

Volume 148, No. 37
16 pages, 2 sections

Thursday,
November 19, 2026

WESTERN KANSAS World

SAMPLE COPY

$1.00

Published on Thursdays

785.743.2155
www.mainstreetmedia.us
theworld@mainstreetmedia.us

Your Community. Your News. Your World

Honoring Our Past While Preparing For Our Future

WaKeeney, Trego County, Kansas - Official County and City Paper

Romero 'not guilty'

Jury finds former police chief not guilty of three counts charged

By Nickole Byers
Western Kansas World

Following a 3-day jury trial, former WaKeeney Police Chief Michael Romero was found "not guilty" by a jury of his peers in the Trego Co. Courtroom Wednesday morning.

"Thank you to the men and women of the jury, so much, from the bottom of our hearts...thank you," said Romero.

Romero had been charged criminally on three counts: 2 battery charges and mistreatment of a confined person charge.

Following Wednesday's closing remarks, the jury returned their 'not guilty' verdict within approximately an hour of deliberation.

"Thanks to the folks on the jury," said defense attorneyKurt Kerns. "The jury stands in the gap...the strength of the jury is the greatest aspect of our system."

The State, represented by Trego Co. Attorney Abraham Pfannenstiel, offered the following remarks after the verdict was given:

"I want to offer my sincere thanks to members of the KBI, Highway Patrol, and the WaKeeney Police Department for their willingness to testify during this week's trial. While I am disappointed in the jury's results, I respect their decision. This case was never a reflection on the greater law enforcement community. In actuality, it speaks highly of our officers' character and their belief in the badge they wear that they were willing to call out their perceived injustice within their own ranks.

"Testifying before a court and jury is never an easy task, but the personal nature of this case made that task even harder. Each of them displayed a high level of professionalism, integrity, and composure in their testimony. They brought honor to their badge, their department, and their community. I was proud to work with each of them and have them represent the State of Kansas on the stand.

"It gave me no pleasure to prosecute this case. In the days ahead, I pray that we as a community work together to prevent this case from turning into a prosecution of all law enforcement in the court of public opinion. The men and women that serve our communities across this country are overwhelmingly officers of the highest integrity who take their duty to protect and serve to heart. They deserve our respect and gratitude for the tough role they play in making our communities safer.

"If there is any blame, fault, or criticism attached to the outcome of this case, or any assumptions of failure, such blame or failure is to rest solely on my shoulders and my shoulders only."

A full recounting of the three day trial will be available in the next issue of the *World*.



VERDICT-Michael Romero, above, sits emotional as the verdicts are read and the jurors are instructed. (below) Abraham Pfannenstiel, Trego Co. Attorney, offers a strong closing.

Nickole Byers/Western Kansas World



Local recognized

By Nickole Byers
Ellis Review

Local resident Lynn Randall-Fabrizius was recently honored by the Kansas Association of Broadcasters with the Mike Oatman Award.

Established in 2003, the Mike Oatman Award honors outstanding achievement in Kansas Broadcast Sales, Sales Management, and mentorship.

Randall-Fabrizius is "an experienced marketing, media, and sales professional passionate about helping businesses connect with audiences and achieve meaningful growth."

The award recognizes a Kansas broadcaster who exemplifies the values Mike Oatman embodied throughout his career: leadership, commitment to success, and sales excellence.

Randall-Fabrizius has over 30 years of experience in broadcast radio.

A Kansas State University graduate, she grew her roots in the industry starting



Lynn Randall-Fabrizius

in Dallas, Texas in 1982. She also spent 20 years as a media buyer for Bozell, Jacobs, Kenyon & Eckhardt. in Los Angeles, Calif., where she began her transition into sales at CBS Radio.

•Continued on page 1B

Trash collection Notice

Residential trash collection that would normally occur on Thursday, November 26th (Thanksgiving) will be collected on Wednesday, November 25th. November 25th will also be the final compost collection for the year. The City Office will be closed on Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th. Happy Thanksgiving!

Bake Sale Notice

Christ The King Altar Society will be having their Annual Bake Sale at American FAmily Insurance OFfice on Tuesday, November 24th, from 8 a.m. until noon. Please stop by to purchase those Holiday goodies.

Temperatures & precipitation

Date	High	Low	Prec
11-10	74	40	-
11-11	68	40	-
11-12	69	37	-
11-13	58	30	-
11-14	50	30	-
11-15	47	31	0.11"
11-16	44	38	-

Senior Citizens Center
413 Russell Avenue, WaKeeney
785-743-5449

Affordable, Well-Balanced Meals for Aging Trego Co. Residents

60 yrs. & up $4.00/meal
Under 60 . . . . . $6.75/meal

GOOD FOOD & GOOD COMPANY ALL IN ONE PLACE!
SIMPLY CALL BY 10:30 AM ONE DAY IN ADVANCE WITH YOUR R.S.V.P.

