

Out of the Past

Reprinted from the files of The Valley Falls Vindicator — Compiled by Lesa Brose

100 years ago ... May 22, 1925

• The plumbing and heavy concrete walls of the large basement for the new Methodist Church being completed, the laying of the brick and tile for the superstructure is now in order.

• Sunday, June 14, will mark the 68th anniversary of the organization of the Lutheran Church in Valley Falls. A committee composed of Mrs. Casper Stein, Mrs. Frank Zimmerman, Mr. Frank Dornblaser, and Mr. Harry Hauck has been appointed to make arrangements for a celebration.

65 years ago ... June 1, 1960

• Outstanding Jefferson County 4-H members will attend the state roundup on the campus of Kansas State University June 7 to 11.

Chosen to attend are Robert Heurtz, Donald Schrick, Robert Buttron, Kenneth Kirkham, Wayne O'Trimble, Charles Noll, Marlene McBride, Beverly Domann, Donna Bilerback, Donna Goins, Joan Nolte, and Joyce Logsdon. Mrs. Claude Doman, Ardell Rusk, and Arthur Johnson will attend as adult supervisors.

• The little town of Meriden, more than half destroyed by a tornado, buttoned up its shoes this week and prepared to make a comeback in spite of wreckage and terrific loss.

While Jefferson countians opened their hearts and pocket-books to aid the victims of their sister town, Meriden itself was busy on the road back.

The city officials took steps to declare unsafe any building damaged in the storm and volunteer guards are policing the area.

• Rita Burns, Boyle Boosters 4-H Club member, will attend the state 4-H music camp at Rock Springs Ranch June 7 to 11.

35 years ago ... May 24, 1990

• When Noel and Helen Stewart returned to his hometown of Valley Falls to assist his stepfather in the operation of E. Summerfelt Hardware, the store was already more than half a century old.

The year was 1946. The couple had met at the University of Kansas, married in 1940, and survived the war years. It was time to escape the city and start raising a family.

This weekend the couple will celebrate the store's centennial, their 50th wedding anniversary, and Helen's 75th birthday.

Ernest E. Summerfelt, an immigrant from Prussia, acquired an inventory of hardware goods and assembled a store in what is now the east portion of the hardware store in the 400 block of Broadway. The store was officially opened in January of 1891 and within two years the owner was expanding the building to its current size.

• Sadie Jo is the name chosen by Dennis and Jennifer Jo Tichenor, Valley Falls, for their first child born May 16 at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Topeka. She weighed 6 lbs., 6 ozs.

Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Tichenor, Meriden, and Mr. and Mrs. Terry Metzger, Valley Falls.

Great-grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Bill Metzger and Mr.

50 years ago ... May 22, 1975

• Photo — Kelly Foley, 13, has been selected Valley Falls Saddle Club Queen to represent the club during the 1975 season. Queen Kelly and her registered Arabian horse, Raal Samantha, "Sam," will have a place of honor in parades and horse shows in the area during the summer. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Foley, Queen Kelly will be a freshman at Valley Falls High School next term. Raal Samantha has been Kelly's 4-H project for the past two years. Teresa Abramovitz was runner-up in the queen contest. Debbie

Kansas Profile – Susan Sutton, Orphan Trains and Statues

by Ron Wilson, director
Huck Boyd
National Institute for Rural Development

School must be out. There are children all over town. Some are reading, some are talking, some are playing.

But these children aren't actual schoolkids. They are statues of young boys and girls doing those things. These statues help share the remarkable story of orphans who came west more than a century ago.

Last week we learned about the National Orphan Train Complex in Concordia. The complex is led by a board of directors, including president Susan Sutton, vice president Gregg Markway, secretary Joan Fraser, and treasurer Wonda Phillips. Heather Bigwood is a former curator.

The complex shares the touching stories of abandoned, homeless children in the big cities of the east who were taken by train to the west and placed with new families during the period from 1854 to 1929. These expeditions were called orphan trains. Some of the conditions from which the children came were terrible.

One museum exhibit describes the setting in this quote

Grollmes was the 1974 Saddle Club Queen.

• Richard Malm, Valley Falls, was elected President of Kansas Jaycees at the state convention held in Overland Park.

Malm, 34, a member of the Valley Falls Jaycees since 1967, beat Mose Chandler of Kansas City for the title in a tightly run race with a seven-vote margin, 159-152.

As president, Malm will travel the state during the year attending charter nights and other social functions as the top dignitary. He will also be promoting the Jaycee's "Pride in America" bicentennial projects scattered throughout the state.

• Mr. and Mrs. Steve Bohrer, Wichita, have chosen the name Brice Matthew for their 7-lb., 6-oz. son, born May 14 at the Wesley Medical in Wichita.

• The new Valley Falls Knights of Columbus Council 6671 will hold charter night July 12 with a banquet and dance. Chairman of the event, Joe Glissman, reports that present plans call for holding the function in the new International building south of town. He said advance tickets will be sold by K of C members.

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from the 1890s: "The foundlings come in rags, a newspaper often the only wrap, semi-occasionally one in a clean slip with some evidence of loving care; a little slip of paper pinned on, perhaps, with some message as this, in a woman's trembling hand: 'Take care of Johnny, for God's sake. I cannot.' But even that is the rarest of all happenings."

