


weather report



51°
10 a.m.
Thursday

Today
• Sunset, 4:31 p.m.
Saturday
• Sunrise, 6:33 a.m.
• Sunset, 4:30 p.m.

Midday Conditions
• Soil temperature 42 degrees
• Humidity 40 percent
• Sky partly sunny
• Winds north 15 mph
• Barometer 30.35 inches and rising
• Record High today 80° (1941)
• Record Low today -3° (1955)

Last 24 Hours*
High Wednesday 61°
Low Wednesday 21°
Precipitation none
This month trace
Year to date 9.02
Below Normal 9.86 inches

The Topside Forecast
Today: Sunny with a high near 56, winds breezy out of the south at 10 to 35 mph and a low around 29.
Saturday: Sunny with a high near 61, winds out of the west at 5 to 10 mph and a low around 27.

Extended Forecast
Sunday: Sunny with a high near 59 and a low around 34. Monday: Sunny with a high near 62 and a low around 34. Tuesday: Sunny with a high near 63 and a low around 35.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

Sheriff makes two arrests in arson case

The Sherman County Sheriff's Department has made two arrests in a string of burglaries and arson that occurred last week.

Tyler Heskett, 21, and Charles McQueen, 23, have been arrested in connection with the case. Heskett was booked into the county jail last Friday on charges of arson, burglary, criminal damage to property, theft and felony theft. McQueen was booked Monday on charges of arson, burglary, criminal damage to property, felony theft and criminal possession of a firearm.

The first call came at 1 a.m. Nov. 7 from a motorist on I-70 reporting a fire at Edson. The fire department responded and found the house, on the east side of the town, fully engulfed in flames. The roof partially collapsed while firefighters were putting out the fire.

Sheriff Kevin Butts said evidence at the scene indicated the fire may have been set deliberately and items had been taken prior to the fire being set. Fire Chief Brian James requested assistance from the State Fire Marshal's office, who helped investigate the fire.

Later that day, Butts said, two more residential burglary reports came in. In total, three properties were burglarized, with two sustaining a substantial amount of damage.

"I knew I needed to act fast before any more damage or thefts accrued," he said. "I called in all my available staff and assigned them duties. A bolo was sent out to surrounding counties, indicating what we were working on."

The bolo - short for "be on the lookout" - paid off. Butts said the following night during a routine traffic stop, a Thomas County Sheriff's deputy recovered a handgun that had been taken in one of the burglaries.

"We worked around the clock gathering evidence and conducting interviews until we had sufficient evidence to obtain arrest and search warrants," he said.

Through the investigation, he said, the sheriff's department was also able to clear a gun theft that had occurred in Thomas County earlier this year.

Man hit by car in critical condition

A Goodland man is in critical condition after being hit by a car on Friday.

Taylor Finley was hit by a car while walking at 13th Street and Kansas Avenue at 6:15 p.m. Friday. Police Chief Cliff Couch said the driver was traveling in a straight line at or under the speed limit when Finley walked into the street and was hit.

Finley was taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center and later flown to Denver. He suffered mul-

tiples injuries including a fractured skull. According to the family, his condition may be improving and doctors may be able to start backing off the sedation a little more after Thanksgiving. However, the doctors are saying they cannot tell the extent of any brain damage until he can be completely woken up.

Couch said the police are investigating the accident, but it was mostly a formality and he doesn't anticipate any charges being filed.



The color guard walked by the Goodland High School X-Pressos choir, who performed the national anthem at the Veterans Day ceremony on Monday. Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Goodland honors its veterans

By Pat Schiefen
pjschiefen@nwkansan.com

Local veterans were saluted in a ceremony on Monday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall.

Dr. Ed Mills was the main speaker. He talked of the pride he and his school had for veterans and their efforts and sacrifices for the country. Northwest Tech is a military-friendly school, he said. Mills spoke to the almost 100 people through a computer presentation as he had a meeting to attend. Master of Ceremony Curtis Duncan said it was very appropriate that Dr. Mills used technology to give his speech as he was the head of the Northwest Kansas Technical College, which has been working to incorporate more technology into every level of its curriculum.


Jim Ross gave a scripture reading of the Soldier's

Psalm, the 91st Psalm. He talked of the service the military services did. He said there were five armed branches of service including the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard and two unarmed branches including the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The Goodland High School X-Pressos sang "The Star Spangled Banner" and another song for the occasion. They were directed by Emily Blankenship, Goodland High School vocal instructor.


