



# DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS-TIMES



## Getting back to our roots



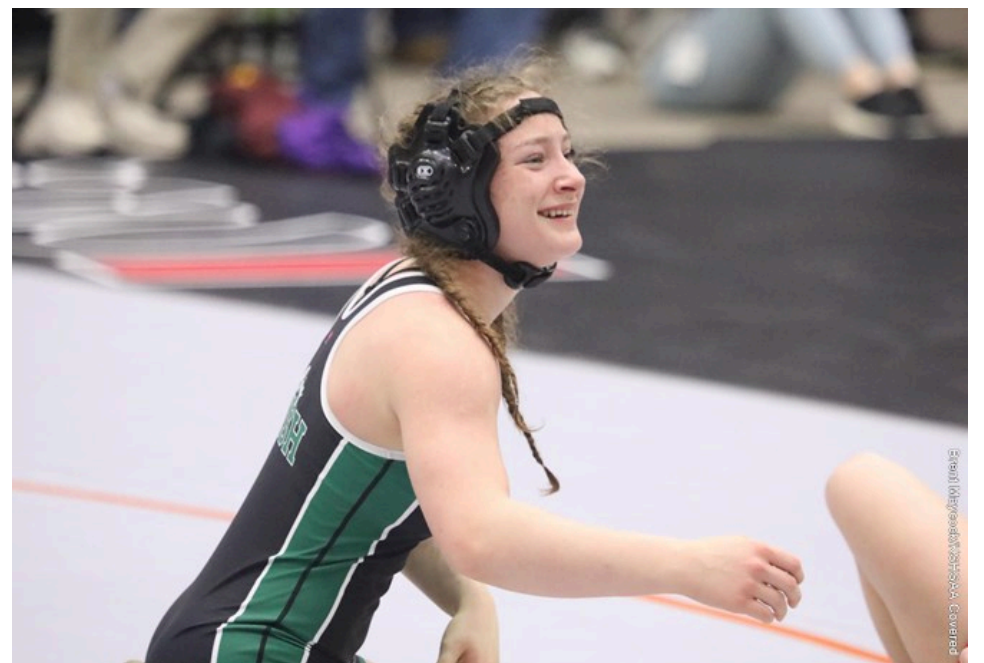
CHAPMAN. ENTERPRISE. HERINGTON . HOPE . AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



**HERINGTON WRESTLER AT STATE**  
Reid Griffiths placed 6th at state.  
(Courtesy Photo)



**CHAPMAN WRESTLERS AT STATE**  
Cambree Obermeyer is runner up at state in the 115 Category (Pictured above). Colton bell placed in 3rd in the 144 Category at state (Pictured to the left). Alyssa Calovich is state champ in the 125 Category (Photos below).  
(Courtesy Photos)



**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

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

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!



Rev. Connie D. Wooldridge  
Chapman United Methodist Church

## PASTOR'S CORNER

Are you like me? Do the commercials and jingles of yesterday stick in your mind even today. "I may be weird, but I make a great peanut butter sandwich." I don't even remember what kind of peanut butter was supposed to be so great. "Have it your way," "two all-beef patties, special sauce..." — are you able to complete those little jingles? I'm guessing some of you actually sang a bit as you read, I sang them as I typed. How many oft repeated little sayings, and jingles are floating around in our heads just waiting for the right trigger? I'm guessing we don't even know until they pop out of our mouths. This tells me there is something about rhythm, rhyme, and repetition that lodges information in our minds. I don't really need all these jingles floating around in my head just waiting for the perfect opportunity to reveal themselves. I wonder how much other junk is stuck in

## Thumper got it right

there just because of repetition. It seems to me we all have heads filled with a mix of useless information and important stuff. We also have heads filled with messages about our value and ability deposited by others and by the stories we tell ourselves. In our current context, we hear a lot of disparaging messages. They come through our televisions, radios, and via the internet. We shout them at one another. Sometimes it feels like we live in an echo chamber of hateful rhetoric. It is heartbreaking. My faith teaches me that everything and every person is valued and created with a purpose. Scripture reminds me that I am loved and I am created to love. This is true for all of us. How do we change the soundtrack or our world? I believe it is possible to change. We can choose the words we use carefully. We can call out the positive and suppress the negative. We can repeat loving words and messages often, to ourselves and to others. Perhaps Bambi's friend Thumper had a message we need to hear more often, "If you can't say somethin' nice, don't say nothin' at all."



## THIS DAY - IN - THE HERINGTON TIMES

125 years ago - 1901  
DRUG STORE OPENING - A good sized crowd was assembled at the new drug store of Ketchersid & Donmyer last Friday to enjoy the music furnished by the Hope Cornet

Band and to look over the elegant furniture and fixtures just arranged for their comfort and accommodation. Dr. Donmyer and wife, together with the clerks, extended to each and all a kind and hearty welcome and did all that was in their power to make their call a pleasant one. The music furnished by the Hope Band was first-class in every respect.

100 years ago - 1926

ROB COUNCIL GROVE BANK - Three unmasked bandits locked 11 persons in the vault of the Farmers & Drivers bank of Council Grove on Tuesday and made their getaway with about \$5,000. While one remained with the powerful Buick car on a side street, the others entered the bank in single file and commanded the bank president to "stick 'em up." When he was slow to comply, they pushed him and the rest of the employees and some customers into the vault. The clerk was commanded to open the safe and one of the bandits pulled a sack from his coat and scooped the cash into it and the men and the car sped away. An alarm was sent to the neighboring towns and possess were formed, but at last account, the desperados were still at large. One of the bandits appeared to be an eighteen-year-old boy, the other appeared much older. A posse of

## CHAPMAN SON TO HEAD SPACE SHUTTLE

Herington citizens drove to Burdick, Lincolnville, and Pilsen but did not locate the bandits. 75 years ago - 1951

RAISE APPROXIMATELY \$200 FOR SCOREBOARD - The Herington Lions Club netted approximately \$200 for the Football Time Clock and Scoreboard Fund from the proceeds of their Pancake Fry last Thursday at the Masonic Temple. Good attendance marked both noon and evening servings. This was the first of several activities which the Lions will promote during the spring and summer in order to raise sufficient funds to buy and install a new time clock and scoreboard at the high school athletic field. The Lions hope to have the scoreboard installed by the start of the 1951 football season.

50 years ago - 1976

CHAPMAN SON TO HEAD SPACE SHUTTLE - A former Chapman resident, Joe H. Engle, who was bumped off the Apollo 14 crew is one of the crewmen selected for the space shuttle approach and landing tests in 1977. Engle, a graduate of Chapman High School, was dumped from the Apollo 14 crew during a controversy in 1971. Engle had trained for months with the crew before being bumped, while Kansas Ronald E. Evans remained on the crew. Both graduated from KSU. Astronaut Fred Haise of the Apollo 13 moon mission that nearly ended in disaster will command the first free flight test of the space shuttle. The shuttle, a \$4.2 billion spacecraft resembling an airplane, is currently under construction.

Herington Historical Society & Museum, 800 S. Broadway. Hours: 1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. - markcwill1963@gmail.com

**KVK INC.**  
Heating & Air Conditioning

**Residential & Commercial**  
We Service & Warranty Parts For All Makes

**24-HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE**

**kvkinc.biz**  
Master Mech.  
Licensed  
Bonded  
Insured

Ask About Our Discount Club Membership

785-257-3224

# Gun & Ammo Show

## Herington Community Building

810 S. Broadway  
Herington, KS

**Saturday, March 7**  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Sunday, March 8**  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

ATM on Site  
Also Knives,  
Coins, Military surplus

**Info. Call Brett,  
785-366-0245**

## VIEW FROM THE HILL- Scott Hill

The American Dream

Most of our ancestors came to this country because of economic or religious freedom. A key component of that dream is the thought of property ownership. That ownership may consist of a house, land, or a business. Since the beginning of recorded history, governments have levied taxes against the value of property that individuals own. Other taxes like income and sales have arrived to supplement property tax. However, property taxes have not only survived, but seemed to have grown over time. Kansas now ranks as having the 14th highest property tax in the nation. The goal of owning a home is realized by about two thirds of the people who live in Kansas. That percentage is declining slightly every year. Part of the reason that home ownership is becoming more difficult is the rising property taxes associated with increasing valuations. Coupled with flat or increasing mill levies overall property taxes have increased faster than inflation. The two counties I represent have worked diligently to keep budgets down so that property taxes do not increase. This makes home ownership more affordable; however, it doesn't help enough to keep elderly homeowners on a fixed income from being overwhelmed by the portion of their retirement required to fulfill the tax burden levied against their long-term ownership. The legislature this week started working on

property tax initiatives designed to alleviate this perennial issue. Senate bill 402 combined several previous pieces of legislation into a program called the "Kansas Golden Years Homestead Property Tax Relief." This legislation would adjust the value of a senior citizen or disabled veteran's home appraisal that would be primarily exempt from property tax. Individuals who make less than 120% of the federal poverty level are eligible for this relief. The qualification amount will be adjusted every year for inflation. Once an individual meets the qualification, increases in their home's valuation will not disqualify them. Similarly, their residency will not be revoked because of long-term absence due to medical or emergency situations. Senate bill 402 passed the senate, I voted for it, and now it will be up to the House and the Governor to make it law. We have several proposals that will help the general population deal with the hardships put on them by property tax that makes realizing the American Dream more difficult. In the meantime, we need to address the issues that our most vulnerable citizens are faced with. For example, those who are unable to seek employment to compensate for tax increases struggle with their finances. The Kansas Golden Years Homestead Property Tax Relief Act should help those individuals maintain that dream through the remainder of their lives.

