

Clubs and family living

County's spring beef show brings 106 head of cattle

The Jefferson County Spring Beef show was held March 29 at the fairgrounds in Valley Falls. Johnathan Emmerson from Paola evaluated 106 head of cattle by 62 exhibitors from 15 counties in Kansas.

The top three heifers were exhibited by Caleb Manche (1st), Broxtin Navensky (2nd), and Ally Williams (3rd). Breed winners for heifers are as follows:

Angus – Champion: Caleb Manche, Reserve: Pate Parsons
 Brangus – Champion: Henry Urban, Reserve: Ryan Neill
 Chiannina – Champion: Aden Grathwohl, Reserve: Austin Sage

Hereford – Champion: Delaney Figge, Reserve: Charlotte Valek

Maine Anjou – Champion: Teagen Parsons, Reserve: Taygen Boyce
 Shorthorn – Champion: Jansen Gerstner, Reserve: Aden Grathwohl

Shorthorn Plus – Champion: Brody Grathwohl, Reserve: Cooper Burling
 Simmental – Champion: Taygen Boyce, Reserve: Delaney Figge

All Other Breeds – Champion: Ally Williams, Reserve: Jaden Teter

Commercial – Champion: Broxtin Navinsky, Reserve: Rucker Harring

1st place Senior Showman was Delaney Figge.
 2nd place Senior Showman was Jansen Gerstner.
 3rd place Senior Showman was Ally Williams.

1st place Intermediate Showman was Brogan Harring.
 2nd place Intermediate Showman was Brody Grathwohl.
 3rd place Intermediate

Showman was Colby Jones.

1st place Junior Showman was Caleb Manche.

2nd place Junior Showman was Gage Jensen.

3rd place Junior Showman was Eric Manche.

1st place PeeWee Showman was Clara Elliott.

2nd place Junior Showman was Charlotte Valek.

3rd place Junior Showman was Braylee Aquilar.

4th place Junior Showman was Avaleen Roade.

The top three steers were exhibited by Jaden Teter (1st & 2nd) and Jansen Gerstner (3rd). Breed winners for steers were:

Angus – Champion: Austin Sage, Reserve: Ivan Hanes
 Charlais – Champion: Jaden Teter, Reserve: Lane Copping-er

Chiannina – Champion: Jaden Teter, Reserve: Jansen Gerstner

Hereford – Champion: Delaney Figge, Reserve: Colby Jones

Maine Anjou – Champion: Austin Sage, Reserve: Ella Copping-er
 Shorthorn Plus – Champion: Jansen Gerstner, Reserve: Harper Mitchell

Simmental – Champion: Jaden Teter, Reserve: Remington Peuker

All Other Breeds – Champion: Danielle Reeves, Reserve: Braylee Aquilar

Commercial – Champion: Harper Mitchell, Reserve: Alayna Westbrook

Overall Champion Jefferson County Steer – Danielle Reeves

Overall Reserve Champion Jefferson County Steer – Alayna Westbrook.



Photo submitted

Democrats, down and dirty

Jefferson County Democrats came out in full force April 5 to help with a community-wide clean-up event, Get Down and Get Dirty, in celebration of Earth Day. Mother Nature held off the rain, but provided a cold, windy day for this annual event sponsored by Keep America Beautiful of Topeka/Shawnee County. Pictured are Mary Jo Kearns, Paula Hladky, Julie Wilson, Sharon Laverentz, Shawn Reeves, and Willard Epling. Not shown is Sharon and Gary Branson.

Rules for planting trees this spring

K-State Extension news

If you're planning to plant a tree in your yard this spring, there are some steps you can take to make sure your new landscape has its best chance of success.

Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini shares the following 10 rules for planting trees:

- Select the right tree for the site.

To avoid serious problems, choose trees that are adapted to your location. Consider whether the tree produces nuisance fruit or if there are disease-resistant varieties available. For example, there are a number of crabapple varieties that are resistant to apple scab and rust diseases. Also consider the mature size of a tree to be sure you have enough room. Your local extension office and garden center can make tree recommendations for your region.

- Keep the tree well watered and in a shady location until planting.

