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WEDNESDAY 30 | SEPT 2026

FOLLOW US:

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

U.S. Highway 73 project to begin this week in Atchison, Brown counties

SUBMITTED

The Kansas Department of Transportation plans to begin a mill and overly project on U.S. Highway 73 in Atchison and Brown counties on Wednesday, Sept. 30. The resurfacing project spans approximately 16 miles, starting at Horton and progressing southeast to Lancaster.

Traffic will be restricted to one lane and directed by a pilot car and flaggers where crews are actively working. Drivers should plan for delays of up to 15 minutes. A 12-foot width restriction will also be in effect.

Work will occur during daylight hours Monday through Friday, and is expected to be complete in November.

All project work and traffic changes are conditions permitting and subject to change.

Bettis Asphalt & Construction Inc., of Topeka, is the prime contractor on the $3.3 million project.

KDOT urges motorists to stay alert, follow posted signs and refrain from hand-held mobile device use in all active work zones. For current road conditions, visit *KanDrive.gov* or call 511. For updates on highway projects in northeast Kansas, visit *https://ksdot.gov/NortheastNews*.

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Commerce earns eight National Economic Development Awards

SUBMITTED

Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce has announced that the Department of Commerce has earned eight 2026 Excellence in Economic Development Awards from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). This marks another year of remarkable recognition for Kansas economic development initiatives, which included two gold awards, five silver awards and one bronze award.

Each of the awarded projects is a testament to the agency's innovative approach to strengthening Kansas' communities and businesses, creating conditions for long-term economic growth.

"This is an incredible accomplishment for the Department of Commerce and reflects the extraordinary work that is happening across our agency," Toland said. "These awards recognize programs addressing some of the toughest challenges facing our communities — from housing and downtown revitalization to neighborhood development, community engagement and major business investment."

The 2026 IEDC award-winning Department of Commerce projects include:

- Fostering Residential Advancement through Mentoring and Education (FRAME) – Gold Award and Best in Show Nominee, Postsecondary Education Partnership category
- Residential Opportunities on Main Street (ROOMS) – Gold Award, Innovative Economic Development category
- Towns Grant – Silver Award, Public-Private Partnership category
- Historic Economic Asset Lifeline (HEAL) Grant – Silver Award, Real Estate Development and Reuse category
- Overhaul of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program – Silver Award, Best Use of Federal Resources category
- Strategic Economic Expansion and Development (SEED) Grant – Silver Award, Neighborhood Development category
- Kansas Community Empowerment (KCE) Listening Tour – Bronze Award, Special Event category
- Merck Animal Health Expansion (Project Magenta) – Bronze Award, Business Retention and Expansion category

The awarded programs and events represent a broad range of economic development strategies. Together, these awards demonstrate how investments in housing, education, neighborhoods, historic properties, community capacity and local partnerships can strengthen the economic foundation of Kansas communities.

"The IEDC awards validate the idea that economic development happens in many different ways," said Assistant Secretary of Quality Places Matt Godinez. "When we talk about quality places, we are talking about communities where people want to live, where businesses want to invest and where families can build their futures. Investing in housing, neighborhoods, education and community leadership all have a part in that equation."

FRAME also was selected as one of 15 programs nominated for the Best in Show award, recognizing transformative initiatives that have made a powerful, lasting impact on communities and regions. The Best in Show winner will be announced during the 2026 IEDC Annual Conference in New Orleans on Oct. 25-28.

The IEDC Excellence in Economic Development Awards program recognizes innovative economic development projects and programs from communities and organizations across the globe. The awards program has 26 categories showcasing transformative efforts that have made a significant impact on communities, regions and nations.

ABOUT THE QUALITY PLACES DIVISION

Established in 2024, the Quality Places Division at the Kansas Department of Commerce exists to improve quality of life in communities across the state through various programs and services. The Kansas Department of Commerce understands the immense role played by strong communities in economic development and prioritizes investments in people and communities as major contributors to the overall strength of the Kansas economy.

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Kansas offers $1.5 million to transform downtown buildings

SUBMITTED

On Wednesday, Sept. 23, Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland announced that $1.5 million is available for a seventh round of Historic Economic Asset Lifeline (HEAL) program grants to revitalize dilapidated and underutilized downtown buildings in Kansas communities. The grants help close the financial gaps for communities of all sizes striving to make their downtown districts economically vibrant.

Since the launch of the program in 2021, $8.2 million has been awarded to fund more than 120 community projects. The state investment has leveraged $45 million in local matching funds.

"Kansas downtowns are commonly known for their historic, unique character — with plenty of potential for local businesses and communities to grow," Toland said. "Through HEAL, we're able to provide communities with the resources to revitalize buildings, bringing new economic vibrancy and opening spaces for housing, entrepreneurs and businesses to succeed in Kansas."

The HEAL grant helps communities restore downtown buildings as spaces for new or expanding businesses, housing, arts and culture, civic engagement, childcare or entrepreneurial activities.

For this round of HEAL funding, urban distressed downtown communities are encouraged to take advantage of the grant opportunity. Up to $750,000 will be made available for communities with 50,000 population or more. Downtown communities must be in a distressed census tract as identified by the U.S. Census Bureau – *https://eig.org/distressed-communities-interactive/?geo=zctas&lat=38.51&lon=-98.32&z=6.96*.

Submitted projects must show potential to become economic drivers in the community and demonstrate that the space will be occupied by the end of the project. There must be proof of 1:1 matching funds from the building owner that will be required at the time of application.

The application window opens Sept. 21 and closes Nov. 20. Awardees will be notified in January. Communities that received HEAL grants in 2025 are not eligible for this round of funding.

