

weather report

72°

noon
Thursday

Today

- Sunset, 7:31 p.m.
- Sunrise, 6:08 a.m.
- Sunset, 7:31 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 71 degrees
- Humidity 63 percent
- Sky cloudy
- Winds northeast at 17 mph
- Barometer 29.95 inches and rising

- Record High today 105° (1936)
- Record Low today 43° (1928)

Last 24 Hours*

- High Wednesday 88°
- Low Thursday 62°
- Precipitation .08
- This month 2.47
- Year to date 10.99
- Normal 4.81 inches below

The Topsis Forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy with patchy fog before noon. High near 78 with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Low around 60. Tonight: Partly cloudy after midnight with patchy fog.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Partly sunny then becoming sunny. High in mid 80s. Low in the upper 50s. Sunday: Mostly sunny. High around 90. Low around 60. Monday and Tuesday: Partly cloudy. Highs around 90. Lows around 60. (National Weather Service) Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz. *Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

- Wheat — \$5.99 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$6.13
 - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 - Corn — \$3.38 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$3.21
 - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 - Milo — \$3.08 bushel
 - Soybeans — \$7.40 bushel
 - Posted county price — \$7.14
 - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
 - Millet — \$7 hundredweight
 - Sunflowers
 - NuSun crop — \$17.90
 - Confection — Call
 - 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

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



Sprint driver wins again

United Rebel Sprint Car driver Jon Johnson (car 86), known as the "Kansas Tornado," got his car ready for racing at Sherman County Speedway on Saturday. Johnson won the sprint car main. See photo, story on Page 10A.

Senator talks to folks at dinner

By Sharon Corcoran

slcorcoran@nwkansan.com

Dinner and dessert got rave reviews, and U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts a warm welcome at a \$35-a-plate fund raiser for his campaign at the Goodland Veterans of Foreign Wars on Monday.

Roberts has been traveling western Kansas for his "Listening Tour, meeting with people to find out which issues are foremost in their minds.

"We don't have constituents out here," the senator said. "We call them folks."

The four big issues voters have brought up on the listening tour, Roberts said, have been No. 1, health care; No. 2, farm bill; No. 3, immigration; and No. 4, the war in Iraq.

Solutions to what is being called a health-care crisis, Roberts said, includes strengthening and preserving the essential services the country already has. Sometimes the Department of Health and Human Services gets into rationing, he said, and that's not good. And the department that handles Medicare wants to cut the program's pay to doctors and hospitals for their services, he said, and that can't happen.

Another big issue with health care, he said, is the state children's health insurance program.

"We need to try to keep it for what it's intended," Roberts said.

In 14 states, he noted, adults can get on the



Sen. Pat Roberts told funny stories about his family and explained why campaign fund raising is starting so early for the 2008 election during a dinner at the Goodland Veterans of Foreign Wars hall on Monday.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran The Goodland Star-News

program, he said, including in New York, where adults living at 400 percent of poverty level qualify.

"Why should Kansas taxpayers have to pay for that?" Roberts asked. "We need to wean those people off and get it back to just paying for children's health care."

A comprehensive health-care payment formula that puts doctors, hospitals and home-health agencies on the same program would also help, he said.

Solutions to the problem of illegal immigration include increasing border security, Roberts said, and having a "Real ID" card for immigrants so employers know for sure applicants have the right paperwork. Allowing immigrants to work in the United States on the VISA program and then go back to their country of origin is a good idea, he said, but needs to be easier to enforce. Immigrants can buy fake IDs on the black market, he said, and employers don't always know the difference.

That doesn't solve the problem of the 12 million illegals who are here, Roberts said, and that's not an easy thing to resolve.

A bill that has been defeated included a provision for amnesty for illegal immigrants, Roberts said, but it didn't take into account human behavior. To become legal, he said, they would have to pay a \$5,000 fine and then go back to their original country and wait about two years before they could come back.

"Would anyone do that?" he said. "Who would leave their job and family here for two years and just hope they will be approved to

come back? We need something realistic."

The proposed farm bill isn't going to work, Roberts said, because it would cut \$6 billion in crop insurance and would require paying union-scale wages on all energy projects. That would raise the cost of energy production 35 percent, he said, and out here, that's not going to work.

"We need to keep renewable energy," he said, "such as biodiesel and ethanol."

Congressman Jerry Moran put it best, Roberts said, when he said, "This is the first farm bill I've seen written entirely by non-ag entities."

Roberts said people have asked why has the fund raisers and campaigns for 2008 have started already.

"2007 is now 2008," he said. "It's exhaustion politics. I won't spend any more than is necessary, but I'll get the job done."

Roberts said everyone running for office competes against aggressive campaigns that start early and raise millions of dollars that is then spent on "campaign ads" that amount to character assassination.

"They say things in those ads," he said, "that if I believed those things were true of me, I wouldn't vote for me either."

There's no transparency, or openness, regarding campaign funds, Roberts said — there's no listing in the newspaper of where the money went.

Schools on normal schedule

With cooler temperatures, classes in the Goodland School District will be on the regular schedule, said Superintendent Shelly Angelos.

