

## weather report



**41°**  
 noon  
 Monday

### Today

• Sunset, 7:11 p.m.  
**Wednesday**  
 • Sunrise, 6:29 a.m.  
 • Sunset, 7:12 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 48 degrees  
 • Humidity 62 percent  
 • Sky mostly cloudy  
 • Winds north 20-26 mph  
 • Barometer 29.86 inches and steady  
 • Record High today 86° (1940)  
 • Record Low today 10° (1949)

### Last 24 Hours\*

High Sunday 43°  
 Low Sunday 29°  
 Precipitation trace  
 This month 0.30  
 Year to date 0.91  
 Below normal 1.12 inches

### The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny with a high near 47, winds out of the north at 15 mph and a low around 29.  
 Wednesday: Mostly sunny with a high near 61, winds breezy from the south at 15 to 30 mph and a low around 36.

### Extended Forecast

Thursday: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, a high near 56 and a low around 35.  
(National Weather Service)  
 Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
 \* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

## local markets



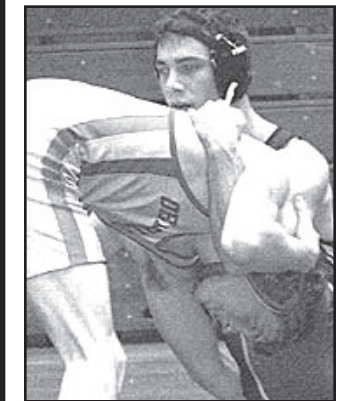
### Noon

Wheat — \$9.00 bushel  
 Posted county price — \$9.51  
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
 Corn — \$5.20 bushel  
 Posted county price — \$5.22  
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
 Milo — \$4.90 bushel  
 Soybeans — \$10.32 bushel  
 Posted county price — \$11.37  
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
 Millet — \$7 hundredweight  
 Sunflowers  
 Oil current crop — \$17.90 cwt.  
 Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
 Confection — \$30/\$20 cwt.  
 Pinto beans — \$32 (new crop)  
(Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

## inside today



More local news, views from your Goodland Star-News



## Stephens wins title

Senior A.J. Stephens beat junior Everett Urban of Oberlin during Goodland's dual with the Red Devils at Max Jones Fieldhouse in January. Stephens went on to win the Class 4A state title. See stories, photos on Page 12.

# Meeting about burn ban today

By Tom Betz

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The Sherman County Commissioners will hold a special meeting at 8 a.m. today to consider instituting a countywide burn ban because of the dry and windy conditions.

Burn bans are in place in Gove and Logan Counties for the same reason.

A grass fire Friday night about 14 miles northeast of town got away and extra fire trucks from Goodland, Brewster and Bird City were called in to control the fire. A rural fire truck with a couple of rural firemen were standing by during the burn and called for help when the flames got out of control.

The first call went out about 5:30 p.m., and the fire was contained within an hour with the firemen mopping up and watching for hot spots.

With about two weeks remaining in this

year's Conservation Reserve Program burning a special meeting was held Wednesday to clarify the policy on having rural firefighters stand by during a burn.

The Sherman County commissioners, rural fire board members, volunteer firefighters and interested farmers gathered at the Sherman County courthouse to talk about a policy the rural fire board had approved that said the rural firefighters and a fire truck could stand by for a burn plan with a charge of \$300 for the truck and \$20 per hour for each firefighter.

The fire board had previously adopted the policy, and board members Darrel Cloyd of Kanorado and Ken Palmgren of Edson said the board did not want to accept the liability of having the rural firefighters do the whole burn including setting the fires.

County Attorney Bonnie Selby said she

had reviewed the policy and had called the fire chief in Thomas County who said they follow a similar policy of standing by for burning, but do not have a formal burn plan requirement.

On Tuesday the county commissioners had proposed a waiver of liability form for the county to be signed by the landowner or legal tenant. Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked Selby if that would be sufficient to keep the county out of trouble.

Selby said she thought the form would be a help, and that it was similar to the waivers the city uses at the pool during the summer and the racing association uses.

She said there is nothing that will keep someone from trying to sue, but it can be a way to get out of the court case.

Chris Bauman, assistant rural fire chief for

Goodland said the firefighters have been doing this since he has been on the department for 20 years.

The commissioners and fire board agreed to follow the stand-by policy with the landowner signing the waiver as a way to try to keep the county liability down.

Bauman said the calls have been crazy and he and Alan David Goodland rural fire chief have been getting calls at all hours. Bauman said they have agreed to stand-by at a few burns where there was special conditions, but have been turning any more down because there are not enough volunteers to cover the whole county.

Sherman County requires a burn plan for any area larger than one acre, and the plan has to be turned into the rural chief at the county road and bridge office and have to call central dispatch before starting any fires.



A rural fire truck mopped up along the southeast side of a grass fire that got out of control about 5:30 p.m. on Friday 14 miles northeast of town. A Goodland rural fire truck was standing by at the fire and called for help when it got away. Trucks and tankers from Goodland, Brewster and Bird City responded to help get the fire under control.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Bill passes Senate, goes to conference

By Tom Betz

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A bill to give Sherman County voters a choice on how county commissioners are elected passed the Senate 40-0 on Thursday, but Friday the House asked for a conference committee without agreeing to the Senate's amended version.

Rep. Jim Morrison (R-Colby) told Sherman County Commissioner Kevin Rasure on Saturday it was not unusual for the House to request a conference committee when a bill passed by the Senate is much different than what had been passed by the House last year.

