mention was made of the drug alliance. The room was silent for a long minute, then Commissioner Annette Fairbanks made the motion to adopt the budget without any

change. Commissioner John Garcia seconded the motion, and Commissioner Josh Dechant joined the others in a 4-0 vote. Commissioner Dave Daniels was absent.

**corrections**

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## Blue Planet Run to land in Kansas on Wednesday

A team of 20 international citizen athletes who have been running around the world nonstop since June 1 will arrive Wednesday in northwest Kansas as part of their journey across the continent for the Blue Planet Run. This international event is raising money for projects to deliver safe drinking water to some of the 1.1 billion people who currently live without it. A member of the Blue Planet Run team will take a handoff at Kanorado about 3 p.m. on Wednesday, near Goodland about 7 p.m., east of Edson about 9 p.m. and at Brewster about 10:30 p.m., carrying the Blue Planet Run baton, which will be handed off to a waiting runner at the corner of Thomas County Road Q. Team members run individual 10-mile (16-kilometer) shifts. Organizers say the runners, representing 13 countries, include a renowned jazz musician, a Scottish gardener and a champion marathoner. The inaugural Blue Planet Run, made possible by support from the Dow Chemical Co., launched from the United Nations

in New York on June 1. Since then, the team has traveled relay-style 24 hours a day, seven days a week through Ireland, England, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, Poland, Belarus, Russia, Mongolia, China and Japan. By the time it gets to northwest Kansas, the team will have covered more than 12,000 miles of its 15,200-mile journey, which will take 95 days to complete. The route during the evening hours of Wednesday will take the runners through Goodland and Edson before arriving in Brewster. After Brewster, the Run should be through Colby about 1:30 a.m. on Thursday. The route turns south at Colby crossing under I-70 and the next handoff is about 3 a.m. five miles south of Colby and a mile east of K-25. The route continues south and east with a handoff at 4:30 a.m. about a mile west of Oakley. The Run continues eastward parallel to I-70 past Grinnell (about 7 a.m.), Grainfield (about 8:30 a.m.), Park (about 9 a.m.) and Quinter (about 10 a.m.). The route continues east in Kansas

for three days, entering Missouri on Saturday. "By the time the Run leaves Sherman County, we hope every local resident becomes a witness and messenger to a human crisis happening right now — a crisis brought about by the lack of safe drinking water," said industrialist and philanthropist Jin Zidell, founder and chairman of the Blue Planet Run Foundation. "Just as we're doing around the world, we're carrying a message of hope, step by step, through the streets of Brewster, to push the issue to the forefront of people's minds and hearts in this city." People can donate through the Blue Planet Run web site, www.blueplanetrun.org. A \$30 contribution can provide one person safe drinking water for life, the foundation says. Nearly 2.2 million people, most of them children, die each year from diseases related to unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene, the group says. Water-related illnesses are the single greatest cause of human sickness and death worldwide.

## Lutheran churches get new pastor from Lancaster

By Pat Schiefen  
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Lutherans from five churches — Emmanuel Lutheran in Goodland, Our Savior at Brewster, Bethany at Weskan, Sharon Springs and Bathesda in Park — have a new interim pastor at the altar. Pastor Jane Rothman had her first service Sunday in Goodland, followed by a potluck dinner. Pastor Rothman said she was ordained in 2003 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lancaster where she worked for two years and then worked two more years on creating St. John's parish with that church and St. John's Lutheran Church of Bandina. She worked for 29 years as a mechanical engineer after earning a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering degree from University of Minnesota. She worked for Praxiar in Charlotte, N.C., for 20 years doing quality control on coatings with a microscope. In 1988, she said, as a delegate to a synod in Huntersville, Ind., she

went to an ordination ceremony, and she said she knew "like a bolt of lightning that was what she wanted to do." "It was an unbelievably difficult decision and I prayed about it for six months," Rothman said. When she got to checking, she said, the laws had changed enough so she could sell her house without paying taxes and she could use her Individual Retirement Account for educational expense. She said she gave her boss a year's notice. Rothman said she and her son, Wesley Marquette III, had a busy year with him being in his senior year in high school, finishing his Eagle Scout and she studying Greek. The next year, Wesley went to Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn., and she went to Lutheran Seminary in St. Paul. Wesley graduated in 2004 with a major in religion and minor in computer science. He works as a data base manager in Minnesota.

Rothman

Rothman said she will be going to his wedding in St. Paul on Saturday, Aug. 18, where he will marry Nichola Wilkowski. "I am finally getting a daughter," she said. The minister said she will work with each of the congregations to become a part of Lutherans on the Plains Parish, where they can share resources. The Goodland church is the largest one, she said, and she hopes they will not have to rely on retired pastors as much as they do now. As an interim pastor, she has been sent by the national church for two years. As a solo pastor, she said, there are so many things to do. The ones you like balance out the ones you don't, she said, adding that her favorite part of the service is the liturgy. "It's only fair to serve the people who are there to work the land," Rothman said. "We are called to serve the whole church. I feel called to rural ministry. "This has been such a welcoming community and the hospitality has been overwhelming."

## Rural fire department gets grant

The Sherman County Fire Rescue Department received a \$2,800 grant Monday to improve fire prevention in the county from FM Global, a business property insurer based in Johnston, R.I. An FM Global representative presented the check to Sherman

County Rural Fire Chief Alan David, who said the money would be used to buy smoke alarms and educational material. The company says it awards grants four times a year to support fire prevention, preparedness and control efforts by fire departments,

because fire is the leading cause of commercial and industrial property damage.

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