



Raiders earn
NCKL nods
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THE TIMES

POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY, KS

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Col. Erica Christie retires after storied Army career



Beth Day | The Times

Brig. Gen. Anthony Mohatt, right, presents Col. Erica Christie with the Kansas National Guard Medal of Excellence Saturday at her retirement ceremony.

Beth Day
The Times

When Col. Erica Christie hits her official retirement date on June 30, she will be the highest ranking woman in the Kansas Army National Guard.

But 35 years ago, she had no idea that's where her career would go. In fact, she didn't even know she would have a career as an Army officer.

How did she become one? She was asked.

"Major Ray Rod was in the hallway of Washburn University," Christie said. Rod was professor of military science at KU. "I had

Please see
Christie PG. A8

Library kicks off summer reading with new building

Loryn Clauson
The Times

If you notice Lincoln Ave. is extra busy this week, you can look towards the Wamego Public Library. Not only was June 3 the kick-off to the Summer Reading Program, and the area business' scavenger hunt, but the entire building was opened to the public, unveiling over a year's worth of renovations to both the first floor and the basement.

Wamego Library Director, Darcie Hildebrand described all the hard work, "The move went really well with the help of amazing community volunteers, in-kind contributions and a very hard-working library staff. In all, we put in nearly 650 hours in just two weeks to get the shelving built, the boxes unpacked and the furniture in place. Our favorite part has been seeing the spaces we carefully and thoughtfully designed for



Loryn Clauson | The Times

Community members line up to sign up for the summer reading program.

our community being used by excited library patrons."

Area families flooded in on Monday morning to sign up on the first day of the reading program. Hildebrand explained, "We always try to improve and meet the needs of our community, so we have adapted the programming schedule and tried to keep it as simple as possible to participate. Just come in, pick up an age-appropriate reading log and join in the fun!"

Kids, kindergarten through fifth grade, sign up in the children's library on the first

floor. This year kids and parents set their own reading goals, the recommendation is 20 minutes, but any reading is considered a win. At the end of the week, kids total up their time and take their log back into the library for a prize. Kids can receive another prize at the end of the summer by turning in their whole reading log. The reading log also includes some bonus adventures, including: read a book outside, play I Spy, and visit the StoryWalk, among others.

Fifty-one area businesses have also partnered with

the Wamego Public Library again this year for the scavenger hunt. Each participating business in the downtown area has a poster displayed in its window. Kids have to find each poster and write down the summer image it displays. Several families were already walking up and down Lincoln filling in their scavenger hunt sheets just an hour after the library opened its doors. All completed sheets will need to be turned in to the Library by July 15 to enter to win a prize basket. Some prizes include Flint Hills Discovery Center memberships, a star-gazer lamp, library totes, and other games and activities.

For older kids and young adults, their adventure begins downstairs in the newly renovated YA space. Sixth-graders through 12th graders get their own reading logs and adventures. Their new library space also includes a new gaming

Please see
Library PG. A4

ELECTION 2024
Candidate Filings

Filing deadlines close for upcoming election

Beth Day
The Times

Filing deadlines closed for the 2024 elections at noon, June 3. A primary will be held on Aug. 6. The general election will be Nov. 5.

July 16 is the voter registration deadline for the primary and early in-person voting begins in the clerk's office on July 22.

Since voters at the last election approved expanding the Pottawatomie County Commission from three to five members, two new seats are on the ballot in this election.

The Times will run candidate profiles for contested county and city positions from June 20 weekly through July 25. Due to the large number of contested seats, we will be limiting our profiles to those races.

Candidates will be mailed a questionnaire approximately two weeks before the deadline for their particular publication. They will each be asked the same questions, with a word count limit. They will also have a "unlimited soapbox" which will be run on-line only.

The run-dates are — Sheriff and County Attorney, June 20; Pott. Co. Commission District 2, June 27; Pott. Co. Commission District 3, July 4; Pott. Co. Commission District 4, July 11; Pott. Co. Commission District 4, July 18; St. Marys City Commission, Wamego City Commission, July 25.

The Times will run a similar series of profiles prior to the November general election for any contested area races.

These profiles will be run free-of-charge. Any other submitted material, to include *Letters to the Editor* supporting or opposing a candidate, will be considered paid political advertising.

FEDERAL POSITIONS

• **US House of Representatives District 1.** Democrat — Paul Buskirk, Lawrence, unopposed. Republican — Tracey Mann, Salina, unopposed.

STATE POSITIONS

• **KS Senate 1.** Republican* — Craig Bowser, Holton, John R. Eplee, Atchison, Dennis Pyle, Hiawatha.

• **KS Senate 17.** Democrat — Lillian Lingenfelter, Emporia, unopposed. Republican* — Mike Argabright, Olpe, David Schneider, Milford.

• **KS Senate 18.** Democrat — Matthew Robin, Wamego, unopposed. Republican — Kenny Titus, Manhattan, unopposed.

• **KS House 51.** Democrat — Linda Morse, Manhattan, unopposed. Republican* — Eli Kormanik, Alta Vista, Megan D. Steele, Manhattan.

• **KS House 61.** Republican — Francis Awerkamp, St. Marys, unopposed.

COUNTY POSITIONS

• **County Commission District 2.** Republican* — Nancy McCarter, Wamego, Merl Page, Wamego.

