CENTRAL KANSAS TIMES

Where our Communities build Kansas Stronger

Covering Dickinson County, Geary County, Morris County, Marion County, and Riley County.

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Candidate Forum in Herington

By: Brandy Sensmeier

On Saturday October 31st, The VFW of Herington held a Candidates Forum. Mary Clare Halpin, the campaign Manager for Greg Wilson, attended on behalf of Greg Wilson. Kylie Kilmer was also in attendance and invited Mrs. Jennifer Day who is running for Secretary of State.

The candidates opened by sharing information about themselves and where they come from. After the introduction we set some ground rules and started with questions from the audience. The one that seemed to ring loud and clear was about funding for education. Kylie Kilmer stated “If the state was to fully fund education, it would alleviate around 450 Million in property taxes across the state of Kansas”. Mrs. Mary stated “When it comes to education, it's important to attend meetings (Board of Education Meetings) so you can start talking to people”.

Janet Wade from Herington made the statement “Our children are our future and our states greatest asset”. Ms. Wade's comment rang loud and clear as everyone shook their heads in agreement. Mrs. Mary also stated “Greg believes before we ask Kansas Tax payers to pay more taxes we want to look at how those dollars are spent. Greg Wilson wants to make sure what’s already being spent, and where it's being spent at”.

The meeting lasted for two hours and a lot of views and concerns were voiced during this meeting. Due to space needed in the newspaper, I will not put all the notes in this article. I have posted the full recording on our facebook page. I also will have the questions that were sent to the candidates posted on our facebook page.
(Photo Courtesy of Kylie Kilmer)





Herington Elementry held a indoor trunk or treat, hosted by the PTO. (Courtesy USD 487)





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WORSHIP GUIDE

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

St. Michael's Catholic Church
210 E. 6th St. Chapman, KS
9 a.m. Sunday Mass
Fr. Peter O'Donnell

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



Rev.Connie D. Wooldridge

Chapman United Methodist Church

PASTOR'S CORNER

LIVING LOVE

I spent the first half of this week with my clergy colleagues at an event set aside for training, and fellowship. I am in my thirtieth year of pastoral ministry so many of the people I have worked with over the years have retired from ministry and many have ascended from the earth. I looked around the room during our final worship and my heart was warmed. Some of the people in the room were well known to me, others were not. Even so, I love those people. There is special permission in a room full of pastors to say the words, "I love you." We understand that loving originates in God who is love. We can love each other without cause or reason because we know that is how God loves us. This is all saints Sunday. I believe that all who follow Jesus are included in the list of saints. We are able to love one another because God first loved us. But let's take this love business one step farther. All of us living and dead are connected to one another. We are sparks of the divine. God loves all of us and calls upon us to love one another. It is not so easy to shout out "I love you" in every crowd. But we can live out of that love, and perhaps our love will spread. We live it when we really see one another. We live it when we listen to one another. We live it when we are generous and when we are thankful. We live it when we offer support and when we willingly receive it. There are so many ways we can live out the love God has poured into our hearts. And when we aren't sure we can love someone, we can pray for God's blessing for them. I find praying for others moves us toward love. I recently read See No Stranger by Valarie Kaur, in which she talked about how we are all connected; made of the same stuff. That understanding helped her to see others with a desire to learn about them and learn from them. She suggested an approach that says, "you are a part of me that I don't know yet." What a beautiful way to see the world. I love you. I may not know you, but I know you are a part of me I don't know yet. God, who is love, loves you, so it only makes sense for me to love you too.



Mark Will
DCNT Columnist

THIS DAY IN THE HERINGTON TIMES

125 years ago – 1901

FEARED FOUL PLAY – A lady who was living on a farm near Topeka, visited Mayor Shepherd last week asking for his assistance in ascertaining the whereabouts of her son, Bertie Ergo. It seems that he came here with another boy and was employed by a threshing outfit near Hope and has not been heard from after the job was completed. The man for whom they worked said that the boys had been paid off sometime in July, and that they had taken the train at Hope and gone "nobody knows where." The next night, the lady returned to Herington to inform us that a letter from home indicated that her son had been heard from someplace in Missouri and that he was alive and well.

