

weather  
report

48°

noon  
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 5:47 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 6:05 a.m.

• Sunset, 5:48 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 44 degrees
- Humidity 37 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds light and variable
- Barometer 29.04 inches and falling
- Record High today 87° (1989)
- Record Low today -20° (1948)

Last 24 Hours\*

High Wednesday 46°  
Low Thursday 29°  
Precipitation trace  
This month trace  
Year to date .58

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, high around 53, breezy with a low near 27.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Mostly cloudy, high near 55 and a low near 26. Sunday: Partly cloudy, high near 52 with a low of 24. Monday: Partly cloudy, with a high near 40 and a low of 22. Tuesday: Partly cloudy with a high around 42.

(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local  
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.08 bushel  
Posted county price — \$5.08  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Corn — \$1.92 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.89  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 5¢  
Milo — \$1.55 bushel  
Soybeans — \$4.90 bushel  
Posted county price — \$5.08  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Millet — \$5.50 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$7.10 cwt.  
NuSun crop — \$8.10  
Confection — Call  
Pinto beans — \$17 (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



Wrestling  
area winners

Junior Brett Bahe (on top) won a 7-3 decision over Concordia's Dustin Dooley in the quarterfinals. Bahe won the state Class 4A title at 119 pounds. For other area wrestling winners see story on Page 11a.

# Power plant permit OK'd

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Smiles and some cheering could be heard Thursday morning in the offices of Goodland Energy Resources when they heard the air permit for the coal fired power plant had been signed.

"It is nice to know it has been signed," said Ron Pickman, head of Goodland Energy Resources, Thursday morning. "We are excited and pleased the Kansas Department of Health and Environment has signed the permit,"

Pickman said that as soon as they have the

original in hand they can begin moving forward.

"I think there are a lot of smiles around there with this news," he said. "This is good for us, and for the community."

Sharon Watson, communications director for the state Department of Health and Environment, called *The Goodland Star-News* Thursday morning with the good news.

"The air permit for the Goodland Energy Resources power plant has been approved," she said. "With this the company can begin construction, and the permit sets out the emis-

sion specifications the new plant will have to meet."

Dana Morris, professional environment engineer from the air permit division, said he completed review at the end of February of the results of the hearing held in Goodland on Feb. 8, and had forwarded the permit to the department head with his recommendation for approval.

Watson said the permit says construction of the power plant must be started within the next 18 months or Goodland Energy Resources would have to start the permit process again.

Pickman said they have been doing some site work, but with the permit approved they can begin the real work.

He said the first construction to be done will be the foundation for the turbine and boiler, and he expects to finalize the plans and approve a contract next week. He said the work on the foundation should begin within the month or the first of next month.

"People won't see much above ground until all the concrete is poured and cured," he

See PLANT, Page 7a

## County orders total burn ban

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The extreme dry conditions, and a few grass fires that have been reported, got the Sherman County Commissioners to order a total burn ban at their meeting Tuesday.

County Commissioner Mitch Tiede said he had talked to Rural Fire Chief Kenny Griffith, who agreed the dry conditions were bad and that a burn ban was a good idea.

"I think we ought to put a ban in effect until we get some moisture," Tiede said. "It is very dry and Cheyenne County has instituted a burn ban as well."

"It is not good when you have a burn ban in March," said Commissioner Chuck Thomas.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure agreed it was dry and that having a burn ban was a good idea.

Tiede made the motion to approve the burn ban and to make it a total countywide burn ban. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Rasure said the burn ban will be in effect for all of Sherman County

outside the Goodland city limits. The ban includes Kanorado and prohibits any open burning, burning of trash in trash barrels or any container of any type.

The commissioners said the ban will remain in effect until conditions improve.

Tiede said there was snow or rain in the forecast, but did not feel one storm would be enough to improve conditions.

"The conditions are so dry it will take several storms to get much improvement," he said.

Sheriff Kevin Butts asked the commissioners to be sure the burn ban included Kanorado so his deputies could enforce the order.

Rasure said that Kanorado was included because the county provides the fire protection for the city and surrounding area. He said Goodland was not included because it is illegal to burn in the city without a permit from the city fire chief.

The county had a burn ban in June of 2002 because of the drought, but that was lifted in August after sufficient rains improved the conditions.

## Co-op merger fails by close margin

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

After the votes were counted the proposed merger between Frontier Equity Exchange and St. Francis Equity was defeated by a narrow margin in St. Francis, but passed in Goodland.

The voting for Frontier Equity Exchange took place at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Tuesday night and the voting for St. Francis Equity

took place at the 4-H Building in St. Francis.

Stockholders in Goodland supported the merger. The merger needed 15 more yes votes to pass in St. Francis. For the merger to pass two-thirds of the stockholders present had to approve it.

The St. Francis Equity has run into financial woes stemming from

See MERGER, Page 7a

## Cowgirls tie the score



Sophomore Samantha Raymer (No. 30) scored a layup tying the game at 36 during the fourth quarter of Wednesday's state Class 4A quarterfinal game between Goodland and Andover Central. The Jaguars defeated the Cowgirls 48-45. See pages 10a and 12a for story and more photos.  
Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Sales tax open forum planned 7 p.m. Monday

Explaining the special sales tax election and answering questions about the road and street improvement plans are what city and county commissioners are planning for the special open forum to be held at 7 p.m. on Monday at Howard Johnson's Hotel.

The special sales tax election will be held on Tuesday, March 28, and voting will be at the Veteran of Foreign Wars hall, 824 Main.

The open forum is being planned by the 2004 Leadership Sherman County class, and plans are to have maps to hand out, and there will be a special computer presentation created with the help of Police Chief Ray Smee.

City Commissioner Josh Dechant asked Smee to show the program at Monday's commission meeting, and Smee showed the same program to the Sherman County Commissioners Tuesday morning.

Dechant said the presentation will be available for showing at other places where people might be interested in hearing about the road improvement plans.

"We want to hear from those who are against this," Dechant said. "We need to start rebuilding our infrastructure somewhere and the streets seem to be a good place to start."

City Commissioner Annette Fairbanks said it looked like a pretty good program, and felt this was a

good way to work with the county to improve things for everyone.

City Manager Wayne Hill said this is a pleasant situation, and good to see the city and county working for the same cause. He said in his experience the city and county where he had worked did not always get along.

Dechant said if the sales tax is approved by the citizens it can be in effect by July.

At the county commission meeting Tuesday Rasure said he was contacting the Senior Center and possibly Wheat Ride Acres to see if the presentation could be shown there. He said he is willing to speak to anyone who will listen.

## Spring colors



An oil painting called "Iris Medley" by Bobbi Kerth of WaKeeney is on display at the Carnegie Arts Center. It is not for sale, as her family cannot bear to part with it, but most of Kerth's work on display is for sale, including prints of the Santa paintings she is known for. A photo of one of the Santas is on page 5a.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News