# International Women's Day

Celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women around the world!

**MARCH 8**

# BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY

Call 785-524-4200 or Email [dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com](mailto:dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com) to order your directory ad!

**FINANCIAL**

**First National**  
Investment Professionals

**DAN COOK**

1112 North Main  
Hope, KS  
785-366-7225  
Fax  
785-366-7333  
[dan.l.cook@ampf.com](mailto:dan.l.cook@ampf.com)

*"A Tradition of Caring Since 1970"*

**Chapman Valley Manor**  
A Non Profit Skilled Nursing Facility

**Administrator:**  
**Amanda Jeardoe**  
1009 Marshall • PO Box 219  
Chapman, KS 67431  
785-922-6525  
[chapval@chapmanvalleymanor.org](mailto:chapval@chapmanvalleymanor.org)  
[christyloy@chapmanvalleymanor.org](mailto:christyloy@chapmanvalleymanor.org)

**HVAC**

**KVK INC.**  
Heating & Air Conditioning

**Residential • Commercial**  
**24 HOUR SERVICE**  
Master Mechanical  
Licensed  
Bonded • Insured

785-257-3224  
[kvkinc.biz](mailto:kvkinc.biz) YORK

**Home comfort you can depend on**

You can count on Heil® Air Conditioning systems for high efficiency Air Conditioning and reliable performance, backed by outstanding warranties.

**Herington Heating, Air Conditioning, Plumbing & Appliances**  
110 E. Main, Herington  
785-258-3355  
Mon. - Fri.  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**INSURANCE**

**HARRIS CROP INSURANCE, LLC**

785-479-5593 or  
Toll Free 888-408-7487

A family-owned and operated crop insurance agency serving central Kansas since 1981.

1207 Hwy. 15, Abilene, Kansas 67410  
[www.harriscropinsurance.com](http://www.harriscropinsurance.com)  
This agency is an equal opportunity provider.

**STEVE CRICHTON** State Farm Insurance Agent

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Tues & Thurs  
9:30 am - 4 pm  
Sat 9 am - 12 pm  
220 W Walnut St.,  
Ste 2 Herington

PHONE 785-258-2203  
[shelly@stevecrichton.com](mailto:shelly@stevecrichton.com)  
[steve@stevecrichton.com](mailto:steve@stevecrichton.com)

**State Farm**  
Here to help life go right.™  
[stevecrichton.com](http://stevecrichton.com)

**RECREATION**

**Indian Hill GOLF COURSE**

9 hole course with cart rentals no tee time  
Located 1 mile off I-70, exit 286

**522 Golf Course Rd. Chapman**  
785-922-6203  
[chapmanks.com/activities](http://chapmanks.com/activities)  
[indian-hill-golf-course](http://indian-hill-golf-course)

**SERVICES**

**Simmons**  
Towing & Auto Repairs  
Herington, KS

**456 Highway 77**  
**785-258-8024**

*Cleaning your house while kids are still rowing is like shoveling the walk before it stops snowing.*

**VETERINARY**

**COUNTRYSIDE VETERINARY SERVICES**

Quality and Compassionate Veterinary Care for Your Pets & Livestock

781 Hwy 43, Hope  
785-366-6587  
Monday - Friday  
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Check Out the LOCAL SCENE

shopping • dining • drinking • events • entertainment

**LET US HELP PROTECT YOUR DREAMS.**

**Brian Tajchman, Agent, Inc.**  
Brian J. Tajchman, Agent  
104 Nw 3rd S. Abilene  
[btajchman@amfam.com](mailto:btajchman@amfam.com)  
(785) 263-2512

24-HOUR CLAIMS REPORTING & CUSTOMER SERVICE  
1-800-MYAMFAM (692-6326)

**AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE**

HOME | AUTO | LIFE | BUSINESS | FARM & RANCH | AMFAM.COM

**Hilltop Community Center**  
**Fun for Seniors**

2 South A St. • Herington • 785-258-2956

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!

Sunday, March 8: Daylight Savings Day  
Wednesday, March 11: 10:30 a.m. Bingo with prizes (hosted by Home Health)

Tuesday, March 17: St. Patrick's Day!!  
Corn beef and Cabbage for lunch at the Hilltop

Thursday, March 19: 9:00 a.m. -?:  
**FOOTCARE!** Call for appointments: 785-258-6028!

Friday, March 20: **FIRST DAY OF SPRING!!**  
Wednesday, March 25: 11:30 - Trivia Day

**For Meals on Wheels, Meals to go, or Dine-in Eating call: 785-258-2956**  
Suggested Contribution:  
\$4 - 60 Years Old \$7 - Under 60 Years

**General Public Transportation Bus Service:**  
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. ~ 4 p.m.  
\$1.50 one way or \$3.00 round trip  
Bus Tickets can be Purchased from the Driver.

**DENTAL Insurance**

from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company, Inc.

**1-844-216-6942**  
[Dental50Plus.com/NewsTimes](http://Dental50Plus.com/NewsTimes)

Product/features not available in all states. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solicitation. To find a network provider, go to [physiciansmutual.com/ind-dental](http://physiciansmutual.com/ind-dental). This specific offer not available in CO, KS, MI, NY, OR - call 1-800-969-4781 or respond for a similar offer in your state. Certificate C254/B465, C250A/B438 (ID: C254ID; PA: C254PA); Insurance Policy P154/B469 (GA: P154GA; OK: P154OK; TN: P154TN). 6370

**Classified**

**Misc WATER DAMAGE CLEANUP & RESTORATION:** A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-833-879-1451 Have zip code of service location ready when you call!

**Misc NEED NEW WINDOWS? Drafty rooms? Chipped or damaged frames?** Need outside noise reduction? New, energy efficient windows may be the answer! Call for a consultation & FREE quote today. 1-833-880-0052 You will need to have your zip code to connect to the right provider.

**For Sale Hereford Bulls Ready for service, horned and polled, good selection, will deliver.** Davis Herefords • Maple Hill Kansas 785-256-4643 or 785-383-2493

**Misc. Keim TS - Sabetha, KS. Rock hauling with side dump trailers serving KS/NE/MO/IA.** Fast delivery, competitive rates. Call 785-284-7723 for a quote.

**Misc. CASH PAID FOR HIGH-END MEN'S SPORT WATCHES.** Rolex, Breitling, Omega, Patek Philippe, Heuer, Daytona, GMT, Submariner and Speedmaster. These brands only! Call for a quote: 1-833-641-4573.

**Misc. We Buy Houses for Cash AS-IS!** No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Call today for your fair cash offer: 1-913-365-1969

**Misc. Attention: VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS!** A cheaper alternative to high drug-store prices! 50 Pill Special - Only \$99! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW: 1-833-641-6607

**Misc. We Buy Vintage Guitars! Looking for 1920-1980 Gibson, Martin, Fender, Gretsch, Epiphone, Guild, Mosrite, Rickenbacker, Prairie State, D'Angelico, Stromberg, And Gibson Mandolins / Banjos.** These brands only! Call for a quote: 1-833-641-6990

**Misc. GOT AN UNWANTED CAR???** DONATE IT TO PATRIOTIC HEARTS. Fast free pick up. Patriotic Hearts' programs help veterans find work or start their own business. Call 24/7: 1-833-485-0154.

**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!

**HOMESTEAD VILLAGE APARTMENTS**

NOW LEASING  
1100 N. Broadway St. Herington, KS

- 1 and 2 bedroom units
- Appliances furnished
- Laundry hookups
- Single detached garage
- Snow removal & lawn care
- Pet with pet deposit
- All utilities included plus cable
- Clubhouse on site

For more information contact Mgr. Lori Dornbusch  
(785)258-2956 • [Lori.Hilltop@yahoo.com](mailto:Lori.Hilltop@yahoo.com)

**Jim's Metal Roof Coatings**  
Leak Repair, bin tops, flat decks  
Quonset roofing metal/galvanized  
Asphalt Shingle roof coating  
Painting exterior steel or aluminum  
Statewide service - Free Estimates  
785-201-7622

**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, March 6:** Fish & Cheese OR Chicken Patty on Bun Potato Wedges, Creamed Peas, Pineapple

**Monday, March 9:** Cheesy Beef & Macaroni Casserole, Italian Blend Vegetables, Tossed Salad, Cinnamon Baked Apples, Wheat Roll

**Tuesday, March 10:** BBQ Chicken, Potato Salad, Roasted Vegetables, Baked Beans, Mandarin Oranges, Wheat Roll

**Wednesday, March 11:** Roast Turkey/Stuffing, Green Bean Casserole, Fresh Fruit, Pumpkin Muffins

**Thursday, March 12:** Pulled Pork on Bun, Black Beans, Corn, Fruit Cobbler

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

**Friday, March 6:** Fish with Cheese or Chicken Pattie on a Bun, Potato Salad, Green Beans, Pineapple, Milk

**Sunday, March 8:**

**Monday, March 9:** Cheesy Beef Macaroni Casserole, Tossed Salad, Cinnamon Baked Apples, Roll, Milk

**Tuesday, March 10:** Chicken Pot Pie, Roasted Veggies, Mandarin Oranges, Roll, Milk

**Wednesday, March 11:** Smoked Sausage with Sauerkraut on Bun, Mashed Potatoes, Chuckwagon Corn, Fruit, Milk

**Thursday, March 12:** Pulled Pork, Black Beans, Cucumber Salad, Fruit Cobbler, Roll, Milk

**Abilene**  
Physical Therapy & Sports Rehab  
103 NW 15th • Abilene, KS 67410

**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. STOP OVERPAYING FOR HEALTH INSURANCE!** A recent study shows that a majority of people struggle to pay for health coverage. Let us show you how much you can save. Call Now for a no-obligation quote: 1-833-928-5491 You will need to have your zip code to connect to the right provider.