100 years ago – 1926

POLICE FIND LIQUOR – In a raid conducted by Chief of Police Art Calkins Saturday night, a jug containing what appeared to be whiskey was found on the premises of a local Rock Island brakeman. The supposed owner of the liquor was lodged in jail and sentenced to thirty days confinement and fined $100. According to Chief Calkins, the man had been under suspicion for some time and had been warned repeatedly. Only lack of evidence saved him from arrest a while back, with a man from Kansas City who is serving time at Abilene now.

75 years ago – 1951

NATIONAL SCRAP DRIVE – Farmers are being asked to contribute their iron and steel scrap to relieve the shortage of scrap at steel mills. More scrap must move to the mills if the steel industry is to operate at full capacity and defense production is to encounter no delays. Scrap prices are comparatively good right now and farmers can count on getting higher prices than they received in World War II. Following is a partial list of what to look for: plow points and shares, cultivator shovels, other broken machine parts, horse-drawn equipment, old electric wire and cable, worn out storage batteries, windmill and water tank towers. Scrap helps guarantee continued production of new farm machinery and equipment when scrap moves to mills in sufficient quantities.

50 years ago – 1976

OLD LOST SPRING NOMINATED AS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE – The old Lost Spring, 2 ½ miles west of Lost Springs, which served as a watering place on the Santa Fe Trail, has been nominated as a National Historic Site. It was announced last week that "Lost Spring" will appear on the National Register of Historic Places. The Lost Spring site covers about 10 acres of land. During the busy years of the Santa Fe Trail, the Lost Spring site was a major stopping point for travelers who came from Council Grove, stopped at Lost Spring, and went on to Cottonwood Crossing northwest of Durham. Lost Spring was later the site of a stage station on the Santa Fe Trail.

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

Missing Persons, Alcohol, and Steel

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Monday, November 2: Cheesy Beef & Macaroni Casserole, Italian Blend Vegetables, Fruited Gelatin, Wheat Roll

Tuesday, November 3: Chicken Teriyaki, Over Steamed White Rice, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Mandarin Orange, Wheat Roll

Wednesday, November 4: Peppered Pork Loin, Smashed Red Potatoes, Spinach,Warm Cinnamon Peaches, Wheat Roll

Thursday, November 5: Liver or Beef & Onions, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Peas, Bananas, Wheat Bread

Friday, November 6: Oven Baked Fish OR Baked Ham, Roasted Sweet Potatoes, Steamed Cabbage w/Parsley, Wheat Bread, Fruit, Gingerbread



Hilltop Community Center

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Monday, November 2: Cheesy Beef & Macaroni Casserole, Italian Blend Veggies, Roll, Pears, Milk

Tuesday, November 3: Chicken Teriyaki, Rice, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Roll, Mandarin Oranges, Milk

Wednesday, November 4: Pork Loin, Smashed Red Potatoes, Spinach, Roll, Peaches, Cookie, Milk

Thursday, November 5: Liver or Hamburger Steak with Onions, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Bread, Applesauce, Milk

Friday, November 6: Oven Baked Fish/Baked Ham, Roasted Sweet Potatoes, Steamed Cabbage, Fruit Cocktail, Roll/Milk

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SpiceUpYourLife-SugarCookieRiceKrispiesTreats Lindsey Young

Sugar cookie Rice Krispies treats feature a little bit of sugar cookie mix, along with browned butter and some extra marshmallows to elevate the childhood classic just a bit.

