

CHAPTER 4 — from page 1

Elsewhere, a Red Cross fundraising campaign was underway. Sterling reached its goal in a single day, and Lyons soon did the same. Campaign manager D.J. Fair reported that workers were out across the county: “I am sure we already have at least half of our \$20,000 goal.”

A few days after Ernest Wikoff received his brother’s letter, the Hoyts received one of their own from “Somewhere in France.” Its opened envelope and censor’s markings made the war suddenly feel far less distant. *Somewhere in France* July 8, 1917 *Dear Folks,*

I’ve at last got time to write. I’ve been intending to do so for a week, but something has been going on all the time. Frank is over at our barracks washing clothes (even if it is Sunday) as we’ve been busy all the time except on the Fourth of July when we were given a vacation day. The Army band played in (say, I almost put down the name of the place we are at) – some square uptown. Aside from the band concert, little marked the day. I never heard a firecracker all day. The French people, though, sure did celebrate with us on the Fourth.

. . . I am in the YMCA tent at the campgrounds now and sure am glad there is someplace to go where a person can feel at home, where you don’t have to hear the French talk, or as it sounds to me, jabber.

The Catholics invited me to attend their service at six o’clock this morning. That was a little too early for me. You know, when I am at home on Sunday, I hardly get to Sunday school at 9:45.

Where we are, a fellow can hear aero planes all the time. I can hear one now. They surely make a lot of noise.

Gee, it seems funny that harvest should be about over in Kansas, as the wheat up here is just now filled out. Most of the wheat here is of the beardless variety.

I received five hometown papers the other day. The latest one is June 5th, but it was sure interesting. Everyone in our shack reads them, and there are just about a hundred in it.

As I was walking to town the other day, I picked up a big four-leaf clover along the side of the road – so you know I am going to have good luck. I don’t believe I’ll have anything but the best of luck in the trenches. I don’t see anything to be scared of yet.

Frank and I are well, and I am beginning to feel just as much at home here as back home and a thousand times more at home than in El Paso, Texas.

Well, I must close as it is almost dinner time, about 5 o’clock where you are. I’ll bet you’re not up yet.
Your Soldier Boy,
Hobart L. Hoyt
Co. M., 16th Re. Inf.,
US Expeditionary Forces

Nothing made the distance from home feel greater than the long wait for mail to arrive. Messages from Kansas required at least two weeks to reach France, while those sent from the camps there often took more than three weeks to make their way back home.

The newspapers that reached France at the end of July carried reports of a Kansas wheat harvest long since completed. By the time word of the first cutting arrived, the wheat back home had been in the barn for nearly a month.

Even so, they eagerly read and reread the article about George Wells, the first farmer in the county to put his binder to work. They were pleased to learn that John Speck, north of town, called it some of the best wheat he had ever cut. And they proudly told anyone who would listen that the crop back home yielded thirty to forty bushels an acre and fetched two dollars a bushel.

But the harvest reports also carried troubling news. As enlistments shrank the pool of available workers, farmers agreed to cap wages at three dollars a day for general harvest hands and five dollars for experienced men with a team of horses. For the Lyons boys living on thirty dollars a month, the wages sounded almost unbelievable.

Newspapers also reported that the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) were organizing harvest workers, who demanded three dollars and fifty cents a day. Rather than lose valuable harvest time searching for replacements, farmers reluctantly agreed to the higher wage.

More troubling were the reports of sabotage. Newspapers blamed disgruntled field hands, pro-German agents, or union sympathizers for hurling incendiary devices from passing freight trains into unharvested fields.

The “bombs” were crude devices made from stones wrapped in oil-soaked rags and set ablaze. George Potwin, whose farm lay along the Missouri Pacific tracks a mile south of Lyons, discovered the charred remains of several in his field. Fortunately, the blaze caused only minor

damage.

By the end of July, Mamma Wikoff finally received her first letter from Frank since May. His carefully chosen words reflected his concern for her as he sought to reassure her that he would come home when the war was over.

Somewhere in France
July 10, 1917
Dear Mother:

Well, I suspect you think I am slow in writing, but this is the first chance I have had to write since July 4th. Remember that I have not heard from you except for a letter and a card, both written about June 6th, so you see it is the fault of the mail and not that I do not write. Some days I don’t have any time, and when I do, I have to do things for myself.

I will try to write more often, but do not worry whether I am alright – if I weren’t, you would hear at once, so no need to worry.