**Misc. BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY!** Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 1-833-752-0092

**Misc. INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT? Don't Accept the insurance company's first offer.** Many injured parties are entitled to cash settlements in the \$10,000's. Get a free evaluation to see what your case is really worth. 100% Free Evaluation. Call Now: 1-833-770-0339

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**  
CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!  
WE NEED YOUR HELP!

- Sunflower State Spelling Bee - Salina, KS  
• March 21, 2026
- Kansas State Battle of the Books - Emporia, KS  
• May 8, 2026
- Kansas Civic Games - Topeka, KS  
• October 29

Contact the Kansas Press Association today to learn more about these exciting volunteer opportunities

785-271-5304

[www.kspress.com](http://www.kspress.com)

*Building the AMERICAN DREAM*  
from our Kansas locations for over

Hundreds of design ideas @ [MortonBuildings.com](http://MortonBuildings.com)

**50 YEARS**

**MORTON BUILDINGS**

LOCATIONS ACROSS KANSAS  
**800-447-7436**

©2024 Morton Buildings, Inc. A listing of GC licenses available at [mortonbuildings.com/licenses](http://mortonbuildings.com/licenses)



# BULL SALE

Angus/Red Angus  
Sim Angus™

2443 26th Road  
Frankfort, KS  
Sunday,  
March 8th—1 p.m.

Huninghake  
Angus Ranch  
Randy Huninghake  
785-556-0319

[www.huninghakeangusranch.com](http://www.huninghakeangusranch.com)  
[huninghake.angus@gmail.com](mailto:huninghake.angus@gmail.com)

## JAMES ROBERT BRYANT APRIL 29, 1954 - FEBRUARY 26, 2026



James Robert Bryant, 71 passed away February 26, 2026, peacefully at his home in Valley Center. He was a husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He was born in Herington, Kansas on April 29, 1954, to Owen and Loretta (Thompson) Bryant.

James attended Herington schools and graduated in 1972. He enlisted in the United States Airforce and served four years of active duty. He married his best friend and high school sweetheart on January 24, 1973.

Shortly after, he was deployed to Taipei, Taiwan as an Air Traffic Controller. Deborah joined and their journey began. Jim was stationed at Luke Air Force Base in Phoenix, Arizona. He completed his associates degree from Glendale Community College. James and Deborah moved to Wichita, where James attended Wichita State University. He obtained a dual degree in 1981. Because education was important to him, he completed his MBA in 2003.

James, alongside his wife, owned and operated Heartland Distribution in Phillipsburg, Kansas. Prior to owning Heartland, he worked for Walters Kluwer as Executive Vice- President of CCH Prosystem/FX Tax Software Development Group.

James enjoyed traveling, photography, being outdoors and seeking new adventures. He liked to play tennis, backgammon, chess and a good game of spades. He followed KU basketball, especially during the Final Four. But, most of all loved his beloved Chiefs.

Above all, he loved his family and friends. He was proud of his children and his grandchildren. He never failed to show them how much.

James is preceded in death by his parents Owen and Loretta Bryant, and his brother Lawrence. He is survived by his wife of 53 years Deborah of Valley Center; a daughter Heidi (Jon) Bennett of Rosehill, KS and their children Dawson (Megan), Makayla and Naia; his son Matthieu (Rene) Bryant of Bel Aire, KS and their children Shaelyn, Kyle, Jakob and Xander; a sister Pat Schneider (Galen) of Herington, KS; a brother Steve (Jan) Bryant of Wichita, KS and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm, Friday, March 6, 2026, at Downing & Lahey East Mortuary. Funeral Service will be at 11:00 am, Saturday, March 7, 2026, at Pathway Church.

A memorial has been established with: Kansas Humane Society, 3313 N. Hillside, Wichita, KS 67219; and St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, 501 St Jude Pl., Memphis, TN 38105.

Share tributes online at: [www.dlwichita.com](http://www.dlwichita.com)

### Dickinson County 4-H Foundation Phone-a-thon

The 15th Annual Phone-a-thon for the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3 and Wednesday, March 4. 4-H members will be making phone calls to connect with 4-H alumni and friends on these dates between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. from the K-State Extension—Chisholm Trail District, Abilene Office.

The mission of the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation is to promote and secure funding for county 4-H youth programs and manage 4-H youth scholarships. Funds raised during the Phone-a-thon directly benefit Dickinson County 4-Hers through club and project meeting support, camp scholarships, community service grants, and travel grants to state and national events.

For more information, please contact Jill Martinson, Chisholm Trail District 4-H Youth Development Agent, at K-State Extension – Chisholm Trail District, Dickinson County (785) 263-2001 or [martinso@ksu.edu](mailto:martinso@ksu.edu).

<p><b>POSTMASTER</b> Send change of address to: Dickinson County News-Times P.O. Box 109, Herington, KS 67449</p> <p><b>SUBSCRIPTION RATES</b></p> <p>Digital Only .....\$38.00</p> <p>(tax is included in all prices) Periodical's Postage Paid at Herington, KS 67449</p>	 <p><b>DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS-TIMES</b> SERVING HERINGTON, AND SURROUNDING AREAS</p>	<p><b>JLS GROUP LLC</b></p> <p>DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS-TIMES THE HILL CITY TIMES LINCOLN SENTINEL-REPUBLICAN</p> <p>DALE WORLEY - OWNER - JLS GROUP LAUREN HOUCHEMANS - PUBLISHER/PAGINATOR BRANDY SENSMEIER - EDITOR/OFFICE ANNA KRISTEK - GRAPHIC DESIGNER</p>
<p><b>TO SUBMIT NEWS:</b> Dickinson County News-Times welcomes news and will print it as it fits our guidelines. The best way to submit news is to e-mail it to <a href="mailto:DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM">DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM</a>, or drop off/mail it to P.O. Box 109, Herington, KS 67449.</p> <p><b>TO ADVERTISE:</b> Dickinson County News-Times offers retail and classified advertising. We can build an ad campaign to fit your budget and reach our loyal readership. For all advertising placements, please email <a href="mailto:DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM">DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM</a>, call our office, 785.524.4200, or mail it to P.O. Box 109, Herington, KS 67449.</p> <p><b>SUBSCRIPTIONS:</b> Questions and updates regarding subscriptions should be sent to <a href="mailto:dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com">dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com</a>.</p> <p><b>ADVERTISING AND NEWS DEADLINE - FRIDAYS AT NOON</b></p>		
<p>P.O BOX 109, HERINGTON, KS 67449- PHONE (785)524-4200- USPS 242-100- <a href="mailto:DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM">DK.CO.NEWSLETTERS@GMAIL.COM</a> - <a href="http://JLSNEWSGROUP.COM">JLSNEWSGROUP.COM</a></p>		

### Traffic changes at I-70/K-18 interchange to begin March 2 in Geary County

Beginning Monday, March 2, the traveling public should be prepared for traffic changes on I-70 in Geary County as work progresses to the next phase for interchange improvements at the K-18/I-70 interchange.

Traffic will be reduced to one lane on eastbound I-70 from exit 301 at Marshall Field to exit 303 at K-18 for about a week to install a safety barrier. Once this work is complete, all lanes will reopen at a reduced speed.

King Construction of Hesston is the prime contractor for this \$27.5 million interchange project and has scheduled the project to be completed in Fall 2027.

For more project information, visit [ksdot.gov/projects/north-central-kansas-projects/k-18-and-i-70-interchange](https://ksdot.gov/projects/north-central-kansas-projects/k-18-and-i-70-interchange). To stay aware of all highway construction projects across Kansas, visit [kandrive.gov](https://kandrive.gov) or call 511.

### 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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  
1<sup>st</sup> 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  
4<sup>th</sup> 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  
4<sup>th</sup> of each month 11:30 AM 12:30 PM

## FOYE PATRICK MOLONEY

SEPTEMBER 4, 1934 - FEBRUARY 24, 2026



Foye Patrick Moloney, 91, passed away peacefully in Chapman, Kansas on February 24, 2026. Born on September 4, 1934, in Junction City, Kansas. Foye was the son of Francis Patrick and Irene Lucille (Foye) Moloney. Foye was raised on the family land owned by his Irish immigrant ancestors who arrived in America starting in the late 1800's.

As a young man, Foye moved to Kansas City to attend Rockhurst Catholic University. Through a Rockhurst colleague, he met his wife to be. Foye and Jody (Judith Ann Jochems) were married in 1962. They left the city and moved to Morris County to begin their life together.

Upon returning to the Flint Hills of Kansas, Foye completed his studies with a degree in history from Kansas State University. He was a lifelong parishioner of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Junction City.

Along with his wife, Jody, he created a simple yet profound farmer's life. All known to them witnessed a true Christian marriage marked by generosity where large and small acts of love were abundant. Altruism was central to their existence. Above all, Foye was a steward of the land. He actively managed and cared for the soil with complete dedication to the sound practices of agricultural commitment to the future.

He was an advocate of public broadcasting and academic advancement for all people. Foye was the last to judge and the first to acknowledge the struggles of those less fortunate. He and his wife led by example and inspired many in the Junction City community. May he be remembered as a wonderful man and as a pillar of decency. He is survived by his sisters Marilyn Moloney Wasytk and Therese Moloney Howe (and her husband, Charles), seventeen nieces and nephews, forty grandnieces and grandnephews and four great-grandnieces and great-grandnephews; his California cousins (Aunt Kathryn Moloney Mundy descendants; and his Ireland cousins (Great- uncle Michael Moloney and his wife, Catherine, descendants).

