Wednesday, November 4, 2026

COUNCIL GROVE REPUBLICAN

Volume 154 • Number 173

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

COUNCIL GROVE 154 Years SANTA FE TRAIL REPUBLICAN

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Briefly...

Reminder: The Latimer Lutheran Church Preservation Society will host a Veterans Appreciation Sloppy Joe Meal and special program on Saturday, Nov. 7, at the former Zion Lutheran Church in Latimer.

Obituary... Page 2

Local Grain Prices

(Provided by Agri Trails Coop)

Corn $3.73
Milo.....$3.46
Soybeans $11.54
Wheat $5.70

Reservoir Lake Level

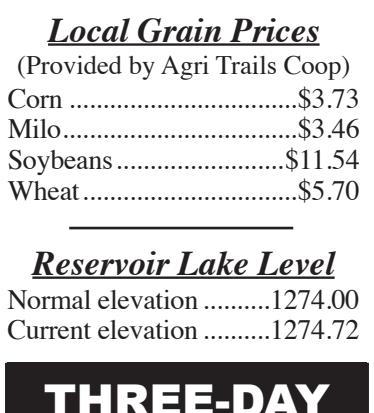
Normal elevation 1274.00
Current elevation 1274.72

THREE-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

Corps of Engineers Readings, Council Grove Reservoir

High and low temperatures for the 24-hour period ending this morning were 62 and 45, with the 8:00 am reading 47°.
There was .03 inch of rain

Thursday: A 20% chance for rain. Mostly sunny, high 56. Northwest wind 5-10 mph. Partly cloudy, low 37.
Friday: Mostly sunny, high 57. North wind around 5 mph. Mostly cloudy, low 37.
Saturday: Mostly sunny, high 62. Calm wind becoming southwest around 5 mph. Mostly clear, low 38.



THURSDAY FORECAST
High 56
Low 37

8 10499 02579 4

Mayor Ryan McDonald recall fails; Morris County favors Republicans

Council Grove Mayor Ryan McDonald will remain in office after voters rejected an effort to recall him in Tuesday's general election. According to unofficial results released by Morris County on November 3, 433 voters, or 54.12%, voted against the recall, while 367, or 45.88%, supported removing him from office. The recall failed by a margin of 66 votes.

A total of 800 votes were cast on the recall question, with 14 voters choosing not to vote on the issue. All three Council Grove precincts had reported.

While Morris County voters strongly favored Republican candidates in the state and federal races, the results differed considerably from statewide voting trends. According to election-night results reported by WIBW-TV, Democratic candidates were leading in races for governor, U.S. Senate, attorney general, secretary of state and insurance commissioner, although statewide counting was not yet complete.

In the U.S. Senate race, Morris County voters favored Republican incumbent Roger Marshall with 1,366 votes, or 58.78%, compared to 823 votes, or 35.41%, for Democrat Adam Hamilton. Libertarian David Graham received 135 votes. Statewide, however, WIBW reported Hamilton leading Marshall, 52.5% to 44.5%, in the incomplete returns.

The same contrast appeared in the governor's race. Morris County gave Republican Ty Masterson and running mate Jeffrey Klemp 1,496 votes, or 64.62%, while Democrat Cindy Holscher and running mate KC Ohaebosim received 819 votes, or 35.38%. Statewide, Holscher was leading Masterson, 51.8% to 48.2%, in WIBW's election-night reporting.

Republican Kris Kobach received 1,527 votes in Morris County in the attorney general's race, compared to 784 for Democrat Chris Mann. Statewide, Mann was leading Kobach.

Republican Pat Proctor led the county's secretary of state race with 1,403 votes, followed by Democrat Jennifer Day with 695 and Scott Morgan with 195. Day was leading statewide.

In the insurance commissioner race, Republican Daniel Hawkins received 1,475 Morris County votes, compared to 662 for Democrat Dinah Sykes and 150 for Libertarian Ric Koehn. Sykes was leading in statewide returns.

Republican Steven Johnson carried Morris County in the state treasurer's race with 1,562 votes, followed by Democrat Juan Luengo with 558 and Libertarian Eric Lund with 166. Johnson held a statewide lead.

In the Second Congressional District race, Republican incumbent Derek Schmidt received 1,553 Morris County votes, or 66.45%, compared to 691, or 29.57%, for Democrat Don Coover and 93 for Libertarian John Hauer. Schmidt also held a narrow districtwide lead in the incomplete statewide reporting.

In uncontested local races, Republican Jon Sawyer received 677 votes for Morris County Commissioner District 1, while Republican Nathan "Nate" Butler received 2,028 votes for the Kansas House of Representatives District 68.

