



Wednesday,  
October 7,  
2026

# CHASE COUNTY

## Explore the Flint Hills

### OLD SCHOOL HAUNTED HOUSE returns Oct. 16-17

The Chase County Old School Development District will host its sixth annual Old School Haunted House Oct. 16-17 at the Old School, 518 Third St., Cottonwood Falls. The Haunted House will be open from 7 to 10:30 p.m. both evenings.

The event began six years ago with a group of high school boys who were volunteering at the Old School. Nano Zuniga, Marcus Fleshman and Micah Cauthers took the lead, with Silus Hernandez, Colton Kewley and Mayson Jones also heavily involved. Since its beginning, the Haunted House has been built and staffed entirely by volunteers and supported through donations. All proceeds benefit the nonprofit Old School's programs and building improvements.

The Haunted House has continued to grow and change each year. Admission is \$12, and all seven rooms will feature new themes and decorations this year. Volunteers are responsible for decorating the individual rooms, with each group work-

ing to make its area as frightening as possible.

Several other activities will return or be added this year. A bonfire and s'mores, which proved popular last year, will again be available, with s'mores priced at \$2.



Visitors may also roast their own hot dogs for \$4. Drinks, chips and other treats will be available for purchase.

Hayrack rides will return from 7 to 9 p.m. each evening, courtesy of Roy Vansickle. Organizers said the ride will follow an entirely new route

this year. The cost is \$5 for children age 12 and younger and \$10 for those older. Pumpkins donated by Kay Wealand will be available for \$5 each. Coralee Conway will offer tarot card readings from 7 to 10:30 p.m. both evenings for \$10. Half of each fee will be donated to the Old School and the other half to Bloom House Youth Services.

New this year, Hidi Ca-hoone of Captured by Ca-hoone Photography will take free photographs of individuals and groups from 7 to 9 p.m. outside near the event props. Visitors do not have to enter the Haunted House to participate.

Volunteers are still needed to serve as actors, build sets, assist with makeup and hair, or help with donations for volunteer food, building supplies, costumes and decorations. Those interested may contact Lee Anne at 620-340-9634.

More information at [www.oldschooldevelopment.org](http://www.oldschooldevelopment.org) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/Chase-County-Old-School-Development-District](https://facebook.com/Chase-County-Old-School-Development-District).



**PIONEER BLUFFS TO HOST FALL ROUNDUP FESTIVAL -- Don't miss the Fall Roundup Festival at Pioneer Bluffs from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10. Spend the whole afternoon or come and go as you please while enjoying free kids' activities, art and merchandise, food trucks, a tractor display and more. The afternoon will also feature a concert by 3 Trails West beginning at 3:30 p.m. Pioneer Bluffs is located at 695 KS-177 Scenic, Matfield Green, Kansas.**

### Cottonwood Falls

(Continued from Page 2)

leak. Delores Conley spoke to Terri with concerns on the amount. Mike Hastings asked to review the final bill and explained that his church might be able to help in this matter. Terri asked if she could proceed with planning and scheduling this year's Christmas party, the council agreed. Jerry Moran visited the municipal office. Nick Rogers mentioned he stopped by the courthouse also.

**UTILITIES SUPERVISOR:** Scott was absent due to other commitments. Buddy talked about the estimate for the riprap project at the lagoons. Conley Excavating bid was for \$12,500. The council discussed the project. Nick Rogers motioned to accept the bid from Conley Excavating, seconded by Ryan Spinden, motion carried. The council talked about sledging the lagoon; they wanted Scott to confirm the timeline. The council would like to replace the landscape material/barrier and have some rubber mulch added around the playground equipment. Grant Edwards asked about the limestone rocks on the city property that are not being used. He will reach out to Scott about this.

**Staff Policy & Relations:** Street Alleys & Properties: Mike Hastings discussed the grass clippings that are still being discharged on the streets. The council would like Terri to remind the community about Ordinance No. 981 on their utility bill again this month. Nick Rogers mentioned that Maddox Repair Shop had debris on the sidewalks & streets. Tina was asked to send two letters out to Maddox Repairs and Betts address about their violation of Ordinance No. 981.

**Economics, Tax & Finance:** Parks & Recreation: Sidewalks: Sidewalk replacement was discussed; Crystal Hinnen is researching grant funds. A complaint was discussed about the rocks that the Betts residence has placed on the sidewalk in front of their house. Tina will send a letter to ask them to remove the rocks.

**Capital Improvements:** APPROVAL OF: Payroll, Taxes, Voided Checks Payment of Bills & EFT's: Mike Hastings presented the bill payment checks, voided checks,

EFT's, QuickBooks payroll figures, and overtime. Federal, Medicare & Social Security, and State With-holdings, KPERS. Mike Hastings motioned to approve, seconded by Nick Rogers. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to adjourn by Mike Hastings, second by Nick Rogers, motion carried: Time 7:00 pm.

### CHASE COUNTY SHERIFF REPORT

#### September 28

Civil matter, Cottonwood Falls; Adult welfare check, Strong City; Investigation, Cottonwood Falls; Civil matter, Cottonwood Falls; Adult welfare check, Cottonwood Falls.