He was preceded in death by his wife, Judith Ann (Jochems); his brother, friend and farming partner, James Moloney; his sister-in-law, Ella Moloney; his brothers-in-law, Don Wasytk and James Jochems. The Rosary will be held on March 6th at 10:30 a.m. The funeral Mass will follow at 11:00 a.m. within the St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Following services, the burial will take place at Vine Creek cemetery. May our dearest Foye rest in peace.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the St. Xavier Parish, 218 N. Washington, Street, Junction City, Kansas, 66441.

# EVENTS

**5 Mar, Thu**  
 All day USD 487 HMS Quiz Bowl  
 Goessel  
 2 – 3pm USD 473 Mock Job Fair  
 (FFA)  
 4 – 6pm USD 473 Scholars Bowl  
 Tournament @ Rock Creek  
 5:30 – 9:30pm CMS Pickleball  
 Tournament  
 6 – 8pm Youth Wrestling  
 District Gym, Wrestling Room  
 6 – 7pm Post 12 American Legion-  
 Herington

**6 Mar, Fri**  
 All day USD 487 No School  
 3 – 4:30pm USD 487 JH Wrestling:  
 Middle School  
 3:30 – 5:30pm CMS "ALL" School  
 Dance  
 6:30 – 7:30pm VFW Bingo 101 E  
 Main St

**7 Mar, Sat**  
 All day Forensics Meet @  
 Concordia  
 8 – 9am High School Forensics  
 Silver Lake

**9 Mar, Mon**  
 8am USD 473 PARENT-TEACHER  
 CONFERENCES; 1:00 DISMISSAL  
 9 – 10am Veterans Coffee The Pin  
 Up Cafe  
 6 – 8pm Youth Wrestling  
 District Gym, Wrestling Room  
 6:30 – 8:30pm USD 487 BOE  
 Meeting  
 6:30 – 7:30pm USD 473 BOE

**10 Mar, Tue**  
 USD 473 PARENT-TEACHER  
 CONFERENCES; 1:00 DISMISSAL  
 (Day 2/2)  
 All day 10 a.m. Storytime @ Hope  
 Library  
 All day 11 a.m. Fresh conversations,  
 Enterprise Library  
 9am – 3pm USD 487 League JH  
 Music Wakefield  
 9:35 – 10:35am USD 473 Seniors  
 Supreme Court Visit  
 6:30 – 7:30pm VFW and Aux  
 Meeting 101 E Main St

**11 Mar, Wed**  
 All day BB State Tournament - Mar.  
 11-14 (Day 1/4)  
 7:30 – 8:30am CES Books and  
 Breakfast  
 6 – 8pm Youth Wrestling  
 District Gym, Wrestling Room  
 7 – 8pm Chapman City Council  
 Meeting  
 7 – 8pm District Band Night  
 Chapman High School

## HORTON POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONS

(Courtesy Photos)



Send your team photos to  
[Dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com](mailto:Dk.co.newstimes@gmail.com)

## Chapman Girls take home 1st place from the Panther Classic



**Local Journalism  
 Helps Protect  
 Our Community.**

Your Support Helps Protect Local Journalism.

**SUBSCRIBE NOW!**





Stampopot is a traditional dish from the Netherlands, featuring creamy mashed potatoes, fresh kale and smoked sausage to create a hearty, but simple, meal.

I'll give this recipe my 'stampot' of approval. I love finding recipes that claim to be "national dishes" or "traditional" ones.

But I will also confess that, more often than not, when I declare that something is "traditional," there is someone who will email me (very nicely, mind you) to let me know that, actually, the recipe I found wasn't quite right.

Inevitably, the person I found making that dish online or in a cookbook somewhere doesn't quite live up to the food one of my readers grew up enjoying. So, I am very cautiously introducing you to what is supposedly the Dutch national dish: stampot.

Stampot is a mashed-potato meal that is mixed with some vegetables and served with sausage. It's hearty and simple, and while Joey swore it could really have benefitted from a bit of gravy, it's delicious, too.

Plus, while you're eating a big plate of mashed potatoes, you're also getting a huge serving of veggies along with it. That seems like a win to me.

This comes from the blog "Gypsyplate" by Jason Beiser. You can find the original post at <https://gypsyplate.com/stampot/>. I added extra kale and garlic in my version and substituted an onion

in place of shallots.

Stampot

Ingredients

3 pounds potatoes, cubed

2 bay leaves

6 tablespoons butter, divided

16 ounces kale, cut into strips (a big bunch)

## SpiceUpYourLife-Stampot

Lindsey Young

6 cloves garlic, minced

1 small yellow onion, diced

1 1/2 cups milk, warmed

pinch nutmeg

salt and pepper, to taste

1 pound smoked rope sausage, cut into bite-sized pieces

Directions

Add the potatoes to a large stock pot and just cover them with cold water. Add the bay leaves and add a large pinch of salt.

Bring the water to a boil and cook until the potatoes are fork tender. Drain the water and discard the bay leaves.

While the potatoes cook, heat two tablespoons of butter in a large skillet with a lid over medium heat. Add the onion and saute until it's tender. For the last couple of minutes, add the garlic and give it a quick saute until it's fragrant.

Remove the onion and garlic and place it on a plate or bowl to the side, and add the kale to the skillet, along with one-half cup of water. Place the lid on the skillet to wilt the kale. Check on it after a few minutes and stir to help the kale cook down. Add more water if all of it evaporates, and continue that process until the kale is cooked to your liking.

Meanwhile, mash the potatoes with four tablespoons butter, the milk, nutmeg and salt and pepper to taste. (This made a slightly looser mash than I would normally make, but it had a great consistency once it was combined with everything else.) Add the kale and sauteed onions and garlic to the mashed potatoes and stir to combine.

Set the potatoes aside, keeping them warm.

In the same skillet as before, saute the sausage until it's cooked through and has a little color on it.

Serve the stampot by placing a layer of the mashed potato/kale mixture on the bottom and topping with some sausage.

The amount of kale was a bit intimidating at first, but it does cook down a lot, and the flavor actually melds in with the mashed potatoes really well. I was afraid it would take over, but it was just a nice compliment to the rest of the dish.

The leftovers also reheated nicely, which was nice later in the week.

And this recipe may or may not be exactly what someone from the Netherlands would expect, but regardless, it was a darn tasty meal.

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).



Tim Swenson named Village Manor nursing director

(February 24, 2026) – ABILENE, Kan. – Village Manor, an affiliate of Memorial Health System, is pleased to announce the appointment of Tim Swenson as its new director of nursing. Swenson brings more than 20 years of diverse health care experience to the Abilene community. Swenson was introduced to the opportunity through a recruiting firm

and quickly felt a strong connection to the role after meeting the teams at Memorial Health System and Village Manor.

"After meeting the team, I immediately knew the role was for me," Swenson said. "I have worked in health care for more than 20 years in many different facets, and I could see how my experience aligned with the mission and vision here."

Throughout his career, Swenson has served in clinical, operational and business development roles across the Midwest, including the past eight years in traveling leadership positions. His broad background, paired with a passion for servant leadership, positions him well to guide Village Manor's nursing team and enhance resident care. For Swenson, long-term care is deeply personal. "Long-term care is more than just a medical service; it is a commitment to dignity and family," he said. "Having seen the impact of life-altering physical and health challenges with my home

health and hospice patients throughout the years, 'care' involves supporting the whole person and their environment. It represents a bridge between clinical excellence and the comfort of home."

He added that ensuring residents and families in the Abilene community receive the same high-standard advocacy he would want for his own family is a driving force behind his leadership.

"Tim's ties to the community, professional experience, commitment to servant leadership and dedication to providing resident-centered care positions him well to lead the Village Manor nursing team and its commitment to providing compassionate, high-quality care," said Kimberly Haverly, Memorial Health System administrator.

For more information about Village Manor and its services, please call Village Manor at (785) 263-1431 or visit [mhsks.org/village\\_manor](http://mhsks.org/village_manor).

### Dickinson County Launches America 250 Community Grant Program to Support Local Celebrations in 2026

Dickinson County, Kansas — Dickinson County communities will soon have an opportunity to bring history to life as the America 250 Community Grant Program launches to support local events, projects, and legacy efforts celebrating the nation’s 250th anniversary in 2026. Funded by Dickinson County and administered by the Community Foundation of Dickinson County (CFDC), the program will provide \$30,000 in grant funding to cities, towns, nonprofits, schools, historical societies, and community groups across Dickinson County. The goal is to encourage meaningful, community-driven celebrations that highlight local history, foster civic pride, and invite residents and visitors to take part in America’s semiquincentennial. “This is a fantastic opportunity,” said Elizabeth Weese, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Dickinson County. “Through this grant program, we want to help communities tell their stories, celebrate their heritage, and create experiences in 2026 that

people will remember for years to come.” Janelle Dockendorf, Dickinson County Administrator, emphasized the countywide importance of the effort. “Dickinson County is proud to invest in projects that bring our communities together,” Dockendorf said. “These grants are an opportunity to honor our shared past while strengthening community connections and civic pride across the entire county.” The program also aligns with broader efforts to promote Dickinson County as a destination in 2026. “America 250 gives us a powerful platform to showcase what makes Dickinson County unique,” said the Executive Director of Driving Dickinson County, Natalie Muruato. “These locally driven projects will not only celebrate history, but also support tourism, local businesses, and long-term community vitality.” The America 250 Community Grant Program will open for applications on March 1, 2026, with awards

announced on April 15, 2026. Projects must take place within Dickinson County during 2026, with preference given to enhancements of existing community events. **Grant Details**  
 **Micro Grants:** \$500–\$1,500 for small-scale efforts such as decorations, banners, flags, marketing, or single-day events  
 **Community Project Grants:** \$1,500–\$3,500 for larger initiatives including murals, public art, interpretive signage, oral history projects, or multi-day heritage festivals  
 **Local Match:** A local match is encouraged and may include cash, in-kind donations, or volunteer hours. Larger grants may require a stronger match commitment. Eligible projects include patriotic parades, concerts, fireworks, public art, beautification efforts, historical markers, youth engagement initiatives, oral history projects, and promotional efforts designed to attract visitors and increase participation. Applications will be reviewed by a

selection committee convened and evaluated on alignment with America 250 themes, community involvement, project readiness, legacy impact, and overall quality of planning and budget. All grant recipients will be asked to use the “Dickinson County Celebrates America 250” branding and will be featured in a countywide calendar of events to promote tourism and community participation. For more information and to apply for a grant, visit the Driving Dickinson County website at [www.dkedc.com/](http://www.dkedc.com/). About Driving Dickinson County Driving Dickinson County is the region’s economic development organization dedicated to strengthening business retention and expansion, supporting entrepreneurship, and fostering collaborative community growth throughout Dickinson County, Kansas.