The colors were placed and retired by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Color Guard. Dennis Musil and Ken Baum represented the American Legion. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander Marvin Cullens welcomed the group. JoAnn Wahrman represented the Auxiliary.

local markets




10 a.m.
Wheat — \$8.33 bushel
Posted county price — \$8.39
Corn — \$7.24 bushel
Posted county price — \$7.28
Milo — \$6.87 bushel
Soybeans — \$13.21 bushel
Posted county price — \$13.78
Millet — \$14 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$25 cwt.
Confection — no bid
Pinto beans — \$28
(Markets by Scoular 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



Junior high plays at home

The Grant Junior High School wrestling team played against Colby, Oakley and Scott City in a home quad match on Monday.
See Page 10

School district discusses facilities

By Pat Schiefen
pjschiefen@nwkansan.com

The Goodland School Board had another round of public meetings this week to present its latest thoughts on where they were going with school buildings.

Goodland School Board President Gary Slough welcomed the

crowd of around 40 people at the Goodland High School Auditorium at noon on Wednesday. The other two meetings were Monday night and this morning.

Superintendent Bill Biermann then took over the meeting. He said he and the board had not really wanted to approach the remodeling issue with a school bond but that maintenance issues and future planning kept leading back to remodeling and where to get the money to do that.

The district does not foresee a time when state funding for education will increase, said Biermann. That means fewer dollars to educate our kids with. That means the district needs to run as efficiently as possible. For Goodland to be more efficient that means operating with fewer buildings.

The current thought of the district is to go to three buildings, pre kin-

dergarten through second at West Elementary, third through sixth at North Elementary and seventh through 12th at Goodland High School, he said.

In earlier meetings the public was concerned about taking care of what facilities the district already has, keeping the cost down and what it would do to taxes for any project.

The last school bond issue voted down in April 2010 was for \$14.9 million to renovate North Elementary into a pre kindergarten to sixth. The only thing addressed at the high school for seventh through 12 would have been heating and air conditioning. That bond would have raised the mill levy by 12.6.

The current board has been looking at a couple of options. A bond for \$16.3 million would renovate West, North and the high school or

See DISTRICT, Page 5



The Goodland High School A Team performed their skit at the state Ecomeet on Nov. 1. Pictured are Carly McCracken (from left) Cheyenne Stegeman, Josh Whisnant and Amber Smith.

High schoolers do well at Ecomeet

By Kevin Bottrell
kbottrell@nwkansan.com

Goodland High School took two teams of students to the state Ecomeet competition on Nov. 1, scoring fifth and 23rd out of 26 teams.

The Goodland A Team - Carly McCracken, Josh Whisnant, Amber Smith and Cheyenne Stegeman - placed fifth while the B Team - Alicia Benevides, Madison Mayer, Raquel Tomsic and Sabre Yarbrough - placed 23rd. Cheyenne Prevatt also qualified as an individual in the test event.

The Ecomeet competition, which is run by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, was held at Camp Wood near Salina.

"The kids had a really good time," said coach Brian Coon. "All of the students want to do it again next year."

The team members are drawn from current and past students in Coon's Biology II class at the high school. In all, 12 students participated, making up

three teams, two of which qualified for state at the regional meet in September. Goodland was the only school from western Kansas to qualify.

McCracken, a senior, has been to the state competition three times.

"It's always going to be one of my favorite activities," she said.

Stegeman, a junior, said she has always liked biology and that the Ecomeet is also one of her favorite things all year.

There are four parts to the competition: two multiple-choice tests, a scavenger hunt and a skit.

For the tests, this year's topics were ornithology - the study of birds - and short-grass prairie. McCracken and Stegeman said they did well on the ornithology test, but described the prairie test as "awful." That test included both plant and animal species, and often had obscure questions such as guessing a

See ECOMET, Page 5

Suspect pleads not guilty in Brewster car accident

By Sam Dieter
sdieter@nwkansan.com

A vehicular manslaughter case stemming from an incident in Brewster earlier this year moved a step closer to trial on Tuesday.

James House of Brewster pleaded not guilty at his arraignment in Thomas County District Court in the death of Val Gallentine, Goodland. Judge Glenn Schiffrer presided over the hearing.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that a car driven by House struck Gallentine as it was pulling out of a parking stall near Main Street and Kansas Avenue in Brewster the night of Saturday, March 10. Gallentine was taken to Citizens Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead.

House was arrested for involuntary manslaughter, driving under the influence and endangering a child under the age of 14 on June 25. He had a preliminary hearing on Oct. 15. Officials would not comment on where the child endangerment

charge came from.

"Sometimes crimes are reported and take place, and it takes some time to assemble the case," County Attorney Kevin Berens said, "especially if it's a charge like involuntary manslaughter."

A four-day trial is scheduled to start April 29, Berens said. The charge of manslaughter carries a mandatory prison sentence of between three years and two months, and 14 years and three months. The charge of drunk driving carries a fine between \$750 and \$1,000 and the child endangerment charge comes with a fine of up to \$2,500 and one year in jail.

The prison term for the manslaughter charge, Berens said, could be changed with a departure motion or other motions from the defense attorney.

"There's all kinds of motions that could be filed to get that changed," he said. "It all depends on the reasons that they're presenting and what the judge determines."

