

COUNCIL GROVE REPUBLICAN

A Daily Newspaper on the Santa Fe Trail in Council Grove, Kansas Since 1872



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Briefly...

The Morris County Courthouse and all departments will be closed Monday, October 12, for County Employee In Service Day. There will be no Public Transportation available.

The Council Grove High School Lady Braves volleyball team will celebrate its seniors at its last home match today when it hosts the Chase County Bulldogs. Matches start at 5 pm with varsity, JV, varsity on the east court and JV, C, C. on the west court. Senior Night festivities will take place before the 2nd varsity game.

Tyler Nelson, Assistant Lake Manager with the Corps of Engineers, reported the current pool elevation at 1278.80 this morning. With all the recent rains, that puts it up 4.8 inches above normal elevation.

Reservoir Lake Level

Normal elevation1274.00
Current elevation1278.80

THREE-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

**Corps of Engineers Readings,
Council Grove Reservoir**

**High and low
temperatures for the
24-hour period
ending this morning were
76 and 46, with the
8:00 am reading 50°.**

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 84. South wind around 5 mph. Clear, with a low around 59.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 81. South wind around 5 mph. Mostly clear, low around 57.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 81. Southeast wind 5-10 mph. Clear, with a low around 59.



**WEDNESDAY
FORECAST
High 84
Low 59**



Celebrating National Newspaper Week

Embracing Local Journalism *for a Better Future*

A town without a newspaper loses more than just news

By Robb Hicks

During National Newspaper Week, we should all ask what would happen if our local newspaper suddenly disappeared.

Our community would lose more than headlines.

We would lose the public record of who voted for what, how tax dollars were spent and which promises were kept. We would lose the watchdog that asks the hard questions.

We would also lose the chronicle of daily life: obituaries, births, honor rolls, ballgames, county fairs, veterans programs, business openings, retirements and the small acts of service that hold a town together.

A newspaper is not just paper and ink. It is part of the civic fabric that holds a community together.

That is why the crisis facing local newspapers should concern everyone, not just people in the news business.

According to Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, close to 3,500 newspapers have disappeared in the United States since 2005. In the past year alone, another 148 vanished through closures or mergers. About 50 million Americans now have limited or no access to local news. Nearly 80% of the nation's news deserts are in pre-

dominantly rural counties.

This did not happen because people stopped needing local news. It happened because the old business model broke down.

For generations, newspapers were supported by readers, advertisers and public notices. That worked when downtowns were strong, businesses were locally owned and advertising decisions were made by people who lived in town.

The local hardware store bought an ad because its owner lived here, knew the newspaper and understood that supporting local institutions was part of doing business in the community.

When that store becomes one location in a regional or national chain, the advertising decision may be made hundreds or thousands of miles away — if there is any local advertising at all.

The store may still be here. The advertising dollars are not.

At the same time, more local advertising dollars are flowing to social media and other digital platforms. Those companies can sell clicks. But they do not cover city council meetings, county budgets, school boards, youth baseball or print every kid on the honor roll.

Newspapers must modernize. We

have to make our websites better, improve our digital products, reach readers in new ways and become more efficient.

But technology alone cannot replace a strong local business base.

Philanthropy can help. Foundations can fund reporting projects, student journalism, technology and innovation. But grants are a bridge, not a permanent road for most community newspapers.

There is another part of the equation that deserves more attention.

Local newspapers have spent decades providing public-service information that government agencies and nonprofit organizations need communities to see — often at no cost.

There is an important difference between news and public information.

Reporters should decide what is news. Government agencies should not expect a news story to replace a communications budget.

If an agency needs the public to understand a tax program, election, health service, school initiative or government program, it should budget to communicate that information through trusted local media.

The same is true for nonprofits.

A news release is not a communications plan. If telling people about available services or important community work is part of the mission, telling that story should also be part

of the budget.

Some states have started to act, creating tax credits and other programs to help protect local journalism jobs.

Congress should move, too.

The Community News and Small Business Support Act would help keep or expand local coverage in rural communities while also helping small businesses advertise in their local market.

That matters because local stores are fighting their own battle.

They cannot compete online against Amazon, national chains and big-box retailers with enormous advertising budgets and sophisticated digital marketing operations.

Helping small businesses advertise locally could strengthen downtown businesses and local news coverage at the same time.

Saving local news is not about nostalgia.

It is about whether communities can still make informed decisions, preserve their shared history and hold those in power accountable.

A community without a newspaper does not become better informed. It becomes more dependent on rumor, social media, press releases and outside narratives.

It becomes less informed, less connected and easier to mislead. Accountability weakens. Civic engagement declines. And gradually, (See *Newspaper Week*, Page 2)

PUBLISHER'S PUNDITS



By Jan Kendall
Sciaccia
Owner/
Publisher
Council Grove
Republican

As we observe National Newspaper Week Oct. 4-10, I want to add a little background to John Schlageck's "Grassroots Journalism," which appeared on the front page of Monday's Council Grove Republican. The article was originally written and published in the Emporia Gazette in 2016. I contacted Schlageck, and he graciously gave us permission to share it again with our readers.

I should have noted that when the article appeared Monday, and I regret the omission.

What struck me, however, was how relevant Schlageck's words remain 10 years later. In many ways, they carry even more weight today. Since 2016, communities across the country have lost even more local newspapers, and the number of news deserts — places with little or no consistent local news coverage — has continued to grow, particularly in rural America.