County voters also supported the proposed Kansas constitutional amendment concerning noncitizen voting, with 1,607 voting yes and 621 voting no, a margin of 72.13% to 27.87%. Statewide returns also showed the amendment receiving majority support.

All nine judicial retention questions on the Morris County ballot received majority support, including those involving Kansas Supreme Court justices, Court of Appeals judges and District Court judges.

In township clerk races, Steven Shepard received 156 votes in Township Three, Jamie Schmidt received 202 in Township Five, Anne Carr received 73 in Township Eight, Frances D. Davies received 135 in Township Nine and Karen Harmison received 48 in Highland Township. All were unopposed.

Morris County reported 2,351 ballots cast among 4,056 registered voters, representing a turnout of 57.96%. All 15 precincts had reported in the county's final election-night update, issued at 9:36 p.m.

The Morris County results remain unofficial pending canvassing and certification. Statewide totals reported by WIBW were also incomplete at the time of reporting.

Mayor McDonald responds

Council Grove Mayor Ryan McDonald expressed gratitude to voters following the failure of Tuesday's, November 3, recall election. According to unofficial election results, 433 voters opposed recalling McDonald, while 367 voted in favor of removing him from office.

In a statement issued following the election, McDonald thanked those who supported him throughout the recall process.

"I am humbled and grateful to have earned the continued support of Council Grove voters in the recall election. I sincerely thank everyone who voted, supported me, encouraged me, and stood with me throughout this process," McDonald said.

The mayor reaffirmed his commitment to the priorities he established when first seeking office.

"When I first campaigned for mayor, I promised change. I knew change wouldn't always be easy or popular, but I believed Council Grove needed leadership willing to address difficult issues, challenge the status quo, and pursue new opportunities. That commitment has not changed."

McDonald also acknowledged the divisions within the community surrounding the recall effort and emphasized his desire to move forward.

"I recognize that this recall effort created division in our community. Regardless of how anyone voted, I respect their right to have their voice heard. I have no interest in prolonging political disagreements. We are neighbors, friends, and fellow residents who all want to see Council Grove succeed."

He further recognized the responsibility that comes with remaining in office.

"I also recognize that this victory comes with responsibility. I will continue listening, making difficult decisions when necessary, and working on behalf of all residents, including those who opposed me."

Looking ahead, McDonald said his priorities remain unchanged.

"The recall election is behind us, and my focus is now on the future. I ran on change, and I intend to keep working toward that goal. Council Grove has tremendous potential, and there is still much work to do."

He concluded his statement by thanking residents for their confidence.

"Thank you for your confidence and for allowing me to continue serving as your mayor. The work continues, and I believe there are great days still ahead of us."

The Council Grove Republican has also requested a statement from the committee that organized the recall effort to provide its perspective on the election results. No response from the recall committee has been received as of press time.

Council Grove City Council approves holiday projects, truck purchase

by Jan Sciacca

The Council Grove City Council approved several holiday initiatives proposed by CG HOPE, authorized the purchase of a truck for the street department and reviewed ongoing city projects during its regular meeting Tuesday, November 3. All six council members were present.

The council unanimously approved the consent agenda, including minutes from the previous meeting, appropriations totaling $80,304 and cereal malt beverage license applications for Short Stop #18 and Ray's Apple Market.

Fire Department Report

Fire Chief Tyson Stevenson reported on recent emergency calls, including structure and vehicle fires, a gas line break and traffic accidents. The department's October 3 ATV/UTV fundraiser attracted approximately 40 participants and raised $2,312. The money will be placed in a donation fund for future equipment purchases, potentially including water rescue equipment.

Stevenson reported that the department's ladder truck is operational following repairs to a transmission sensor and other mechanical issues. However, an engine rear main seal continues to leak oil. Replacing the seal could cost between $6,000 and $10,000, and Stevenson plans to obtain estimates next year.

The department is preparing to host Kansas Firefighters Association training December 5-6, with firefighters from across the state invited to participate. Training will include simulated fire conditions, smoke exercises, vehicle extrication and classroom instruction.

City Administrator's Report

City Administrator Nick Jones reported continued progress on the Katy Depot restoration. Foundation work is underway, while approval of replacement windows from the State Historic Preservation Office remains pending. Questions concerning fascia-board materials and dimensions are also being addressed.

Downtown parking stall striping is expected to take place next week, weather permitting. Jones said the contractor anticipates completing the work in one day. The city will notify the public when vehicles must be moved from affected areas.

Jones also reported that the city's request for qualifications for the CCLIP project has been approved for publication. The city intends to advertise for engineering firms and contact companies previously involved with Safe Routes to School projects.