The bill (HB2307) passed the House last year by a vote of 120-2 on Feb. 19. It was sent to the Senate, where it languished in the Elections and Local Government Committee until Tuesday.

Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer (R-Grinnell) helped get the amended version through the Senate committee on Tuesday, and the Senate unanimously approved the bill 40-0 during the evening session on Thursday.

The Senate amendment added a section that sets out the procedures for setting the election and calls for the Sherman County commissioners to pass a resolution to allow citizens to vote on the issue in November.

The bill says the Sherman County Commission will consist of three positions numbered 1, 2 and 3. Candidates may live anywhere in the county.

If approved by voters, the bill says, "Each registered voter in Sherman County shall be permitted to vote for each candidate for the position of county commissioner."

Rasure said after he talked to Morrison, he was glad there would be a conference review. He said he had called Rep. Mike Burgess (R-Topeka), the conference chair.

Rasure said Burgess told him the conference committee would meet on Monday, and hoped to advance the bill for final approval this week.

Members of the conference committee from the House are Rep.

Burgess, Rep. Ted Powers (R-Mulvane) and Rep. Tom Sawyer (D-Wichita). From the Senate the members are Sen. Tim Huelskamp (R-Fowler) chair of the Elections and Local Government Committee, Sen. Roger Reitz (R-Manhattan) and Sen. Donald Betts (D-Wichita).



Ostmeyer

Rasure said Morrison raised a question about the wording in one paragraph, and felt Burgess would work to approve the clearest language possible.

Once approved by the Legislature and signed by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, the bill will become law after being published in the state register. Sherman County is the first Kansas county to ask for this kind of flexibility in how commissioners are chosen, said County Clerk Janet Rumpel, but the bill does not affect any other counties.

Demand for a change was sparked by a heated county commissioner race two years ago involving Commissioner Chuck Thomas of Edson. Darin Neufeld, an engineer for Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, ran as a write-in candidate both in the Republican primary and the general election. Thomas narrowly survived both challenges.

In public forums during that campaign, candidates were asked if they would support having commissioners voted on at large.

Most — including Thomas — said they would support an election on the issue. Thomas voted in favor of the at-large language in March last year, but on March 18 he voted against supporting the bill this year.

## Letters opposed, supported power plant modifications

By Tom Betz

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A decision about allowing the Goodland Energy Resources power plant to burn trash and old tires as well as coal is in the hands of the state Secretary of Health and Environment Rod Bremby in Topeka, a department engineer said last week.

Dana S. Morris of the state Bureau of Air and Radiation said he had completed his review and gathering the written comments and the transcript of a hearing held in Goodland on Feb. 26, and forwarded a recommendation to the secretary.

Morris said he could not say when the secretary would make a decision.

He said a total of 16 letters had been received at his office in Topeka, and that those became part of the public record.

With an Open Records Act request, *The Goodland Star-News* received copies of the letters.

Of the 16, one from Alva Vandiver, who lives north of the plant being built at Caruso, five miles west of town, requested a copy of the permit. Two letters supported the modification proposal and 13 were opposed.

In support was a letter from the Sherman County Farm Bureau signed by President Jeannie Schields, and a letter was from Jim Waldman, operating manager of Truck and Tractor Repair.

"The modification to burn biomass and tire chips is a positive way to use items that fill up our landfills," the Farm Bureau letter said. "We see the benefit of using 'wastes' to make energy."

"Green energy is friendly to the environment, and it's exciting to see Goodland Energy Resources pursue this option," Waldman wrote. "It is estimated that over 70 trucks a day will be delivering and exporting goods from the facility. These trucks will have breakdowns and we see a business opportunity in servicing these trucks."

"The power plant can bring life back to our community and it is also very friendly to the environment."

Half of the 12 letters opposing the modification were form letters, though two had additional comments.

Joe and Threse Armstrong of Goodland wrote they had seen some changes over the past few years specifically with the contamination in the city water.

"Now, not only are we seeing the water being polluted, but, our good clean air will be riddled

with toxic poison, which will make us sick," the Armstrongs wrote. "We have not been very happy with the fact that someone decided to build this plant here in the first place and now to find out they are going to fire it with all manner of pollutants is unforgivable."

"Please help us stop these people turning Western Kansas into the cesspool of the United States."

Judith C. Willems of Goodland, added her comments to the letter.

"Why should a few people who are looking to make a lot of money be allowed to put in this plant that will contaminate our air and water?"

"They will also be ruining our roads that the taxpayers are paying for."

"This is owned by a few rich people that want to profit at the expense of people's health. It is not right."

The other form letters were signed by Marie Edwards, L.A. McKnight and Ila Shepard, all of Goodland, and Garry Moore of Kanorado.

"From sources I've read," wrote Toni A. Becker of Goodland in her letter, "the permit allows the burning of 30 percent by weight of municipal trash, without any provision for source separation (no source control), so that any and all types of waste could be burned. I shudder to even imagine what kinds of chemical waste such 'fuel' could emit into our air."

"Our family urges you to not allow the modification of the Goodland Energy Center's permit to increase emissions and types of fuel burned at the facility, which is located within two miles of our home," wrote Denise Floyd. She and her husband Dave have been vocal opponents of the plant from the beginning.

"While burning trash may put funds in the investors pockets," Floyd wrote, "who will want to live in a community where investors admit they are polluting the environment, where investors burn items that are not safe to burn, where investors use (or abuse) precious water resources, where investors do not take the health of our elderly into consideration, where investors seek the dollar more than clean air. No one, including our young adults, will want to remain in this town."

Leonard and Ramona Kashka, who live south of the plant site, each submitted letters opposing the modifications.