The Office of Rural Prosperity will host office hours at 11 a.m. every Monday starting Sept. 28 through Nov. 16 for those with questions. Visit *https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/H9vGPOTKS7uqY1NNCeacQw#/registration* to register.

For additional information about HEAL grants, the webinar and the online application, please visit *https://www.kansascommerce.gov/qpd/heal/*.

New commerce grant to boost youth registered apprenticeship opportunities

SUBMITTED

On Wednesday, Sept. 23, Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland announced the launch of the Kansas Office of Apprenticeship State Grant, a new funding opportunity designed to strengthen and expand Registered Apprenticeship programs across Kansas. The new grant will support both new and existing apprenticeship programs while promoting opportunities for youth ages 16 and 17 to enter high-quality career pathways in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

"Creating opportunities for our students and employers to connect at the early stages of professional careers is key to building a strong and sustainable Kansas workforce," Toland said. "Investing in Registered Apprenticeship programs will provide Kansas businesses with reliable and skilled workers while also setting up young Kansans for rewarding careers right here in their home state."

Grant funding will support activities such as program development and expansion, staffing, outreach, employer engagement, technical instruction, partnership development, and other operational costs that strengthen Registered Apprenticeship programs. Individual grants of up to $100,000 will be awarded.

As part of the grant requirements, applicants must commit to one of the following engagement activities:

- Successfully register a minimum of two apprentices ages 16-17.
- Complete a minimum of four structured K–12 and community engagement activities (e.g., presentations to students, school counselors, school boards, chambers of commerce, or local governing bodies, or coordinated site visits with K–12 partners). Career fairs will not qualify toward this requirement.

Applicants must also list both their target occupations and industries based on NAICS codes.

"Registered Apprenticeships have been one of the most effective workforce strategies in Kansas because we're connecting education with real employment opportunities," said Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship Director Shonda Anderson. "This grant supports the growth of Registered Apprenticeship by expanding opportunities for Kansas youth and helping employers develop the skilled workforce needed to keep Kansas competitive."

The grant is designed to expand new and existing Kansas-based Registered Apprenticeship programs, with a goal of increasing new apprenticeship enrollment and the number of 16- and 17-year-old apprentices by at least 5 percent year over year, particularly in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

Eligible Kansas Registered Apprenticeship programs are encouraged to apply. Applications will be accepted from Friday, Sept. 18, to Friday, Oct. 23. A webinar to explain the grant will be from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 1. Join the Teams webinar by visiting *https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F_%23%2Fmeet%2F296936577804206%3Fp%3DIIKjvwNqlzr0wsKCBt%26anon%3Dtrue&type=meet&deeplinkId=13b47662-1fba-4b47-b3f7-54080ddef0a7&directDl=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true*.

To learn more about the grant and to submit an application, visit *https://www.kansascommerce.gov/workforce/kansas-registeredapprenticeship/kansas-office-of-apprenticeship-state-grant/*.

The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship continues to expand innovative workforce solutions that connect employers with skilled talent while creating sustainable career pathways for Kansans. More information about Registered Apprenticeship and available resources can be found at *https://ksapprenticeship.org/dinner-bell-calls/*.

Three commerce programs receive 2026 NADO Impact Awards

SUBMITTED

Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland has announced that three Department of Commerce programs were selected as recipients of the 2026 Aliceann Wohlbruck NADO Impact Award. The awards from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) recognize the innovative efforts that are strengthening Kansas communities through housing, community engagement and economic development.

"These awards represent three very different projects, but each are designed to understand what communities need and find ways to help them move forward," Toland said. "We want to meet communities where they are, give them the tools and resources they need, and help them turn their ideas into action."

NADO announced 94 winning projects led by 58 organizations across 20 states. The awards recognize projects and partnerships that demonstrate how regional development organizations are turning vision into action and delivering measurable results.

NADO awarded the following programs:

- Fostering Residential Advancement through Mentoring and Education (FRAME) – The grant supports technical and community colleges in Kansas to enhance and expand programs that train skilled trade workers while addressing the state's housing needs. FRAME provides funding for colleges to build homes, collaborate with local high school students, and create sustainable workforce training programs.
- Kansas Community Empowerment Listening Tour – The tour marked the beginning of Commerce's administration of the Kansas Community Empowerment program. The agency traveled throughout Kansas to listen directly to communities, understand their priorities and learn what they needed to succeed. The tour helped build a framework where communities of different sizes, needs and levels of capacity can find a place to participate and grow.
- Residential Opportunities on Main Street (ROOMS) – A program that encourages the renovation and improvement of upper floors in commercial buildings with local Main Street districts, creating new housing opportunities in downtowns while rehabilitating and preserving existing properties and expanding the local tax base.

"Economic development is about building places where people can launch a career, put down roots, start a business and invest in the community they call home," said Assistant Secretary of Quality Places Matt Godinez. "Our awarded projects show that when we tackle the fundamental needs, we're able to improve communities and set the stage for continued growth."

Together the projects demonstrate a broader approach to economic development and why it's important to invest in people, places and infrastructure to create a foundation for long-term growth.

The awards are named in honor of Aliceann Wohlbruck, NADO's founding executive director, and recognizes 20 years of steadfast advocacy for rural and small-town economic development through regional collaboration.

The Kansas Department of Commerce and the awarded projects will be recognized alongside the other 2026 honorees at NADO's 2026 Annual Training Conference in Reno, Nev., this October.

ABOUT THE KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

As the state's lead economic development agency, the Kansas Department of Commerce strives to empower individuals, businesses and communities to achieve prosperity in Kansas. Commerce accomplishes its mission by developing relationships with corporations, site location consultants and stakeholders in Kansas, the nation and world. Our strong partnerships allow us to help create an environment for existing Kansas businesses to grow and foster an innovative, competitive landscape for new businesses.

