



Beth Day | The Times
Hundreds braved the heat Saturday just for a taste of the famous Flush Picnic chicken dinner.



Umscheid

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accomplishments and personal triumphs.

“Chief Umscheid was an integral part of why this incident went from rescue to recovery very quickly,” Barnes continued.

Kathy Ostrom of Dara’s also spoke on Umscheid’s outstanding dedication to the community, noting how “with the fire and then the tornado, Kevin took vacation time to make sure those things were covered.”

She then awarded him NACS First Responder of the Year award as well as Keurig Dr Pepper Products awarding a \$500 check.

U.S. Senator Jerry Moran also recognized Chief Um-



Lily Hansen | The Times
Westmoreland Fire Chief Kevin Umscheid (white shirt, fourth from right) is with members of his department during Thursday’s award ceremony.

scheid via a representative, as he is in DC this week, congratulating the outstanding achievement and thanking him for his service.

Umscheid thanked the crowd, saying he “appreciates it more than anyone

knows” adding he “couldn’t do it without the great people around me.”

He thanked his fellow firefighters, coworkers, and family. His son said of Chief Umscheid, “he is one of the most selfless people

I’ve ever met.” He recalled grass season of 2023, his father would come home from fighting fires, change clothes, get in his fuel truck, and then return home just to immediately head back out to aid again.

County property taxes set to rise

Lily Hansen
The Times

Financial Officer Heather Gladbach proposed a budget to the Pottawatomie County Commission that would cause a seven percent increase in county property tax for the average homeowner due to a three percent mill levy raise and 4.5 percent property value increase.

Under this plan, the mill rate would be raised from 25.999 to 26.780. One mill is \$1 in tax for every \$1,000 in assessed, taxable property. Last year, a house costing \$100,000 would pay a \$298.98 bill. This year, the same house would pay \$321.08 to cover the cost of increased property value

and the raised mill levy.

The property owner’s bill will also be affected by their city and school district.

The plan also includes a four percent cost of living adjustment for those employed by the county. The commissioners were hesitant to take this increase for themselves. Commissioner Dee McKee suggested that if the increase was needed, it should be voted on for the sake of transparency. Commissioner Merl Page agreed with the sentiment saying he is “not comfortable having something built in.”

They ended up turning down the pay increase.

The commission voted to have the budget hearing at 9 a.m., Tuesday, Aug. 5.

St. George annexes Flush-24 corner

Lily Hansen
The Times

St. George has annexed the land occupied by Dara’s Corner Market and Moe’s BBQ into city limits.

The area is located south of the intersection of Highway 24 and Flush Rd.

This annexation was first brought to the attention of the Pottawatomie County Commission on June 30, with St. George’s Mayor Debby Werth requesting the change. She was met with questions surrounding the maintenance of Flush Road and possible issues with sewage.

Commission Chair Terry Force had said “right now to me we need more information” alongside Commissioner Merl Page saying that the plan “has a lot of merit but would hate to see St. George get stuck with something they aren’t aware of.”

The discussion was tabled until July 14, when Werth returned with St. George’s engineer Brian Foster to further discuss the plan. After discussion surrounding the best way to complete this annexation, County Councilor Bernard Irvine alongside Saint George’s City attorney Todd Luckman created a resolution that was seen by the commission on July 21. The commissioners reviewed the resolution and passed it unanimously.

‘25 Sylvester-Rudolph reunion held

The 76th annual Sylvester-Rudolph family reunion was held Sunday, July 27, 2025 at the Fairview Presbyterian Church near Riley, KS. Galen Hofmann welcomed the 26 family members.

Those present were: Fern Freeman, Topeka; Mary Jahnke, Junction City; Don and Shauna Nye, Powhattan; Eugene Visser, Seneca; Judd and Carol Meyer, Sabetha; Leon and Janet Sylvester, Wamego; Gary and Ruby Sylvester, Justin, Valerie, Jeremiah, Samuel, & Eleanor Visser, Vinton Visser, Riley; Scott and Lynette Hill, Abilene; Galen and Nancy Hofmann, Leonardville; Russell and Sandy Sylvester, Kay Selman, Terry & Kris Wallace, Ottawa.

Leon Sylvester led us in the doxology to begin our gathering and the group enjoyed a potluck dinner.

Galen Hofmann recognized the oldest attendee, Eugene Visser, 92 years old and the youngest attendee, Ella Visser, 9 year old daughter of Justin and Valerie Visser.

Closest traveled was Gary and Ruby Sylvester and farthest traveled was Terry and Kris Wallace, Ottawa, KS.