# DO YOU WANT A GRADUATION/SPORTS PRINTED EDITION?

This is our first year being 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....

<p><b>2x2</b> <b>\$50</b></p>		<p><b>2x4</b> <b>\$75</b></p>
<p><b>1x2</b> <b>\$30</b></p>	<p><i><b>SIGNATURE</b></i> <b>\$20</b></p>	

This is also available for parents to put their dedications in for their 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.**

**Why FEAR?**  
By: Van Yandell

Joshua 1:9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”.

Some men fear death! Some fear life. Some fear other men while others fear pain and many fear uncertainty. Fear of disease or fear of poverty may be the summit of the fears of many and fear of the future may bring other to tremble.

Some jump out of airplanes; others face wild animals or poisonous snakes. Why do some appear to have no fear while others allow their fears to destroy their lives? Why will some engage in a business venture while many are content to work for another in the safe haven of a weekly paycheck? These questions are impossible to answer because every person has a thinking mind, different experiences and separate ancestral proclivities.

Are some fears common sense? Of course! In the early 2020’s we feared covid. We took precautions to keep from contracting the virus. Certain actions are engaged in to alleviate our fears while others are out of our control. Many in the world today fear cancer. That of course is somewhat justified. We can take precautions to quell that fear with a sensible diet, an active lifestyle and having the right ancestors. That ancestral choice is not ours to make but we know from observation, family history seems to be a link. Guilt can lead to a state of fear. Guilt is

said to be the most wasted emotion. For the believer in a crucified and resurrected Christ Jesus, sins are forgiven.

1 John 1: 9 “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” To fear the afterlife is unnecessary because of this absolute promise of our Creator.

In the 23 rd Psalm verse 4, David wrote “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” The presence of God in David’s life prevented fear.

Isaiah 41:10 “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” We have scriptural assurance of the unwarranted feeling of fear. God gave us a mind to analyze the sources of our fears and eliminate them.

If any character in the Holy Bible had a reason to fear it was the Apostle Paul. In spite of his certain future of physical pain administered by those opposing the teaching of the Gospel of Christ, Paul trudged on with his God given purpose.

2 Corinthians 11: 24-26 “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in

the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.” Paul’s body must have been a mass of scar tissue having been flogged five times. Because of Paul’s encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road (Acts 9: 3-6), he was of a certainty of the reality of salvation through Christ Jesus. Paul had no doubts of the reality of Christ’s divinity and His power. Can we have that assurance? Of course we can through faith. Faith is a belief system and among our greatest gifts from God.

Many of us have found our greatest weapon against fear is prayer. When we encounter those (many times superfluous), reasons for fear, prayer is constantly available. God never hides or sleeps! Over five billion people in our world have not found the solace of life offered by Christ Jesus. Did Jesus fear? Luke 22: 44 “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” The man Jesus knew fear because of His immediate future (Hebrews 5: 7).

He could have called twelve legions of angels (Matthew 26: 53) and stopped His inevitable future, but He did not. He went, voluntarily, sacrificially to the cross for the sin of all mankind. We do not face crucifixion as did Jesus. We do not face the flogging whip as did Paul. Our fears seem miniscule in comparison. If one’s greatest fear is death or the process of dying, consider the

depth and promise of Revelation 21: 4. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” We have the promise of God written by the Apostle John. That place called Heaven awaits the believer in Christ Jesus (John 14: 1-3).

It surely appears many Christians fear greatly the command of Jesus before ascending (Acts 1: 8-9) and that is to tell others about Him. With our world eroding further into chaos as we watch, the only solution for survival beyond total anarchy is our Jesus. We must not have fear of our verbal witness of the teachings of the Holy Bible, God’s word. Matthew 28: 20 “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” We are not alone!

The Bible teaches there is only one eternal salvation. That is by a faith based belief (Ephesians 2: 8) that Christ Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27: 35) for the remission of sin (Romans 4: 25), resurrected (Matthew 28: 6) and ascended alive into Heaven (Acts 1: 9). Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and missionary. His email is [vmy3451@gmail.com](mailto:vmy3451@gmail.com)

**Applying for LIEAP?**

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) can help eligible households pay a portion of their primary home heating costs by providing a one-time per year benefit. LIEAP can help restore or maintain electricity, natural gas, propane and other home heating bills. The application period begins Jan. 20, 2026, at 8 a.m. and ends March 31, 2026 at 5 p.m.

Apply online at [dcfapp.kees.ks.gov](http://dcfapp.kees.ks.gov) or get help in-person at an upcoming LIEAP event:

**Feb. 25, 2026**  
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Herington City Library**  
102 S Broadway St.  
Herington, KS 67449

See the full schedule of LIEAP events at [LIEAP.dcf.ks.gov](http://LIEAP.dcf.ks.gov)

Please bring copies of the following information:

- Proof of income (earned and unearned) for anyone living in the residence.
- Copy of all fuel bills (gas, electric, propane, etc.)
- Proof of child support payments received or the court order.
- If in subsidized housing, provide a copy of your rental agreement.
- If your primary heating costs are included in your rent, provide a copy of your rental agreement.

Applications accepted **Jan. 20, 2026— March 31, 2026**  
Applications must be received by DCF by 5 p.m. on March 31, 2026.

\*Other information may be requested as needed.  
\*\*If your utility bills are in the landlord’s name, a copy of the lease agreement must be provided.

## Songs of the Flint Hills

Poems, stories & lyrics celebrating Kansas Flint Hills land and people by Annie Wilson – named “Flint Hills Balladeer” by the Kansas Governor

**Beautiful Marianne**

Her gentle smile is unusual. Unlike the somber-faced tradition of early-day photos, her expression is one of contentment, even appreciation. A family history says the photo “shows that she was a beautiful woman of pleasant and serene character.”

Beautiful Marianne: born 1830 as Marianne Joseph, in Alsace-Lorraine - that disputed and often war-torn region of France, later twice occupied by Germany, including Hitler’s Nazi regime – a horror her descendants would have endured had she stayed.

Instead, she and her husband Nikolas Maybell, a farmer 21 years her senior, emigrated to America in 1854.

After a few years in upstate New York where their children were born, they journeyed west in 1860, eventually homesteading in Chase County in 1867, settling on

an upland tributary that would later bear their name: Maybell Creek, part of the Middle Creek watershed west of Elmdale.

It was here she lived her life in the tiny, three-room home her family built, set into the hillside, made entirely of stone since there were hardly any trees. Its ruins stand today on our ranch.

The large kitchen window looks out east, framing the small creek-side meadow they farmed, surrounded by rolling hills and draws. How many times she must have gazed out this window as the sun rose to light this pastoral scene and start her day.

Attached is the other small room which also had a loft, accessible by ladder. Here they all lived, a family of five.

The site reveals foundations of a barn and corral, and a long stone wall they laid up and down the hills and draws, encircling sixty

acres of stream and farmable meadow. Imagine the work.

Nikolas died in 1882 of typhoid, at age 74. Marianne was only 56. She did not remarry and lived on in the home, with an adult son continuing to farm the land. In final years, the Pracht family, immigrants from Germany living just downstream, kindly took her in.

The last year of her life, which like her husband’s ended at age 74, she wrote a letter expressing her long-held desire to reconnect with her lost family heritage. “I would like to find my people,” she wrote, but died before she heard back.

Whenever I pass the remnants of her home, I think of beautiful Marianne – her smile, and her life lived in this place - on land I also love.

See other stories & songs of the Flint Hills at [talgrassexpress.com](http://talgrassexpress.com)

# Prairie Doc Perspective

## Cultivating Trust: A Trauma-Informed Approach to the Therapeutic Alliance

By Patti Berg-Poppe, MPT, Ph.D. and Shana Cerny, OTD, OTR/L, BCP

Health care professionals enter every patient encounter with the goal of helping individuals heal, yet many don't realize how often past adversity shapes the way a person experiences care. Trauma, whether from childhood experiences, medical procedures, accidents, interpersonal harm or environmental conditions, doesn't remain a distant memory. It becomes embedded in the body through biobehavioral adaptations that influence posture, muscle tension, breathing patterns, nervous system sensitivity and low body safety. When we understand that trauma lives not only in stories but also in tissues and reflexes, we begin to see why a trauma-informed approach is essential for building trust.