Through Commerce's project successes, Kansas was awarded Area Development Magazine's prestigious Gold Shovel award in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, and was awarded the 2021 and 2022 Governor's Cup by Site Selection Magazine.

opinion

COLUMNS

Work garden soil in the fall

On the Extension Line

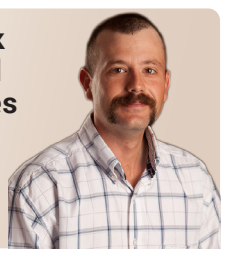
BY: MATT YOUNG BROWN COUNTY EXTENSION

Fall is the preferred time to prepare garden soil for next spring's vegetable garden. Spring is often wet making it difficult to work soil without forming clods that remain the rest of the season. Fall usually is drier allowing more time to work the soil when it is at the correct soil moisture content. Even if you work soil wet in the fall and form clods, the freezing and thawing that takes place in the winter will break them down, leaving a mellow soil the following spring.

Insects often hide in garden debris. If that debris is worked into the soil, insects will be less likely to survive the winter. Diseases are also less likely to overwinter if old plants are worked under. Also, the garden debris will increase the organic matter content of the soil. Working the debris into the soil is often easier if you mow the old vegetable plants several times to reduce the size of the debris.

Fall is an excellent time to add organic matter. Not only are organic materials usually more available in the fall (leaves, rotten hay or silage, grass clippings) but fresher materials can be added in the fall than in the spring because there is more time for materials to break down before planting. As a general rule, add two inches of organic material to the surface of the soil and till it in. Be careful not to overtill. You should end up with particles like grape nuts or larger. If you work your garden into the consistency of dust, you have destroyed the soil structure.

Hold the net wrap



Livestock & Natural Resources

BY: ROSS MOSTELLER MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT

There are days when I sit down to write on a topic for the week and writers block hits. That mental block got me thinking about another blockage and inspires this week's topic. We are entering the time of year when calves are weaned and stored harvested forages fed. A question that arises is should the net wrap or twine be removed before feeding? This article, originally ran in Progressive Cattle, looks at the research and reasons why the answer should be YES – remove the wrap.

Net wrap is an efficient forage binding method and significantly reduces harvest and storage losses compared to twine. According to a survey conducted by South Dakota State University (SDSU), net wrap was the most preferred method of forage binding (67 percent) compared to twine (26 percent) or both (6 percent) depending on the crop harvested or livestock being fed. Oftentimes, to save time and labor, net wrap or twine is not removed prior to feeding hay to cattle. The SDSU forage binding survey reported 54 percent of producers removed net wrap or twine when feeding bales whole, but only 11 percent of producers removed it when grinding bales.

Whether it occurs by accident or simply out of boredom, cattle can consume some of this net wrap or twine, which then accumulates in the rumen. The buildup of forage binding material in the rumen can result in cattle weight loss, diarrhea, and other symptoms similar to hardware or Johne's disease. Research by North Dakota State University (NDSU) has shown that the rumen microbes do not digest plastic net wrap or biodegradable twine. Sisal twine does get digested but at a much slower rate compared to hay.

In another NDSU study, steers were fed net wrap in a ration until 14 days prior to harvest to determine if the material would pass through the digestive system. However, there was still a significant amount of net wrap remaining in the rumen after 14 days. In non-related livestock mortality cases, 26 percent of SDSU survey respondents had postmortem exams conducted by a veterinarian and 30 percent of those recovered net wrap from the animal.

Cows fed ground, net wrapped hay for 140 days in an SDSU study accumulated a softball-sized mass in the rumen consisting of 0.8 to 1.1 pounds of net wrap. The entangled mass of net wrap and feed measured around 3 feet in length when stretched out. Based on the amount of net wrap offered through the diet, about 53 percent of the net wrap was recovered through rumen evacuations. Research by Montana State University has shown similar results where 47 percent of the net wrap offered to cows was recovered from the digestive tract.

While grinding net wrapped bales may reduce the particle size compared to feeding intact net wrap, health issues can still occur. It is important to consider how failing to remove forage binding materials may affect rumen function and capacity of the cattle being fed long-term. Due to differences in diet and the amount of baled forages consumed, cows are likely to be more at risk than feedlot cattle. There is no treatment available for the buildup of forage binding materials in the rumen, so prevention is key to avoiding any health issues.

Fall prevention starts at home

Family & Wellness

BY: TERESA HATFIELD MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT

More than 25 percent of adults age 65 and older experience a fall each year. After one fall, the risk of falling again doubles. Some falls result in serious injuries, such as hip fractures or traumatic brain injuries. The good news is that many falls can be prevented, and there are steps you can take today to reduce your risk.

Many older adults develop a fear of falling, and in some cases, that fear can actually increase the likelihood of a fall by causing people to become less active or more cautious in ways that affect balance and mobility. Because many falls occur in and around the home, one of the most important things you can do is conduct a home safety check.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends reviewing your home for common fall hazards. Use the checklist below to identify areas that may need attention.

Stairs and Steps

• Remove papers, shoes, books, and other clutter from stairs and walkways.

• Repair broken or uneven steps.

• Make sure there is adequate lighting and a light switch at both the top and bottom of the stairs.

• Replace burned-out light bulbs promptly.

• Repair loose or torn carpeting.

• Ensure handrails are sturdy and extend the full length of the staircase.

Floors

• Remove throw rugs or secure them with non-slip backing or double-sided tape.

• Arrange furniture to create clear walking paths.

• Pick up items that could become tripping hazards.

• Secure electrical cords and wires along walls or behind furniture.

Kitchen

• Store frequently used items on lower shelves where they are easy to reach.

• Use a sturdy step stool with a handrail when reaching high places. Never stand on a chair.

Bedroom

• Place a lamp within easy reach of the bed.