We got paid yesterday. I have about \$10 this month because I have done some barber work, and I guess I will do more after this if I can get the time. I ought to clear \$15 to \$25 extra a month if I can get enough time outside of drill.

Well, I will be glad when the war is over, as I intend to go to medical school. I like it, though, not for the waging of war but for the drill and the experience of it all. It is worth \$1,000 to any man if he will only make use of it. One thing is certain: You learn to take care of yourself.

I only wish I could assure you that I am safe and not to worry at all. I can’t give details as to where we are, but believe me when I say no need to worry or fear I will not come home for I feel that I will. It don’t worry me at all.

Write often. Tell the kids hello,
Your son
Frank H. Wikoff

Next Week: Chapter 5
The dog days of summer

RIGHTS — from page 4

The right to choose. Consumers often compare products based on price and quality before making a purchase.

The right to redress. If we’re unhappy with a product or service, we have the right to ask for a refund or a satisfactory resolution. **The right to consumer education.** This relates to being able to acquire knowledge and skills to be an informed consumer throughout life.

The right to a healthy environment. This helps to assure that we can live and work in an environment that is non-threatening to the wellbeing of present and future generations.

“These are guidelines for consumer rights,” Kiss said. “And these should be considered as going beyond what a company or store policy might be.”

Kiss added that many states provide additional protections for consumers, as well as federal laws and policies. On the national level, three organizations that are charged with aiding consumers are:

The Federal Communications Commission, which protects consumers when they experience is-

sues with phone, radio, Internet, television or emergency communications. The FCC can also aid in providing access for people with disabilities.

Federal Trade Commission, which protects consumers from deceptive and unfair business practices related to shopping and donating; credit, loans and debt; and money-making. They can also protect consumers from unwanted calls, emails and texts; as well as identity theft and online security and scams. **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau,** which focuses on banks, lenders and other financial institutions, and how they treat customers.

Kiss notes that these organizations and others are not intended to create an ‘us versus them’ mentality between businesses and consumers. Rather, she says, “we’re all in this market together, but if consumers don’t know their rights, then they may be infringed upon.”

A longer discussion with Kiss on consumer protection is available on the weekly radio program, Sound Living, produced by K-State Research and Extension.

Baxter digs big against Halstead

By: KENDRA GRIZZLE

Volleyball action this past week took the Lady Lyons to Wichita on Thursday, Sept. 10 where they competed in a tri-match between Wichita Trinity Academy and Halstead. The Lions lost both matches, going 0-4 for the night. The Halstead Dragons rattled the Lady Lyons with set scores of 25-12, 25-10.

Lyons lost despite a true team effort on offense. Junior Taylor Baxter stood out in the performance by registering 14 digs and an assist against the Lady Dragons.

Lyons gave Wichita Trinity their first win of the season, falling in the first set with a score of 10-25. Although the Lady

Lyons kept the second set close, the final score was 23-25.

Tuesday, Sept. 8, the LHS Volleyball team stole the first set from the Southeast of Saline Trojans led by senior setter Aariah Silva.

Lyons jumped out and took the first set from the Trojans 25-18 as Silvia served up an ace to get the Lady Lions rolling. Silvia has served the role of setter for the past three seasons for Lyons and continues to make a difference on the court in her final season.

Melanie Cereceres and Landyn Crawford added some big hits to finish off the Trojans.

The Trojans rebounded and came out scoring

during the second set. The Lady Lyons fell behind and could not gain enough ground to catch the Trojans, who took the second set 25-16. The third set saw Lyons come out with a lead of 3-0 before the Trojans scored five points in a row and ran off with the third set, 25-12, to win the first match of the series.

The SES Trojans went on to win the first two sets in the next games 25-17 and 25-14. Freshman libero Jade Leiker and senior defensive specialist Celena Lara were instrumental in digs for the Lady Lyons through the two games.

The Lady Lyons have yet to bring home a win but will see action again on Thursday, Sept. 17 at home starting at 5 p.m.

Tourney cut short due to sweltering temps

By: ABIGAIL SAWIN

Saturday the 12th was another hot day, but the Lyons High School girl’s tennis team played in the Pratt Varsity Invitational Saturday morning, having to start early to try to beat the heat. The tournament ended early due to the heat and Coach Vicki Johnston commented that by the early afternoon the teams were struggling to keep their players from overheating.

Results

No. 1 Doubles: Jazmin Contreras and Madeline Tobisch played hard losing to Conway Springs, 4-8, (who went undefeated last season) in their first

match; to Larned, 3-8, in their second match; and to Ashland, 3-8, in their final match.