#### September 29

Gas smell at Care and Rehab, Strong City and Cottonwood Falls fire cleared the building. The fire chief advised nothing was found; Medical- Fall, Burdick; Motorist assist, Elmdale.

#### September 30

Suspicious subject, downtown Cottonwood Falls; Vehicle lock out, Strong City; Medical- difficulty breathing. Non-transport; Motorist assist, mm328 US Hwy 50. The vehicle spun out and is in the ditch, calling their own tow; MM336 US Hwy 50, tire debris in roadway; Adult welfare check, Cottonwood Falls.

#### October 1

Adult welfare check, Strong City; Theft, Elmdale. A vehicle was reported stolen from a driveway. A deputy later located the vehicle traveling westbound on U.S. Highway 50. The vehicle failed to stop and led deputies on a pursuit for approximately three miles before leaving the roadway and entering a ditch. The driver was taken into custody and transported to Juvenile Intake.

#### October 2

Medical-general, Strong City. **October 3** Medical-chest (cardiac), Elmdale; Medical-stroke, Cottonwood Falls.

#### October 4

Theft, Cottonwood Falls. The reporting party's clothes were stolen from the laundry mat.

## Chase County Commission seeks alternatives to 26% health insurance increase

A proposed 26% increase in Chase County's employee health insurance costs dominated discussion during the Chase County Commission's Sept. 30 meeting, prompting commissioners to begin looking closely at alternatives for 2027.

The county's current carrier, UnitedHealthcare, proposed an approximately 26% renewal increase. Insurance representatives Julie Yarmer and Darren Booth told commissioners the company might reduce the increase by about 2.5 percentage points, but commissioners indicated an increase of that size would still be unacceptable.

A preliminary fully insured proposal from Blue Cross and Blue Shield was about 16.83% above the county's current costs. Final Blue Cross rates were not yet available because they could not be released until Oct. 1, and rates from Aetna were also still pending.

Much of the discussion centered on whether the county should move from its current fully insured arrangement to a partially self-funded plan through Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Preliminary figures showed annual fixed costs of approximately \$878,945.64 for a fully insured Blue Cross plan, compared with approximately \$569,874.24 under the self-funded option, a difference of about \$309,071.40.

Under the proposed self-funded arrangement, the county would assume more responsibility for claims but would have stop-loss protection against unusually high expenses. The proposal included a \$40,000 individual stop-loss level as well as aggregate protection for the county as a whole.

Yarmer said Chase County has been building insurance reserves and is currently running about 3.86% below the amount projected for 2026.

If the county kept premiums at the same level as 2026, preliminary calculations showed it could place approximately \$282,009.88 into reserves under the self-funded arrangement. Maximum liability was estimated at \$560,225. When existing reserves were included, Yarmer said the county would be approximately 101.75% funded against that maximum liability.

Yarmer said the county's current financial position could make 2027 an appropriate time to consider moving to a self-funded plan, provided the final numbers and coverage comparisons are favorable.

Commissioners said they want additional information before making a decision, including three years of claims history and comparisons of

provider networks, prescriptions and laboratory benefits.

They emphasized that any savings to the county should not result in poorer coverage or significantly higher costs for employees.

Additional insurance information is expected later in October, with Oct. 30 discussed as a likely date for another presentation.

#### Burn resolution reviewed

Sheriff Jacob Welsh and commissioners also continued a lengthy review of Chase County's controlled-burn resolution.

Officials discussed adding clearer definitions for types of burns, identifying the responsibilities of land-owners and burn operators, and determining what information should be provided when a burn is reported.

Possible requirements include the names of the operator and landowner, location, estimated acreage, type of burn, anticipated starting and completion times and contact information.

Commissioners also discussed burn bans, exceptions under certain conditions, smoke near roadways, liability and possible penalties for violations.

Welsh said he would like the county to use a scientifically defensible method for determining when weather conditions make burning unsafe rather than placing that responsibility on dispatchers.

Representatives of the National Weather Service have offered to provide information about the Grassland Fire Danger Index and how weather conditions could be incorporated into county policy.

No changes were adopted. Commissioners plan to continue discussing the issue and indicated controlled burning will be a topic at their 7 p.m. Oct. 21 meeting at the Cedar Point fire station.

#### Flock cameras questioned

Cottonwood Falls resident Matt Methvin briefly addressed commissioners about privacy concerns related to Flock license plate recognition cameras recently introduced in Chase County.

Methvin said he supports the work of the Sheriff's Department but questioned the collection, storage and sharing of information generated by surveillance technology. He encouraged county officials to consider privacy and civil-liberty issues as the technology develops.

#### Other business

County grant writer Christie Reinhart reported that new grant activity

had slowed as the federal fiscal year ended. She has been working on policies needed for federally funded projects and researching future funding opportunities for roads and bridges.

Reinhart also reported that four engineering firms have expressed interest in future county work.

Resident Diana Seigle asked commissioners whether Chase County has policies governing data centers or solar farms. Commissioners said it does not. Seigle expressed concern about potential water use associated with data centers and encouraged public involvement before policies are established.