• Install night lights to illuminate the path between the bedroom and bathroom.

• Keep floors clear of shoes, cords and other obstacles.

Bathroom

• Place non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips in the tub and shower.

• Install grab bars near the toilet and bathtub or shower.

• Consider using a shower chair if standing for long periods is difficult.

Making a few simple changes can significantly reduce your risk of falling and help you maintain your independence. This fall, take a few minutes to walk through your home and identify potential hazards. A safer home today can help prevent a serious fall tomorrow.

Where has our work ethic gone?

Nutrition & Finance

BY: CINDY WILLIAMS MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT

Every parent and teacher's dream is to have children that internalize and display a good work ethic. The characteristics of consistent effort, perseverance and positive attitude combine to form the work ethic mindset. These qualities build the child's sense of personal responsibility and pride in their work.

When I was a classroom teacher, I was delighted with those students who went the extra mile to complete assignments, because they held high expectations for their work. I often found their high expectations were a result of parental guidance and modeling of a good work ethic at home.

Why has work ethic eroded over the years? Psychologists suggest that several changes in attitude toward work may have led to a weakening in effort. The first is that work is not always accepted as a necessary and routine part of life. If kids are often excused from daily tasks, they begin to think that work is optional, not a required part of family living.

Another related change is that kids don't feel the sense of accomplishment from completing their work as they once did in earlier generations. They are missing the self-esteem boost that comes from completing their jobs with skill and effort. The last is that kids often look upon work as too hard, so why should they try? They defeat themselves before they ever begin, rather than look at the task as a challenge they can tackle.

What steps can parents take to develop work ethics? A great start is to call a family meeting to discuss work expectations at home and school. Let kids give input on chores, study times and consequences for work that doesn't meet guidelines.

Nest, set up a work schedule to get kids into a regular routine and keep them on track. Remember to model a strong work ethic by completing your tasks side by side with them. Most importantly, teach the work-related skills of patience and perseverance. Explain that work can be hard, boring or frustrating, but completing the job is the critical factor to achieving success.

As you help children build their work ethic, tell them they are developing key skills for their future careers. Employers look for workers who are dependable and committed to their jobs. Such employees increase the productivity of the company. Employers value workers who are motivated and engaged in their job. When the time comes for company promotions, employees who have shown dependability, commitment and positive attitude will likely be the first to climb the ladder to better opportunities.

Land lease resources

Crops & Soils

BY: DAVID HALLAUER MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT

Each spring, USDA's National Ag Statistics Service (NASS) surveys operations with a history of cash renting land and compiles it into an annual report. That report is summarized by K-State Extension Farm Economist Robin Reid into the Kansas County Cash Rent Values report available on our AgManager website. It's not the only resource on rental rates available, however. There are many others as well.

Want to look at numbers? The publication referenced above is a good one, as is the companion publication that typically follows it that takes an economic view of rental rates. Use any or all, keeping in mind they all have limitations and require some level of study to see what they cover and what they do not. For example: the Kansas County Cash Rent Values report doesn't differentiate between old and new agreements or production levels and includes hay ground values in crop ground numbers. Still, it's the best local survey numbers we have and can be a great resource. In short, they are best used not as the number but as a starting number for every unique situation.

Interested in a written contract or what state statutes say about oral lease arrangements. We have resources to help with those types of questions as well. From the complex with explanations to the simple almost fill in the blank type examples, there are options that can help.

Don't even know where to begin? There are even references to help with that. Most are going to start with the recommendation to focus on agreements that are equitable to both landlord and tenant. They will also provide some insight into other considerations as well. Maybe they'll just remind you of what you have already considered. Maybe they'll help you improve the agreement you have. Either way, they can serve as great information to think about.

Check the numerous resources out online at *https://www.agmanager.info/farm-management/land-rental-rates.* If hard copies are more convenient, feel free to visit any of our District Offices or email me at *dhallaue@ksu.edu.*

LETTERS POLICY

WRITE: Letters to the Editor, The Sabetha Herald, P.O. Box 208, Sabetha, KS 66534

EMAIL: news@sabethaherald.com

We welcome letters of general interest to the community and reserve the right to edit for clarification or length. Letters should be fewer than 400 words, and writers are limited to one letter every other week. Letters are due by 10 a.m. on Monday before publication and must be signed with the writer's name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Only the name and hometown will be included in the printed letter. We do not publish anonymous letters or letters printed elsewhere.

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If it matters to you... It matters to us.

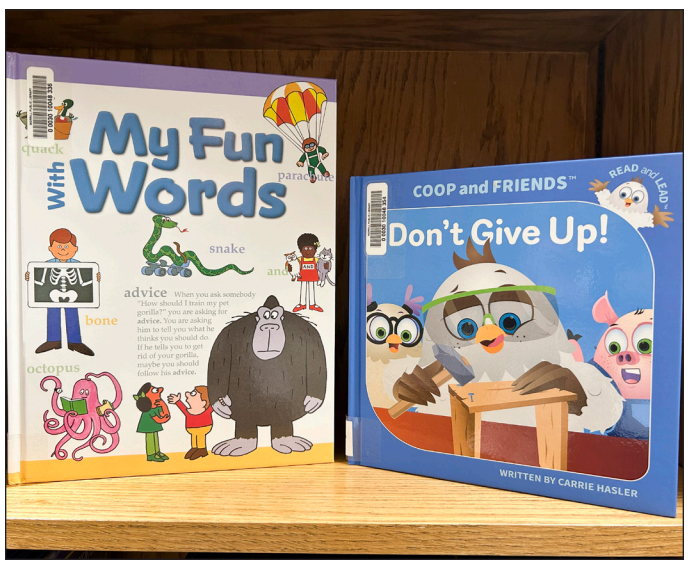
We have been serving Sabetha and the surrounding area since 1876. The Sabetha Republican was established in 1876, and The Sabetha Herald was established in 1884. The two consolidated in 1893.

local&area

MORRILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Morrill Public Library chat

These books are available to borrow from the Morrill Public Library in Hiawatha. **Submitted**



These books are currently on display at the Morrill Public Library. **Submitted**

Submitted by Joey May
Community Services Librarian

Our Storytimes are booming! We had 30 people at Toddler Storytime on Monday this week and our Thursday morning Preschool Storytime has been drawing big crowds as well! It's so much fun to see all the littles interacting with each other and it's a great time out for Mom, giving them opportunities to chat with other mothers.