President, Galen Hofmann asked the attendees to introduce themselves and share about their family. Gary Sylvester commented how thankful his is for the bless-

ings the Good Lord has shown his family.

Leon Sylvester lead the group in singing happy birthday to Samuel Visser. He turned 13 today.

Appointment of officers for next year was held. The officers are: President, Justin Visser; Vice President, Samuel Visser; Secretary/Treasurer, Kay (Sylvester) Selman.

The next family reunion will be held on July 26, 2026 at 12:45 pm at the

Fairview Presbyterian Church near Riley, KS.

Births and Marriages:

BIRTHS:
Landon Banks Miller, born January 30, 2025, son of Luke and Annalise Miller; Grandparents, Doug and Connie (Sylvester) Miller; Great Grandparents, Gary and Ruby Sylvester.

MARRIAGES:
Sara Sylvester married Dennis Frank on October 6, 2024. Sara is the daughter

CLUB NEWS

Fink successful in Peewee showmanship



Courtesy photo

Canaan Fink, Wamego, placed sixth in the Peewee division in showmanship July 15 at the 2025 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Louisville, Ky.

The top 10 peewee showmen are: Taos Heck, Fitzhugh, Okla.; Adalynn Blankenship, West Burlington, N.Y.; Paislee Young, Springville, Tenn.; Everly Foster, Niles, Mich.; Cricket Collins, Chattanooga, Okla.; Canaan Fink, Wamego, Kan.; Adelynn Kuykendall, Graham, Texas; Piper Seiss, Thurmont, Md.; Sutton Stelzer, Oologah, Okla.; and Colyer Schaeffer, Hagerstown, Ind.



Courtesy photo

First-place junior Hereford bowl team members from Kansas (l to r) are: Bradyn Greenwood, Hamilton; Cooper Acheson, Wamego; Jacqueline Studer, Frankfort; and Wyatt Weaber, Wamego.

Weaber, Acheson on championship team

National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members tested their Hereford breed and beef industry knowledge in the Hereford bowl during the 2025 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) “Live From Louisville,” July 13 in Louisville, Ky. The Hereford bowl consists of both an individual written test and team competition designed to challenge participants’ knowledge of the beef industry, Hereford breed and the history of the JNHE. They begin with a 50-question written test and skillathon including feed sample identification. The top four teams from the written round advance to the buzzer bowl round and compete for the champion title.

Cooper Acheson and Wyatt Weaber, both of Wamego, were part of the Junior Champion Team.



Courtesy photo

2025-2026 NJHA Board of Directors is Gavin Rhode, Stewartsville, Mo.; Matt Bruns, North Platte, Neb.; Rylie Meinhardt, Onaga, Kan.; Jordan Mitchem, Vale, N.C.; Lauren Gatz, Fairview, Kan.; Kendall Boatman, Rockford, Ill.; Harlee Watson, Flemingsburg, Ky.; Emma Ballinger, McKee, Ky.; Salem Sifford, Goldvein, Va.; Sarah Beth Callicot, Only, Tenn.; Maddie Weaber, Wamego, Kan.; and Sam Birdsall, Torrington, Wyo.

Maddie Weaber named NJHA director

Maddie Weaber, Wamego, was one of four National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) directors who were selected during the 2025 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE), “Live From Louisville.”

The newly elected NJHA directors were announced during the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) Scholarship, Award and Maroon Jacket Ceremony July 17. Fifty-nine state delegates chose these young leaders to serve a three-year term on a team of 12 directors who govern and serve the organization of more than 4,000 members.

Weaber is a sophomore at Oklahoma State University, majoring in animal science. The 19-year-old daughter of Bob and Tami Weaber has served on the Kansas Junior Hereford Association board of directors and participated in the Kansas State University Animal Science Leadership Academy. Maddie also excelled in FFA, where she earned sixth place in the National FFA Agriscience Fair animal systems category. She believes the NJHA has a place for everyone, from the showing to the pasture, from becoming a better leader to connecting with like-minded peers. As a candidate for the NJHA board of directors, she says, “I’m not just running to lead — I’m running to serve, to represent juniors who are passionate about production, education and the future of the beef industry.”

After giving their retiring addresses, retiring NJHA board members handed off their jackets to the newly elected directors. In addition to Weaber, the other new directors and recipients of maroon jackets are: Gavin Rhode, Stewartsville, Mo.; Jordan Mitchem, Vale, N.C.; and Kendall Boatman, Rockford, Ill.

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