Treat yourself to a more grown-up version of a childhood favorite
I hate to waste food. Even when I have mess ups in my kitchen, I try to follow my grade school art teacher's advice and
"take a mistake, and make it great." But that was not going to happen this week when I decided to try a fun dessert that features browned butter.
The directions said to turn the stovetop on high, but in what I'm sure is my own ignorance about how quickly butter can burn, I managed to take it from yellow, way past brown and into blackened territory in what felt like 30 seconds flat.
I very briefly considered still trying to use the now ebony slurry, but I thought about countless TV
chefs I've heard repeat over and over that burnt butter is bitter butter, and while that might be a fun
tongue-twister, it's certainly not something I wanted to actually taste.
The good news is my second attempt—with my pot on lower heat—turned out great, and it elevated
what would be fairly normal Rice Krispies treats to something a little more special.
This recipe comes from influencer Sarah Kraffty. You can find her under her name on pretty much all
the social media platforms. I left out sprinkles and changed some of the directions in my version.
Sugar Cookie Rice Krispies Treats
Ingredients
1/3 cup butter
14 ounces sweetened condensed milk
10-12 ounces regular-sized marshmallows
1/2 cup sugar cookie mix
9 ounces Rice Krispies cereal
5 ounces mini marshmallows
Directions
Add the butter to a stock pot or Dutch oven over medium to medium-high heat. Stir continuously and remove from heat immediately when the butter reaches a light-milk-chocolate-brown color (when the butter starts browning, it will go quickly).
Stir in the can of sweetened condensed milk. Add in the entire bag of regular-sized marshmallows, and stir until the marshmallows melt completely. (If there isn't enough residual heat in your pot to accomplish this, place it back over medium heat, stirring continuously until the mixture is melted, and then remove it from heat to finish up.)
Stir in the sugar cookie mix, and then add in the Rice Krispies, stirring to coat the cereal in the marshmallow mixture.
Finally, fold in the mini marshmallows, and then press the mixture into a nine-by-13-inch pan.
Let the treats cool, slice and serve. Store the treats in an airtight container.
These weren't drastically different from normal Rice Krispies treats, but they were enough dissimilar
that the people I shared them with immediately asked me what I did differently. They just had a slightly richer flavor.
And I think I have officially conquered browned butter for any of my future endeavors.
It's sad I had to waste part of a stick in my journey, but the final result more than made up for it.
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.

K-State Extension Chisholm Trail District Receives Capacity Building Grant

Abilene, KS - K-State Extension is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a generous grant from The Community Foundation of Dickinson County in the amount of $5,055 to support two extension programs. This grant exemplifies The Community Foundation of Dickinson County's commitment to investing in initiatives that positively impact our community.
"We are honored to receive this grant from The Community Foundation of Dickinson County. It will enable us to expand our efforts and further our mission to improve Kansans' lives, livelihoods, and communities through education, research, engagement, and leadership. This grant is a testament to the dedication of our team in seeking additional funding to increase our impact across the Extension District," said Amanda Lindahl, Family & Community Wellness Agent at K-State Extension Chisholm Trail District.
This grant funding will support the continued capacity building for our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. In the 2025 tax season, Chisholm Trail District completed 150 federal tax returns, generating $212,404 in total refunds for our constituents. This reflects money returning to our community.
The total financial impact of the VITA program in 2025, operated by Rodney Denholm, Family Resource Management Extension Agent, with support from one volunteer tax preparer, was $246,904, including the value of savings from tax preparation fees. Grant funding will be used to purchase new computer equipment to expand the VITA program's capacity.
The second Chisholm Trail District program receiving funding is the Herington Community Garden. This project is led by Bret Toews, Ag & Natural Resources Extension Agent, and will support site improvements at the garden. In the 2026 gardening season, six gardeners utilized rental plots in addition to a large community plot coordinated by Bret, with involvement from Herington Elementary students and teachers.
K-State Extension Chisholm Trail District serves both Dickinson and Marion Counties, bringing Kansas State University to our local communities. For more information about the Chisholm Trail Extension District and these important programs, please visit https://www.chisholmtrail.k-state.edu or contact Amanda Lindahl at 785-263-2001 or alindahl@ksu.edu.

