

Local Scouts enjoy baseball game in Wichita

Sixteen scouts from Caney and Independence, along with nine adults, recently attended the Wichita Wind Surge minor league baseball game. The local scouts also got a chance to pitch their tents and spend the night on the baseball field as part of a promotion from the Wichita Wind Surge. COURTESY PHOTO

Cedar Bluff Camp receives Cherokee Nation grant

Two area entities are the recipient of grants through the Cherokee Nation of

Cedar Bluff Camp in rural Coffeyville was awarded \$8,000 to assist in removing and replacing a set of stairs at the

Oklahoma Union School in northern Nowata County will receive \$104,800 to create an outdoor space on the school campus that will serve the community as well. The outdoor space will include a pickleball court, shade structure, con-

Cherokee Nation awarded \$1.8 million in grants to 34 entities to support access to opportunities to improve public health and wellness.

In February Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. and Deputy Chief Bryan announced the launch of the Public Health and Wellness Partners Grant program, initially funded at \$1 million to assist schools, local governments and non-profits with projects that can improve their local community's public health, such as pilot wellness programs or capital projects to create or enhance access to physical activities.

Hoskin said the volume of impressive applications led to increasing the budget to \$1.8 million.

"Our Public Health and Wellness team received so many great applications to further the cause of public health in our communities that we felt compelled to add funds to this great new program," said Chief Hoskin. "These grants are an investment in healthy living and they are an investments through which we will see a great return."

Grants ranged from one time operations funding for an initiative to address homelessness in a rural county, to public restroom facilities at municipal parks to a tornado siren in an underserved area.

ICC reduces budget, lowers property tax rate for 2025-26

BY ANDY TAYLOR chronicle@taylornews.org

INDEPENDENCE — Taxpayers in the Independence Community College district will see a lower tax rate assessed on their properties in 2026, courtesy of a budget plan that calls for lesser expenditures and, therefore, a reduction in tax collections.

ICC trustees on Monday adopted the college 2025-26 budget plan that calls for a tax rate of 33.760 mills, which is a drop from the 35.415 mills that was assessed during the 2024-25 budget cycle (college budget cycles operate from July 1 through June 30).

That is a decrease of 1.655 mills, which translates to a 4.6 percent decrease. Residential homes valued

at \$100,000 can expect to pay \$388.24 in yearly property taxes that are dedicated to ICC. In comparison, the same \$100,000 home paid \$407.27 in taxes for ICC in the 2024-25 budget cycle.

The ICC budget plan calls for maximum spending authority of \$19,850,719, of which \$6,488,399 will be levied through property taxes.

For the sake of comparison, the 2024-25 budget had actual budget expenditures of \$20,969,766 and a tax levy of \$6,491,989.

ICC was able to lower its tax rate by taking advantage of a higher assessed valuation of all local properties. The 2025-26 budget plan is built on a total taxable valuation of \$192,190,058, which is up from the \$183,311,845 in the 2024-25 budget cycle.

One mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Therefore, one (1.00) mill in the 2025-26 budget cycle will generate \$192,190 in tax dollars. For comparison, one (1.00) mill in 2024-25 generated \$183,311 in property tax dollars.

Computer purchase

ICC trustees on Tuesday also gave their blessing toward the purchase of 458 laptop computers and seven laptop storage carts a part of a \$300,000 grant.

The ADOPT grant through the Kansas Department of

Commerce intends to make laptop computers available to ICC students who are income eligible or have no other computer technology at home.

The 458 laptop computers will be purchased through Lenovo at a total cost of \$299,990, and the seven storage carts will be purchased from Uline for \$5,840.23.

Other business

Among other items of business at Tuesday's meeting, ICC trustees: conducted program re-

programs, including accounting, biology, bookkeeping and office management, cosmetology, English, math and science, and theatre. • signed an agreement with the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference for

views of several academic

- football and volleyball gameday officials. ICC will pay \$10,250 to the KJCCC for the five home football games and \$7,866 for the 16 home con-• acknowledged that ICC had received \$2,527,871 in
- 2024-25 budget cycle. The college has \$996,400 in grant applications under review thus far in the 2025-26 year. • learned of the hiring of Nicholas Jones, Brandy Huser and Kristin Schicke as custodians and Juwan Mitchell as volunteer football coach. The board also learned that Steph-

anie Kaiser will transfer from

custodian to senior custodian,

and the board also learned of

the aspiration of Dustin Burch

various grants through the

as maintenance technician. The college still has five vacancies, including instrumental music instructor (adjunct), academic coordinator for Upward Bound, associate professor of industrial maintenance technology, volunteer football coach/housing supervisor, and maintenance tech-

ICC has 91 full-time salary employees, four full-time hourly, seven part-time, four volunteer and one temporary agency workers. Mixed in with the six open positions, ICC has a total employee roster of 113 for the 2025-26

USD 445 employees honored for years of service

year by recognizing faculty versary awards, which were given to the honored employees on Monday.

Those milestone anniversaries include:

• 5 years: Becky Caresio, Jared Chastain, Judy Dobler,

Michael Gillman, Tara Gossard, Jessica Howard, Kay Jennings, Angie Krause, Sa- Shanna Ehmke, Spencer Mcand staff with service anni- mantha Oliver, Kayla Smith, Glothin, Halie O'Connor, Rosa Sherry Thompson, Tyler Robinson-Turner, Ed Ruth-Tosh, Ashley Tracy, Rachelle Trzok, Deonta Wade, Megan Wade, Meggin Waggoner, Corrissa Walker, Kelsea Watkins, Camille Watts, Elena Watts, Stephanie York.

Rita Collins, Samara Crider, erford, Michelle Smith, Amy Walker.

- 15 years: Jenna Nash, Alysia Walthall.
- 20 years: Ashley Rutherford, Ray Rutherford, Kar-

• 10 years: Melissa Barnett, las Moore, Angie Deenihan, Amanda Cavaness.

• 25 years: Paula Page.

NAME ON CREDIT CARD

• 35 years: Lisa Childress. \bullet 40 years: Sherri Chittum.





Any Hustler Mower thru Sept., 30, 2025



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