



# DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS-TIMES



*Getting back to our roots*



CHAPMAN. ENTERPRISE. HERINGTON . HOPE . AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

**Congratulations to all of the candidates for Herington High School's Homecoming Queen and King.**

**The winners were Queen Cheyenne Purkeypile and King Matthew Mann.**



Photos Courtesy of Nadiyya Sensmeier and Nichole Strauss.

### LA ISLA'S GRAND OPENING

There was a Grand Re-Opening on February 13th, for La Isla in Herington, KS. The staff, City members, CVB, and Community Members were all there to congratulate the owners on their new location and the remodel of the old hamburger spot. The ceremony hosted a ribbon cutting and food, that the owners graciously gave to everyone that attended.

If you have not had food from La Isla, you are missing out. My husband ordered the Carne Asada and the plate was stolen as soon as my teenager got a whiff of the food. I had a glass of Horchata, and believe me when I say it's my favorite drink of all time.

The decor in the restaurant is nothing less than immaculate. The tables were all hand painted in Mexico and brought up personally to be in this restaurant. The colors are beautiful and vibrant. Each scene is more poetic than the one before. This restaurant is bringing a slice of Mexico right to our community.

Delicious Food, Great environment, and Superb Staff, Try La Isla as soon as you can.



**Contact Information: Dickinson County News-Times  
dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com • Phone 785-524-4200**

**Closed: Monday - Tuesday for Delivery and Production  
Phone Hours: Wednesday - Friday 11 am - 3 pm**

# Worship Guide

## First Baptist Church

9 am - Connection Section  
Enjoy snacks, coffee & fellowship  
9:30 am - Sunday School  
For adults & kids of all ages  
10:30 am - Worship Service  
201 E. Hawley St.  
Herington, KS 67449  
785-258-3207  
www.fbcherington.org

## St. Michael Catholic Church

210 E. 6th St. • Chapman  
Sunday Mass 9 a.m.  
Fr. Peter O'Donnell  
Marita Campbell,  
Parish Life  
Coordinator  
785-922-6509  
smichael-chapman@sbcglobal.net  
www.smchapmanparish.org

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
2201 1000 Ave., Herington  
8:30 a.m. Worship  
(Alternating Sundays)

Our Redeemer Lutheran  
802 E. Trapp, Herington  
10:30 a.m. Worship

St. John's Lutheran Church  
2124 Highway 4, Herington  
8:30 a.m. Worship  
(Alternating Sundays)

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
114 N. Eighth St., Herington  
9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class  
11 a.m. Worship/Communion

Sutphen Mill Christian Church  
3117 Paint Rd., Chapman  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Call 785-524-4200  
to have your church added!

Alida Upland  
Cooperative Parish  
2243 3300 Ave., Junction City  
11 a.m. Worship Service

Enterprise Community Church  
210 W. South St., Enterprise  
9 a.m. Adult Sunday School  
10:15 a.m. Worship

First Baptist Church  
201 E. Hawley St., Herington  
9 a.m. Connection Section  
Coffee & Fellowship  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults and children  
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

First Christian Church  
15 S. First St., Herington  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

Grace Baptist Church  
117 E. Third St., Chapman  
9:45 a.m. Bible School  
10:45 a.m. Worship/Service



Rev. Connie D. Wooldridge  
Chapman United Methodist Church

## PASTOR'S CORNER

I just left Chapman Library's Story Time. I know you have read before how much story time blesses me and brings joy to my week. We sing a hello song at the beginning of each gathering. The question built into the song asks, "How are you today?" The children are then invited to point their thumbs up or down or toward the middle to indicate how they are feeling. Nearly every child, in nearly every session, quickly points up. Some may think about it for a moment and then point in another direction but only after pointing up. I always point up as well because it is one of my favorite weekly activities. We are all having a good day because we start with a smile and an uplifting tune. We read a couple of stories, sing some songs, move our bodies, and laugh. I always get a multitude of hugs around my knees and there is not much in life that is better than that. I believe in the power of stories and think we should read, tell, and listen to as many

## STORY TIME

as we can. Stories help us learn and grow. They allow us to see things in new ways. Stories move us - sometimes to tears and sometimes to raucous laughter. Stories require time; you can't learn someone else's story until you are willing to linger. I've heard much about the abundance of loneliness in our world. Researchers even say that it is a major health risk and compare it to smoking 15 or more cigarettes a day. I think that some of the stories we tell are better described as tall tales. We post some over-blown image of our hero persona through the best filters and hide behind them, afraid to reveal too much then we wonder why no one really knows us. I accidentally told a story once that revealed my brokenness and vulnerability and the most amazing thing happened. People in the room lit up, they recognized themselves in my story and then told me theirs. We laughed and cried together, and we formed a connection that impacted the community in which we lived. What is your story? Whose story impacted today? Want someone to hear your story? Come and see me at the church and we can share stories over a cup of coffee or a cool drink. I would love to get to know you.



## THIS DAY - IN - THE HERINGTON TIMES

125 years ago - 1901  
**SALOON SMASHING NOTHING NEW**  
- In raising up the history at Dickinson and other counties in Kansas, it has come to the surface that Carrie Nation was not by any means the first woman in Kansas to take the law into her hands and demolish things as she went. A brave little woman in the little city of Abilene some eighteen or twenty years ago went into Oscar Merrill's saloon with a club and proceeded to do up things in a grand old style. She dispatched mirrors, chandelier lamps, decanters, tables, glasses and everything within her reach as fast as she was able to reach them. The only thing that was left intact was the stove, the counter and half a dozen spittoons, and even they were scattered about from one end of the room to the other. So, Mrs. Nation didn't inaugurate this system of saloon smashing after all.  
100 years ago - 1926  
**CAUGHT TWO CAR THIEVES** - The Herington City Marshal was informed Monday that two young men driving a good Nash car, had appealed successfully to the proprietor of the Glenwood Hotel for a room free of charge in which to get a much-needed sleep. The Marshal roused the strangers from sleep and took them to jail for investigation. The car carried an Illinois tag. Telegrams to Chicago revealed that Mrs. Annie Cornelius gave the men permission to drive the car around the city a little and the car had been stolen last week. When confronted with the information, the men gave their names and confessed.