Trauma and adverse experiences are more common than we may realize. More than two-thirds of the patients that health care providers encounter in practice are likely to have experienced trauma in some form. Trauma-informed care should be a universal precaution, guiding providers to assume that any patient may have a history of adversity, even if it is never disclosed. This mindset shifts the focus from "What's wrong with you?" to "What's happened to you, and how is it affecting your health today?" For clinicians who rely on touch, such as physical and occupational therapists, physicians, nurses and primary care professionals,

this awareness is especially important. Touch can be grounding and healing, but it can also activate the sympathetic nervous system, triggering a stress response before a patient has words to explain why.

Trust becomes the foundation of the therapeutic alliance, and trust is built through safety, predictability and respect.

Trauma-informed practice encourages providers to slow down, explain what they are doing and invite patients into Shared decision-making. Simple actions, such as asking permission before touching, checking in about comfort, offering choices and being transparent about what comes next, signal to the nervous system that the environment is safe.

These small shifts can reduce physiological stress responses and create space for true healing. Research on trauma-informed health care highlights how past adversity can influence patient engagement, adherence and outcomes.

When patients feel overwhelmed, misunderstood or rushed, they may appear "non-compliant," when in reality their nervous system is doing its best to protect them.

A trauma-informed lens helps clinicians interpret these reactions not as resistance but as communication. It encourages us to look beyond the symptom in front of us and consider the whole person, including their history, their stress load, their strengths

and their goals.

Holistic care means recognizing that physical symptoms rarely exist in isolation. Pain, fatigue, dizziness and muscle tension often have emotional and neurological components. When providers acknowledge this mind-body connection, patients feel seen rather than dismissed. They're more likely to share concerns, ask questions and participate actively in their care. This collaboration strengthens the therapeutic alliance, which research consistently links to better health outcomes across disciplines.

Trauma-informed practice is not a specialty; it's a skillset. It requires curiosity, humility and a willingness to adapt. It asks clinicians to be mindful of their tone, body language and pace. It reminds us that healing happens in relationships, and that every interaction, every moment of touch, every explanation, and every pause can either reinforce safety or erode it.

When we approach patients with the assumption that their bodies carry stories we cannot see, we create conditions where trust can grow. And when trust grows, so does the capacity for healing.

Patti Berg-Poppe, MPT, Ph.D., is a physical therapist, professor, and Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of South Dakota. She has published on trauma-informed care, including work examining how adverse childhood experi-

ences influence patient engagement and how trauma-aware practices can strengthen therapeutic relationships. Her writing and teaching emphasize the importance of trust, safety and respectful communication in all health care interactions. Shana Cerny, OTD, OTR/L, BCP, is an occupational therapist and associate professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of South Dakota. Her research, service and teaching interests revolve around trauma-informed care, including publication of practice guidelines for trauma-informed occupational therapy, interventions for individuals after exploitation, and the effectiveness of a trauma-informed care curriculum for multi-disciplinary care providers. She is a Trust-Based Relational Intervention® Educator and co-creator of the Child & Adult Advocacy Studies graduate certificate at the University of South Dakota. 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, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).





**Routine. Safe. Recommended by your doctor.**

If you're 45+, a routine colonoscopy screening can help prevent colorectal cancer through early detection.

Peace of mind starts here. Colonoscopy screening can detect concerns early — often before symptoms — and in many cases can prevent cancer.

At Salina Regional Health Center, we're dedicated to your well-being, with trusted providers and easy access across five convenient locations in our region. You'll be in the expert hands of our specialists, with clear guidance and support every step of the way. Taking that first step toward better health has never been easier.

[Learn what to expect at srhc.com/colonoscopy](http://srhc.com/colonoscopy)

Visit us at Memorial Health System | (785) 263-2100

**New Kansas bicycle maps now available**  
The new 2026-28 Official State Bicycle Map of Kansas is now available from the Kansas Department of Transportation. Whether riding a few miles or cycling across the state, this edition offers a variety of information to help active transportation users plan a short trip or a long ride.

State bicycle maps and educational flyers with bicycle safety tips are free and can be ordered on KDOT's website at <http://www.ksdot.gov/KSBikeMap>.

"Rail-Trails and the U.S. Bicycle Route System maps are included in the publication and showcase historic and unique places to visit along these routes," said KDOT's Active Transportation Manager Jenny Kramer. "We want residents and visitors alike to experience a few of the many venues and sights Kansas offers by bike while participating in active lifestyles."

The map features color-coded highways to help riders distinguish traffic levels and varying route widths to show where shoulders are paved and wider than 3 feet. For those wanting to avoid highways, county roads are also shown using the same color coding for traffic ranges and denote whether they are paved or unpaved.

**Additional features include:**

- Rest areas and bike shops
- State parks and scenic byways
- Hospitals with 24-hour emergency care
- Past Biking Across Kansas routes

In addition, details and contact information on the new Kansas Trails Inc. organization are available. According to the group, its mission is to provide the resources, support and community connections needed to make trails across the state accessible and sustainable for everyone.

For more information or to order maps, send an email to [KATE@ks.gov](mailto:KATE@ks.gov) or call Kramer at 785-296-5186.

## The Golden Ticket Fund Launches for CKFF Carnival

Abilene, KS — February 16, 2026 — What began as a heartfelt idea from a local Fair Board member has grown into a meaningful community partnership designed to ensure more children can experience the joy of the carnival at the Central Kansas Free Fair. Michelle Holt, a lifelong Abilene resident and member of the Central Kansas Free Fair Board, approached the Community Foundation of Dickinson County with a simple but powerful dream: to help children who may not otherwise have the opportunity enjoy the lights, laughter, and excitement of carnival rides. "As a lifelong Abilene native, I have always felt a deep responsibility to this community," Holt shared. "Watching my grandchildren experience the same hometown traditions I once enjoyed inspired me to give back in a greater way." Holt recalled seeing the excitement on her grandchildren's faces during last year's fair, while also recognizing that rising ride costs — now as much as \$35 for a wristband — can create barriers for some families. "Watching my grandchildren experience the fair reminded me how much joy it brings," she said. "I want more children to share in that joy and help ensure the fair continues to thrive." Executive Director Elizabeth Weese immediately contacted Hank Royer of the Jeffcoat

Foundation to share the vision and explore how it could become a reality. Following a meeting between Hank, Elizabeth, and Michelle, the Jeffcoat Foundation committed an initial \$10,000 gift to establish the Golden Ticket Fund. With the support of the Fair Board and the Community Foundation, the Golden Ticket Fund was officially created as part of the CKFF Carnival initiative. How the Program Works Golden Tickets will be distributed during the Kids in Crisis Back-to-School Backpack Fair on Saturday, July 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Central Kansas Free Fair will host a booth at the event where qualifying families may choose to receive a carnival wristband for one night of rides. Eligibility will align with participation in the free and reduced lunch program. Students who qualify may follow the provided instructions to redeem their Golden Ticket.

This approach ensures the program reaches families who may benefit most while maintaining privacy, dignity, and choice. "This is what community partnership looks like," said Weese. "Michelle brought forward a dream. The Fair Board stood behind it. The Jeffcoat Foundation stepped forward with generosity. And together, we created something that will bring joy and inclusion to children in our community." Starting in Abilene — With a Vision for Growth The Golden Ticket Fund is currently structured as an expendable fund, meaning the initial \$10,000 gift and additional donations will directly support ride passes for Abilene children during this year's fair. The long-term goal is to grow the fund through continued community support so that it may one day become endowed, expanding beyond Abilene to serve children across all of Dickinson County for generations to come.

Community members who would like to help broaden access to the CKFF Carnival experience are encouraged to contribute. Donations may be made online at [www.communityfoundation.us](http://www.communityfoundation.us) or by mailing a gift to the Community Foundation of Dickinson County at 201 NW 2nd Street, Suite B. For more information about the Golden Ticket Fund or to explore how you can start your own fund to support a cause close to your heart, please contact the Community Foundation of Dickinson County at 785-263-1863. Because at the CKFF Carnival, every child deserves a ride. The Community Foundation of Dickinson County connects people who care with causes that matter by supporting local nonprofits, students, and community initiatives through grants, scholarships, and charitable funds. Together, the Foundation is helping build a stronger, more vibrant Dickinson County— For good. For ever. ®



Scan to support the Golden Ticket Fund

Pictured left to right: Kylie Lee, Central Kansas Free Fair Board member; Elizabeth Weese, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Dickinson County; Kayleigh Ferris, Central Kansas Free Fair Board member; Michelle Holt, Central Kansas Free Fair Board member; and Hank Royer, representative of the Jeffcoat Foundation.



### Kyle Bowers named manager of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine

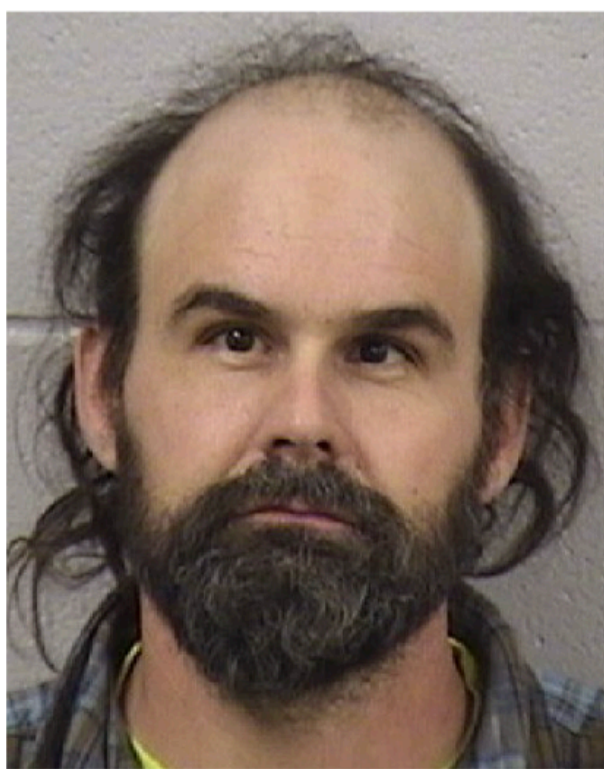
(February 19, 2026) – ABILENE, Kan. — Memorial Health System is pleased to announce the promotion of Kyle Bowers, PT, DPT, as manager of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine. Bowers will replace Jeff Sanborn, who is stepping down after 20 years of service to the organization. Bowers has been a member of the MHS Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine team since 2020, providing care across outpatient, acute and skilled settings. He also has supported local schools with weekly screenings, reflecting his commitment to both patients and the broader community.