Don't miss out on our Storytimes – at 10:30 a.m. Mondays for toddlers and 10:30 a.m. Thursdays for preschoolers. It's a fun time for all!

Another fun program we offer is Senior Socials - a fun time of socializing and games for our senior citizens. Senior Socials meets the first and third Fridays from 1 to 4 p.m. in the large meeting room downstairs. They play cards, have snacks and have fun socializing! Come join our Senior Socials and bring a friend.

In October, Rainbow's Tech Topics will be back in action on the third Friday of the month — from 12-1 p.m. — right before Senior Socials. They are planning a three-month session, October through December, before winter hits! Stop in to learn about the latest in the tech world and Rainbow Communications staff always welcomes questions!

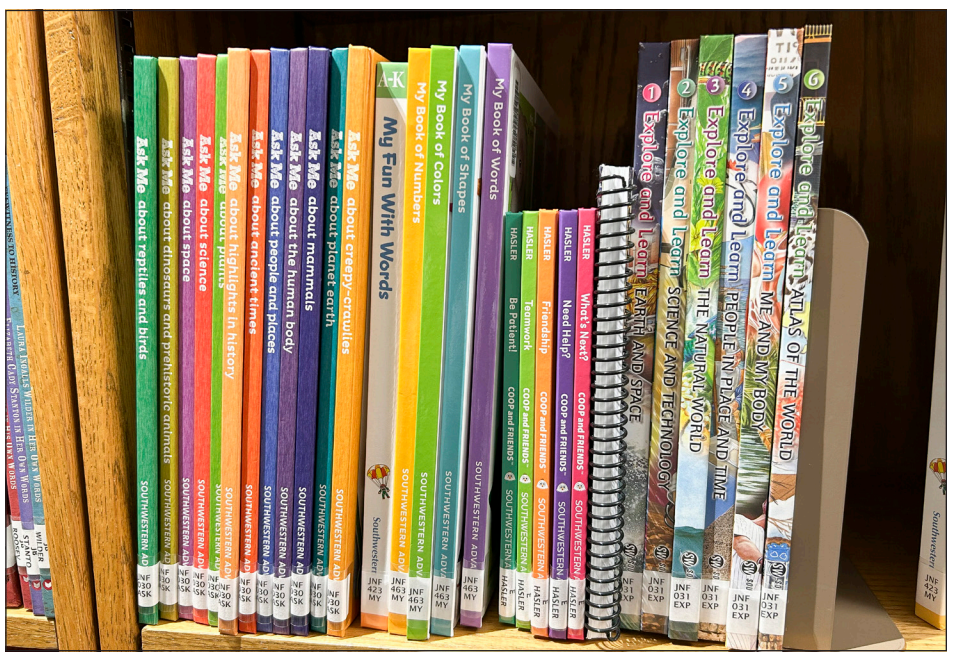
The Maple Leaf Festival is Saturday in downtown Hiawatha and the library — along with Friends of the Library volunteers — will have a booth on the north side of the courthouse on the main sidewalk. The Friends will be selling tickets for a chance to win its One Night at the Pumpkin Patch basket. This comes with a quilted witch hat, the Bill Martin Jr. book The Ghost-Eye Tree, a flashlight and mask, along with a Halloween quilt. The witch hat is made by Jane Bebermeyer and the quilt is a collaboration with Bebermeyer and Carrie Olsen, both members of the Friends of the Library. If you miss them at Maple Leaf stop by the library to check out the basket and purchase your ticket for a chance to win.

Upcoming events include our mini fall festival, set for 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8, with the Friends of the Library Book Sale that evening at the Fisher Center. We will have some fun games, a fall craft and a snack making event for the kiddos! More details to come!

October events will include Storytime at the Pumpkin Patch, a Halloween Trivia game night and Decorate Your Pumpkin Like Your Favorite Literary Character contest!! Watch for details!

A while back, a very nice young man named Szymon Bookman Binger, with Southwestern Advantage, was selling book sets around town. He stopped by the library and we purchased all of his sets and they are now available in our children's library in the non-fiction section. These sets include Explore and Learn Books, Ask Me About and My Fun With Words among others. They offer a variety of educational and fun books. Some of the topics include "Which Bug Has a Flashlight," "The Natural World," "My Fun With Words," and inspirational books with Coop and Friends such as "Don't Give Up!"

As always, anyone with questions about any of our programming, books and other resources can contact us here at the library at 785-742-3831.



These book sets offer a variety of education and fun. **Submitted**

Public library chat

Submitted by Joey May
Morrill Public Library

Hope everyone had a great Saturday at the Maple Leaf Festival!

The One Night at the Pumpkin Patch basket is now on display at the library, where you can buy chances to win. It includes a quilted witch hat, a Halloween quilt, Bill Martin Jr.'s children's book The Ghost-Eye Tree, a flashlight and a mask. We will have the basket at the library until next Monday when it moves to the Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale at the Fisher Community Center. The drawing for the winner will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10. Proceeds from the book sale and the raffle will go back to supporting the library's programming and projects, including the Gutter Replacement Fund.

