

Van Gogh to go up Monday



The public is invited to a breakfast event to celebrate the end of the giant Van Gogh repair and repainting project from 7 to 10 a.m. Monday at the painting site.

Artist Cameron Cross, who is putting the finishing touches on the painting now, will be signing posters from 7 to 10 a.m. Breakfast will begin at 7 a.m. and the painting itself will be hoisted back onto the easel at 8 a.m.



Nine candidates spoke at the forum on Tuesday. Pictured are Republican Chairperson Jeanie Schields (from left), Lowell Coon, Paul Flanders, Ralph Ostmeyer, Kevin Butts, Rick Billinger, Ken Klemm, John Miller, Burton Pianaalto and Ward Cassidy. Photo by Kevin Bottrell/The Goodland Star-News

Candidates square off at forum

County hopefuls tout business and management experience

By Kevin Bottrell

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Sherman County Republicans and other members of the public got a taste of the sometimes heated races in the upcoming Primary Election at a candidate forum Tuesday night at Northwest Kansas Technical College.

Nine candidates for State Senate, State House, Sheriff and District 2 County Commissioner came to the forum. Sherman County Republican Chairperson Jeanie Schields allowed each candidate to make a three-minute introduction, then asked each set of candidates one or two questions, allowing a 1 minute response.

After the state Legislature candidates spoke, the candidates for Sherman County Sheriff went next.

Current Sheriff Kevin Butts had been undersheriff for four years before being elected sheriff four years ago. He said his top priority has been drugs, and to help combat

that he created a county drug task force, and provided drug training for the deputies.

Butts said he has also been able to keep the department's budget low.

"I've turned back nearly \$600,000 to the county," he said. "That's taxpayer dollars I did not spend."

One of the programs that has helped keep the budget down is the commissary fund, which allows the prisoners in the county jail to exchange for things like soda. Butts said he also instituted an impound fee, which also goes into the commissary fund. Some of those funds are then put back into the community for sponsorships of boy scouts and a kids softball team.

Butts said the election is like any other, and

See COUNTY, Page 5

State office-seekers set budget and education as top priorities

By Kevin Bottrell

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Four Republican primary candidates for the Kansas Senate and House of Representatives faced off against each other at Tuesday's candidate forum.

These included the Senate candidates for the 40th District, John Miller and Ralph Ostmeyer, and the House candidates for the 121st District, Rick Billinger and Ward Cassidy. The event, organized by the Sherman County Republican Committee, also included candidates for sheriff and county commissioner. About 50 members of the public attended.

John Miller, a 16-year Norton County Commissioner, was the first Senate candidate to speak.

The Legislature needs to change, he said.

People are paying too much in property taxes, while a lot of blame was handed out and money was spent on the failed redistricting process.

Miller said he would rather communicate than blame. He said that because the various Norton County groups have communicated well, the county has been steadily improving.

"We are going to have to make some sacrifices in the Legislature," he said.

Incumbent Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer spoke next. Ostmeyer has served two terms in the Senate, and before that served two terms in the House of Representatives. Before that he was a school board member, a county commissioner and a KSHSAA official.

Ostmeyer said he chaired the Senate Natural Resources Committee during this years session, a committee which had some

See STATE, Page 5

weather report

90°

10:30 a.m. Thursday



Today

Sunset, 9:09 p.m.

Saturday

Sunrise, 5:38 a.m.

Sunset, 9:09 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 77 degrees
- Humidity 29 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds east 5 mph
- Barometer 30.16 inches and rising
- Record High today 109° (2005)
- Record Low today 50° (1897)

Last 24 Hours*

- High Wednesday 100°
- Low Wednesday 61°
- Precipitation none
- This month 1.22
- Year to date 6.63
- Below normal 5.10 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Sunny and hot with a high near 103, winds out of the south at 5 to 15 mph and a low around 67. Saturday: Sunny and hot with a high near 102, winds out of the south at 5 to 15 mph and a low around 72.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: Sunny and hot with a high near 101 and a low around 73. Monday: Sunny and hot with a high near 101 and a low around 72. Tuesday: Sunny and hot with a high near 101 and a low around 71. Wednesday: A high near 96 and a 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms.

(National Weather Service)

local markets

10:30 a.m.

- Wheat — \$8.51 bushel
- Posted county price — \$8.09
- Corn — \$8.10 bushel
- Posted county price — \$7.44
- Milo — \$7.65 bushel
- Soybeans — \$16.08 bushel
- Posted county price — \$15.42
- Millet — \$14 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$24.20 cwt.
- Confection — no bid
- Pinto beans — \$28
- (Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)



Hot day for fighting fires



Tuesday was a hot day for fighting a fire. With temperatures at 100 degrees in the afternoon, the department responded to a small fire at Motel 7. Goodland firefighters cut a hole in the roof of one of the structures at the motel to provide some ventilation for others fighting a fire inside the building. Photo by Kevin Bottrell/The Goodland Star-News

Tornado spotted north of Brewster

Updraft from a passing storm spawned a landspout tornado about 12 miles northwest of Brewster on Tuesday.

Dave Floyd, warning coordination meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said an off-duty service employee spotted the tornado, and staff at the Goodland office were also able to see it.

The tornado was only on the ground briefly in an open field and it did not move very far. Floyd said it had been classified as an EF0, the lowest classification for tornadoes.

Landspout tornadoes generally form along convergence boundaries and are stretched upwards by thunderstorm updrafts. While they are usually weaker than supercell tornadoes, Floyd said they can get as strong as EF3. Even at an EF0, a landspout can cause damage.

Commissioners declare County Rd. 11 'minimum maintenance'

By Kevin Bottrell

[The Goodland Star-News](http://www.thegoodlandstarnews.com)

After deliberation and conversations with state officials, the Sherman County Commissioners have decided to label County Road 11 as a "minimum maintenance" road, and halt all repair work.

The road is being used by semi-tractor rigs hauling gravel from a quarry to the I-70 construction project. The heavy truck traffic is damaging the road. Commissioner Cynthia Strnad said she had driven the road Tuesday morning, and while the southbound side looks all right, the northbound side shows heavy

damage, even after county road crews have worked on it.

Under the contract, the county gets paid 2 cents per ton per mile for quarry road maintenance.

Commissioner Larry Enfield said he's had several conversations with Department of Transportation Officials, and has given Rep. Rick Billinger a tour of the road. Enfield said he told the state that the road is not a dedicated quarry road, but rather a regular county road, something he said they were unaware of.

Strnad suggested abandoning work on the road, since it was costing the county in wages

and wear and tear on the equipment.

"We can't afford \$12-15,000 a month," she said. "We should pull our guys off."

Enfield said the corn harvest is likely to be early this year, and grain trucks will be needing that road and causing even more damage and make for more work for the road crew.

"It's not fair to the rest of the county," Enfield said. "All those other roads are being neglected."

Enfield suggested marking the road as minimum maintenance and posting signs to that effect. The commissioners said they would review the situation on Tuesday.

In other business, commissioners:

- Awarded a contract to Yost Farm Supply for a tractor for the landfill. The Yost bid was for \$84,000 on a 2008 tractor with about 1,500 hours. The county is trading in a backhoe and another smaller tractor. The difference will be \$39,000. John Deere and Ag Power also placed bids. Even though the Yost tractor had less horsepower than the other bids, the commissioners accepted that bid because the price was lower, the tractor had fewer hours and is newer.

See ROAD, Page 5