## ERNEST QUIGLEY TO TALK ON LOCAL BASEBALL TEAM

75 years ago - 1951  
**ERNEST QUIGLEY TO TALK ON LOCAL BASEBALL TEAM** - Ernie Quigley, well known sports broadcaster announced Tuesday evening that his period of broadcasting Thursday evening at 10:30 would be centered upon the local high school basketball team and their standing in the Cottonwood Valley League. He will also spend some time discussing the playing of Eugene Whisler, local star who has scored 284 points in the 15 games played this year.  
50 years ago - 1976  
**SUPERMARKET TO TAKE OVER BAKERY SALES** - Sandra's Bread and Pastry Shop, 6 South Broadway, will discontinue retail sale of baked goods and pastries next month. Owner-manager Gaius Masten said Monday his bakery will begin producing and supplying baked goods and pastries exclusively for resale through Stiles Thriftway Supermarket beginning March 8. Masten said the arrangement will permit expansion of Terry's Gifts and Office Supplies at the same location as the bakery. The two businesses have operated jointly in recent years. The baked goods and pastry department will be a new addition to the Stiles Thriftway store. Masten, who has been in business in Herington for 26 years, said he will continue to provide a cake decorating and catering service. Miss Emily Herpich, who has worked at Sandra's Bakery for the past 21 years, will be employed by Stiles Thriftway to manage the new bakery department.  
Herington Historical Society & Museum, 800 S. Broadway. Hours: 1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. - markcwil1963@gmail.com

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# Public Auction

## Simmons Towing & Auto Repair

will be host to a sealed bid abandoned vehicle public auction. All bids will be accepted until Monday, February 23rd, 2026, at 10 am where the following vehicle(s) will be sold to the highest bidder if said vehicle(s) are not claimed by owner on or before 2/20/2026.

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## VIEW FROM THE HILL- Scott Hill

Legislature Update Week 3

The Ed Sullivan show became an important part of history this week in 1964. The decision of the show managers to have a "radical" new band called The Beatles on their stage changed the course of music history in our country. Pop culture often has more of an impact on the direction of our country than legislative statutes. The decision made by the NFL that resulted in the half time show at the Super Bowl being sung in the Spanish language is an interesting cultural statement. We are not a bi-lingual country in spite of the fact that we have millions of people living in our country who are immigrants, both legal and illegal. There are those who would argue that the popular culture portrayed in media and the internet follows the values of society. I believe that we often see influencers who may or may not have widespread support trying to use their position to influence culture. My job as a senator is not to be swayed by influencers, but to listen to constituents and weigh their concerns in relationship to the foundational ideas of our republic.

Legislation that was approved by the Senate this week and my vote follows:

- SB299 Makes the process for nominating Supreme Court Justices more transparent. I voted aye and SB299 passed 38-0.
- SB327 Would change the meeting time of the Robert G. Bethell Joint Committee on Home and Community Based Services and KanCare Oversight to meet once in each quarter. I voted aye and SB327 passed 38-0.
- SB348 would exempt any electric public subsidiary of an electric cooperative from the control of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). I voted aye and SB348 passed 38-0.
- HB2331 is a bill that would enable coroners to dispose of, for internment, the remains of persons that relatives do not claim. It also establishes the requirements for using the term crematory. I voted aye and HB2331 passed 38-0.

These bills are typical of many of the pieces of legislation that comes before the senate. It is easy to become fixated on a few bills that are very controversial and forget that most of the work done in the Capitol is about making minor changes to law. These changes are usually prompted by adaptations to technology, or ways that business practices have changed. In some cases (not often enough in my opinion), we remove obsolete statutes. Many times, legislation is put in place to safeguard the public as a whole. Other times special interests get barriers in place that ensure a competitive advantage for the supporters of the legislation. It is my goal to be transparent, honest, and straightforward on all of the legislation that comes before us. Music groups change with the whims of the consumer. The Beatles went on to become one of the most iconic bands ever. Time will tell if the pop culture bands of today will survive. The fundamental values of a constitutional republic have clearly demonstrated their value in world governmental history and will hopefully be here for many years to come.

# LOCAL NEWS

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[chapval@chapmanvalleymanor.org](mailto:chapval@chapmanvalleymanor.org)  
[christyloy@chapmanvalleymanor.org](mailto:christyloy@chapmanvalleymanor.org)

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## SERVICES

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## Senior Center Menus

**Abilene Senior Center**  
 100 N Elm St. • Abilene • 785-263-7059

**Chapman Senior Center**  
 439 S Marshall • Chapman • 785-922-6958

**Solomon Senior/Friendship Center**  
 119 W 4th Ave • Solomon • 785-655-9435

**Friday, February 20:** Riblets OR Baked Fish, Potato Wedges, Broccoli, Pineapple Tidbits, Wheat Bread

**Monday, February 23:** Chicken Tenders, Hash Browns, Green Beans, Rosy Apple-sauce, Wheat Roll

**Tuesday, February 24:** Chicken Fried Steak, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Creamed Corn, Peaches, Wheat Roll

**Wednesday, February 25:** Chili & Crackers, Coleslaw, Blushing Pears, Cinnamon Roll

**Thursday, February 26:** Sloppy Joes On Bun, Potato Wedges, Chuckwagon Corn, Mandarin Oranges

**We request that you reserve your meals a day ahead so that we prepare enough food. Please call.**

**Hilltop Community Center**  
 2 South A St. • Herington • 785-258-2956

**Friday, February 20:** Bierocks, Potato Salad, Corn, Fruit Cupcakes

**Monday, February 23:** Chicken Tenders, Tater Tots, Cauliflower, Roll, Dessert

**Tuesday, February 24:** Pork Roast, Potato Salad, Vegetable, Fruit, Roll

**Wednesday, February 25:** Chili, Coleslaw, Crackers, Pears, Cinnamon Roll

**Thursday, February 26:** Swedish Meatballs Over Pasta, Tossed Salad, Roll, Fruit

**Call for Carry Outs and reservations! Monday-Friday Call before 10: a.m.**

## Classified

**For Sale**  
 Place your 25-word classified in the Kansas Press Association and 135 more newspapers for only \$300/week. Find employees, sell your home or your car. Call the Kansas Press Association @ 785-271-5304 today!

**Misc.**  
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**Misc**  
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**Misc**  
**AGING ROOF? NEW HOMEOWNER? STORM DAMAGE?** You need a local expert provider that proudly stands behind their work. Fast, free estimate. Financing available. Call 1-833-889-4107 Have zip code of property ready when calling!