Hours for donations of books:
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 5
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 6
- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 7

Hours for the Book Sale:
- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 7
- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 9
- 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10

Don't forget to bring your kids out to the book sale between 4 and 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8, for a Mini Fall Fest! We will have a fall craft, games and activities and a make & take Halloween treat! Find us in the gym area!

Other upcoming events include a new program Makers Community, which will be on the first Tuesday of the month. The first meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, where farmstand owners, Farmer's Market participants and home bakers are invited to gather, fellowship, share ideas and take part in activities. This month, the library will sponsor a fall craft.

Looking ahead into next month, the library will be sponsoring a Literary Pumpkin Decorating Contest! More details are to come, but start working on ideas to decorate, paint or carve a pumpkin as your favorite literary character. Prizes in four age categories – Elementary, Middle/High School, Adult and Family!

We also plan to be at the Mulberry Pond Pumpkin Patch for our Annual Storytime at the Pumpkin Patch. Finalizing dates, so watch for that soon!

I leave you with a glance at our Kansas Notable Books table, which is located near the Grandfather Clock toward the south wall of the upstairs library. We have featured books about Kansas Wildflowers, Best Biking Trail Guide in Kansas, Nothing But the Dirt-Stories from an American Farm Town, abolitionist John Brown, Native American stories for kids, Soldiers in the Army of Freedom, a Travelers Guide to Kansas Murals, Haunted Houses and other Eerie Tales, A Death at Crooked Creek Campsite in Kansas, Kansas Amphibian and Reptiles and many others!

Call the library at 785-742-3831 or email *jmay@hiawathalibrary.org* for info on our upcoming programs!

Books about Kansas Wildflowers, Best Biking Trail Guide in Kansas, Nothing But the Dirt-Stories from an American Farm Town, a Travelers Guide to Kansas Murals, A Death at Crooked Creek Campsite in Kansas, Kansas Amphibian and Reptiles, and more are featured at the Morrill Public Library. **Submitted**

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

KDOT seeking comments on STIP amendment

Submitted

The Kansas Department of Transportation requests comments on an amendment to the Federal Fiscal Year 2027-2030 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) document.

The STIP is a project specific publication that lists all KDOT administered projects, regardless of funding source, and includes projects for counties and cities as well as projects on the State Highway System. The list of projects being amended to the STIP can be viewed at *https://ksdot.gov/about/publications-and-reports/state-transportation-improvement-program-stip.*

The approval of the STIP amendment requires a public comment period, which concludes Oct. 8. To make comments on the amendment, contact KDOT's Division of Program and Project Management at 785-296-2252.

This information is available in alternative accessible formats. To obtain an alternative format, contact the KDOT Division of Communications, 785-296-3585 (Voice/Hearing Impaired-711).

KANSAS DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES

New long-term services, supports commissioner announced

Submitted

Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) Secretary Laura Howard announced that Seth Kilber has been appointed Commissioner of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS), effective Sept. 27. Kilber succeeds Michele Heydon, who will remain with the agency in an advisory role until her retirement on Nov. 20, to ensure a smooth leadership transition.

Kilber currently serves as Assistant LTSS Commissioner and has been on the KDADS leadership team since 2022. He brings more than a decade of experience advancing Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) at the local and state levels, including policy development, waiver administration, quality assurance, program integrity and stakeholder engagement.

"Seth has already demonstrated the judgment, operational skill and commitment this role requires," said KDADS Secretary Howard. "He knows Kansas's HCBS system from the ground up and has been a steady partner in aligning our programs with federal requirements while keeping people who use services at the center of our work. I am confident he will lead the commission with respect for the individuals and families we serve."

Before joining KDADS, Kilber worked at the Johnson County Community Developmental Disability Organization in Lenexa, first as a Quality Assurance Analyst and later as an Eligibility Determination Specialist. In those roles, he conducted provider compliance reviews, led quality improvement initiatives, determined eligibility for intellectual/developmental disabilities, administered functional assessments for HCBS waiver access, and provided options counseling and technical assistance to individuals, families, and providers.

Kilber joined KDADS in 2022 as Policy and Program Oversight Director for LTSS and was named Assistant Commissioner in 2023. In those roles, he has provided executive oversight of HCBS quality assurance, program integrity and strategic initiatives; advised on agency-wide HCBS policy and interagency coordination; supervised division directors and project staff; and represented the agency in legislative hearings, bill analysis, and testimony.

Kilber holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from MidAmerica Nazarene University. He is a graduate of the Leadership Institute of the National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities, the Next Gen HCBS Leadership program through ADvancing States, and the Emerging Leaders Academy at the University of Kansas Public Management Center.

"I am honored to serve Kansans who rely on long-term services and supports, and I am grateful for Michele's leadership and mentorship during this transition," said LTSS Assistant Commissioner Kilber. "Our responsibility is to keep people in their homes and communities whenever possible, to partner closely with families, providers, and sister agencies, and to continue strengthening a system that is person-centered, compliant, and sustainable. At the end of the day, our work is to ensure the right people receive the right services and supports in the right way."

Heydon was appointed LTSS Commissioner on Feb. 10, 2023, after joining KDADS in 2017 as Brain Injury and Technology Assisted Waiver Program Manager and serving as HCBS Director beginning in November 2018. She has an extensive 30-year background in HCBS, serving people with disabilities.

"Michele has devoted more than three decades to serving Kansans with disabilities, and the LTSS Commission is stronger because of her leadership," said KDADS Secretary Howard. "She has guided the commission through significant program and policy changes with professionalism, institutional knowledge, and a clear focus on access to home- and community-based services. We are grateful that she will remain with us through November to support a smooth transition, and we thank her for her service to Kansas."