Bowers is a native of Sidney, Neb., and earned a bachelor of science in exercise physiology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a doctorate in physical therapy from Creighton University. He practiced in critical access and outpatient settings in Kansas and Missouri prior to joining MHS, with an emphasis on orthopedic, sports medicine and vestibular rehabilitation. Bowers has continued to pursue professional development during his time at MHS. He is certified in dry needling, serves as a Meditech super user, has completed Front Line Leader Training and earned his Lean Six Sigma Green Belt. In addition to his professional accomplishments, he coaches his children’s recreational sports teams, serves on the Solomon Planning and Zoning Commission and the church council at Faith Lutheran Church in Abilene.

“I am humbled, honored and blessed to have the opportunity to lead a group of exceptional clinicians who provide amazing patient care,” Bowers said.

As manager, Bowers plans to focus on expanding services to meet growing community needs, including exploring opportunities to increase pediatric therapy offerings and women’s health services. In the immediate term, he will also prioritize onboarding and mentoring a new physical therapist joining the department this summer.

Memorial Health System Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine provides friendly, caring and quality services to restore individuals to their highest level of function – helping them get back to doing what they love. Located at Memorial Hospital in Abilene, services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, recovery care, ASTYM, sports medicine and concussion management. Services are available with or without a physician’s referral. For more information, call (785) 263-6664 or visit [mhsk.org](http://mhsk.org).



Loren Jones


### MEDIA RELEASE (02/23/2026)

In August of 2025, the Dickinson County Sheriff’s Office received tips from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Investigators determined the tips were associated with a case that began in 2023. Investigators continued the investigation and with the new information executed a search warrant on September 3, 2025, at a residence in the 100 Block of West Walnut Street, Herington, Kansas. Additional search warrants were executed and an arrest warrant was issued on February 18, 2026, for Loren Michael Jones. On February 20, 2026, Loren Michael Jones, 42, of Herington, Kansas was

arrested by the Sedgwick County Sheriff’s Office on the warrant issued through the Dickinson County District Court. Jones was later booked into the Dickinson County Detention Facility on multiple counts of sexual exploitation of a child.

All persons are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Anyone with information regarding any 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).

**SHERIFF**  
Jeff T. Soyez  
202 S. 4<sup>th</sup>  
Marion, KS 66861



**SHERIFF**  
**MARION COUNTY**  
[www.marioncoks.net](http://www.marioncoks.net)

**UNDERSHERIFF**  
Larry R. Starkey  
Phone: 620-382-2144  
Fax: 620-382-3441

March 3, 2026

**PRESS RELEASE**


On February 23, 2026, Marion County Sheriff’s Office Lieutenant Detective Aaron Christner received a report of inappropriate communication between a teacher and a student from Peabody-Burns High School, in Peabody, KS.


The investigation revealed that the teacher had sexual contact with a student. With the assistance of the Kansas Internet Crime’s Against Children Task Force, further evidence was discovered and Brett McGee was arrested on March 3, 2026.

The Marion County Sheriff’s Office is committed to protecting children.

If anyone has information regarding this case or needs to report any other cases of the mistreatment of a child, please call 620-382-2144.

This is still an active investigation, and no further information will be released at this time.

Approved,  
  
Jeff Soyez  
Sheriff  
Marion County, KS



**Brett McGee**

**McPherson**

**County Jail**

### Kansas House Bill 2503 Ignores What Our Political Science Research Shows About Rural Voters

As political scientists who study Kansas politics, election administration, and political participation—and as the coauthors of a recent statistical analysis of Kansas’ special elections—we are compelled to speak out against Kansas House Bill 2503.

The bill would repeal the state’s 1983 Mail Ballot Election Act and prohibit municipalities from conducting all-mail elections. This proposal is not merely a matter of administrative preference; it runs directly counter to what the data tell us about how Kansans, especially rural Kansans, participate in our democracy.

In our research on 39 Kansas special elections conducted in 2024 and 2025, we examined turnout under two different systems: traditional in-person elections and elections conducted entirely by mail. These contests, often focused on school bond issues or local tax proposals, represent some of the most consequential—but also least visible—governance decisions affecting Kansas communities.

What we found was striking.

When elections were conducted entirely by mail, turnout increased dramatically. After carefully matching rural and urban voters on demographics, party registration, and turnout history, we estimated that all-mail elections increased the probability of voting by 21.7 percentage points.

This is not a marginal difference. It is a structural one.

Just as important, the rural-urban turnout gap nearly disappeared. In traditionally administered elections, rural voters were 3.5 points less likely to participate than urban voters. But when provided an all-mail system, the rural-urban gap shrank to less than one percentage point.

In other words: all-mail elections do exactly what legislators claim to value—they promote equitable participation across all geographic regions of our state. The data is clear: rural Kansans benefit from all-mail elections. The explanation is straightforward: voting is not costless, and those costs fall disproportionately on rural residents.

Rural Kansans often travel long distances to a polling location, rely on deteriorating roads and minimal public transportation, and live in jurisdictions that struggle to maintain sufficient polling places and staff. Political science research has long shown that even modest increases in the time or effort required to vote depress turnout. Put simply, rural Kansans face bigger hurdles when it comes to voting, and all-mail elections help remove those barriers.

Kansas has long embraced local control, particularly in election administration for special elections. County clerks and school districts understand their communities’ needs far better than legislators in Topeka. When local jurisdictions choose all-mail elections, they do so because it is the most accessible, cost-effective, and logistically feasible option. HB 2503 would eliminate that choice. It strips local autonomy and silences rural voices.

If adopted, rural Kansans—who already face higher barriers to participation—would be pushed back into a system that statistically depresses their turnout. It is difficult to read the evidence and see this bill as anything other than a step backward for democratic participation in our state.

We argue that evidence, not assumptions, should drive Kansas’ election policy.

Much of the public debate around voting by mail has relied on speculation or rhetoric. But the state legislature need not speculate. We have Kansas data on Kansas voters in Kansas elections and the findings are clear. All-mail elections increase turnout. They mitigate geographic inequities. They ensure rural voters can make their voices heard on school funding, infrastructure, and public investments that directly affect their communities.

Lawmakers may disagree on many issues, but they should not ignore empirical evidence—especially when that evidence is produced by researchers in their own state examining their own elections.

As political scientists and Kansans, our conclusion is clear: HB 2503 would harm the very communities it claims to represent. If we are committed to a democratic process that includes all corners of Kansas—urban and rural alike—we must preserve municipalities’ ability to hold all-mail elections.

The Senate should reject House Bill 2503. Rural Kansans deserve better. They deserve a voting system grounded in evidence, not ideology.

---

Alexandra Middlewood and Brian Amos are associate professors of political science at Wichita State University. They co-founded IKE Lab in 2023 to offer data and analysis on Kansas elections.

## On Cell Phones, Public Schools, and State Exemptions

As a proposed state-wide ban on cell phones in Kansas classrooms winds its way through our state legislature—a ban that at least initially had strong support from both parties, a ban that would be similar to actions that have been taken in multiple other states—an interesting question has arisen. What is more important to the Kansas legislators: the well-being of students, or freedom from regulation for alternatives to public education?

In answering that question, Kansas Senate President Ty Masterson drew a fairly explicit line: “The epidemic of cell phones disrupting classrooms and damaging our kids’ mental health is a top priority. But a fix must not trample on the independence of private schools. The radical left would exploit any opening to impose their agenda on faith-based and independent education. Rather than creating bad precedent, we will use this opportunity to review all state mandates on private schools and create a bright line that government will not cross.”

The epidemic he refers to is well-documented, by both numerous scholars and by a separate study commissioned by the Kansas Department of Education. Screen and smartphone addiction clearly creates distractions, interferes with learning, and invites bullying and other psychological pathologies. The data doesn’t necessarily mandate a complete bell-to-bell ban on cell phones in schools (the National Association of State Boards of Education encourages local school board involvement, concluding that “bans of devices during the school day alone will not address the complicated, potential harms arising from students’ online behaviors”), but everyone agrees that whatever compromise is reached, it should be implemented consistently, covering all students equally.

Unless, perhaps, you attend a private—or shall we say a “faith-based and independent”—school?

It’s not that Masterson is opposed to students whose parents opt to home school or to make use of private schools being able to enjoy the educational environments and resources that are generated through Kansas’s free public school system. After all, he has been a major force behind both making certain that Kansas students being educated privately or at home be allowed to participate in all public school activities, both athletic and academic and promoting school choice plans that could provide up to \$200 million in tax relief every year to support Kansas parents who want to send their children to a private school or teach them at home.