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DAR ABILENE MINUTES

The Abilene Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution met Wednesday, October 14th , at 11:00 at the Abilene Public Library. Members present were April Barker, Mary Jean Eisenhower, Leesa Hettenbach, Judy Lynn, Becky Pozella, Jackie Staab, Michelle Stephens, Ann Strunk, Cassy Wilson and guest Carole Brazil.

The meeting was called to order by Regent Wilson. She announced the following opening rituals: Invocation by Leesa; The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America lead by April; The American's Creed was started by Judy and Michelle played the National Anthem. The President General's message was distributed with the minutes. Leesa gave an American 250! Moment on the traveling display commemorating America's birthday. It is currently at the Abilene Library for the community to view. She also gave a Constitution Moment about her and two SAR members visiting the Enterprise Elementary School on September 17th , Constitution Day. Also on Constitution Day, Abilene DAR participated in a Naturalization Ceremony at the Eisenhower Library.

Cassy gave a National Defense report about moments that defined the National Guard. Four years after 9/11, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. It couldn't have come at a worst time because 79,000 guardsmen were federalized to support the Iraq and Afghan wars. An additional 51,000 guardsmen from across the country quickly deployed to help the coast. For American Indians Moment, she gave that around 9.7 million people in the U.S. identify as Native American or Alaska Native. The Cherokee Nation is the largest U.S. tribe, and the Navajo Nation has the largest land area. Cassy said there are many different conservation pathways, but they can be condensed into four areas. So, for the Conservation Moment, she listed Environmental, Human, Wildlife/Animal and Marine Conservation.

DAR Good Citizen Chairman, Michelle, said emails have been sent to all five Dickinson County High School Councilors about the contest. She also advised there are two applicants for the nursing scholarship.

Cassy, JAC Chairman, said information has been distributed for the contest with this year's theme about the Statue of Liberty. For a Flag Moment, Leesa shared that Shari Lenhart carried the KSDAR Flag for the table dedication at Eisenhower Park.

Minutes were approved, Cassy gave a treasurer's report and bills paid. Judy gave a Registrar report that Tonya Sims is a new member. Also, she encouraged everyone to take the Membership Course. Secretary, Leesa, told about the KSDAR Fall Forum held in Wichita.

She, Judy and Lorie Barnhart attended. As Regent, Cassy distributed program books for the coming year.

Cassy mentioned the Northwest KSDAR Chapters are wanting to place an America 250! Patriot Marker somewhere in the district further out west. More research will be done by Sherry Koster, NW District President.

The Seeley Mansion ask Cassy if the Chapter would be willing to help decorate for Christmas, and the consensus was yes.

The program was given by Leesa on the NSDAR sponsored schools. There are five, Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, Grant AL; Berry College, Mount Berry, GA; Crossnore Communities for Children, Hendersonville, NC; Hillside School, Marlborough, MA; and Hindman Settlement School, Hindman, KY. She shared where each school is located, their mission, what they offered their students and how DAR supports the schools.

Hostess for the morning was Connie Cooper, who provided delicious chocolate chip cookies and bottled water. The next meeting will be Tuesday, November, 10th , at 10:30 am, at the Abilene Public Library. Program will be by Bonny Funk about her military experience.

Hostesses will be Michelle and Cassy.

Leesa Hettenbach
Recording Secretary



Picture with America 250! Display at the Abilene Public Library. Members L-R Leesa Hettenbach, April Barker, Mary Jean Eisenhower, Cassy Wilson, Ann Strunk, Becky Pozella, Jackie Staab, Judy Lynn and guest Carole Brazil.