Councilor Denise Hartman asked that the city consider concerns expressed in letters from local students regarding deteriorating sidewalks and other pedestrian safety issues. Jones explained that locations included in the state-funded Safe Routes to School project have already been approved and cannot be changed without affecting the funding. Mayor Ryan McDonald said he would share the students' letters with the council but that most were general in nature, without specifying an exact location.

Jones confirmed that the city's new security cameras have been installed and are operational. The cameras record when motion is detected, include audio capabilities and use cloud-based storage rather than the city's internal server.

McDonald also raised concerns about the planned repairs to the World War II Memorial. He suggested obtaining construction specifications addressing concrete thickness, reinforcement and adequate footing beneath the monument before work begins. Jones agreed to follow up on the matter.

City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Stuart Symmonds, participating remotely, provided an update on municipal court operations and his first several months representing the city.

Symmonds said municipal court is operating smoothly and handles cases ranging from traffic violations and animal control matters to domestic battery charges. He is also considering expanding the court's diversion program, which could help offset some operating expenses.

He recommended that requests for legal services generally be coordinated through the mayor or city administrator to ensure consistent communication and direction.

Councilor Nathan Adams asked Symmonds to investigate a possible conflict between Sections 1-302 and 1-303 of the city code and an individual contract.

Section 1-302 states that the terms of appointed officers and employees expire May 1 of each year, or when their successors are appointed and qualified. It also provides that a majority of the council may remove an appointed officer or employee, or that the mayor may remove an officer for good cause with council consent.

Section 1-303 establishes the position of city administrator, providing that the administrator is appointed by the mayor with council consent and serves at the pleasure of the

(See City Council, Page 2)

Tallgrass Prairie sets winter hours

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, located at 2580B Highway 177, Strong City, has announced changes to its operating schedule for the winter season.

From Nov. 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027, the preserve's visitor center and bookstore will be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

However, the historic ranch buildings will remain open to visitors seven days a week, operating under normal winter hours of 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MC Hospital Fall Health Fair set for Saturday, Nov. 14

The Morris County Hospital is hosting a Fall Health Fair Saturday, Nov. 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. It is a free community event.

Blood pressure checks, bone density screening, balance screening, carotid screening, skin checks, self-pay labs (fasting), massage, patient portal help and flu shots are among the services offered.

Health vendors and other resources will be available. There will be door prizes and a $3 breakfast (cash only). Children can bring their teddy bear to the kid's teddy bear clinic.

For more information, call 620-767-6811 ext. 148.

From The Dale Linn Collection

WHO NAMED TOWN STREETS? WHY WAS A COUNCIL GROVE STREET CALLED SAZARAC?

The following article was originally published in the January 1, 1946, edition of the Council Grove Republican. It is reprinted in its entirety, exactly as published, preserving the original wording, spelling and punctuation. We are grateful to the Dale Linn Collection for submitting this piece of Morris County history.

Many Pioneer Names Preserved by Streets —Trees and Presidents a Favorite Pattern for Town Builders

Probably only old settlers know the origin of names given the streets of Morris county towns. The source of Huffaker and Simcock streets in Council Grove, Loomis in Diamond Springs, Mackinzie in White City, Coffin and Pirtle in Wilsey are well known, but how many pioneers recall the origin of Edwards street in Burdick, Stockholm in White City, Logan in Helmick, Guilford in Dunlap, and Gilmore in Wilsey? Or Roy avenue, Jennings, Douglas, Keller Guston and Short in Council Grove? Or Adolph, Netsell and Chaiser in White City?

Why was Market street, which is only 1½ blocks long and never had a store building, so named in the county seat? Why is Fourth street known by that designation for three blocks and as Glen street for the next five blocks?

All towns except Parkerville and Diamond Springs use numerals to designate part of their cross streets. There are just as many Front streets as Main streets. No set system seems to have been used by the pioneer town-builders, but states, presidents and trees seem to have been a favorite pattern.

Parkerville yielded to the horticultural urge and named its streets Peach, Olive, Orange, Grape, Plum and Vine. White City has Mulberry, Oak, Walnut and Elm. in Dwight are Cypress, Osage, Oak and Pine. Council Grove has an Oak, Walnut and Elm in the First ward. Delavan has Maple and Walnut.

The names of American presidents or statesmen appear in White City, which has Lincoln, Grant, Blaine and Garfield; in Wilsey which has Lincoln; and in Burdick with Washington, Lincoln and Grant.

Except for its Main street, Diamond Springs has used one identical letter for naming all its streets—Loomis, Logan, Lyon, Lynn, Lincoln, Locust and Laurel.

Dunlap calls its main business street Commercial; Wilsey is built on Fifth street; White City on Mackinzie; Parkerville on Front and Olive; and Helmick, which has completely disappeared, once had four store buildings on First street.

The two oddest names are in the county seat— Sazerac and Adelphian—in old Shadeland addition.