Rather, the idea appears to be that, though public schools will be expected to follow the best research in working out how to deal with a problem facing young people throughout Kansas, about 9% of Kansas students (those that attend private or home schools) perhaps ought to be left to their own devices (literally!), all for the sake being free from state mandates, however educationally justified.

Of course, the problem isn’t that straightforward. For one thing, regulating how parents impose—or don’t impose—cell phone restrictions while teaching in their children in their own homes would be an impossible, and terribly invasive, act.

For another, many private schools are very small, and requiring them to comply with state-wide regulations could be terribly burdensome.

But still, taking seriously public education is a value deeply rooted in Kansas history and law. Which makes the belief that educational alternatives to publicly funded schools should be given both additional financial support and access to educational resources, but should also be exempt from any concerted action to introduce best practices on those schools and resources, is a difficult one to balance, to say the least.

Dr. Russell Arben Fox teaches politics at Friends University in Wichita, KS

Regular Meeting  
February 17, 2026  
6:00 p.m.

The Herington city commission met on the above date and time in the commission chambers at city hall. In attendance were Mayor Eric Gares, Commissioner Cynthia Naylor, Commissioner Robbin Bell, Commissioner Dalton Scarff and Commissioner Larry Mann. Also in attendance were City Manager Thatcher Moddie, City Attorney Brad Jantz, City Clerk Megan Lawrenz, Mark Noble, Marion Noble, Lisa Schlesener, Rhonda Rice and Kim Ditto Bell.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Gares called the meeting to order. Approval of Agenda – Mayor Gares made a motion to approve the agenda with the following additions

and corrections, add 4a Executive Session, add 5 Discuss and Authorize Media Release Confirming Action of the City Commission, all other agenda items will move down one number, seconded by

Commissioner Naylor. Motion carried 5-0. Accept Resignation of City Manager Thatcher Moddie – Mayor Gares made a motion to accept Thatcher Moddie’s resignation effective February 10, 2026, with his last working day being March 18, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

4a. Executive Session – Mayor Gares made a motion that the Herington City Commission recess into Executive Session, pursuant to the personnel matters of non-elected personnel exception, K.S.A. 4319(b)(3) in order to discuss personnel matters to include the following, Governing Body, City Manager, and City Attorney with the open meeting to resume at 6:20pm. Seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0. The open meeting resumed with no action taken.

Discussion and Authorize Media Release Confirming Action of the City Commission. Mayor Gares made a motion that the city commission put out a media release, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

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. Mayor Gares made a motion by agreement with the City Manager to waive the 60-day notice and that the City Manager will vacate all remaining vacation payout, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Forum – Received via email - To the Commission of the City of Herington, Kansas; I am sending this to you via your City Clerk, as upon surveying the City Website it appears that none of your contact information is publicly available, neither phone number nor email address.

As it pertains to the City Manager, who now has both feet solidly outside of the door, it would be very strange not to accept his resignation; he's already left. Vote Yes. Accept that resignation.

As it pertains to the agenda and the employment contract of the City Manager, there should not even be a consideration of waiving what appears to be a full breach of his contract by his own choice not to submit a 60 day notice, per his contract. A choice. It does appear that he wanted to ensure he was protecting himself, but his dates didn't work out .... While our municipality is the one who will be left to suffer. That 60 day notice is purposeful, or it would not be meant as an amendment in the contract. While his offering to pay back vacation and et cetera is kind, business is often unkind to individuals who choose not to play by terms. It is my opinion that not only should he not be paid out vacation time accrued, he should have to pay for new search for a city manager that he, himself, has unexpectedly forced the municipality into. To let any person just get away with a breach of contract and more importantly, public trust, is to absolutely also lose the trust of the public who has seated you at that table. Vote No. Do NOT waive that 60-day notice. He should be held to a higher standard. Thank you for your time.

Kat Souza  
Consider February 3, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Mann made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2026, Regular Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

Consent Agenda – Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve the following consent agenda items, Announcement of Leo Schlesener as Temporary Fire Chief, Update KMEA Board of Directors: Seth

Biehler, Director Leo Schlesener, Alternate 1 Cody Oswald, Alternate 2, seconded by Commissioner Naylor. Motion carried 5-0.

Proclamations and Announcements – None.

Open Public Hearing for Union Pacific ROW Vacation – Opened at 6:34. Kim Ditto Bell 801 E Trapp –

The property that the city is vacating is attached to other people’s property, why were those property owners notified that the city was vacating?

Close Public Hearing – Closed at 6:40

Consider Petition for Vacation of a Portion of Street Right-of-Way from City of Herington to Union Pacific Railroad – Commissioner Mann made a motion to approve the petition, and to authorize the mayor’s signature, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider Order Vacating a Portion of Street Right of Way for Union Pacific Railroad – Commissioner Mann made a motion to approve the order to vacate and authorize the mayor’s signature, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

Authorize Quit Claim Deed Between City of Herington and Union Pacific – Commissioner Mann made a motion to approve the quit claim deed, and authorize the mayor’s signature, seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider Acceptance of Engagement Letter from Auditors – Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve the Engagement Letter for the auditors, to authorize the mayor’s signature and to designate Megan Lawrenz as the designated contact, seconded by Commissioner Naylor. Motion carried 5-0.

City Manager Comments – None. Mayor and Commissioner Comments Commissioner Scarff – None. Commissioner Mann – Thank you and Good Luck to Thatcher. Please bring Commissioner an outstanding list.

Commissioner Bell – Airbase building, schedule meeting before last day. Megan airbase financials.

Wildlife and parks want to make some enhancements at the lakes, we pay for it, but it will be reimbursed.

Commissioner Naylor – Someone would like to come and present about a dog park at the old baseball fields.

Help area Nonprofits and communities grow their permanent funds!  
Your gifts are matched up to \$5,000\* per organization.  
\*until funds are exhausted

 **MARCH 20**  
Give online for 24 hours @  
[www.donatedickinson.com](http://www.donatedickinson.com)  
Drive Thru **8:00 am to 4:30 pm**  
 **201 NW 2nd Street, Abilene**  
Scan to Give

Since 2019, Donate Dickinson County Day has raised over \$1.5 million to support local nonprofits.

The Community Foundation of Dickinson County  
For good. For ever.®

*We love our readers!*  
Thank you for your continued support.

# Eric Gares

Commissioner-Mayor  
City of Herington, Kansas

## INDIVIDUAL ELECTED-OFFICIAL MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

February 17, 2026

I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to Mr. Thatcher Moddie for his service to the City of Herington. Like any two people working closely together, he and I have not always agreed 100 percent on how to accomplish certain goals or what decisions should be made. That is a normal part of professional leadership, and it never diminished my respect for the work he has done for our city. I appreciate his contributions, and I sincerely wish him the very best as he prepares to move forward in his career with the City of Ottawa.

Over the past several days, many residents have reached out with questions, concerns, and frustrations regarding the transition in the City Manager's office. Now that the City Commission has taken formal action, I want to speak directly to the community and provide accurate information.

I also want to acknowledge the mistrust and confusion that some members of the community have expressed. Information about this transition became public before the City Commission was legally able to take formal action on his resignation. Because this was a personnel matter, and because Mr. Moddie specifically requested confidentiality until the Commission could formally act, we were required to follow the established process. I also want to remind everyone that agendas for special sessions of the City Commission cannot be added to and are limited in scope. That meant we could not formally accept the resignation, confirm details, or announce the start of a new search for a City Manager until the February 17 meeting.

On February 10, the City Commission received written notice from Mr. Moddie that he wished to resign from public service with the City of Herington and requested that his final day of service be March 18, 2026. Tonight, the Commission formally received and accepted that notice, which now allows us to speak openly about the transition. Section 4.4 of his contract allows us, by mutual agreement with him, to waive the 60-day notice of resignation requirement.

To me, it makes no sense to force him to stay or to pay him more than he has offered simply to enforce a provision that we can waive in the interest of the city. Nor does it make sense to commit public money to sue for a breach of contract that is a moot point and can be resolved without legal action. We would spend far more on doing so otherwise. The public money that will not be spent by agreeing to the waiver can now be utilized appropriately during the search for a new City Manager.

That is the action we have taken tonight, and I believe it is in the best interest of the city. It allows us to move forward immediately and begin the process of seeking out the next City Manager.

I understand how the gap between public conversation and official communication created frustration. But I want to be clear: in my opinion, the Commission was not withholding information intentionally to keep anyone in the dark. We were following the legal and procedural requirements that apply to all personnel matters—contracted or otherwise.

During this interim period, several statements circulated in the community that were inaccurate or based on incomplete information. I won't repeat them here, but I do want to encourage everyone to reach out directly when questions arise. I am always willing to answer what I can. At the same time, there will always be certain topics—especially personnel matters—that cannot be discussed publicly, regardless of who holds the position or how their employment is structured.

I want to reassure the community that it is my belief that city operations will continue without interruption. I have full confidence in our City Clerk, our Department Heads, and their teams to ensure that goal succeeds. The Commission will begin the search for a new City Manager immediately and with diligence.

Finally, I want to extend an invitation to those who feel strongly about the direction of our city or the actions of the Commission. Local government works best when more people are involved. If you are passionate about Herington's future, I encourage you to attend Commission meetings, speak during public forum, apply for appointments to local boards and committees, or—if you feel called to serve—file as a candidate and put your commitment into action. Our community benefits when more voices step forward—not just online, but in the rooms where decisions are made.

Thank you to everyone who has reached out with questions, concerns, and support. I remain committed to the stability of city services and the continued progress of the City of Herington. If you have questions, you are welcome to seek me out and ask. I will answer what I can within the boundaries and responsibilities of my individual office.



Eric Gares  
Commissioner-Mayor  
City of Herington, Kansas