**Hilltop Community Center Fun for Seniors**  
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 8 a.m. ~ Coffee is on! Monday - Friday  
 Every Monday ~ 1 p.m. Mexican Train Dominoes  
*Come Join This Fun Bunch!*  
 Everyday ~ 1 p.m. Cards  
 Puzzles and Games every day!  
 Thursday, Feb. 19: 9 to? ~ Foot Care!  
 Call 785-258-6028 for your appointments.  
 Wednesday, Feb. 25: 11:30 Trivia Day!  
 Friday, Feb. 27: Noon in House Potluck Dinner  
**For Meals on Wheels, Meals to go, or Dine-in Eating call: 785-258-2956**  
 Suggested Contribution:  
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## Classified

**Misc**  
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**Misc**  
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**Simmons Towing & Auto Repair**  
 will be host to a sealed bid abandoned vehicle public auction. All bids will be accepted until Monday, February 23rd, 2026, at 10 am where the following vehicle(s) will be sold to the highest bidder if said vehicle(s) are not claimed by owner on or before 2/20/2026.  
**2014 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY**  
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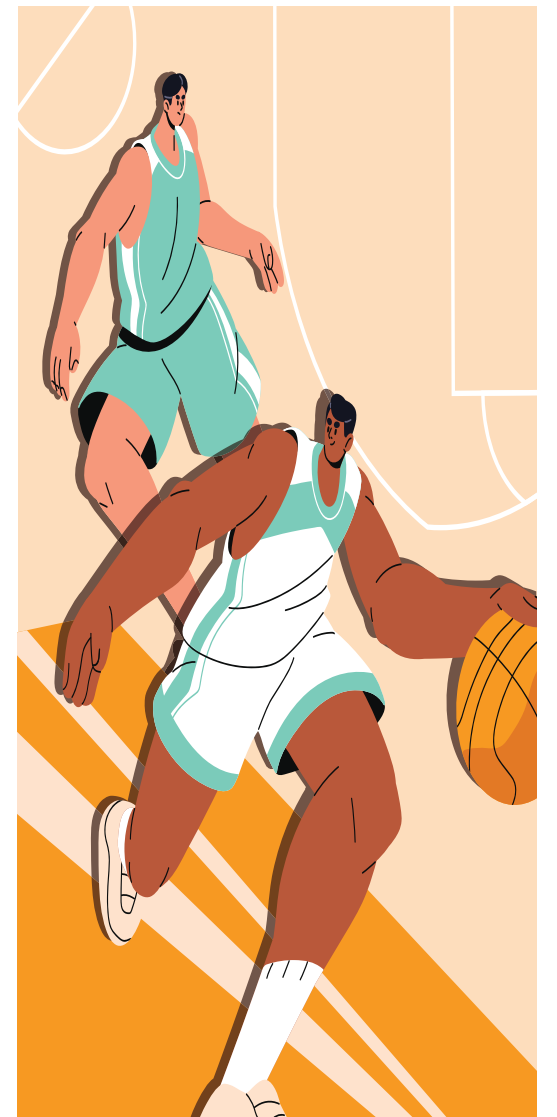
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**Herington VS Centre at Herington High School on Tuesday February 10th**

**Photos by Curtis Sensmeier (Herington High School Student Contributor)**



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Herington High School January Student of the Month is Pierce. Pierce is a junior at Herington High School who involves himself in football, basketball, baseball, FFA and FBLA. Pierce is the son of Beth and Darin. Pierce believes he was chosen because "I'm respectful to my peers and teachers, I get my assignments done, and I'm just a really nice person to my peers." Mr. Hirsch believes he was chosen as Student of the Month because "Pierce is always ready to go! In class, he joins in the discussions and works hard. He truly is a great kid in and out of school. We need more student's like Pierce!"

Congratulations, Pierce!

(Courtesy USD 487)

## SpiceUpYourLife-ChileVerde

Lindsey Young



Chile verde spends a lot of time simmering in a pot, but putting it together is really easy. With plenty of fresh pepper and onion flavors, it's a filling and excellent meal.

Give yourself the green light to make spicy chile verde. With the Chiefs out of the Super Bowl this year, it felt like there was a lot less pressure for Joey and I in hosting our annual party. But that also meant a lot of hemming and hawing from our friends and family about attending. It's tough to commit to a Sunday night when you don't really have a dog in the fight and Monday morning is looming. We ended up with a great crew of four guests to watch the game and, thanks to our smaller contingent, a fridge full of leftovers to enjoy throughout the week.

The recipe I made for the group comes from the blog "Kevin is Cooking." You can find the original recipe at <https://keviniscooking.com/pork-chile-verde/>. I added extra garlic in my version and added the optional potatoes.

**Chile Verde**  
**Ingredients**  
1.5 pounds boneless pork shoulder/pork butt  
1 tablespoon cumin  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1.5 pounds tomatillos  
6 Anaheim chile peppers  
2 jalapeno peppers  
2 serrano peppers  
1 large white onion  
8 to 10 cloves garlic, minced  
1 bunch fresh cilantro (around 2 cups, stems included)

**Directions**  
Prepare the pork shoulder by cutting it into one-inch cubes. Add them to a large bowl and season with The cumin, salt and pepper. Mix to coat the meat, and then set it aside. (I put mine in a covered container in the fridge over night.) Husk the tomatillos and slice the stems off the peppers and give them all a good rinse. Also cut the onion in half, and add the tomatillos, peppers

and onion to a large stockpot, covering them with water. Boil for about 8 minutes, and then remove them with a slotted spoon directly into a blender or food processor, along with the garlic and cilantro, blending until the mixture is smooth. Set the sauce aside. Heat the oil over medium heat in a large Dutch oven with a lid, and saute the pork cubes on all sides (do this in batches), just until each side has some nice color on it. Add all the pork back into the pot, along with all but one cup of the sauce, and stir to coat. Bring the mixture to a boil, and then reduce the heat to a simmer. Place the lid on the pot and cook for about three hours (stirring occasionally) or until the pork reaches an internal temperature of 180 to 190 degrees.

While the pork cooks, cube some Russet potatoes into one-inch pieces, and boil them until they are fork tender. Drain them and set them aside. When the pork is done, add in the potatoes and the rest of the sauce, and stir to combine. Add more salt and pepper, to taste. Serve with tortilla chips, with corn or flour tortillas or just in a bowl. This was really, really good. It's a bit spicy but not over the top. You could easily throw in a couple more Anaheim peppers and skip the jalapenos and serranos, if you wanted to make it extremely mild. We also threw a can of kidney beans in a few servings for leftovers, and that was great. In the past, I made tomatillo sauces by roasting my vegetables under the broiler or in my air fryer and then blending them, and you could absolutely do that with this recipe, too.

The next time we make chile verde, if I decide to boil the veggies, I'm going to plan on making another soup at the same time to use the leftover water, because it smelled absolutely amazing. And while I was bummed that we didn't get to see some of our friends and family who didn't get out on Sunday, at least I can drown my sorrows with some awesome food they didn't get a chance to enjoy. Spice Up Your Life is a weekly recipe column by Lindsey Young, who describes herself as an enthusiastic amateur cook and can be reached through her website at [spiceupkitchen.net](http://spiceupkitchen.net).

