

'Streaks get bell rung

Cherryvale awakens from early nap, defeats rival Neodesha on Friday

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Classic car heaven

Tyro Christian Church prepares for annual car show on Saturday

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A free ride for all county citizens

A new, free transportation service has set its wheels in Montgomery County.

"MoGoes" is the name of the new service, which was established by the Southeast Kansas Community Action Program, or SEK-CAP, with

'MoGoes' offers free transport to in-county destinations for any Montgomery County resident

funds from the federal government to serve unreached markets. Several local entities also contributed their

own funds toward the MoGoes program.

Here is how the program works: any resident, regardless of age or income levels, can contact the program at (620) 724-8350 to reserve a ride to any destination within the county. Reservations should be made at least seven days ahead of the ride. Rides are available one a first-come, first-serve basis from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The transportation vehicles that were purchased for MoGoes are wheelchair and handicapped accessible.



The Stars and Stripes fly high in Cherryvale

Cherryvale High School's football team opened its 2024 season last Friday with Military Appreciation Night at Logan Park Stadium. The game, which pitted Cherryvale and rival Neodesha, included numerous flags and attendance by members of the Kansas National Guard as the CHS players entered the playing field for pregame introductions. Among the flag-waving football players to carry the Stars and Stripes was CHS junior Cooper Smith. More photographs of Military Appreciation Night are viewable in a gallery at the Montgomery County Chronicle's Facebook page. ANDY TAYLOR / MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHRONICLE

County budget OKd, but complaints persist about appraisals

BY ANDY TAYLOR
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INDEPENDENCE — Confusion persisted among Montgomery County taxpayers about the direction county

commissioners will take on their spending plan for 2025 . . . and how it will impact property taxes.

But, what commissioners reiterated repeatedly at Mon-

day's meeting of the commission was that the Montgomery County Courthouse budget for 2025 will reflect a 13.2 percent drop in the county's property tax rate.

Citizens who attended Monday's budget hearing held letters that they received in August showing the county commission proposing a property tax rate increase

in their 2025 budget. Those letters were sent to all taxpayers in Montgomery County in accordance with state law that requires local governments to notify the public about potential growth in property tax collections.

So, what is the truth: the commission's budget story from Monday . . . or the public letters that were issued in August?

The answer is in the budget document that was approved at Monday's meeting. The commission did adopt a 2025 budget plan that calls for the property tax rate to drop from 48.180 mills in 2024 to 41.817 mills in 2025. That equates to a decrease of 13.2 percent.

The proposed 41.817 mills will keep the county's tax rate in check with the Revenue Neutral Rate for 2025. What is meant by the Revenue Neutral Rate? It is an option that is afforded to local units of government in Kansas to limit the amount of col-

• see BUDGET, page A5



Nick Connors . . . Independence High School senior earns highest award in the National Speech and Debate Association. ANDY TAYLOR / MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHRONICLE

IHS senior in elite field in nat'l speech-debate sphere

INDEPENDENCE — A major academic award with nationwide credence has befallen an Independence High School senior.

Here's the story . . .

Nick Connors on Tuesday was informed that he was awarded the level of Premier Distinction by the National Speech and Debate Association. It's the highest award given within the sphere of high school-level debate and forensics in the United States, as it measures a student's level of participation in debate and forensics tournaments, overall grade point average, and level of community service.

For Connors, amassing a level of 1,500 points (students are awarded points based on each tournament in which they compete, community service events, etc.) was enough to put him in an elite category of high school debate and forensics students. Only 3 percent of all NSDA members in the United States are able to qualify for the Premier Distinction award.

But, Connors was able to achieve that prestigious honor in just three

years. His senior year points have not even been considered in his total NSDA resumé.

That means it's entirely possible for Connors to achieve a level of 2,000 points by the time he graduates in May.

In other words, Connors will break the ceiling when it comes to debate and forensics achievement.

Connors isn't afraid to say he is a goal setter. Forensics is his go-to event, where he thrives in all 13 separate events that measure a student's performance in speech and acting. He has competed in all 13 individual events . . . and qualified for the state tournament in all but two categories.

His goal? To complete state tournament qualification for the 12th and 13th events (dramatic interpretation of

ANDY TAYLOR



HERE'S THE STORY

• see CONNORS, page A5

Today's Chuckle

An Australian failed to set the record for staying awake the longest, then tried to set it for the longest sleep and failed. He did, however, set it for the biggest waste of time.

FunnierU.com



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