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VIEW FROM THE HILL BY SCOTT HILL

Populating Rural America, Past and Future

Public law 37-64 passed the United States Congress on May 20, 1862, and was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln. The "Homestead Act," as it became known, distributed millions of acres of public land to Americans desiring to be part of an ownership-based society. In the history of the world, land was "owned" or controlled by a small percentage of the population. This usually was enforced by war and strong- armed leaders. From the very beginning of our country, the rights to own property were central to the concept of the United States. Many of the soldiers in the Revolutionary War were paid for their service by land grants from the newly-formed country. In 1788 when the Constitution was ratified, the rights of property owners were reinforced. This created a culture of ownership that is still a bedrock value in our country.

In the world today there are few countries that have as widespread ownership of property as the United States. In many countries the government owns most or all of the land and even the dwellings. The concept that grew out of the idea that government comes from the people also encouraged people to participate in ownership of houses and land. The newly formed Republican Party in 1860 included the idea of a Homestead Act in the party platform. Kansas became a state in 1861 after the southern states ceded from the Union. The next year the Homestead Act was passed and over the next 123 years homesteaders were granted ownership of land by the Federal government.

On January 1 of 1863 at 12:10 am, Daniel Freeman filed the first homestead claim near current day Beatrice Nebraska. Mr. Freeman was a Union soldier and a physician from Illinois. The site of his claim is preserved as a National Park only a few miles from Kansas. The onslaught of people wishing to own land led to approximately 4 million claims being filed until the act was totally repealed in 1986. The final homestead completed was by a Vietnam War veteran, Kenneth Deardorff. Title to his homestead was delivered in 1988 and he still lives on it today. Land ownership brought people, and people brought prosperity to the far reaches of the growing United States.

A hundred and fifty years later we live in a different, but also similar, world. Consolidation of population back into the cities has removed the hope of ownership from many Americans. Decreasing civic participation may, in no small part, be due to the disillusion experienced by those who feel disconnected from the American dream.

As the population has declined in rural areas, perhaps there is an opportunity to shift population once again. In a modern connected society the most important resource, in many cases, is electronic connectivity. The dual connectivity of high-speed internet and a retro connection to the land could bring young couples desiring to raise children in a safer environment back to our rural communities. The advent of small farming practices, coupled with technology advances, may even facilitate economic opportunities to small- acreage neo agriculturalists. The answers to societal changes that threaten time- honored values is never a simple one-size-fits-all solution. However, the discussion is worth having. A rebirth of the homesteader movement is already happening.

Governmental policy that provides economic incentives to repopulate dying rural areas should be a priority for policy consideration. We have invested billions in economic development in eastern Kansas. The promised dividend of fantastic growth may or may not come. The benefit of providing a climate for urban-exhausted millennials desiring a reconnection with values may even hold more promise for the future of our state.

Results of Chapman Cross Country at State in Wamego on Saturday, October 31, 2026

Varsity Girls (5K)—97 runners in the race
14th Liberty Cuevas 20:08 (medal)
Varsity Boys (5K)—10th Place out of 12 Full Teams (and 26 schools represented) and 104 runners
6th Riley Delorenzo 16:42 (medal)
63rd Charlie Purdue 18:36 (season PR)
65th Slayde Crouse 18:42
68th Elliot Solander 18:44.67
69th Asher Solander 18:44.69
70th Ethan Falls 18:45
95th Jackson Fong 19:52
Alternates on the State Team: Baptiste Balmitgere, Shiloh Solander, and Bryar Cochran

Comments: On a cloudy day with temps in the 60's, and the rain having stopped just in time, it was actually a great weather day for running. Congratulations to these kids for qualifying for State! They have all worked hard all season (and some, year-round), to get there. The talent and competition in 4A is just incredible and it is really eye-opening to watch. As happens every year, it is hard to lose the seniors, (six of them this year), but truly appreciate their time, work, and commitment to the Chapman Cross Country program. Thank you, too, to ALL of our runners, their parents, Coach Hoffman, administrators, teachers, staff, community and all those who have played any part in supporting us.

Next up: Take some time off to rest/recover. Then, get back out there whether it be doing a winter sport, or running a few days a week. :) Yes, I'm serious about that—don't sit on the couch eating potato chips for too long!! Hee hee!