### Catholic Charities

St. Michael Catholic Church  
210 E 6th ST  
Chapman, KS 67431  
Every 4th Wednesday of the month  
9am-10am

St. John Catholic Church  
712 Broadway  
Herington, KS 67449  
Every 1st Wednesday of the month  
1pm-2pm

St. Andrew Catholic Church  
311 S Buckeye Ave  
Abilene, KS 67410  
Every 3rd Wednesday of the month

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church  
3599 N Field Rd  
Solomon, KS 67480  
Every 3rd Wednesday of the Month

Enterprise Community Church  
210 S High St.  
Enterprise, KS 67441  
Every 4th Wednesday of the Month  
10:30am till 11am

#### DRIVE THRU FOOD PICK UP

First UMC Manhattan  
1710 Avery Avenue  
Manhattan, KS 66503  
785-539-1748  
PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM  
HOURS  
Tue  
3rd of each month 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Westview Community Church  
615 Gillespie Drive  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
785-537-7173  
PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM  
HOURS  
Fri  
1st of each month 10am-11am

Ogden Community Center  
220 Willow Street  
Ogden, KS 66517  
785-564-0071 or 785-410-6672  
PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM  
HOURS  
Tue  
4th of each month 9:30am-10:30am

Highview Church  
402 Main Street  
Alta Vista, KS 66834  
620-767-2844  
PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM  
HOURS  
Tue  
4th of each month 11:30 AM 12:30 PM

## EVENTS

- 19 Feb, Thu**  
 2:45pm USD 487 MS Wrestling Group Pictures  
 4 – 9pm USD 487 JH Wrestling: Middle School  
 4:30 – 5:30pm USD 473 BB V/JV/C @ Wamego (Schedule Change)  
 4:30 – 5:30pm USD 473 MS BBB vs Abilene  
 6 – 7pm Post 12 American Legion-Herington
- 20 Feb, Fri**  
 All day USD 473 WR V Regionals @ TBA (Day 1/2)  
 2:15 – 2:45pm CHS Trap Team Meeting  
 4 – 5:30pm USD 487 Basketball: Varsity/JV Alma, KS  
 6:30 – 7:30pm VFW Bingo 101 E Main St
- 21 Feb, Sat**  
 All day USD 473 WR V Regionals @ TBA (Day 2/2)  
 All day National FFA Week (Day 1/8)  
 All day USD 487 Archery Oswego  
 All day USD 487 Boys Wrestling Regionals Southeast of Saline High School
- 23 Feb, Mon**  
 All day National FFA Week (Day 3/8)  
 9 – 10am Veterans Coffee The Pin Up Cafe  
 4 – 8pm JH Wrestling: Middle School  
 Herington High School Herington High School  
 4:30 – 5:30pm USD 473 MS BBB NCKL vs TBA  
 5 – 6pm CMS Site Council  
 6 – 8pm Youth Wrestling District Gym, Wrestling Room  
 6 – 7:30pm Youth BBall 4th-6th Coed (Stanley)
- 24 Feb, Tue**  
 All day National FFA Week (Day 4/8)  
 All day USD 487 JH Wrestling: Middle School  
 4 – 5:30pm USD 487 Basketball: Varsity/JV - Senior Night  
 4:30 – 5:30pm USD 473 BB V/JV/C @ Abilene
- 25 Feb, Wed**  
 All day  
 National FFA Week (Day 5/8)  
 All day USD 487 Scholastic Art @ Mark Arts View Show  
 8 – 11am USD 473 Free ACT JUNIORS  
 5 – 6pm CES ELA Night  
 6 – 8pm Youth Wrestling District Gym, Wrestling Room  
 6:30 – 7:30pm Driver's Ed Meeting (CMS Commons Area)

SEND YOUR EVENTS TO  
 DK.CO.NEWSTIMES@GMAIL.COM

Supreme Court announces case for March 10 special session in Abilene

TOPEKA—The Kansas Supreme Court announced the case it will hear in a special session Tuesday, March 10, in Abilene, the next destination in the court's ongoing outreach to familiarize Kansans with the court, its work, and the overall role of the Kansas judiciary. The court will be in session from 6:30 p.m. to about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 200 SE 4th St., Abilene. The public is invited to attend the special session to observe the court as it hears oral argument in one case. After oral argument, the justices will greet the public in an informal reception. "We invite the people of Abilene and surrounding communities to join us at the Eisenhower Presidential Library to hear this case," Chief Justice Eric Rosen said. "It's a great way to get to know our court, what we do, and how we do it. Plus, we want to meet you in the reception afterward." Case on docket The case on the March 10 docket is: Appeal No. 126,167: State of Kansas ex rel. Kansas Highway Patrol (appellee) v. \$381,620.00 and Bryce Robert Fuleki (appellant) Saline County: (Petition for Review) Kansas Highway Patrol trooper stopped Fuleki on Interstate 70. The stop led to a search of Fuleki's rental vehicle, during which the trooper confiscated \$381,620 in cash. Fuleki said the money was not his. At Kansas Highway Patrol headquarters, he continued to deny the money was his and eventually signed a property disclaimer form to that effect. Later, in a civil forfeiture proceeding, Fuleki filed a claim for the money. He also filed a motion to suppress all evidence from the traffic stop claiming it was unlawful. The district court decided Fuleki could not claim the seized money because he did not have standing after saying it was not his both verbally and in writing. The court did not consider whether the traffic stop was valid. On appeal, the Court of Appeals found that Fuleki was the only person who had a right to challenge the traffic stop and detention. Also, that it was an error when the district court did not first consider Fuleki's motion to suppress evidence before it decided Fuleki did not have standing to claim the money. The Court of Appeals reversed the decision and sent the case back with instructions for the district