The LTSS Commission administers Kansas's system of community-based supports for older adults and people with disabilities, including HCBS waivers delivered through KanCare, and coordinates with managed care organizations, partner agencies and community stakeholders.

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Current Blue-Green Algae Public Health Advisories

This information is provided by Kansas Department of Health and Environment on September 25, 2026.

WHAT IS IT?

A harmful algal bloom (HAB) may look like foam, scum or paint floating on the water and be colored blue, bright green, brown or red. Blooms can develop rapidly; if the water appears suspicious or there is decaying algae on the shore, avoid contact and keep dogs away. These toxins can be absorbed by ingestion, inhalation of aerosols and even skin contact.

Symptoms vary depending upon the type of exposure (e.g. direct contact, ingestion, inhalation) but can include rash, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, sore throat and headache. If you, or your dog, come into contact with algae rinse the area with clean, fresh water. Suspected HAB-related health incidents, whether human or animal, regardless of season, should be reported at kdhe.ks.gov/1163.

For information on blue-green algae and reporting potential harmful algal blooms, please visit kdhe.ks.gov/HAB and check out our interactive story.

ACTIVE WARNINGS

A Warning status indicates that conditions are unsafe for human and pet exposure. Contact with the waterbody should be avoided.

When a warning is issued, KDHE recommends the following precautions be taken:

- Signage should be posted at all public access locations.
- Inhalation of spray or aerosols may be harmful.
- Lake water is not safe to drink for pets or livestock.
- Lake water, regardless of blue-green algae status, should never be consumed by humans.
- Water contact should be avoided.
- Fish may be eaten if they are rinsed with clean water and only the fillet portion is consumed, while all other parts are discarded.
- Do not allow pets to eat dried algae.
- If lake water contacts skin, wash with clean water as soon as possible.
- Avoid areas of visible algae accumulation.

HAZARD STATUS

A Hazard status indicates that a harmful algal bloom is present, and extreme conditions exist.

- Signage should be posted at all public access locations.
- It is recommended that either a portion of the lake or the entire lake or zone, be closed to the public.
- In some cases, the adjacent land should be closed as well. Actual setback distances will be determined on a site-specific basis, if necessary.
- When partial closures (i.e., beach or cove) are issued, the remaining lake or zone area will carry a warning status.

WATCH STATUS

A Watch status means that blue-green algae have been detected and a harmful algal bloom is present or likely to develop. People are encouraged to avoid areas of algae accumulation and keep pets and livestock away from the water.

During the watch status, KDHE recommends the following precautions be taken:

- Signage will be posted at all public access locations.
- Water may be unsafe for humans/animals.
- Avoid areas of algae accumulation and do not let people/pets eat dried algae or drink contaminated water.
- Swimming, wading, skiing and jet skiing are discouraged near visible blooms.
- Boating and fishing are safe. However, inhalation of the spray may affect some individuals. Avoid direct contact with water, and wash with clean water after any contact.
- Clean fish well with potable water and eat fillet portion only.

LIFTED

A Lifted status indicates that it is safe to resume normal water-related activities.

KANSAS LAKES IN ACTIVE WARNINGS

Hain State Fishing Lake, Ford County
Lake Charles, Ford County
Gathering Pond, Geary County
Frazier Lake, Grant County
Jetmore City Lake, Hodgeman County
Frisco Lake, Johnson County
Marion County Lake, Marion County
(Elevated Sept. 25)
Lake Scott, Scott County
Chisholm Ridge Ponds (Clearwater),
Sedgwick County
Lake Afton, Sedgwick County
Neodesha Riverwalk Park Pond,
Wilson County

KANSAS LAKES IN HAZARD STATUS

None

KANSAS LAKES IN WATCH STATUS

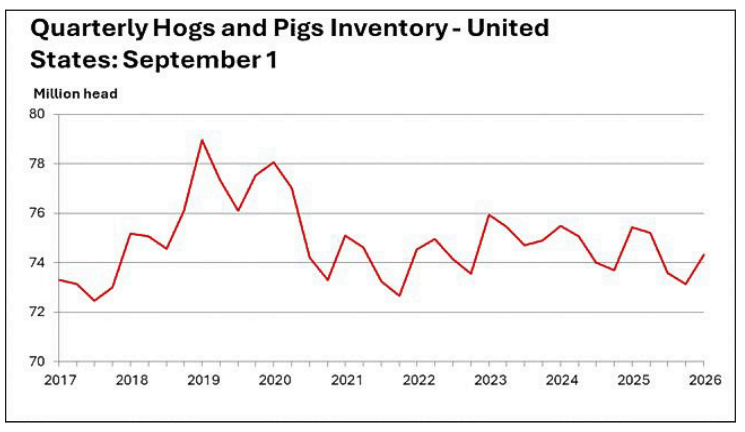
Lone Star Lake, Douglas County
Elkhorn Lake, Jackson County
Jewell State Fishing Lake, Jewell County
Amesbury Lake, Johnson County
Kingston Lake, Johnson County
Melvern Outlet River Pond, Osage County
(Lowered Sept. 25)
Ottawa State Fishing Lake, Ottawa County
Jeffrey Energy Center Make-up Lake,
Pottawatomie County

KANSAS LAKES THAT HAVE BEEN LIFTED

Hiawatha City Lake, Brown County

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

United States hog inventory down 2 percent



Submitted

As of Sept.1, there were 74.3 million hogs and pigs on U.S. farms, down 2 percent from September 2025 but up 2 percent from June 1, 2026, according to the Quarterly Hogs and Pigs report published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

Other key findings in the report were:

- Of the 74.3 million hogs and pigs, 68.4 million were market hogs, while 5.87 million were kept for breeding.
- Between June and August 2026, 34.5 million pigs were weaned on U.S. farms, down 2 percent from the same time period one year earlier.
- From June through August 2026, U.S. hog and pig producers weaned an average of 11.96 pigs per litter.
- U.S. hog producers intend to have 2.85 million sows farrow between September and November 2026, and 2.8 million sows farrow between December 2026 and February 2027.
- Iowa hog producers accounted for the largest inventory among the states, at 24.7 million head. Minnesota had the second largest inventory at 9.3 million head. North Carolina was third with 7.6 million head.