Love our Chapman Irish Cross Country team—proud of you all!

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

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

KYLIE KILMER FOR KANSAS HOUSE



- Pro Veterans' Services
- Pro Working Families
- Pro Public Schools
- Medicaid Expansion
- Rural Transportation Expansion
- Rural Tax Relief

Paid for by Kilmer for Kansas,
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www.kilmerforkansas.com

MEET YOUR CANDIDATE FOR KANSAS ON OCTOBER 31ST AT 10 AM. VFW IN HERINGTON , KS WILL BE HOSTING AN EVENT FOR A MEET AND GREET FOR YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS. INVITES HAVE BEEN SENT OUT BUT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THEIR ATTENDANCE. AS OF TODAY KYLIE KILMER HAS ACCEPTED.

Share Your Holiday Happenings in DDC's December 4–6 Weekend Guide

Driving Dickinson County is inviting businesses across the county to submit promotions and events for an online holiday weekend guide highlighting opportunities to shop, dine, and celebrate December 4–6, 2026.
The guide will complement Abilene's Cowtown Christmas festivities by connecting residents and visitors with additional business offerings throughout Dickinson County. Visit Abilene will link to the guide, helping visitors discover shopping specials, holiday open houses, dining offers, entertainment, and other activities.
"Holiday events bring people into our communities, and we want to help our local businesses make the most of that opportunity," said Natalie Muruato, CEO of Driving Dickinson County. "Bringing these offerings together gives visitors more reasons to explore, support local businesses, and experience what Dickinson County has to offer."
Participation is free and open to all Dickinson County businesses. Promotions that extend beyond the weekend are welcome as long as they are available during December 4–6.
Businesses should submit their business name, promotion or event title, dates and hours, brief description, address, and website or event link. Listings will be organized by community, then date, and alphabetically by business name.
Submit a holiday weekend listing at forms.cloud.microsoft/r/k8ey42WsnJ.
Please complete a separate submission for each promotion or event.
Holiday Campaign Registration Closes November 18 Businesses are also encouraged to register for DDC's Merry & Bright Storefront Showdown and Win What You Spend holiday campaigns, both running November 27–December 24.
The Merry & Bright Storefront Showdown invites businesses to showcase their holiday spirit through decorated storefronts, while Win What You Spend gives shoppers a chance to win back eligible local purchases.
Business registration for both campaigns is open through November 18. Visit drivingdickinsoncounty.org for details and registration.

About Driving Dickinson County
Driving Dickinson County is the region's combined economic development and chamber partnership, serving nine communities across Dickinson County, Kansas. The organization pairs economic development strategy with direct business and community engagement — driving business retention and expansion, entrepreneurship, and countywide investment. Learn more at drivingdickinsoncounty.org.



Salina CityGo to Provide Free Rides on Election Day

SALINA, Kan. — OCCK Transportation will be fare-free all day on Tuesday, November 3 for Election Day. Services include Salina CityGo, Abilene public transportation, Concordia public transportation, 81 Connection, Kan-Connect, and paratransit services.
In 2025, OCCK Transportation gave 1,300 rides on Election Day. Other OCCK services helped 80 people access polls to vote across the service region.
Microtransit on demand rides are not eligible for free rides.
To find the stop nearest your polling location, or to book a paratransit ride, please visit salinacitygo.com or call 785-826-1583.
November 3 is during the 6th Annual Kansas Mobility Week. During Kansas Mobility week, November 1-7, 2026, public transportation providers, Mobility Managers, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and partners across the state will host events to encourage Kansans to make efficient and safe transportation choices, promote multimodal transportation options, and roll out new initiatives and policies.
For more information about Kansas Mobility Week events, visit ksrides.org
About OCCK, Inc.
OCCK, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that has been serving North Central Kansas for more than 50 years. OCCK provides services in north central Kansas to anyone with any type of long- or short-term disability, starting as early as birth and following people through their lifespan. Services include transportation, independent living skills, employment support, in-home services, assistive technology, autism services, children's services, brain injury services and more. For more information about OCCK, Inc., visit www.occk.com.

