

LEADERSHIP 2025 GRADUATES FETED



This year's Leadership Independence class was celebrated last week at a graduation dinner held at the Independence Country Club. The Leadership Independence program, a brainchild of the Independence Chamber of Commerce, brings together men and women throughout the community to help facilitate a number of ideals such as connecting within your community, community engagement, growing as leaders and more. The graduation dinner, hosted by Leadership Refresh- made up of past Leadership Independence graduates- recognizes all of the graduates' hard work and dedication to their community. | Courtesy Photo

Postage expected to rise yet again

BY BREA SANFORD
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With the last postage increase in July 2024 raising the prices of forever stamps from 68 cents to 73 cents, many have felt the pinch from sending snail mail. That pinch could begin to hurt a little more as the United States Postal Service is yet again looking to raise postage prices in a hike that could go into effect in July. Earlier this month, the United States Postal Service filed a notice with the Postal Regulatory Commission for service changes to go into effect July 13. These new hikes include a five cent increase in First-Class forever stamps from 73 cents to 78 cents. If the governors of the Postal Service approve of the adjustments, they would raise mailing service product prices 7.4%. These changes would include: Letters



(1 ounce)- \$0.78; Letters (metered, 1 ounce)- \$0.74; Domestic postcards- \$0.62; International postcards- \$1.70 and International letters (1

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New online work zone course geared to assist new Kansas drivers

STAFF REPORT

A new course focusing on work zone safety has been launched for Kansas drivers. Kansas Work Zone Safe is a free online driving course aimed at teaching teens and other new drivers how to safely navigate through work zones. The course will include information on safe behaviors, laws and situations drivers may encounter in work zones. Current data from the Kansas Department of Transportation shows 1,705 work zone crashes occurred in Kansas in 2024 – an average of 4.6 per day. Those crashes resulted in 508 injuries and eight fatalities. “Behind every flag, cone and flashing light are highway workers and first responders



who have families that want them to come home every night,” said Haley Dougherty, KDOT State Highway Safety Engineer. “This course is designed to raise awareness in new drivers about safe driving practices in work zones, which should make the work zone safer for all.” With an estimated 2,500 miles of construction let by KDOT in the last several years and taking place this year, many highway workers will be relying on drivers to slow down and pay attention so everyone can make it home safely.

Drivers can access the course at WorkZoneSafe.com by clicking the link for the Kansas course. Students who complete the course will be eligible for a scholarship to be awarded at a later date. Details about the scholarship incentive will be provided as they become available. The new platform begins during National Work Zone Awareness Week, a campaign focused on increasing work zone safety. Go to KDOT’s website, ksdot.gov/travel/traveler-safety/work-zone-safety, or KDOT’s Facebook page, @KSDOTHQ. The Kansas Work Zone Safe course is supported by KDOT, the Kansas Contractors Association and other transportation organizations across the state. For more information, visit WorkZoneSafe.com.

Caney City Council looks ahead

BY BREA SANFORD
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The Caney City Council met for their regular meeting Monday evening in Caney City Hall. Unfortunately, due to a lack of quorum, the meeting was changed into a work session. Due to the informal nature of the meeting, Council members began the work session talking about setting a date for a public hearing regarding revenue bonds. City Administrator Andrea Sibley addressed those Council members that were present, explaining why a public hearing had to take place, stating that it is simply a notice that goes into the newspaper letting residents know that a meeting will be held to speak on the topic at hand. At the date in question, Mayor Elliot will open up the floor to anyone that would like to speak on the subject- for or against. “Questions that come up during the public comments, I can answer,” she stated. It was a group decision to plan on having an impromptu work session on the evening of April 28, as it was convenient for most of the council members. At that time, the Council will hear any comments regarding the revenue bonds and will answer any questions that they can. The next meeting after that, to be held May 5, will give the Council a chance to vote whether or not to pass the revenue bond ordinance. After reiterating that, while they can discuss items that are on the agenda, they cannot vote on the items due to lack of quorum. He then moved on to discuss the ordinance on tiny houses, explaining that in the past, the discussion of tiny homes had come up but was overlooked. This time, City staff has come up with stipulations that would be put into an ordinance regarding the residences. “Six hundred square feet would be the minimum,” he stated Monday evening. “That keeps from sheds being classified as homes in this ordinance.” The new ordinance has set backs and lot size stipulations outlined clearly. Other specifications would be that the home cannot reside on a lot less than 1000 square feet, that it must have two

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AN UNCONVENTIONAL EASTER — While the rain last weekend may have spoiled many egg hunting plans, the creative minds at Ralph Mitchell Park were quick on their feet and thought of a different way to ensure area kiddos had a visit from the Easter Bunny. Waiting for a dry, temperate day, Park staff acted as liaisons for the long-eared fellow and hid over 6,500 filled eggs throughout the playground, miniature train depot and statue garden, park oval, carousel and around the Stich Shelter House and Logan Fountain. Families could come at their leisure Tuesday afternoon to gather eggs under the watchful gaze of the antique cement hares that stand sentinel around the park. | Courtesy Photo



Latest Royals win had standing ovation, boos — and then a rally after that

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Kansans share personal insight into meaning of Medicaid cuts contemplated by Congress

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