

weather report

33°

noon
Thursday



Today

• Sunset, 7:21 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 6:14 a.m.
• Sunset, 7:22 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 37 degrees
- Humidity 92 percent
- Sky cloudy
- Winds northwest 22 mph
- Barometer 29.40 inches and falling
- Record High today 87° (1916)
- Record Low today 11° (1997)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday	42°
Low Wednesday	32°
Precipitation	0.49
This month	0.58
Year to date	1.51
Below normal	0.96 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow with a high near 43, winds out of the north 25 to 40 mph, a low around 27. Saturday: Mostly sunny with a high near 50, winds breezy out of the north 15 to 35 mph and a low around 31.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: Sunny with a high near 64 and a low around 37. Monday: Mostly sunny with a high near 71 and a low around 41.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400.MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

- Wheat — \$9.07 bushel
- Posted county price — \$9.13
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Corn — \$5.69 bushel
- Posted county price — \$5.66
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Milo — \$5.29 bushel
- Soybeans — \$12.07 bushel
- Posted county price — \$11.89
- Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
- Millet — \$7.00 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 and views from your Goodland Star-News



Cowboys take fourth

Cowboys junior Andrew Raile putted on No. 10, a par-three hole Tuesday. Twelve teams competing at Sugar Hills Golf Club and Goodland finished fourth. See story, photo on Page 11.



Firemen smother flames

Flames roared from a pile of wooden crates (above) set on fire as part of training class Monday, March 31, for the Goodland Rural Fire Department. Volunteer firemen Brett McQuitty, John and Kenny Studer and David Avila (right) tested a foaming agent that acts to smother flames on "Class A" fires such as wood, paper, hay, grass, and "Class B" fuels such as gasoline, oil, diesel and alcohol, said volunteer Cary Amos, who took the photos. Instructors for the class were Rick Morley of Hazard Control Technologies and Don Spangler of Weis Fire and Safety of Hays.



County sends letter to support at-large bill

By Tom Betz

ntbetz@nwkansas.com
More than a dozen people crowded into a courthouse meeting room Tuesday to save a bill allowing the people to decide whether everyone should be able to vote in Sherman County Commission races.

Before they left, commissioners all signed a letter asking for passage of the proposal, allowing an election this fall. If approved, though, the change would not take place for another two years.

With a room full of taxpayers present, people questioned Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas about their apparent opposition to the bill. The taxpayers said they wanted a chance to put the issue on the November ballot to let the voters decide.

"The people want a unified effort," said Alan Townsend county farmer.

Commissioners today are selected from districts. They must live in the district they represent, and only voters in that district get a ballot in commission elections. The bill now stuck in a House-Senate conference committee would allow voters to authorize at-large elections.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked Tiede why he had told legislators in Topeka he wanted the bill changed to keep the commissioner districts when that was not what the commissioners had voted to support after two open meetings this year and last year.

"Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer (R-Grinnell) called me the day we passed it in March," Tiede

said. "I asked him at that time if we could keep the districts. It was my mistake to ask."

"I talked to the person writing the bill and he said we could not do that, and I told him to go on with the at-large language. I did not intend that to cause a problem. I will take responsibility for that."

The bill (HB2307) passed what appeared to be its last major hurdle when the Senate approved an amended version 40-0 on March 27, but the House asked for a conference committee because of the Senate changes. The Legislature went into recess Friday with the bill in limbo.

Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer (R-Grinnell) said last Friday the bill is not dead, but that Rep. Mike Burgess (R-Topeka),

See BILL, Page 9

Nebraska firm awarded road striping contract

By Tom Betz

ntbetz@nwkansas.com
Crews will paint a yellow center line and white edge stripes on old U.S. 24 across Sherman County this summer after county commissioners approved a painting contract with a Nebraska firm on Tuesday.

Curt Way, county public works manager, said he had two bids for the painting, from Kolbe Striping of Castle Rock, Colo., and Straight Line Striping of Grand Island, Neb.

Commissioner Mitch Tiede said he was surprised Way had found smaller firms that were willing to handle the project.

The figures from both firms are estimates,

Way said, based on how many gallons of paint the project would take. He said he gave both firms measurements from the Kansas Department of Transportation, including the no-passing zones.

Straight Line's estimate was \$19,000 for both the yellow "skip" line, no-passing lines and the white edge lines. Kolbe's estimate was \$34,000, plus \$1,500 to mark the center line.

The commissioners considered whether to have both the yellow and white stripes done, and decided to do both.

Way said on a two-way road, the yellow

See STRIPING, Page 9

Snow messy, wet



Wet snowflakes stuck to the banners on Main Avenue on Thursday as a spring storm hit northwest Kansas. The National Weather Service said the snow might last through the day and most of Thursday night, dropping three to five inches, with winds gusting to 40 mph in the afternoon. Goodland schools closed at 11 a.m., and Brewster schools were to open an hour late, but were closed before noon. Sheriff deputies were called to several slide-offs on I-70.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Burn ban is lifted

By Tom Betz

ntbetz@nwkansas.com

A countywide burn ban lasted only one week before Sherman County commissioners lifted it Tuesday after hearing from federal officials that many Conservation Reserve Program fields still need to be burned this spring.

Dennis Mote, executive director of the Sherman County office of the U.S. Farm Service Agency, and Fred Wedel, district conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, came to discuss the burn ban and the problem with dirt blowing off some of the fields after burning.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas said he had suggested that the two come to the meeting to tell everyone what they had told him on Monday.

Basically, they said, the blowing problems seemed to affect fields where the grass isn't well established or those with "Colby type" soil, which is a silt-loam soil.

Under the federal program, farmers contract to plant grass or trees on "highly erodible" land, taking it out of grain production. Every so often, they're supposed to burn or till the grass to keep it healthy.

Wedel said Dan Meyerhoff, assistant state conservationist from the area office in Hays, had come out and looked at some of the fields here. He agreed some need to be re-evaluated to see if the grass is established enough to burn.

"If anybody has a question about a field, I will be doing the reviews this week," he said. "Fields that are established, we can burn those in sections so we have smaller areas, and there are some other options to look at for these fields."

"That we will be working with the farmers on this is the basic thing I wanted to share with you."

Commissioner Mitch Tiede said he thought there would only be about a week left in the burning program because it was to end on April 15.

Wedel said that was not totally correct, because it depends on the soil type. He said

See BAN, Page 9