Those of us who publish community newspapers see firsthand how important local journalism remains. It is where school boards, city councils, county commissions, local

(See *Publisher's Pundits*, Page 2)

Large rock damages semi

Justin Richardson, 48, Hope, was westbound on O Ave in a 2016 Peterbilt when he struck a large rock that turned up and struck the step and fuel tank of the semi. Both were heavily damaged. Richardson was wearing a seatbelt.

The accident occurred on September 17.

Creation of Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve explored

Several people with ties to Council Grove and Morris County will be part of the story when the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka hosts a program examining the creation of the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9.

Prairie Hollow executive producer Dave Kendall and Rex Buchanan, formerly of Council Grove, will take part in the museum's "Museum After Hours" program, which will focus on the people and events that ultimately led to establishment of the preserve in neighboring Chase County.

The program comes just weeks before the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve marks its 30th anniversary in mid-November.

As part of the evening, Kendall and Buchanan will screen approximately half of a documentary Kendall produced in 2016 for the preserve's 20th anniversary. The documentary examines the sometimes-contentious debate that preceded creation of the preserve and includes several people with strong connections to Morris County.

Among those featured are Tom Moxley and the late former U.S. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum Baker, both of Morris County. The documentary also includes representatives of two organizations that held opposing views about whether a national preserve should be created in the Flint Hills.

Kassebaum Baker played an important role in trying to bring the opposing sides together and find common ground. Those efforts eventually helped clear the way for creation of the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve.

For residents of Council Grove and Morris County, the program offers a look back at a chapter of Flint Hills

(See *Tallgrass Prairie*, Page 2)

Hit by unknown driver

On August 26, Lorraine Kasten, 58, White City, was driving a 2013 Ford Edge northbound on 2400 Road, when she met another car going southbound (driver unknown). Kasten pulled to the side to it to pass on the narrow roadway and was struck on the mirror by the unknown vehicle.

Kasten was wearing a seatbelt.

Rezac Land & Livestock wins fall ranch rodeo

Some of the state's top ranch teams competed Sunday, Oct. 4, during the Annual Fall Ranch Rodeo in Council Grove, sponsored by the Morris County Youth Rodeo Association.

In the men's division, teams competed in team penning, steer branding, team roping and mugging.

Rezac Land & Livestock took first place with team members Russell Rezac, Matt Rezac, Corey Lundberg and Tyrell McClintock.

Gibbs Cattle Company finished second. Team members were Chase Gibbs, Michaela Gibbs, Garrett Cole and Kolby Boos.

Third place went to Lonesome Pine, represented by Bud Higgs, Troy Higgs, Trey Langvardt and Bailey Langvardt.

Youth teams competed in penning, calf branding and ribbon roping.

CST captured first place in the youth division with team members Luke Goin, Tip Cloud and Trace Cloud.

Two teams tied for second place. Running C included Macey Hensley, Avery Hastings and Ketchum Carl, while Rising R was represented by Karson Rogers, Kaydin Rogers and Kashlyn Rogers.

The annual rodeo brought ranch competitors of different ages together for an afternoon of events highlighting traditional ranching skills and teamwork.

Kaw Mission Councils program is October 11

The October 11, Kaw Mission Councils: 2026 Westward Expansion Lecture Series program will be Mary Ann Wilson/ de Tevis/Joseph/ Means: The First Documented Free African American Woman on the Santa Fe Trail. It will be presented by Dr. Leo Oliva.



Dr. Leo Oliva

The program will be held at 2 p.m., at the Council Grove Methodist Fellowship Hall, located at 21 North Mission Street in Council Grove.

Mary Ann Wilson was born a slave in Alabama. When she was a young adult, she was purchased by Portuguese immigrant Peter Joseph de Tevis. He freed her and married her in St. Louis. Peter Joseph was a friend of Kit Carson and other Santa

(See *Kaw Council*, Page 2)

Nancy Dosien wins Pigskin Pick'Em

Nancy Dosien of Council Grove claimed the Week 4 title in the Council Grove Republican's Pigskin Pick 'Em contest after a three-way tie was settled by the tiebreaker.

Monday night's 45-24 victory by the Atlanta Falcons over the New Orleans Saints completed the 18-game slate and left three contestants tied with 14 correct selections.

Dosien won the tiebreaker with a prediction of 48 total points in the Kansas City Chiefs-Las Vegas Raiders game. The Chiefs defeated the Raiders 30-27 for a combined 57 points, making Dosien's guess the closest among the three tied contestants.

Several games proved particularly challenging for contestants during Week 4. The Cleveland Browns edged the Pittsburgh Steelers 27-24, while the New England Patriots defeated the Buffalo Bills 29-26. The Los Angeles Rams' 24-20 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles and the Carolina Panthers' 32-26 win over the Detroit Lions also caused difficulty for many entries.

Elsewhere in the NFL, the Baltimore Ravens defeated the Tennessee Titans 24-18; the Jacksonville Jaguars topped the Cincinnati Bengals

(See *Nancy Dosien wins*, Page 2)



The youth ranch team of CST took first place at Sunday's ranch rodeo, sponsored by the Morris County Youth Rodeo Association. Pictured left to right are Miss Morris County Youth Rodeo Queen Macey Bolen, Tip Cloud, Luke Goin and Trace Cloud, all brothers.