court to examine whether law enforcement actions were legal before it considers whether Fuleki has standing to claim the money. The State appealed. The issue on review is whether the district court was correct when it determined Fuleki lacked standing to claim the seized money because he never said it was his. Case information online Briefs filed by the attorneys involved in this case are on the judicial branch website at [www.kscourts.gov/travel-docket](http://www.kscourts.gov/travel-docket). Briefs include details about the case and the issues before the Supreme Court. Attend the special session Anyone who wants to attend the special session in person should plan to arrive early to allow time to get through security screening. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Court security offers these guidelines to ease the screening process: Do not bring food or drink. Do not bring large bags, large purses, backpacks, computer cases, or briefcases. Small handbags are permitted. Do not bring knives, pepper spray, firearms, or weapons. Do not bring electronic devices such as laptop computers, handheld games, personal digital assistants, or tablets. If you must carry a cell phone, turn it off and store it out of sight while court is in session. Decorum during oral argument Audience members must not talk during oral argument because it interferes with the attorneys' remarks and questions asked by justices. Talking immediately outside the room where oral argument will take place is also discouraged. If someone arrives after proceedings start, or must leave the auditorium before it ends, they should be as quiet as possible entering and exiting the auditorium. Livestream The special session will be streamed live online at [www.YouTube.com/KansasSupremeCourt](http://www.YouTube.com/KansasSupremeCourt). Communities visited The Supreme Court has conducted special sessions outside its Topeka courtroom since 2011, when it marked the state's 150th anniversary by convening in the historic Supreme Court courtroom in the Kansas Statehouse. Since then, the court has conducted special sessions in Colby, Concordia, Dodge City, El Dorado, Emporia, Garden City, Great Bend, Greensburg, Hays, Hiawatha, Hutchinson, Kansas City, Lansing, Lawrence, Logan, Louisburg, Maize, Manhattan, Overland Park, Parsons, Pittsburg, Salina, Topeka, Wichita, and Winfield.



Herington HOSA had the opportunity to attend Cloud County Community College's cadaver lab, as well as tour their nursing department today. Students gained valuable insight into healthcare careers and hands-on medical education during this learning experience. Thank you to Cloud County Community College for hosting our students!  
 (Courtesy USD 487)

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NEWS

# INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST IN DICKINSON COUNTY

In January of 2026, the Dickinson County Sheriff's Office Drug Enforcement Unit began an investigation into the distribution of Methamphetamine in Enterprise, Kansas. The approximate month-long investigation, resulted in arrests and seizure of illicit narcotics.

On February 11, 2026, the Dickinson County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant in the 200 Block of South Garfield Street in Enterprise, Kansas. A search of the residence revealed Methamphetamine, Drug Paraphernalia, Cocaine, Marijuana, and other controlled substances.

Alexandria Houk, 37, of Enterprise, Kansas was arrested and booked into the Dickinson County Jail on the following requested charges:

- Possession of Fentanyl with the Intent to Distribute
- Possession of Methamphetamine with the Intent to Distribute
- Possession of Marijuana
- Possession of Cocaine with the Intent to Distribute
- Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia
- No Drug Tax Stamp

Alexandria Houk

Robert Quist, 57, of Enterprise, Kansas was arrested and booked into the Dickinson County Jail on the following requested charges:

- Possession of Methamphetamine
- Possession of Marijuana

-Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Robert Quist

Leon Houk, 41, of Enterprise, Kansas was arrested and booked into the Dickinson County Jail on the following requested charges:

- Possession of Fentanyl with the Intent to Distribute
- Possession of Methamphetamine with the Intent to Distribute
- Possession of Marijuana
- Possession of Cocaine with the Intent to Distribute
- Distribution of Drug Paraphernalia
- No Drug Tax Stamp

Leon Houk

Dorothea Bishop, 68, of Enterprise, Kansas was arrested and booked into the Dickinson County Jail on the following requested charges:

- Possession of Methamphetamine
- Possession of Marijuana
- Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Dorothea Bishop

All persons are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Anyone with information regarding the use/distribution of illegal drugs or any other crime can contact the Dickinson County Sheriff's office at 785-263-4081. Citizens can submit anonymous tips to Crime Stoppers of Dickinson County at 1-888-535-8477 or the Crime Stoppers online/mobile app via [www.p3tips.com](http://www.p3tips.com).

**Help is available  
Speak with someone today  
988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline  
Substance use support  
Languages: English, Spanish  
Hours: 24/7**



## Five Federally Indicted for Alleged \$220 Million Nationwide Cattle Fraud Scheme; One is Fugitive on FBI Wanted List

(News Release per U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Texas)

Five individuals were federally indicted this week for their roles in an alleged \$220 million nationwide fraud scheme involving purported cattle purchase contracts, announced United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas Ryan Raybould.

Those indicted by a Fort Worth federal grand jury on February 11, 2026, were:

Jed Wood of Fort Worth, Texas, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering involving wiring more than \$63,000 to a lender for "Home Payoff" Joshua Link of Strafford, Missouri, charged with ten counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and two counts of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property

Tia Link of Smithton, Missouri, charged with three counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering, including wiring more than \$527,000 to purchase real property Taylor Bang of Kildeer, North Dakota, charged with eight counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering

Royana Thomas of Arlington, Texas, charged with six counts of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire

fraud, and one count of money laundering

"Thousands of unwitting investors, ranchers, and others in the cattle industry nationwide were drawn in and victimized by the defendants' multi-million dollar scheme alleged in this indictment," said U.S. Attorney Ryan Raybould. "My office, in concert with our law enforcement partners, will hold these defendants accountable and pursue justice on behalf of the victims."

"The defendants allegedly used false promises to lure prospective clients into their scheme and then misappropriated client funds to enrich themselves. One individual, Joshua Robert Link, remains a fugitive. We are asking the public to contact the FBI if they have any information regarding Link's location," said FBI Dallas Special Agent in Charge R. Joseph Rothrock.

As alleged in the indictment, each of the defendants were associated with Agridime LLC, a business headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas that offered cattle sales and meat processing and retail services to the public. Jed Wood served as the Operations Director. Joshua Link served as the Executive Director. Tia Link served as the Marketing Director. Taylor Bang served as a cattle broker, and Royana Thomas served as the financial controller.

The indictment alleges that, from January 2021 through December 2023, the five defendants, acting through Agridime, perpetrated a fraud scheme in which they falsely represented to individual cattle purchasers, cattle ranchers, and feedlots that Agridime would use their funds to purchase specific individual cattle for each victim, raise the cattle, and eventually sell the meat from the same specific individual cattle for a profit. In reality, as the indictment charges, the defendants did not use victim funds as promised and instead used newer cattle purchaser funds to pay Agridime operating expenses, pay funds owed by Agridime to earlier cattle purchasers, pay personal expenses, and purchase real property.

As alleged, the defendants fraudulently collected more than \$220 million from over 2,200 individual victims located throughout the United States due to fraudulent misrepresentations the defendants made in public and private advertising statements.

If convicted, the defendants face up to twenty years in federal prison on each wire fraud count for which they were indicted as well as twenty years' imprisonment for the charged wire fraud conspiracy. Additionally, the defendants face up to ten years'

imprisonment for each money laundering count in which they are charged.

Tia Link and Taylor Bang appeared for arraignment before a United States Magistrate Judge in Fort Worth today. Both were released under pretrial supervision. Jed Wood and Royana Thomas are set to appear for arraignment in Fort Worth before a United States Magistrate Judge on February 25, 2026.