To obtain an accurate measurement of the U.S. swine industry, NASS surveyed 4,258 operators across the nation during the first half of September. The data collected were received online through NASS's Respondent Portal, by mail, telephone and through face-to-face interviews.

The Quarterly Hogs and Pigs report and all other NASS reports are available online at *www.nass.usda.gov.*

"Trust Us!"

Without public notices, the government wouldn't have to say anything else.

Public notices are a community's window into the government. From zoning regulations to local budgets, governments have used local newspapers to inform citizens of its actions as an essential part of your right to know. You know where to look, when to look and what to look for to be involved as a citizen. Local newspapers provide you with the information you need to get involved.

Notices are meant to be noticed. Read your public notices and get involved!

KANSAS BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Multiple arrests in operation targeting child predators, sex buyers

Submitted

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI), in partnership with the Riley County Police Department, Geary County Sheriff's Office and Junction City Police Department, announced several arrests following a joint operation targeting sex buyers and offenders who intended to meet children for sexual relations.

On Sept. 17 and 18, at locations in Riley County and Geary County, KBI agents and local authorities coordinated operations that resulted in the arrest of 19 suspects who were purchasing or selling sex, or arranging to meet with minors for sexual acts.

Agencies who supported the operation include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Kansas Highway Patrol, Pottawatomie County Sheriff's Office, United States Army Criminal Investigation Division, Butler County Sheriff's Office, Park City Police Department, Wichita Police Department, Bourbon County Sheriff's Office, Greenwood County Sheriff's Office, and Cherokee County Sheriff's Office.

The offenders arrested for electronic solicitation of a child and attempted aggravated human trafficking include:

- Andrew David Green, 40, of Manhattan
- Gabriel Guaman-Martinez, 26, of Manhattan
- Scott Bradley Hamill, 40, of Lawrence
- Adam Lee Lang, 42, of Manhattan
- Gary Francis Lewison, 47, of Wamego
- Chris Alan McClanahan, 54, of Abilene
- Hawley Brock Douglas Needham, 32, of Manhattan
- James Cameron Nunley, 38, of Westmoreland
- Ezton Orozco-Agustin, 30, of Topeka
- Jose Guadalupe De Jesus Ortega, 37, of Manhattan

A 29-year-old man from Lincoln, Neb., was also arrested, and is expected to face federal charges.

The arrests occurred without incident. The suspects were booked into the Riley County Jail. Formal charges are pending.

The offenders arrested for buying sexual relations and unlawful use of a communications facility include:

- Devon C. Brown, 36, North Chesterfield, Va.
- Milton A. Guerrero-Vargas, 23, of Fort Riley
- Bradley J. Moscou, 47, of Junction City
- Mohamed A. Rahim, 28, of Junction City
- Lamont K. Ray, 29, of Junction City
- Roscoe B. Richmond, 42, of Junction City
- Zia R. Segule, 40, of Fort Riley

Additionally, Holly J. Goss, 47, of Topeka was arrested for selling sexual relations.

The arrests occurred without incident. The suspects were booked into the Geary County Jail. Formal charges are pending.

During the operation victim advocacy services were offered to three potential sex trafficking victims. User-level narcotics were located and seized. No actual children were victimized during this operation.

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing sex trafficking contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888 or text INFO or HELP to BeFree (233733). This hotline is confidential and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Tips can also be reported to the KBI at 1-800-KS-CRIME, or submitted anonymously online at *www.kbi.ks.gov/sar.*

All subjects are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law. The investigations are ongoing.

Death investigation in Larned

Submitted

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI), the Larned Police Department and the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office are investigating the death of a Larned man.

The Larned Police Department requested KBI assistance on Saturday, Sept. 26, at around 5:20 p.m. KBI agents and the Crime Scene Response Team responded.

Just before 4:30 p.m., a male resident at 907 Aspen Dr., in Larned, called 911 to report that he believed his roommate was dead. When officers from the Larned Police Department arrived, they found a man in a bedroom who had suffered a gunshot wound. Deputies from the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office and EMS also arrived. The man was pronounced deceased at the scene. He was later identified as Cobin A.K. Poston, 24, of Larned.

Interviews were conducted, evidence was collected and an autopsy was completed. Investigators and the coroner believe Poston died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The investigation is ongoing. No further information will be released.

Death investigation in Elk County

Submitted

The Elk County Sheriff's Office requested Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) assistance on Tuesday, Sept. 22, at around 2:30 p.m., after an adult male was discovered deceased on Elk Valley USD No. 283 school property.

KBI agents and the Crime Scene Response Team responded to Longton, Kan., to conduct a death investigation.

School personnel discovered the deceased man on Tuesday afternoon around 2 p.m. and immediately notified local law enforcement.

The investigation determined the man was alone on school property at around 3 a.m., and did not leave the area.

The deceased man has been positively identified as Jason Barrager, 50, of Independence, Mo. Barrager did not have obvious injuries to his body. An autopsy will be performed.

At this time there are no indications of foul play in Barrager's death, or evidence suggesting that students or the public are at risk related to this incident.

The investigation is ongoing.

How are we stacking up?

{ Questions? Concerns? Compliments? Don't hesitate to contact us! }

by email to sabethaherald@sabethaherald.com | *by phone to* 785-284-3300 | *in person at* 1024 Main Street in Sabetha