Commissioners also discussed county building maintenance, courthouse Christmas lights and winter snow-removal needs.

During general business, the commission approved \$432,036.69 in warrants and payroll totaling \$315,027.45 for Aug. 25 through Sept. 24.

Commissioners also renewed the county's membership in the National Association of Counties, or NACO, for 2027 at a cost of \$400.

Stephanie Cervantes, outreach victim advocate with SOS, attended as commissioners proclaimed October Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Chase County.

The commission's upcoming meetings are scheduled for 9 a.m. Oct. 12; 7 p.m. Oct. 21 at the Cedar Point fire station; and 9 a.m. Oct. 30.



## CHASE COUNTY SENIOR CENTER

Senior Center News ~ October 9 through October 16, 2026

By Jessica Kelly

We've been celebrating Natl. Pet Peeve Week, but today, Friday, October 9th is the last day until next year. Get them out in the open! Wear your RED in for Red Friday and join us for some fun Song trivia. Jene Burenheide will be taking blood pressures from 11 a.m. until noon and we'll play BINGO after lunch. Please join us. Monday, October 12th is Columbus Day & Silly Sayings Day. Be ready with your best silly saying. Kathleen Lane will play the piano before lunch and Nancy Brock will play afterward. Thank you, gals! We'll pass out an Apple trivia page before lunch on Tuesday, October 13th, and it's also our monthly Show & Tell day for October. What will you bring? Rachel Jones from the Chase County Health Department will be in the building giving FLU SHOTS for all that want them from 9 a.m. until noon on Tuesday the 13th. No appointment necessary, but please bring your Medicare or Insurance Card so that there will not be a cost! Thanks Rachel. Wednesday, October 14th is Chocolate Cupcake Day. Have you ever heard the saying, "as long as there is chocolate, there is happiness"? We'll have a Fall word search ready for all that want one and welcome in the Wednesday Afternoon Bridge Club after lunch. Thursday, October 15th is another Popcorn Day! We'll set out several different kinds. Before lunch, we'll have a Fall crossword puzzle for everyone and after lunch, we invite everyone to stay and help us welcome Mrs. Potts' new 3rd grade class to the senior center. The kids bring activities and books with them to share with us and it's always a fun time. Friday, October 16th is Red Friday. Wear red and we'll take your picture! Do you have a favorite dictionary? Bring it in for Dictionary Day and if you can find a word you don't think we will know the meaning of...be sure to bring it along. You can give us the word, we can guess and if we get it correct, that is great. If NOT, you get to tell us what it means and either way we all learn something. Jene Burenheide will again be taking blood pressures from 11 a.m. until noon and of course, we'll be playing BINGO after lunch. Remember... your ticket to play is to eat lunch with us. So, get your name in the pot and come have some fun.

To make your reservations for dine in, carryout, or delivery, please call 620-273-8511 any time BEFORE 9:30 a.m., or better yet, get on our regular meal list. Then you will only have to let us know if you are NOT going to eat.

**OUT-MEALS!** Please remember that you can always get out-meals! Meals are available to pick up or can be delivered within our meal delivery area. **FROZEN MEALS!** Frozen meals are also available to pick up or can be delivered within our meal delivery area. The frozen meals are fully cooked meals that have been frozen. You simply thaw them out, put them on a microwave plate and heat to temperature, or heat to temp in a conventional oven. These are incredibly good, and you can pick the ones you like the best!

Please come see us, we would love to see you SMILE!!



Fellowship Meals menus for next week have been announced by the Chase County Senior Citizens Center. Tea, coffee, milk and a bread product will be served with each meal. The menu is subject to change.

**Monday** – Cheesy ham & potato soup, crackers, succotash, biscuit, hot cinnamon applesauce

**Tuesday** – Sloppy Joes on bun, potato salad, 3 bean salad, apricots

**Wednesday** – Chicken tenders, cheesy potatoes, creamed spinach, hot roll, pineapple/bananas

**Thursday** – BBQ ribettes or baked fish, parsley potatoes, cauliflower au gratin, wheat roll, baked apple slices

**Friday** – Oven fried chicken, mashers with gravy, candied carrots, hot roll, strawberry shortcake

### LEGAL PUBLICATION

State of Kansas  
ORDER  
for closing  
of registration books  
before general election  
November 3, 2026

Pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 25-2311(c), notice is hereby given that on the 13th day of October, 2026, all registration books for the general election will close at the end of regular business hours. Registration books will remain closed until the 4th day of November, 2026.

WITNESS MY HAND and the seal of my office this 2nd day of October, A.D. 2026.

SCOTT SCHWAB  
Secretary of State

SEAL

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### CHASE COUNTY GENERAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

307 Broadway,  
Cottonwood Falls  
Phone: 620-273-8511

“Transportation within Cottonwood Falls & Strong City”

• Medical Appointments  
• Business • Hair Appointments  
• Grocery Store, Etc.

#### Donations are accepted

Call us for more information or a ride

Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• Handicap Accessible  
First Come, First Serve

*This project funded in part by the  
KDOT Public Transit Program*