• **County Commission District 3.** Republican* — Bill Drew, St. Marys, Greg Riat, Belvue.

Please see **Election PG. A4**

Make a new friend — Matilda

Staff Report

Meet Matilda.

Matilda is a little girl with astonishing wit, intelligence and psychokinetic powers. She will start appearing on The Columbian stage Friday night in the Roald Dahl musical of the same name.

Matilda is unloved by her cruel parents but impresses her school teacher, Miss Honey. During her first term at school, the two forge a bond as Miss Honey begins to recognize and appreciate Matilda's extraordinary personality. Matilda's school life isn't completely smooth sailing, however — the school's mean headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, hates children and just loves to punish those who don't abide by her rules. But Matilda has courage and cleverness in equal amounts, and could be the school pupils' saving grace!

THE CAST

Matilda — Alexis Toews; Trunchbull — Abby Cop-



Courtesy photo

Meet Matilda, aka Alex Toews, in the Columbian Theatre production of Matilda: The Musical, opening Friday.

pola; Mrs. Wormwood — Lauren Carrol-Kibisov; Miss Honey — Victoria Springer; Mr. Wormwood — Tate Milton; Rudolpho — Matt Kerns; Mrs. Phelps — Sarah Salerno; Lavender — Layla Gonzalez; Bruce — Ryker Engelken; Nigel — JJ Rhoads; Amanda — Kaydee Chicora; Hortensia — Cadence Jacques; Alice — Madeline Beck; Erica — Abigail Kottke; Tammy — Payton Lattimer; Bad Teen Ensemble — Paige Lattimer, Luthien Eustice, Carmen Gayner, Delanie Rhoads; Cara Horton; Michael Wormwood — TBD; Acrobat — Alyx Glessner; Escapist/Cook/Henchman 1/Adult Ensemble — Dan Horton; Doctor/Sergei/Adult Ensemble — Mike McCarty; Henchman 2/Adult Ensemble — Bekah Rhoads; Henchman 3/Adult Ensemble — Melissa Linenberger.

THE CREW

Director — Brent Sigman; Music Director — Diane Zoeller; Choreographer — Stephen Loch; Stage Manager — Betty Amos; Asst. Stage Manager — Elana LaGrone; Set Builder — Bob Sultz; Set Designer — Lorinda Sultz; Costumer — Peggy Riley; Lighting Designer — Scott Chainey; Sound Designer — Terry Hull.

THE DEETS

Matilda will run weekends, June 7-9, 14-16, and 21-23. Friday, Saturday shows begin at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at The Columbian Box office, 785-456-2029 or online at columbiantheatre.com.

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Welcome WHS Class of 2028!

Courtesy photo

Wamego Middle School on May 20 promoted its eighth grade class, which now officially becomes the Wamego High School Class of 2028. Class members are: William Adams, Alayna Ault, Spencer Ault, Callie Baker, Kaden Baker, Kayla Balver, Brooklyn Bearman, Laura, Benson; Porter Billings, Deacon Blackwell, Charleston Bodiford, Elizabeth Bollhoefer, Vaella Boothe, Lacy Braley, Anna-Marie Brown, Samuel Brown, Eric Brunkow, Ian Burdett, Austin Campbell, Travis Cantrell, Andrew Chainey, Alexis Cook, Brooklyn Cornelius, Enzo Coronado-Robledo, Austin Couchman, Emily Crocker, Lincoln Cutting, Raegan Eulenstein, Jillian Falco, Owen Fink, Gavin Flickinger, Issac Franco, Samantha Frazier-Brown, Jordan Freidline, Emersyn Garcia, Jordyn Goehring, Gracyn Goff, Gracyn Hagedorn, Roselyn Hazlett, Chase Hefley, Cole Heinisch, Kendall Heinisch, Javon Howard, Amelia Hupe, Grayson Hutton, Caysen Ingalls, Annie Jantz, Kinlee Jeffery, Jaden Johnson, Alexander Keyser, Daniel Keyser, Braxton Lake, Avery Lindeman, Drew Little, Emily Lohman, Lucas Magette, Kendall Mayer, Zavier McBride, Gentry McIntosh, Adam McMIndes, Marie McVay, Ethan Meinhardt, Grace Moulton, Kyra Nece, Kaia Nelson, Mackenzie Newbanks, Garrett Newell, Brady Olberding, Amelia Peterson, Spencer Peterson, Jaxon Phillips, Kaden Pruyne, Lorelai Quintanilla, Kyler Ritchie, Lakyn Rookstool, Kelton Ross, Lydia Rossow, Nia Sackrider, Gemma Salas, Emily Santana, Libby Schiel, Maddie Sheldon, Cooper Simkins, Haidan Simon, Leah Sisco, Madalyn Smith, Allyson Solida, Benjamin Spellman, Cassandra Sprenkle, Rylee Stanley, Briana Stazenski-Boatwright, Shelby Stewart, Greyson Stream, Chloe Stubbs, Connor Swenson, Lilyann Szel, Liam Ten Eyck, Titan Teske, Jaxson Thomas, Broden Turner, Hope Vanover, Rose Weimer, Sophia Wells Aparicio, Jack Wickenhauser, Allison Willhite, Rylee Williams, Liam Wollenberg, Seraphine Wyatt, and Claire Zachgo.

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