No. 2 Doubles: Ava Almanza and Payton Nachtigal faced Jozlyn Mead and Danielle Hemken of Larned in their first round, losing 8-4.

They made a comeback in their second match to defeat Bonnie Herd and Elsie Herd of South Central, 8-1, and defeated Eve Fields and Addison Lovell of Pratt, 8-0, in their final match.

No. 1 Singles: Isabel Gonzales played hard her first set against top-eight state finisher Lauren Sledder of Larned but came

up short, losing 0-8. She came back in her second round match to earn a win against Ramanna Rozi of Chaparral, 8-6.

Gonzalez began her third round against South Central but the play was discontinued due to the heat.

No. 2 Singles: Keira Webb fell to Nia Napierala of South Central, 5-8, and lost against Rasalee Lang of Conway Springs, 1-8, in her second match.

The Lady Lions varsity will host a meet Monday at Lyons High School and the junior varsity will host a home meet on Tuesday. Matches begin at 3 p.m. on both days.

BOE — from page 1

Reinhardt said the district is still expecting declining enrollment due to the local economy and declining birth rates. He said the district will need to make budgeting adjustments for next year including likely adjustments in staffing. Adjustments will also be subject to changes to the funding formula and overall funding by the state legislature.

In other business the board:

- Held the Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing and approved Resolution 2027-1 by roll call vote to exceed the revenue neutral rate;

- Held the budget hearing;

- Approved the out of state FFA trip to the national conference with transportation costs to be covered by the district. FAA Advisor Kristin Dolechek and students Joy Adams and Austyn Bland gave an overview of the conference which will be held Oct. 20-24, in Indianapolis, Ind.;

- Heard a presentation from staff members Katie Althouse, Jacob Macek, Barb Ross, Juanita Acosta and Deana Westenfeld on this summer’s Model Schools Conference;

- Discussed the Blue Print for Literacy Program. Passed by the Kansas Legislature in 2024 to improve reading instruction and raise student literacy rates, the program will require significant changes in the next few years. Elementary special education and English Language Arts (ELA) teachers in grades one to eight will be required to have a science of reading micro credential by 2030. Currently only 50 percent of the district’s required teachers have the credential.

The state will also be mandating that 90 percent

of students will need to be scoring at level 2 on ELA assessments and 50 percent should be scoring at level 3 by 2033. Currently 68 percent of district students are scoring at level 2 and 34 percent are scoring at level 3.

Reinhardt said there is much work to do to meet those requirements but he believes the district is not in a bad position. He said much of the work currently underway will hopefully bring about positive results.

Reinhardt said literacy screening and reporting for dyslexia will be extended to students kindergarten through ninth grade. Targeted tier interventions and communication with families, which are already in place, will continue and all students kindergarten through third grade performing below required expectations will need to have individual student literacy plans.

Lastly, all elementary schools must have a reading specialist in place by the 2028-29 school year.

- Adopted the 2026-27 budget as presented. The budget calls for a total mill levy of 63.086, a .187 mill decrease from 25-26. The board also approved a resolution to exceed the state average Local Option Budget of 32.4 percent to 33 percent. Total budget expenditure is \$23.41 million.

- Completed a first review of the Rice County Learning Center Policy Update that allows for other Rice County School Districts to utilize the RCLC as an alternative learning center for students;

- Approved the suggested roof repairs by Coryell Roofing of Oklahoma City for \$15, 279.15.

The maintenance agreement with Coryell

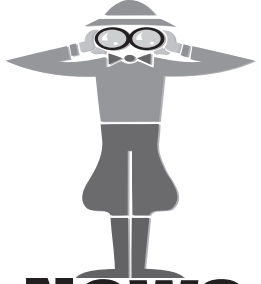
covers several items but not all repairs. During the company’s last inspection they completed several maintenance repairs but suggested these repairs that will help sustain the life of the roof and possibly stave off potential bigger problems;

- Approved the contribution of \$1,000 to the Rice County Sheriff’s Dog Program contingent upon the Rice County Sheriff implementing the program. The donation will help the sheriff purchase, train, and implement a drug dog as part of their tool box to combat drugs and other crimes in Rice County;

- Approved to advertise and fill with the best possible candidates the positions of Director of Special Education for the Rice County Special Service Cooperative and Reading Specialist per requirement by Blue Ribbon for Literacy statute for the 2027-28 school year; and,

- Approved the amended personnel report as presented.

WANTED



NEWS
about
Your
Family,
Friends,
and
Neighbors