When moving the tree, lift it by the root ball or pot and not by the trunk.

- Before planting, remove all wires, labels, cords or anything else tied to the plant.

If left on, they may eventually girdle the branch to which they are attached.

- Dig a proper hole.

Make the hole deep enough so the root flare (point where the trunk and roots meet) is visible when planted. Plant the tree on solid ground, not fill dirt. In other words, don't dig the hole too deep and then add soil back to the hole before placing the tree.

The width of the planting hole is very important. It should be three times the width of the root ball. Loosening the soil outside the hole so it is five times the diameter of the root ball will allow the tree to spread its roots faster.

- Remove all containers from the root ball.

Cut away plastic and peat

pots; roll burlap and wire baskets back into the hole, cutting as much of the excess away as possible. If you can remove the wire basket without disturbing the root ball, do it. If roots have been circling around in the container, cut them and fluff them out so they do not continue growing in a circle inside the hole becoming girdling roots later.

- Backfill the hole with the same soil that was removed.

Amendments such as peat moss likely do more harm than good. Make sure the soil that goes back is loosened - no clods or clumps. Add water as you fill to ensure good root to soil contact and prevent air pockets. There is no need to fertilize at planting.

- Minimize pruning after planting.

Foliage is necessary for manufacturing energy to support a healthy tree. Heavy pruning reduces the number of leaves and consequently the amount of energy generated. Corrective pruning can be done at planting to remove dead, damaged or diseased branches or branches that are rubbing against each other.

- Water the tree thoroughly. Then, water once a week for the first season if there is insufficient rainfall.

- Mulch around the tree.

Mulch should be 2-4 inches deep and cover an area 2 to 3 times the diameter of the root ball. Avoid mulching right up to the trunk of the tree. Leave a 3 to 6-inch gap between the mulch and the trunk to prevent damaging the tree. Mulching reduces competition from other plants, conserves moisture and moderates soil temperature.

- Stake only when necessary.

Larger trees or those in windy locations may need to be staked the first year. Movement is necessary for the trunk and roots to develop properly. Staking should be designed to limit movement of the root ball rather than immobilize the trunk.

West . . . County. . .

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for library time, media, specials, sensory/motor skills, and general exploration. A small room will serve as a quiet space, and the on-site kitchenette will be integrated into the curriculum.

“We are learning as we go, but we hope to truly integrate the preschool into the rest of the district,” Sturgeon said. “We’re hopeful that high school students on alternative pathways—especially those interested in early education—will benefit from this opportunity.”

The state will provide funding for at-risk students. Those on a general education track will be charged a fee of \$750 for full-day or \$350 for a half-day students, regardless of whether they attend as peer models. The school district will supplement the program with funding until it is self sufficient.

“This is not about making a profit,” said Sturgeon. “This is an educational and staffing opportunity and a way to further enhance what we already offer.”

Leadership and Vision

Wilson, the new preschool director, brings extensive early childhood education experience and will implement the CKLA (Core Knowledge Language Arts) curriculum. She also emphasizes character development and social-emotional growth to help build a strong foundation for 3- and 4-year-olds.

“Honestly, whatever gets each student to learn best, that’s what we will do,” Wilson said. “I’m so excited to dig in and see what good can be done here. I have a lot of ideas.”

The school has hired Edna Wells, with 13 years of experience, and Holly Ann Abel, with five years of experience, as teachers. Paraprofessional support is also being sought. Pending enrollment, more teachers will be hired as needed.

This first year will be a learning experience for the district, its staff, and the students. Sturgeon said future years will likely bring adjustments and additions to the program.

One initiative under discussion is the development of a daycare program within the building. The proposed expansion would meet a community need, build on early learning foundations, support staff recruitment and retention, and potentially strengthen the district’s early education pathway.

The district also plans to eventually update the gymnasium and locker rooms in the Ozawkie building, with the goal of bringing those facilities back into regular use for Tiger athletics.

For now, USD 340 has a clear goal: a successful first year back at Ozawkie.

“Jefferson West desperately needed a preschool and we are lucky to have this building,” said Sturgeon. “We are happy to bring it back to the district, and bring part of the district back to Ozawkie.”