Joshua Robert Link remains a fugitive. The FBI requests that the public contact the FBI with any information regarding Link's location.

<https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/wcc/joshua-robert-link>

[fbi\\_wanted\\_-\\_fugitive\\_-\\_joshua\\_link.pdf](#)  
The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Fort Worth Resident Agency conducted the investigation, with assistance from the USDA-OIG. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark McDonald is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an allegation of criminal conduct. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.



Thank you to all who came to help. The scale of this fire required the help of our partners and their cooperation and efforts helped bring this event under control.

Junction City Fire Department was dispatched to a grass fire, on arrival the crew quickly realized the garage was fully involved and fire had extended through a breezeway into the attic of the home. All JCFD units responded along with mutual aid resources. The fire was brought under control and extensive overhaul operations were conducted to knock out spot fires and search for extension.

There were no serious injuries reported.

Again, thank you so much for the support we received from the the community and our partners. Our thought and prayers go out to the family affected by this fire.

(Courtesy of Junction City Fire Department)

## DO YOU WANT A GRADUATION/SPORTS PRINTED EDITION?

This is our first year bring Digital for the Graduation/Sports edition. With this being said, I have been given permission to design a Graduation/Sports printed edition. I am SUPER EXCITED to be able to showcase our kids in our communities. However, I am only able to print IF I raise enough money to cover the cost of printing. So here is what I am offering....

**2x2**  
**\$50**



**2x4**  
**\$75**

**1x2**  
**\$30**

**SIGNATURE**  
**\$20**

This is also available for parents to put thier dedications in for thier students.

In the event I cannot get enough people to buy a sponsorship, we will still do a digital edition and sponsorship prices will be 50% less. I am hoping we can raise enough money to give the kids the recognition they deserve and the family members a keepsake.

Contact us by April 29<sup>th</sup> to support the printed Graduation/Sports Edition  
Invoices will be Sent May 1<sup>st</sup> and Must be paid by May 15<sup>th</sup> to continue.

Contact us at [dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com](mailto:dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com) or call  
785-524-4200 Wed-Fri 11am to 3pm.

## A DEHYDRATED FISH

By: Van Yandell

### SELLING THE END OF TIME

Matthew 24: 36 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Unless one is living on a desert island and hasn't seen another human in many years, the obvious capitalizing of certain conditions and concepts is drowning us every day of our lives. Cancer is big business, body fat is big business. Sex, power, prestige, personal appearance and hygiene make many feel less than adequate in today's world; thus the selling of products. Videos, articles, books, movies and TV shows are profiting from "End of Time" scenarios. Many are pre-occupied with the fore-knowledge of how the world will end and what will become of us when it happens.

As the leading scripture indicates, only God knows when and exactly how the end will come.

Speculations have been made by the thousands and few, if any, of those coincide with scriptural teachings.

Jesus said in Matthew 24: 9 "then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

Old Testament writers indicate times of great distress that correspond to Jesus' statement. Zephaniah 1: 14-18, Joel 2: 1-2 and Daniel 9: 24-27 tell us of times that will be terrible to all mankind left on earth.

This time of tribulation has likely been considered in the present

many times in history. During wars, famines, epidemics, political coups and uprisings; millions have been killed, homes burned, rapes and torturing leading many to believe they were experiencing the tribulation.

The Biblical signs of the end times are ever present somewhere in the world and it is understandable why so many may have had such a thought.

There is a sequence of events that will take place. First, the return of Christ to take up His church (those true believer-followers of Him) 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

Second, the tribulation (in which thousands will die and the earth mostly destroyed) will take place for 3/12 years with a subsequent 3 1/2 years many call The Great Tribulation.

And thirdly, Christ's return at which time the prophesy in Philippians 2: 10-11 will be fulfilled. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Then Christ will establish His 1000 year millennial reign on earth. This listing is debatable and many have other opinions. Students of the Bible and those curious are encouraged to read the scriptures and determine their own thoughts.

Sources of similar information vary in these events. Whereas 1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17 indicate the Lord will "descend" from Heaven to take up the believers but will return with them to Heaven. This considered, He will return to the earth after

the tribulation.

Some listings of the events elaborate into more than the four I have stated. These are only an outline and a listing of the major occurrences.

Attempting not to sound convinced of any certainty of the order, scriptural references of those end time

events seem to be happening before us in our current existence.

The Apostle Paul wrote 2 Timothy over 1900 years ago. 2 Timothy 3: 1-5 "This know also, that in the

last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters,

proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers,

false accusers, incontinent (out of self-control), fierce, despisers of those that are good,

traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Does this description fit our world in this twenty-first century? It certainly does and one doesn't have

look very far to see it! Perhaps in the mirror would be a good place to start.

Paul's description of mankind in the above scripture is only a beginning of the scriptural prophesies; the world conditions and the human attitudes

and actions that will be manifested in the end. Is this dire warning

and description of future events something for us to dread and have great fear? For some "yes!"

For the believer-follower of Christ Jesus there is great anticipation. Romans 10: 9-10 "That

if thou shalt confess with thy mouth (say it,

mean it, believe it) the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The plan of salvation for individuals is a series of actions and understandings. First we must realize all

are sinners (Romans 3: 23). No human is exempt. We do things, think things and say things not in

accordance with the teachings of God in the Holy Bible.

We must confess the fact we are a sinner and in need of redemption (1 John 1: 9).

Thirdly is repentance: this is an intention and a vow to redirect our lives into accordance with God's teachings (Acts 3: 19 and John 3).

Belief in the Lord Jesus, crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected is absolutely essential and finally a prayer asking Him to come into our heart and lives and save our soul.

Anyone reading this can be saved; it's up to you. To believe is to be convinced something is real and true. Are you there yet?

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email is vmy3451@gmail.com

On February 9, sixteen students representing the Herington Band were selected to participate in the Flint Hills League Honor Band.

The Herington students rehearsed with other league schools' band students all afternoon then performed a concert that evening.

(Courtesy USD 487)



# Prairie Doc Perspective

“Spring into Seasonal Allergies”

By Jill Kruse, DO

The groundhog may have seen his shadow, but Spring will be here soon. While many of us look forward to warmer days and blooming flowers, those who suffer from seasonal allergies know that the return of grass, budding trees, and blooming flowers can lead to more sneezing than smiles. Welcome to the Spring allergy season.

If your seasonal allergies seem to be getting worse each year, it is not in your head. A Study from the National Academy of Sciences in 2021 found that over the last 30 years the North American pollen allergy season has increased by approximately 20 days. Pollen concentrations have also risen 21%. The Spring tree pollen season has been starting earlier and the Fall ragweed season has been ending later.