Guests Welcome!
~ Meals on Wheels Also Available ~
Call for details!
The WaKeeney Senior Center is affiliated with the NorthWest Kansas Area on Aging

This Week's Menu

Thursday, Nov. 19: BBQ meatballs, bed of rice, catalina blend vegetables and hot cinnamon apples.
Friday, Nov. 20: Chicken noodle soup, crackers, rice crispy bar and tropical fruit.
Monday, Nov. 23: Chicken parmesan, italian blend vegetables, garlic bread and orange/pineapple salad.
Tuesday, Nov. 24: Ground beef stroganoff, broccoli, no bake cookie, bread and mixed fruit.
Wednesday, Nov. 25: Breakfast casserole, potatoes o'brien, biscuit and strawberries and bananas.
Thursday, Nov. 26: Closed. Thanksgiving.
Friday, Nov. 27: Closed.

Christmas City celebrates 76 years

By Nickole Byers
Western Kansas World

By the time this week's newspaper finds your hands, WaKeeney community leaders will be finalizing plans for this year's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony, as "the Christmas City of the High Plains" comes to life for the 76th annual celebration.

The annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held Saturday, Nov. 28, 2026.

Centered around a handmade, 35-foot tree of fresh pine greenery and its over 3,000 twinkling lights, the downtown community dons all the cherished, traditional splendor that makes the Christmas season in WaKeeney one of a kind.

Described as 'a four-square block area around the tree is draped with garlands, handcrafted decorations and heavenly blue lights in the intersection, the magic of the season is felt by all who travel down the historic brick streets.

Christmas City History

The original idea was born in 1948 by two businessmen.

Art Keraus, the owner of the local hardware store and "a man who could build anything," teamed up with Jake Heckman, the local banker and artist, to design the original Christmas display.

The two spent many hours in the basement of the hardware store working to make the display and its many details would be visible by those both living in and visiting the community for the holidays. They were quickly known to be very "particular" about the effort.

Originally, they could not locate commercially-made red and green light bulbs that would match the colors being used, so they rounded up more volunteers and bought thousands of clear light bulbs and gallons of paint and proceeded to supervise the hand-dipping of each and every light bulb.

The first display went up

•Continued on page 3B

INSIDE News & More

This week:

Section A
Opinion.....2
Columns.....3-4
Horoscopes.....4
Obituaries.....5
Classifieds.....7
Lodges & Clubs.....8
Section B
School.....1-4
Legal Notices 5
TCLMH LTC 7

See more inside!

Collyer News **3A**
From past Collyer Advance newspapers! Includes vintage ads!

Country Greetings by Karen Madorin
Page 3A



Community transport
City Bus & Co. Van info!
Page 4A

Classifieds!
Homes for sale, jobs and more! ***Page 7A***

Eagle Action **1B**



THE WA ? KEENEY COMMUNITY

Cards every Friday, 6:30 P.M., Senior Center; Bus. mtg. 2nd Mon., 12:30 pm
~~~~~
Line Dancing, Scout House, M-W-F, 9:30-10:30 A.M.
~~~~~
REGULAR MEETINGS
Trego Co. Commission
each Tuesday at 5 P.M.
~~~~~
**WaKeeney City Council**
1st & 3rd Tuesdays@6:15 PM
~~~~~
USD #208 School Board
meeting, 2nd Mon. 5:30PM
~~~~~
**Trego Co. Chamber**
2nd Monday of month, 6 PM, Queen of Stars, 128 N. Main St., WaKeeney
~~~~~
American Legion & Aux.
WaKeeney Moore Post #197, 2nd Mon, 6:30 p.m. (Sept-May) 517 Russell Ave
~~~~~
**WaKeeney Eagles**
*Regular Lodge-*
2nd & 4th Tues., 8 pm,
*Joint meetings, 7:30 pm prior to Regular meetings*
***Next Bingo: Nov 22***
Early Bird at 1:30 P.M.
Regular Bingo at 2 P.M.
**Specials**
*Hamburger Night,*
Nov. 19, 6-8 pm
***Closed for Thanksgiving***
Nov. 26
*Ugly Christmas Sweater Party w/Wade Richard*
Nov. 27, 9 pm
*Hamburger Night,*
Dec. 7, 6-8 pm
~~~~~