

Local Happenings

Santa Fe Lake BG algae watch lifted

Activities reopen this weekend for Father’s Day

By Nikole Babb
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The Santa Fe Lake staff have reported that the Blue-Green Algae Watch has been lifted for

the lake. In addition, they announced that camping, swimming, fishing, kay-aking, stand-up paddle-boarding and disc golf are open for the weekend.

FALSE ALARM: Circle High School fire alarm sounds late at night

By Nikole Babb
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The Circle USD 375 High School was echoing an eerie message on Thursday night around 11:20pm.

“May I have your attention please. May I have your attention please. There’s been a fire recorded

in the building. Please proceed to the nearest exit and leave the building.”

After investigation, the Butler County Sheriff’s Office deputy on scene confirmed that there was no active fire inside the school. The alarm seemed to have been tripped, but the reason is unknown at this time.

Walnut River Stream Advisory rescinded

By Nikole Babb
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The Kansas Department of Health and Environment, (KDHE), announced on Thursday that they have rescinded a stream advisory for the Walnut River that was issued seven days ago.

The portion of the river that was on an advisory was the section where it passes under Highway 54 south of El Dorado

to the confluence with Turkey Creek. The advisory was issued due to a damaged pipe discharging untreated wastewater that reached the river.

The damaged pipe has been reported by KDHE to have been repaired and untreated wastewater is no longer being discharged.


KDHE now says that they’ve deemed the stream safe for secondary, (wading), contact and livestock use.



Presented by Jackie Augustine,
Audubon of Kansas (AOK) -Executive Director


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TRICARE authorizes temporary prescription refill waivers for 6 Kansas counties due to flooding

Defense Health Agency

FALLS CHURCH, Virginia – The Defense Health Agency announced that TRICARE beneficiaries in six Kansas counties may receive emergency prescription refills now through June 19, due to flooding.

The counties affected are Butler, Chase, Coffey, Greenwood, Harvey, and Sedgwick.

To receive an emergency refill of prescription medications, TRICARE beneficiaries should take their prescription bottle

to any TRICARE retail network pharmacy. If the bottle is unavailable or the label is damaged or missing, beneficiaries should contact Express Scripts, Inc., or their retail network pharmacy for assistance.

To find a network pharmacy, beneficiaries may call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303, or search the network pharmacy locator.

If possible, visit the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Prescriptions filled by a retail chain may be filled at another store in that chain. If the clinician who prescribed

the medication is available, beneficiaries can ask them to call in a new prescription to any network pharmacy.

As a reminder, TRICARE beneficiaries, other than active duty service members, may receive urgent care from any TRICARE-authorized urgent care center or provider and do not need a referral. This allows beneficiaries to seek nonemergency care for illnesses or injuries if their primary care provider is unavailable because of emergencies. Any TRICARE beneficiary who reasonably believes they

have an emergency should always call 911 or, go to the nearest emergency room.

Beneficiaries are advised to visit Express Scripts’ Weather Notices page for updates.

The Defense Health Agency provides health services to 9.5 million beneficiaries, including uniformed service members, military retirees, and their families. The DHA operates one of the nation’s largest health plans, the TRICARE Health Plan, and manages a global network of more than 700 military hospitals, clinics, and dental facilities.

Governor Kelly announces over \$4.5M for Innovative Transportation projects across the state

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Governor Laura Kelly announced on Thursday the recipients of the annual transportation innovation funding program, awarding a total of \$4,511,595.00 to 20 projects across the state of Kansas.

The Kansas Department of Transportation received 22 applications totaling over \$5 million. Only twenty projects were selected for funding. Two of the applications were deemed ineligible.

“Investing in innovation is crucial for the future of transportation in Kansas,” said Governor Laura Kelly. “These awarded projects highlight the ingenuity and dedication within our state to improve safety, efficiency, and infrastructure through the adoption of new technologies and approaches. This program is a testament to our commitment to building a stronger, more resilient transportation network for all Kansans.”

The projects selected range from aviation, roadway safety, infrastructure assessment to traffic

management.

“This year’s selected projects represent a commitment to leveraging technology to address the evolving needs of our transportation system,” stated Secretary of Transportation Calvin Reed. “From enhancing aviation research capabilities to implementing smart solutions for safer roadways, these initiatives will have tangible impacts for communities across Kansas. We are excited to partner with these innovative organizations and see their projects come to fruition.”

Only one Butler County project was selected.

City of Andover: \$320,000.00 for road-side Radio Units and Emergency Preemption Pilot

The other projects selected are:

Kansas State University - Salina, Saline County: \$1,000,000.00 for advanced UAS Flight Operations and Simulation Center Phase II.

