



Reporter

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Neewollah Generalissimo names Paige as director of 2025 musical Annie

STAFF REPORT

Lisa Paige returns to direct her 13th Neewollah Musical this year as she brings *Annie* to life for the second time — her first time directing the classic was its second Neewollah incarnation in 2001. Lisa, originally from Emporia, considers Independence her true home. She has worked for USD 446 for 36 years as a Kindergarten teacher, a Title teacher and is currently the Assistant Principal at Eisenhower Elementary School.

Paige has been very active in Neewollah, serving on numerous committees throughout the years, directing the Queen's Pageant, Chairing the Coronation and Talent Committees in addition to performing and directing in Neewollah musicals. She has been seen on stage as "Nancy" in *Oliver!*; "Audrey" in *Little Shop of Hor-*



PAIGE

rors; "Narrator" in *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and most recently as "Manager" in *Elf the Musical*.

Lisa also serves on the Neewollah board and was Generalissimo in 2014. She is the founder and Artistic Director

of the Independence Children's Summer Theatre and a member of Diversity Taskforce, as well as an elder at the First Presbyterian Church. Lisa was named Master Teacher in 2009 and was a recipient of the Margaret Goheen Award for Contributions to Community Theatre in 2005.

She enjoys traveling, time with her siblings and of course, Chiefs football. She is continually thankful to God and her parents, Jack and Maxine, for their support and inspiration. Lisa and her husband, Mark, have one grown son, Jaxon.

Auditions for *Annie* are scheduled for April 29, May 1 and May 6 at Memorial Hall in Independence. Please visit the Neewollah website, www.neewollah.com, to sign up for auditions. Performances of *Annie* are scheduled for October 17-19.

City Commission authorizes award for 10th Street pavement restoration

BY BREA SANFORD
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The Independence City Commission met for their regular meeting Thursday, April 24 at City Hall. Mayor Scott Smith led those present in the flag salute, after which the agenda for the evening's meeting was adopted.

Moving swiftly, the Commissioners approved the Consent Agenda, which authorized the following:

- A request from the Montgomery County Action Council to participate in the Team Kansas membership. Team Kansas is a state-wide initiative that showcases the strengths of Kansas to a broader audience, attracting businesses, industry leaders and more. MCAC met with the Economic Advisory Board earlier this month, requesting that the City collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to pledge up to \$2,500 for the membership and the EDAB suggested that the City participate.

- The passage of a Greenbush Energy Group Participation Agreement and Hedging Authorization. City Staff has been working with Greenbush Energy Group for nine years to acquire natural gas for Building D and Memorial Hall. The agreement effectively kept the price spike at bay from February 2021's winter storm. The agreement has a participation fee of \$450 per year, plus a service fee.

Assistant City Manager, David Cowan, addressed the Commissioners next to give some background for the evening's public hearing. Cowan stated that in February, the home in question located in the 1000 Block of West Chestnut Street had caught fire and caused extensive damage, rendering the home uninhabitable. On February 13, the Commission issued a public hearing

♦ See CITY COMMISSION, page A2

Independence man arrested after short standoff

BY BREA SANFORD
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Thursday evening, April 24, at approximately 6:42 p.m., Officers with the Independence Police Department responded to a report of criminal threat in the 1500 Block of North

10th Street. The report had indicated that the subject had previously made threats involving a weapon and it was believed that the individual was still on the premises of the apartment complex at that time.

♦ See INDEPENDENCE MAN, page A2

KANSAS HISTORY CORNER

KANSAS HISTORICAL MARKER TOUR

BY BREA SANFORD
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Historical Marker #44, Fort Wallace, located at Fort Wallace Museum, east of the Wallace City Limits along US-40, Wallace County. 38.910256, -101-582841. This marker is located along the Western Vistas Historic Byway.

INSCRIPTION

First called Camp Pond Creek, Fort Wallace was established in 1865. The fort served as the headquarters for troops given the task of protecting travelers headed west along the Smoky Hill Trail to the Denver gold fields. Fort Wallace was the westernmost military outpost in Kansas and from 1865 to 1878 served as one of the most active military posts in the Central Plains. Troops often spent time in the field and the fort was several times attacked by Plains Indians striving to defend their lands and protect their way of life.

The fort was located about two miles to the southeast of this marker. Abandoned in 1882, nothing is now visible of the stone and wood buildings where once more than 300 men were stationed.

Just north of where the fort once stood, the old post cemetery still exists, enclosed by stone walls within the Wallace Township Cemetery. In 1867, U.S. soldiers erected a monument as a tribute to their comrades who had been killed in ac-

tion and buried there. Although the soldiers' remains were later moved to Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery, the monument still stands in their honor.

ABOUT THE WESTERN VISTAS HISTORIC BYWAY

Picture this... A vast, open, ancient sea that extended from the Gulf of Mexico we know today, all the way to the Arctic Circle and Kansas is smack dab in the middle of it all—hundreds of feet below the crashing waves. As the climate shifted, the waters began to recede and erode the shorelines of the ancient canyons and crevasses. The sea floor morphed into limestone layers that crafted buttes and amazing, gravity-defying chalk formations. As thousands of years passed by in a blink of an eye, that ancient sea bed became the Wild Wild West, where buffalo ran free, cowboys fought banditos and pioneers tried their hardest to make a living off of some of the most unforgiving land in what is mostly a very fertile state.

The Western Vistas Historic Byway cuts through this area in an arcing swath. Connecting Sharon Springs, Oakley and Scott City, there are numerous formations to discover and points of interest along the way, such as the Punished Woman's Fork at Battle Canyon; the El Cuartejejo Pueblo ruins; Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park; Monument Rocks; the Buffalo Bill Cultural Center; the Butterfield Trail Museum; Fort Wallace Cemetery and Museum; Mount Sunflower and the Clark-Robidoux House.

CONGRATS IHS FORENSICS!



The Independence High School Forensics Team announced its qualifiers for the 2025 KSHSAA State Championship Thursday. These students will represent IHS on Saturday, May 3 at Washburn Rural High School in Topeka. The 2025 State Championship Team is as follows: Seniors- Matthias Coltraine- Improvised Duet Acting, Duet Acting. Nick Connors- Improvised Duet Acting, Duet Acting. Leo Hoffman- Humorous Interpretation, Duet Acting, Informative Speaking. Juniors- Audrey Kaiser- Informative Speaking, Duet Acting. Makenna Larimore- Duet Acting; Sophomores- Peyton Connors- Impromptu Speaking, Original Orator, Program Oral Interpretation. Dalton Werner- Program Oral Interpretation. Xavier Wood- Duet Acting, Dramatic Interpretation. Freshmen- Sophie Ballew- Duet Acting. Aiden Drews- Duet Acting, Improvised Duet Acting. Kellen Ebert- Duet Acting, Improvised Duet Acting. Isabella Martinez- Duet Acting, Extemporaneous Speaking. Good luck to you all. | Courtesy Photo



Royals reset with home sweep against Rockies

♦ See page A7



Kansas Legislature turns cold shoulder to child reading program after less than one year

♦ See page A5

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