Angelos said school will be on its regular schedule for next week as well, unless the weather changes. Temperatures are expected to be cooler, with highs in the 80s.

Goodland High School classes start at 7:50 a.m., Grant Junior High at 8 a.m. and North, Central and West Elementary at 7:50 a.m.

Classes end at 3:20 p.m. for the elementary and high schools and 3:25 p.m. at the junior high.

Sealing to begin on Tuesday

The city's annual street sealing project was delayed this week, but Public Works Director Rich Simon said Thursday the program will begin Tuesday when the contractor's crew arrives

Phil Erickson, city street superintendent, said if the weather cooperates, the work should be done by Thursday.

People who live along streets to be sealed will be told to get their vehicles out of the way by city crew members knocking on doors, Erickson said, adding the schedule could be affected by the weather.

Erickson said if a car is in the way and the owner can't be found, the city will have the vehicle towed. He said the program will be similar to what was done last year, with the work in two phases. The first is a chip seal, where a layer of asphalt is covered with crushed rock. Later, a "fog seal," a light overcoat, is sprayed over the chips.

About a month after the chip sealing, the same streets will be fog sealed to hold the surface better and extend the life of the chip seal, Simon said.

Street to be sealed include Ninth from Main west to Cattle Trail; 11th east from Broadway to Eastridge; Seventh from Main east to Eustis; Sixth east from Caldwell to Eustis; Third west from Caldwell to Broadway; Walnut Ave. south from 13th to 16th; College south from 13th to 16th; 15th east from Main to Arcade; Clark Ave. south from Toelkes to Eighth; Fifth east from Caldwell to Kansas; Montana Ave. south from Eighth to 10th; and Grand Ave. between Second and Third.

Capturing first day of school



Juli Shelly snapped a photo of her son Austin, a fourth grader, with Central School Principal Harvey Swager the first day of classes. Swager said the first days have gone well, with the school trying a new bus delivery system to help reduce con-

gestion around the front of the building on Main at 13th. Swager said the buses are loading and unloading on Broadway. He said it may not work as well when the weather is bad, but so far it has been good. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

St. Francis council hears proposal for wind power generation plant

By Lee Nichols

lnichols@nwkansan.com

A proposal to sell electricity from wind power was presented to the St. Francis City Council at their regular meeting on Aug. 7, but the council put off a decision until the members could study the proposal.

Dan Rasure of Goodland, managing partner of Sunflower Wind LLC, said the firm hopes to build a 50-megawatt wind farm in Cheyenne County, with a 4-megawatt hydrogen generation plant and with a 5- to 25-megawatt generator powered by methane to supply power when the wind isn't.

The firm hopes to start the project by June and to be in full operation Jan. 1, 2009, he said. If up and running prior to Jan. 1, Sunflower Wind would offer the city the electricity at the market rate or negotiate a rate, he said.

He said the plan to sell most of the power locally and then open it up to others.

Two options were offered to the city. The first, starting Jan. 1, 2009,

would be at 5 cents per kilowatt hour with increases of about .1 cent each year in January for the next seven years to a 5.75 cent rate for 13 years with an additional two 5-years options at 5.75 cents.

With the second option, the beginning rate would be locked in at 5.75 for 20 years with an additional two five-year options. A guarantee of 10 megawatts of production is made with two full-time employees. Production would be guaranteed at 99.9 percent with less than 8.5 percent of down time, Rasure said. The hydrogen backup would still be available for seven hours at a time.

As an economic development project, Rasure said the plants would bring 50 to 75 employees during construction and then four to eight full-time employees after that. It would also be a research and development site requiring two hotel rooms a week.

The firm would pay landowners \$5,000 a year for turbine sites, and that would bring \$100,000 in revenue to Cheyenne County each year.

Another incentive is 1 percent discount for power used by existing small businesses and others increasing their usage to 2 megawatts. Other towns under site consideration in the area are Oberlin and Sharon Springs.

He said the contracts would become effective on the date of the signing.

Council member Carla Lampe asked if a "letter of intent," would be acceptable but Rasure said no.

Members noted the city would be required to cancel its existing power contracts. This might not be accomplished without penalty, they said. If the contracts could not be canceled, he said, then Sunflower Wind would like an option to sell power to the city at a negotiated rate when the existing contracts terminate. He said Sunflower needs a contract with the city to get financing for its project.

City Attorney Mike Day asked if "benchmarks" could be added or inserted into the proposed contracts. Rasure said that it could be considered.

Asked to comment on present city electrical costs, J.R. Landenberger, city superintendent, said current electrical costs were 4.87 cents per kilowatt hour.

The city buys power from Sunflower Electric and Kansas Municipal Energy Association arranges for other electricity needed from market power on the grid. During the summer, he said, the city runs its generators when market rates are higher.

Councilman Rodney Bracelin asked if the contract would be re-assigned and Rasure said they probably would. He said Koch Industries would probably be the Sunflower Wind marketer.

Rasure said since the project is to start in the spring, they need to hear from the council within three weeks.

The council told Rasure they would contact Mike Lennen, Wichita attorney under contract with the city, and the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency before reaching a decision but they would try to do it quickly.