Seasonal allergies can develop at any time in one’s life. The most common risk factor for developing seasonal allergies is family history. If have

family members with allergies, you have an increased risk of developing them as well. Seasonal allergies are the sign of an overactive immune system that has mistakenly identified harmless substances, like pollen, as dangerous threats to the body. This triggers an inappropriate defense response that leads to the common symptoms of allergies like runny nose, congestion, watery eyes, itching, and sneezing. The immune system is trying to fight pollen like it would fight a cold. This is why it can be difficult to differentiate between allergies and illness.

There are a few ways to help decrease the risk of children developing allergies. Several studies have shown that children who visit a farm in their first year of their life or have furry pets have a lower risk of allergies. In that first year of life, the immune system is busy trying to figure out what things the body needs to defend against and what

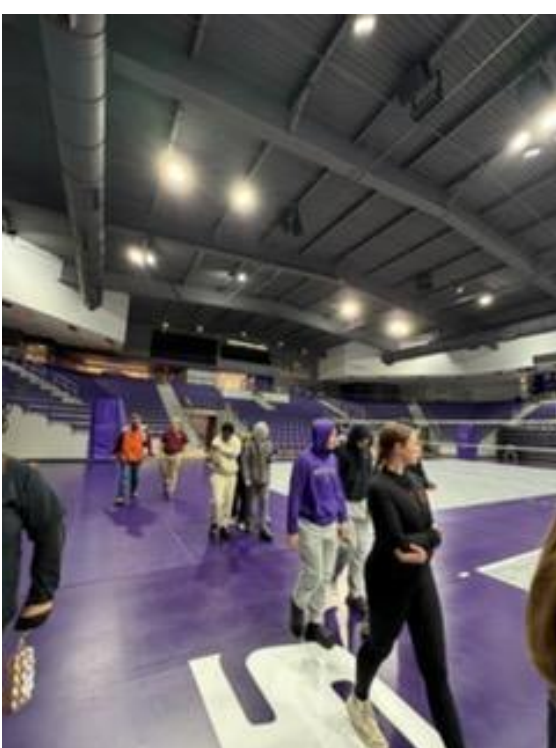
things are safe to ignore. The environment on the farm has so different allergens, that it allows the immune system to become tolerant of the harmless pollen and animal dander. However, once someone has allergies, and the immune system is sensitive to these substances, further exposure to allergens that are on a farm will not help. It will just make the allergy sufferer more miserable.

The first line over-the-counter treatment for seasonal allergies is intranasal corticosteroids such as Fluticasone (Flonase), Mometasone (Nasonex), and Budesonide (Rhinocort). These nasal sprays have been shown to be more effective than over-the-counter oral antihistamines such as Loratidine (Claritin), Fexofenadine (Allegra), and Cetirizine (Zyrtec). If the spray does not give adequate control, then adding an oral antihistamine can help.

If these medications

are not effective, then seeing an Allergist is the next step to enjoying everything that comes with April showers and May flowers. The groundhog says we have six more weeks to prepare for Spring. Regardless of when it comes, everyone can enjoy Spring if they understand seasonal allergies and how to treat them.

Dr. Jill Kruse is a hospitalist at the Brookings Health System in Brookings, SD. She serves as one of the Prairie Doc Volunteer Hosts during its 24th Season providing Health Education Based on Science, Built on Trust. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org), Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).



## HERINGTON VISITS K-STATE

8th grade students traveled to Kansas State University on Tuesday.

During the morning sessions, students visited the Sutherland Foundation Innovation Lab where they had the opportunity to design and print their own custom personalized tag, create a video using a Mad-Lib script and props, as well as visit the Immersion Lab where learning came to life all around them!

While on campus, students were also able to tour a couple of the athletic facilities--Morgan Family Arena and West Stadium Center.

(Courtesy USD 487)

**More clarity, and a way forward on "college" sports**

A few thoughts about the state of "college" athletics and the notion of taxpayer money supporting it.

First and foremost, the whole thing is a mess. As my long conversations with Gene Taylor (as published in the Mercury ([the last week of January]) show, it's the Wild West, where college kids are getting paid to play, and the amounts are entirely unregulated. That's neither sustainable nor fair, and the problem needs to be addressed yesterday. Not just for K-State - which is at a competitive disadvantage in this scenario, but for the entire industry. Without a level playing field, "college" sports are on a suicide mission.

A big part of the solution is already on hand, with a regulatory body and what amounts to a salary cap. All that has to happen is that colleges have to sign an agreement to bestow legal authority.

That's the first step, the key to everything. Mr. Taylor is advocating strongly for it, as he should. Tip of the cap to him for sharing all that background information - we learned more in

that interview than I have known for quite some time. And a salute to him for advocating for a solution.

K-State, KU and Wichita State this past week also began laying groundwork for some sort of request to the state government for money to pay for some part of all of this. Keep in mind that K-State does not put university money into athletics, and hasn't for many years. That makes it unusual nationwide, where many colleges subsidize their athletics operations.

Such a request faces a giant public-relations hurdle until the larger problem is solved. If the public can be certain that it's a level playing field, then the notion of underwriting athletics could become more palatable as an economic development initiative.

Even then, it would have to be carefully and narrowly crafted: Say, for instance, that they established a special taxing district such that only the growth in taxes was captured and funneled toward athletics. Then no government service would be negatively impacted. That could possibly pass muster. Something akin to the Chiefs deal, for shorthand. Or a tax on tickets, or a surcharge on television-rights packages, or...

something specifically targeted. Get the Kansas City Polsinelli lawyers on the job.

But nobody's going to want to pump any taxpayer money of any kind into a black hole where K-State and KU are competing against, say, LSU spending \$50 million on players. Where would the request end?

If the public can be certain that there are real enforceable limits, then there could be a reasonable debate. Otherwise it will be swamped by complaints: I don't want my tax money paying some entitled brat who ends up transferring to KU. Those greedy so-and-sos created this mess, and now they want my tax money to bail them out? Hell to the no. Yadda yadda yadda.

Which probably means any such request is going to have to wait a year or so. Because - to get back to the starting point - the big picture issues have to get fixed first. That should have happened months ago, at the very least.

Ned Seaton

Manhattan Mercury

Thank you to those who nominated us for 2025 Best Trade Business! We are very honored to receive this recognition. 4 of our guys were heading to a job and missed the picture. We are so proud of our KVK team! (Courtesy of KVK)



**CONGRATULATIONS TO CENTRE HIGH HOMECOMING KING JONAH SVITAK AND QUEEN ANNA GODINEZ-VINDUSKA**

(Photo Courtesy Olivia Carlson)

# City Manager now must ask approval to leave due to breach of contract

By: Brandy Sensmeier

The Ottawa City Commission is pleased to announce their unanimous selection of Thatcher Moddie to be the next City Manager. Today's announcement caps a months-long executive recruitment effort that initially produced a field of forty candidates from across the nation.