Salina Regional Airport, Saline County: \$870,000.00 for advanced aviation and engineering

research operations.

Kelly Hills Unmanned Systems, Nemaha County: \$688,609.00 for an autonomous agricultural vehicle pilot.

ByStep LLC and Island Radar Co., Crawford County: \$450,000.00 for a blocked railroad crossing alert system pilot.

City of Dodge City, Ford County: \$220,000.00 for traffic signal modernization and coordination.

City of Wichita and Vivacity Labs, Sedgwick County: \$187,500.00 for improving multi-modal safety in Wichita with advanced AI.

Sedgwick County, Sedgwick County: \$150,000.00 for traffic signal safety upgrades.

City of Maize, Sedgwick County: \$150,000.00 for radar detection traffic signals.

City of Gardner, Johnson County: \$90,000.00 for Gardner pavement assessment and management.

City of Halstead, Harvey County: \$75,750.00 AI street inventory and assessment.

City of Topeka, Shawnee County:

\$75,000.00 for Madison and Monroe Corridor radar traffic detection.

Kansas Highway Patrol, Shawnee County: \$60,000.00 for a VIN Inspection program modernization.

City of Maize, Sedgwick County: \$59,950.00 for a Maize local street assessment using AI.

City of Park City, Sedgwick County: \$49,125.00 for a transportation network evaluation using AI.

City of Edgerton, Johnson County: \$25,000.00 for an automated pavement condition index and asset management.

Leavenworth County, Leavenworth County: \$15,000.00 for a 2000W laser cleaning machine.

Kearny County, Kearny County: \$12,636.00 for vibratory roller for asphalt patching.

Kearny County Airport, Kearny County: \$8,025.00 for an airport debris removal broom.

City of Lakin, Kearny County: \$5,000.00 for a mow and maintenance skid steer attachment.

RACE Continued from A2

you don’t have to mention that,” she said.

She said she and her husband moved to the Kansas City, Kansas, metro area more than 25 years ago. They wanted to start a family and were impressed with the schools, she said. She worked in several positions at Sprint Corp., including in operations, where she designed multi-billion-dollar budgets.

But her kids were in school when former Republican Gov. Sam Brownback’s administration cratered state finances to pay for his ill-fated “tax experiment” and engineered steep cuts to public education. Even in Johnson County, which is known for its economic prosperity, schools didn’t have enough supplies, Holscher said, and some of the classrooms had shower curtains instead of doors.

When her daughter was about 10, she said, they saw one of her teachers

working at Target. The daughter asked why her teacher would be working there on the weekend when she already worked full-time at the school.

“I told her, ‘Well, we’re in the middle of a severe budget crisis. Schools aren’t getting funded the way they should, and she probably can’t pay her bills,’” Holscher said.

Her daughter looked at Holscher and said: “You go fix that.”

“As I thought about it, I’m like, OK, good, reasonable people are going to have to step forward to stop this spiraling downward,” Holscher said. “And that’s how I ended up running for office. I’ve kind of stayed in the fight because every year, that extremist base has gotten bigger, and they’re really trying to reach their goals of destroying public education and implementing some of those very backward tax and economic policies.”

She said she is running

for governor in part because she has now invested 10 years fighting for public schools and economic stability.

Holscher supports reproductive health rights, Medicaid expansion and the legalization of medicinal marijuana. She said state tax policy “isn’t real fair to the regular Kansan” and needs to be corrected.

She has been a vocal critic of the Committee on Government Efficiency — or COGE, inspired by Elon Musk’s federal initiative known as DOGE — where she is the ranking minority member.

During recent town halls across the state, she said, people have expressed fear and anxiety about the impact of federal cuts and “the fact that we have a supermajority of same-style extremists in the Legislature.”

Lt. Gov. David Toland, who also serves as commerce secretary, is a potential challenger for the Democratic nomination for governor. But it isn’t clear whether Toland, or

other Democrats, will run.

The Republican field is led by Secretary of State Scott Schwab. Other potential candidates include former Gov. Jeff Colyer, Kansas Senate President Ty Masterson, state Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt, former Johnson County Commissioner Charlotte O’Hara, businesswoman Stacy Rogers and Wichita school board member Joy Eakins.

Only conservative podcaster Doug Billings has paid the filing fee to be a candidate.

Holscher said party insiders suggested she could wait to run until 2030 because if a Republican were to win this time around and implement damaging policies, it would be easier for Democrats to win races later.

“The fact of the matter is if all of those damaging policies move forward, and many of them will, that just means that a number of people won’t be able to have a future here in Kansas,” Holscher said.

BUTLER COUNTY

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