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for use by inmates with mental health issues or inmates who need to be quarantined for some reason.

Land Bank transfers

On a 3-0 vote, the board authorized Christy to sign a Quit Claim deed transferring two lots from the county to the Jefferson County Land Bank. Those lots are Lot 4 in Block C of the Indian Ridge subdivision and Lot 451 in the Hickory Hills section of Lakeside Village.

The deed was brought forward by Community Development Director Stephan Metzger.

It was the consensus of the board that a hearing be scheduled for Monday, May 12, to consider a petition to vacate the setbacks identified on the plat for a piece of property located at 11091 46th Street, Perry.

In presenting the petition to the commissioners for their consideration, Metzger said the vacation of the setbacks would eliminate the need for the petitioners, Daniel and Linda Foltz, to have to replat the property sometime in the future.

The property is zoned Suburban Residential.

Motorcycle Awareness Month

Voting 3-0, and at the request of A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments of Kansas Inc., the board OK’d the proposed issuance of a proclamation designating May as Motorcycle Awareness Month in Jefferson County.

Christy indicated to those present that as a motorcyclist, he was in favor of the proclamation, and he suggested that County Counselor-designate Jonathan Ehrlich, who wasn’t present, also would be in favor of it, implying that he, too, likes to ride a bike every now and then.

ABATE of Kansas is headquartered in Perry.

Executive sessions

At the request of Health Department Administrator Crystal VanHoutan, R.N., the commissioners met privately with her for five minutes for the stated purpose of discussing personnel matters relating to non-elected personnel. “Recruitment and retention” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Wallbridge, the commissioners met privately with Ney for five minutes so that they could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. “Real estate” was identified as the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Christy, the commissioners ultimately met privately with Ney for a total of 19 minutes so that they could be given legal advice under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. “County commission issues” was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 2:11.

(Published in The Oskaloosa Independent and The Valley Falls Vindicator April 17 and 24, 2025)2t

Notice of 2025 Annual Budget Meeting

Participating Members,

Please be advised that the 2025 Annual Budget Meeting of Jefferson Co. Rural Water District 10 will be held on May 13th at 6:15 at 9383 Delaware Drive, Ozawkie, KS 66070. This is a Non-Election year so this is not a ‘voting’ meeting. However, we have 1 position open on the Board and are requesting those who are interested in helping RWD10 in monthly duties to come to this meeting and apply for the position. The regular monthly meeting will follow the Budget Meeting. Hope to see you there!

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Kindergarten Round-up

USD 338 Valley Falls

The Valley Falls Kindergarten Round-Up will be held April 28 & 29. If you have a child not currently in the Valley Falls Preschool program who will be in Kindergarten next year, contact Becky in the Elementary office at becky.nickelson@vfalls338.com so we can get you on the list for round-up.

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Valley Falls Vindicator April 17, 2025)1t

PUBLIC HEARING

The Valley Falls Housing Authority will hold a public hearing on the Housing Authority’s amended 2025 Annual PHA Plan and 5-year Plan on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at 5:15 p.m., in the community room at Sunset Haven, 940 Frazier, Valley Falls, KS 66088.

The Housing Authority is required to submit an Annual Plan 75 days prior to the beginning of the Fiscal Year. Our Fiscal Year is from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The Plan was previously approved on March 12, 2025 but the Housing Authority will add special use units which calls for an amendment to the current Plan.

The purpose of the public hearing is to obtain citizen comment regarding the amended plan, available for review at the Topeka Housing Authority’s Administrative Office. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Topeka Housing Authority at 2010 SE California, Topeka, KS 66607 or calling (785) 357-8842.

If special accommodations at the public hearing are required, please contact the Topeka Housing Authority to make those accommodations known.

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For daily specials check out our Facebook page

Preschool Round-up

If you have a child who is going to be four years old on or before August 31 and would like to participate in our preschool program, please contact Becky in the elementary office at becky.nickelson@vfalls338.com.

- If there is room available, 3-year-olds will be added to a waitlist if you are interested in enrolling.

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