



# Happy Birthday, America

and enjoy the  
July 4th weekend,  
everyone!

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## Wamego's ready to go



Brandon Peoples  
KMAN Radio

Community volunteers have slowly transformed Wamego into its summer-time alter ego, “Boomtown USA.”

Each year, the city’s Fourth of July fireworks display dazzles crowds with innovative pyrotechnics and a musical soundtrack to enhance the overall sensory experience.

Chris Hupe, who leads Wamego’s pyro crew, said the show will use a new software platform to add professional-level lighting effects to the fireworks.

“There’s some technology that we’re going to be dabbling with this year that we’ll start to unveil in a very small form, but it will be new on site,” he said. “It’s really pushing the envelope of synthesis between pyrotechnics and other types of special effects.”

Hupe said the pyro crew consists of 39 trained pyrotechnicians, all of whom volunteer their services on an annual basis.

“We’re essentially running a business without being a business,” he said. “It’s lining up, finding out who’s available, who’s retiring, who do we need to identify to step in and train.”



Photo Art: Beth Day | The Times

**The MCM silos just east of the Wamego Recreation Complex where the Pyro Show will be fired, get into the independence Day spirit. (MCM photo, Beth Day; fireworks photo, Annie Wolfe).**

Safety is a top priority, with rigorous training and equipment checks up to the time of the show. Hupe said they brought in an instructor from Michigan’s

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## Celebrations continue around the area

**ONAGA – THURSDAY, JULY 3**

Onaga will have a celebration Thursday evening with a fireman’s meal at 6 p.m., followed by a rodeo and fireworks.

**WAMEGO – FRIDAY, JULY 4**

The carnival is already in town, and the town gears up for the remainder of the Independence Day celebration on Friday. Events include a car show and other activities in the park, BOOMTOWN movie showing, a parade down Lincoln Ave. at 6 p.m., pre-fireworks concert at 7:30 p.m., and the fireworks at 10 p.m. in the recreation complex. For full details, go to visit-wamego.com.

**WHEATON – SATURDAY, JULY 5**

Not enough fireworks on Thursday and Friday? Check out Wheaton on Saturday. Wheaton’s Independence celebration runs from 5-11 p.m. in the city park. It includes inflatables, a 6 p.m. parade with a potluck supper at 7 p.m., cow patty bingo and fireworks.

## Bond lowered in attempted murder case

Beth Day  
The Times

Pottawatomie County District Judge Jeff Elder Tuesday lowered the bond and set a second status hearing for the Onaga woman charged with attempted second degree murder.

The charge stems from a June 22 incident where Dana Murray, 43, (identified as Dana Blume in the initial press release) had intentionally run over Kara Murray, 52, Wamego, with a vehicle on Pauling Run Road. Kara Murray was subsequently hospitalized with severe injuries.

In Tuesday’s hearing, Dana Murray’s attorney Laura Ingels, while acknowledging the seriousness of the offense, requested the \$250,000 bond be lowered to \$100,000.

“That’s still a significant bond that will ensure that she will appear at court,” Ingels said. “She doesn’t have any prior felonies. She doesn’t have any prior failures to appear. Her plan is to return home, if there is no objection to that. She does have children. She is employed, or at least I believe she is. She has lived in Kansas for 25 years. Her family is all in Kansas.

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## Local family close to losing home in fire

Ellie Baker  
The Times

A local family came close to losing their home in a fire a few weeks ago.

According to Alex Kinderknecht, assistant fire supervisor with the Pottawatomie County Fire Supervisor’s Office, Ben Garland of Emmett, called 911 to report a fire in the basement of his home around 3:16 PM on June 10. The Emmett volunteer Fire Department arrived at the home at 3:25 p.m. and was able to eliminate the fire in about 10 minutes.

“Thankfully, the fire was still rather small, but in the growth phase when Ben arrived home and discovered it,” Kinderknecht reported. “The fire was located in a basement mechanical area and contained to the origin

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## One-car crash injures Hutchinson man

Staff Report

A Hutchinson man was seriously injured last Friday in a one car crash, according to the Kansas Highway Patrol.

The KHP report said Zachary Lynn Stinson, 43, Hutchinson, was driving a 2003 Toyota Corolla southbound on K13 at Cedar Creek Rd. at 2:05 p.m., June 27, when he entered a curve in the roadway. The car went left of center, entering the northbound lane of travel. There it encountered a north bound car, causing the driver to correct and enter back into the southbound lane. The driver lost control and the car went on to the east shoulder, colliding with two guard rails, then coming to rest after striking a tree.

According to the report, Stinson was transported to an area hospital for suspected serious injuries. He was wearing a seatbelt.

The accident caused authorities to close the road at K-13 and Cedar Creek for approximately four hours.

## County moving in arson case

Lily Hansen  
The Times

The county may have identified suspects in the Walmart arson case, according to County Attorney John Paul Washburn, who on Monday updated the commission on the status of several ongoing cases.

The June 13 arson caused approximately \$1.2 million in damages and caused the store to be closed for several days.

Washburn told commissioners a meeting was planned later that day to review security footage with the lead detective, but they believe they have already identified a suspect. He thanked the Riley County police force, saying they “did a good job working on that case.”

Additionally, he said that a hearing

was to take place the following day for the June 22 attempted murder case north of Wamego and that the victim is “recovering the best she can.”

Although the case is still under investigation, Washburn stated the “public deserves to know we are moving forward.”

In other updates, Washburn said his department is continuing to stay busy preparing for the Rock The Plains music festival in August. They expect an increased case load because of the festivities and have cleared Oct. 2 to solely deal with its caseload.

A focus has also been placed on attending training and community meetings such as Safe Kids, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Bikers Against Child Abuse, and USD 320 school district. They have also partnered with several law enforcement

officers, spending time with them to “get to know the officers as well as their philosophy and obtain a greater appreciation.”

The county attorney’s office is now fully staffed after three months where “two people were doing the work of four,” according to Washburn. There are hopes of possibly getting a legal intern but that would be in the coming years. Washburn thanked the team for “really stepping up.”

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## WPL ‘Friends’ recognized for 50 years of service

Beth Day  
The Times

The Friends of the Wamego Library organization celebrated 50 years of service this year.

In recognition of that service, Kansas State Senator Kenny Titus was present at Tuesday’s meeting to present the group with a Senate Tribute.

“The Senate created these special certificates of recognition for important achievements in our communities,” he said. “It’s a way for us to recognize people, give them something and let them know we appreciate all the hard work.”

The Tribute is signed by the senate president, printed, sealed and framed.



Beth Day | The Times

**Kansas State Senator Kenny Titus (second from left) presents a certificate to the Friends of the library. Also pictured, left to right, Nancy Scheopner and Susan Patrick, Friends of the Library, and Maci Murillo, director.**

“It’s just something nice from Topeka that we can go out to present and let people know we care about the

work they are doing. Titus added the Tributes will get printed in the State Journal.

“When we get back, there will be a catch up of the out-of-session stuff and it gets recorded that we requested the certificated and that it went out.”

The senator said his family is a regular user of the library.

“It’s just part of a great community having a vibrant library,” he said. “If you look at all the work done here in the last decade, it’s really impressive. And, like everything else in Wamego, people really care. And you know, it’s important to recognize the people that work, because there is a lot of free hours that get put into this.”

Titus discovered the milestone through a Times article published earlier this year.