"We are thrilled to welcome Thatcher Moddie to the City of Ottawa," said Mayor Clayton. "Thatcher will be a great asset to the city for years to come; his professionalism, support for a strong local government, forward-looking community vision, and leadership expertise are well positioned to lead the City of Ottawa into its next chapter."

Moddie has served as City Manager for Herington, Kansas, for almost three years. During his time in Herington, Moddie created a Capital Improvement Plan outlining 10-year financial goals for proposed capital improvements; a comprehensive plan to outline community goals through 2044; and implemented a Rural Champion program to improve business outreach. His dedication to community development can be seen with the securing of millions in grants to expand the Flint Hills Trail to Herington, installation of runway lighting at Herington Regional Airport, and a new sidewalk network to USD 487 for safe routes to schools.

Prior to his time in Herington, Moddie spent five years with the City of Goddard, Kansas, most recently serving as Assistant City Administrator. In this position, he focused on community engagement and daily operations of city government overseeing many infrastructure projects.

Mr. Moddie received his Master of Public Administration from Wichita State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations from the University of Oklahoma. He currently serves on the Kansas Trails Board and Kansas Association of City/County Management Board.

"I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve the community as City Manager. I appreciate the City Commission and staff for trusting in me to help lead this organization. My family and I are excited to call Ottawa home. I look forward to engaging with citizens and working with staff and the governing body to move Ottawa forward," said Moddie.

Reporting directly to the City Commission, the City Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the City and assumes full responsibility for all activities and operations of City Government based on policies and priorities established by the Commission. Moddie is scheduled to begin work in March 2026.

(Courtesy of the City of Ottawa)



Wednesday, February 11th, was a shocking morning for most of us in Herington. We woke up to the news that our City Manager, Thatcher Moddie, had accepted a position in Ottawa. When I called up to the office on Wednesday morning to ask about some information, most of the individuals in the office had just heard the news also. However, the post from Ottawa had been released on Monday, February 9th, three days prior to the office in Herington being notified. Citizens are outraged, and are calling for commissioners to vote NO on the agenda numbers 4 and 5 on Tuesday's Meeting (Tonight February 17th). Many are taking to Facebook calling for fines to be attached to Moddie's dismissal due to breach of contract. Others are saying to refuse his resignation entirely, forcing him to stay. A few citizens in Herington support his move and growth onto bigger things in life. We will see what the Commissioners state tonight. Agenda item four is to approve the dismissal of Thatcher. Agenda item five is to Consider Waiving 60-day Notice Requirement from City Manager Contract. Final Working Day being March 18, 2026. City Manager will opt out of Payment of Accrued Time Reflected in the Personnel Policy and Vacate all Remaining Vacation Time. As of now, 91.5 hours of Vacation. In total, a minimum of \$4,000 will be relinquished to the City.

**About Thatcher Moddie:**  
Thatcher came into office as the City Manager in March of 2023. He was the former assistant city manager of Goddard, where he was making around \$87,000 a year. He had spent four years as an assistant city manager before stepping into the role of City Manager in Herington. He spent almost three years in Herington and his ending salary is above \$92,000. Ottawa is currently advertising the City Manager position at \$125,000, via their website. Some of the items that were accomplished while Thatcher was in office would be the trailhead finally getting finished, many of the dilapidated homes were demolished, and helped get the safe walk home grant for a walk path for our children. There are a few more items that he has also pushed for in the Herington community. The biggest and most talked about item that Herington has lost since Thatcher has been in office was the community hospital. We lost the hospital then bought the empty building which has been sitting vacant for awhile, loss of revenue and resources.

Herington's search for a new city manager has come to an end.  
(By Gail Parsons- Abilene Chronicle Reflector- 2023)

Herington City Commissioners approved a contract for Thatcher Moddie, former assistant city manager in Goddard, with an annual salary of \$87,500, at the end of their Tuesday, March 21 meeting. Moddie's official start date is April 10. Although this is Moddie's first city manager position, he is no stranger to city management. He started with the city management team in Goddard in 2018. "I worked under one of the more qualified city managers in Kansas," Moddie said. "I have gained enough experience over the past four years to navigate my way through anything. I am very involved in state and national city management organizations and I am very well connected across the state of Kansas." Former city manager Brandon Dross, who left Herington in December 2022 for the city administrator position in Lafayette, Oregon, is familiar with Moddie and said he has confidence in his ability to take on the position. "Thatcher is great," Dross said. "We have talked a few times a week since he applied and I think they made the right choice. Thatcher knows there are high expectations, he knows what the community expects of him." Dross is confident enough in Moddie to have reached out to him informing him about the position. "Full disclosure, I did kinda help put the job out there," Dross said. "I knew a lot of colleagues from Kansas and the region and I felt that some first timers and second timers would be great for Herington. When Thatcher left his employment with his previous position, I immediately thought of him." Moddie's drive and personality made him the best of the three candidates who were interviewed for the position, said Mayor Robbin Bell. "I think he is a good fit for Herington," Bell said. "He will be able to come in and take off where Brandon left off pretty easily." When they set out to fill the position, they were looking for someone with leadership skills, work ethic, people skills, and, "someone ambitious who wants to do a good job and move up somewhere," Bell said. "That's mostly what Herington is, (city managers) get established here and move up." Although Moddie has city management experience, being at the helm the first time may come with challenges but he is prepared for them, he said. "I have enough mentors in the industry who are always willing to lend a hand out to me, and I think with the support of governing bodies who have full faith in me, I am confident I can manage this position," he said. Dross said Moddie can count on him as someone to turn to for advice as well. "I will be there to help him any way I can," Dross said. "I will be around to give a hand as much as he needs me too." Also putting Moddie's mind at ease is that during the interview process he felt like the commissioners were going to be supportive and that Herington is a welcoming place. "From the outside looking in, I've been keeping track of some of the things going on in Herington for the past three or four years and I certainly think there is a lot of opportunity to keep moving the city forward," he said. "What excites me about Herington is the opportunity. There's been substantial growth in the past couple years. I think with a good school district and a supportive community, a lot of wonderful amenities for a city the size of Herington — an airport, two lakes, a hospital, electric utility, some of these things for a smaller community is pretty impressive." And, he said, he's heard nothing but good about the staff and the commission. "I am looking forward to working with him on the commission and I think he will do great things for Herington," Bell said.