

The Goodland Daily News

TUESDAY

**January 2
2001**

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Eight Pages

Goodland, Kansas 67735

50¢

**weather
report**

39°
at noon



Today

• Sunset, 4:35 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 7:07 a.m.
• Sunset, 4:36 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 28 degrees
- Humidity 64 percent
- Sky sunny
- Winds northwest 18 mph
- Barometer 30.43 inches and falling
- Record High 68° (1935)
- Record Low -12° (1948)

Last 24 Hours*

High 28°
Low 1°
Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy, low 20-25, west winds 10 mph. Tomorrow: Partly sunny, high mid 50s, low mid 20s, northwest winds 15-25 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: dry, high 55-65, low 20s. Friday: dry, high mid 40s-50, low 20s. Saturday: dry, high 40s, low 20s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local
markets**

Noon

Wheat — \$2.88 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.77
Loan deficiency payment — 0¢
Corn — \$2.01 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.00
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Milo — \$3.34 hundredweight
Soybeans — \$4.50 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.39
Loan deficiency payment — 51¢
Millet — \$8.75 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$5.85 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — \$3.90
Confection current — \$15/\$7 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$15
(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon

A BUSY YEAR

Big painting, airline shutdown big stories of the past year

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

A year in the life of Sherman County covered lots of ups and downs, lots of ins and outs.

The big news of 2000 included a worldwide economic development project starting up, airline service shutting down, an incumbent senator staying in office after a hard-fought race and an incumbent county commissioner getting pushed out by a write-in candidate.

New buildings went up, older businesses shut down, a county official was taken down by a deadly disease, a hero saved a woman's life by pulling her out of a burning car, the technical school was changing itself into a college and the county decided to hire an administrator.

With 255 newspapers printed for the year, *The Goodland Daily News* brought these and hundreds of other stories into thousands of homes in Sherman County and across the country.

After reviewing this year's papers, *The Daily News* staff voted on the top 10, looking for stories that had the biggest impact on our economy and residents.

We tried to focus on events that will have an impact now and for years to come, choosing articles that held the attention of people here and across the state. Some of the news is good, some of it is bad, but it all happened in Sherman County in the year 2000.

Starting with No. 1, then:

THE SUNFLOWER PROJECT

1 Cameron Cross, the Canadian painter who spent two months in Goodland creating a giant replica of a Vincent van Gogh painting, shouted "Hallelujah," when he heard in late September that his work visa had been granted.

After years of planning and months of wading through red tape, the former high school art teacher could start on the third in a series of seven reproductions of Van Gogh's sunflower paintings to be placed in cities around the world.

The agriculture building at the Sherman County Fairgrounds became the painter's workshop later in September. There the 37-year-old transformed four fiberglass-covered wood panels into the first painting in Van Gogh's sunflower series.

Boosters and state officials hope the 24-by-32-foot painting, to be displayed on an 80-foot steel easel near the Cherry Street/Business U.S. 24 junction, will draw 89,000 tourists to



Cameron Cross, a Canadian artist, spent two months in Goodland last year painting a giant replica of the first in Vincent van Gogh's sunflower series. Boosters hope the attraction, which will go on an 80-foot easel near Cherry Street and Business U.S. 24, will attract 89,000 people to Goodland a year. The story is No. 1 in *The Goodland Daily News*' top 10 picks of the year.

Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Goodland each year.

City officials see it as part of a new entryway to Goodland, including a pond, a new road and walking trails.

Cross said two other paintings in the world-famous Dutch artist's series now tower above small towns in Canada and Australia. The tourist attractions, he said, serve to recognize the huge impact the sunflower industry has on the rural towns' economies.

Members of Sunflowers USA, a

group that raised money to bring the painting to this Sunflower Capital, plan to have the replica erected sometime this year. As for Cross, he said he's looking to complete the series in bigger cities in Japan, South Africa, the Netherlands and Argentina that have ties to Van Gogh or the sunflower industry.

SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

2 The Kansas Board of Regents put the Northwest Kansas Tech-

nical School one step closer to becoming a college when it met on the school's campus in mid-September.

The nine-member board approved a recommendation to grant the school college status.

If state lawmakers approve in 2001, the school will be able to award two-year associate degrees along with certificates for completing various tech-

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County narrows its search

Finalists to visit, tour on Wednesday

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

The Sherman County commissioners will spend Wednesday interviewing three finalists, including one Goodland man, for the new county administrator job.

The commissioners created the position in October, saying that county government is growing more complex and harder for part-time commissioners to manage. Randy Allen of the Kansas Association of Counties in Topeka helped find and rank applicants and will be here to help with the interviews.

Chuck Frankenfeld, acting chairman, said the commission will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the courthouse for a long special session that will be held almost entirely behind closed doors.

The interviews will not be open to the public, he said, because they are considered a personnel matter — deemed confidential under the Kansas Open Meetings Act.

Frankenfeld said all three finalists have strong resumes, with two now filling administrative positions and one working as an editor for *The Goodland Daily News*.

Tom Betz, editorial editor for *The Daily*, said former commissioners' Kenny Davis, who resigned in November after losing the general election to a write-in candidate, and Gary Townsend, who died in August from leukemia, encouraged him to apply.

Betz has lived in Goodland for over three years, moving here from Lamar, Colo., where he was publisher of *The Lamar Daily News*. Betz, who has covered county commission meetings here for two years and county government for over 20 years, said he applied because he felt he could make positive contributions and was ready for the challenge.

Frankenfeld said David Chamberlin from Kansas City, Mo., will also interview, along with Roy Ridener from Wichita. He said the commission will release more information on the applicants as they near a decision. The commissioners hadn't set a hiring deadline, he said, but could make a decision this week.

Allen, executive director of the county association, said he helped the commissioners prepare interview questions and will attend the meeting to

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Pioneer Park completed in November

9 A project that began in 1998 finally produced a park with grass, trees, a hike-bike path and a gazebo to welcome people to Goodland.

Pioneer Park, adorning the entrance at Cherry Ave. and Business U.S. 24, started as a drainage and flood control project, but a citizens group felt it should be an attractive entrance to the city. The group proposed adding grass, trees, shrubs, sidewalks, a hike and bike trail, a gazebo and decorative lighting to beautify the area and named it Pioneer Park.

Seven years of designing, planning, raising money and trying to decide which features are most important and what the city could afford came to an end in October, when the park was completed.

Miller Construction was the low bidder on the project, at \$465,404, but the city didn't have that much to spend. The City of Goodland came up with \$10,000 in its budget to add to the pot, and the Rev. Gene Tromble led a group that raised another \$17,897.

The commission voted to accept Miller's bid and have City Manager Ron Pickman negotiate to trim the project to within the city's means.

The city got a \$210,000 grant from the state and had to contribute at least \$90,000. Tromble, along with others, had been raising money for several years, and the city had \$453,916 set aside. Adding the \$75,000 maximum engineering costs brought the total for the project to \$538,904 before negotiating.

The Goodland Kiwanis Club bought a gazebo for \$5,000 over two years ago and donated it, along with \$5,000 to put it up.

"The ugliness of the old wye was a mucky mess," Tromble said in February. "It will be replaced by beautiful Pioneer Park and will honor the people who founded the city of Goodland on the treeless prairie."

"Pioneer Park will be a green tree-lined park with a 10-foot side concrete hike-and-bike trail around the perimeter. There will be benches located along the trail where people may sit and relax under the cool shade of the trees. A pavilion or roofed shelter with tables and benches will be enjoyed by families and groups, who will be delighted to have a nice picnic area."