Community Foundation Awards More than $175,000 for 2026 Grant Season

ABILENE, Kan., October 26, 2026 — The Community Foundation of Dickinson County awarded $175,425.36 to support thirty-five projects throughout Dickinson County, following a competitive grant cycle. Grant recipients gathered at the Foundation's office on Friday, October 23, for Grant Check Pickup Day, an opportunity to celebrate their awards, connect with fellow community leaders and learn about resources available to help their projects succeed.

Elizabeth Weese, Executive Director, opened the celebration with a warm congratulations to recipients, thanking them for the extensive work they are doing which revealed over a million dollars in projects from organizations working to strengthen local communities. The response reflects both the needs that exist throughout Dickinson County and the dedication of individuals and organizations developing solutions, improving services, and creating opportunities for their neighbors.

Weese also announced the newly promoted Jen Parks to Director of Grants and Scholarships, who held a great responsibility in the Foundation's redesigned competitive grant program featuring four categories intended to better address local needs, encourage collaboration, and support projects with lasting community impact. The September application cycle marked a major step in putting that new structure into action. "Our vision and hope were to diversify our grants and shine a spotlight on our seniors. We also wanted to make the grant application process more thought-provoking. We want to see you succeed," said Parks. The Foundation received forty-seven applications requesting support, demonstrating the significant investment local organizations are prepared to make in the future of Dickinson County.

While available funding could support only a portion of the total requests, the response underscores the importance of the Foundation's role in connecting charitable resources with meaningful community projects.

Funding was awarded across all four grant categories:

 Community Support Grants: $126,925.36 supporting twenty-eight projects

 Senior Services Grants: $28,500 supporting five projects

 Strategic Impact Grants: $15,000 supporting one project

 Innovation and Pilot Grants: $5,000 supporting one project

The funded projects represent a wide range of community priorities, including food assistance, childcare, education, community improvements, family support, and services for older adults.

The gathering also emphasized the importance of sharing the stories behind each grant. Haley Jones, Director of Operations and Strategy, the newest member of the team at the Foundation, began this section by stating that one of the most rewarding experiences since her start has been to sit through the three days of grant panel interviews, "It was amazing to hear the passion behind each of your projects during the grant panels!" By documenting project progress, celebrating accomplishments and communicating the difference their work makes, recipient organizations help build awareness of community needs and inspire continued charitable support. Jones emphasized, "Your story is our story, and we want to help you share it!"

Jones also introduced the Foundation upcoming Giving Catalog, a new initiative launching in conjunction with Giving Tuesday on December 1. The catalog will highlight charitable funds held at the Foundation, along with community projects identified during the recent grant cycle that could benefit from additional support.

Designed to connect the Foundation's donors with meaningful giving opportunities while also connecting potential new donors who find joy in giving and making a difference in their own communities.

The significant response to this year's grant cycle reinforces the value of a strong community foundation. Through partnerships with donors, nonprofit organizations, and community leaders, the Foundation helps transform local generosity into meaningful investments while identifying opportunities for continued growth and collaboration.

"Every application represents people who see a need and are willing to do something about it. Every grant awarded represents a community investing in that commitment. We have the privilege of working with donors, and we have generous donors who believe in the impact you make possible. Thank you for making Dickinson County a better place to live," exclaimed Weese!

About the Community Foundation of Dickinson County

The Community Foundation of Dickinson County connects donors with charitable causes, supports nonprofit organizations, and provides leadership to strengthen communities throughout Dickinson County. Through grants, scholarships, donor-advised funds, endowed funds and community partnerships, the Foundation helps create lasting local impact.



Photo Caption: Representatives of local organizations gather at the Community Foundation of Dickinson County on October 26, 2026, to celebrate the Foundation's grant program.