Imagine the heartbreak of abandoning one's child in desperation. In the 1850s, New York charities sought to find new, safe, loving homes for these children in the west. Western families could apply to take in these orphans and were screened for their suitability. Agents for the placement agencies traveled west with the children by train and made sure they were placed with families appropriately.

After this history was shared by a speaker at Cloud County Community College, community interest was so great that Concordia ultimately became home to the National Orphan Train Complex. The museum opened in 2007 and has expanded since then.

One addition was an actual passenger train car, which was slated to be demolished in Marion but was rescued and moved

and Mrs. Raymond Colhouer, all Valley Falls.

A great-great-grandmother is Ester Smith, Nortonville.

• A flag and flag pole were dedicated in a ceremony May 12 for the Meriden Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 10815.

The flag had been flown over the U.S. Capitol at the request of Sen. Bob Dole on behalf of the Meriden Memorial Post.

Photo: Color guards Elmer Bell and Martin Vytalacil hoist a new flag during dedication ceremonies at the Meriden VFW Post. Others, from left to right, are: Commander Donald Cook, Ben Mallinston, Charley Shoemaker, and Senior Vice Commander Jim Burkett.

20 years ago ... May 26, 2005

• Photo: The Jefferson West High School golf team placed 11th out of 12 at the state golf tournament in Coffeyville May 23. They earned the trip to state by becoming regional runners-up in Atchison May 16. Team members are Garrett Perry, Leighton DeGarmo, Jon DeMaronville, Matt Watson, Jacob Hothan, Tyler Wiegert, and Chris Kaberline. Larry Deiter is coach.

• Kansas Highway Patrol Technical Trooper Richard J. Mahoney was promoted to lieutenant Feb. 13 and now assumes the role as zone supervisor for the patrol's Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program in southeast Kansas.

Mahoney is a member of Knights of Columbus, St. Francis Xavier Council No. 6055 and has coached youth sports.

• Several members of the Grantville United Methodist Church, whose ancestral roots go back to the first settlers in Kaw Township, will provide a Memorial Day program at the Grantville Cemetery.

The church is one of many in this part of the state that will soon reach its 150th anniversary.

"We think we may be unique as a community in that great-great-grandchildren of these early families all still live in the community," Grantville resident Caroline Bigham said.

Those invited to give highlights of early family history are Betty Wright Leech, Tamara Beeler Engler, Evelyn Wilson Seck, Mary Jane Tucker, John Quinlan, Paul Flagg, Sally Shirley, Jeanne Gantz, Charlotte Tryon, Marky Grindol, and Ann Brunton.

The first homesteaders in Kaw Township date back to 1854 when the territory was opened to white settlers under President Buchanan.

to the museum. The train car was owned by a former orphan train rider.

After being abandoned, the train car had been used in various ways, most recently as a chicken house. "When the train car was moved to the museum on a truck, chicken feathers blew out of it the whole way," Bigwood said. Once it was restored and placed at the complex, a building was constructed around it.

Now visitors to the museum can walk through the passenger car and learn about what the travel would have been like for those orphans.

When the visitor's center was added, seven statues of children were placed near the entrance. This inspired many more such statues to be placed around the community.

Each statue is accompanied by a plaque telling the history and biography of an actual, orphan train rider. Their origins are heart wrenching, but their lives afterwards are often inspiring.

The statues and plaques are sponsored by descendants, community members, or by those businesses near where the statue is placed.

The collection now includes more than 50 statues throughout Concordia. One is even placed in the nearby rural community of Jamestown, population 237 people.

The rider's stories are inspiring.

"The orphan train riders were survivors," Bigwood said. "These children had such difficult childhoods, but they survived through their inner strength. It gives us hope that we can survive our challenges too."

These touching stories have attracted international attention. In 2024, the National Orphan Train Complex recorded visitors from 46 of the 50 states and 11 countries, literally from Azerbaijan to Slovakia. For more information, go to www.orphantraindepot.org.

Obituaries

JEFFREY HURST
Jeffrey Mark Hurst, Topeka, Kansas, passed away May 9, 2025, after a long and courageous health battle.

Jeff was born August 17, 1947, in Christ Hospital, Topeka, Kansas, the second of two sons born to Irene June (Herd) Hurst (06/26/1923-08/17/2017) and Paul Arthur Hurst (02/11/1918-06/13/1992). His brother, First Lt. Quentin Poxx Hurst (11/16/1944-09/27/1968) was a U.S. Army helicopter pilot killed in action in Vietnam.

Jeff was raised at Valley Falls where he and his brother assisted their parents with the family farm operations. He was baptized in the Valley Falls United Methodist Church and received recognition for 13 years perfect attendance at Sunday school.

He graduated from Valley Falls High School in 1965. He attended Kansas State College of Pittsburg and Emporia State Teachers College before graduating Magna Cum Laude from the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science on March 22, 1968.

Jeff was married to the love of his life, Loretta Renee Smith, of Oskaloosa on Super Bowl Sunday, January 11, 1970, at the Valley Falls United Methodist Church. They were happily married for over 55 years, were true life partners, and did everything

together.

He began working at the Hagge Funeral Home in Valley Falls during his high school years. After he completed mortuary school, he served his apprenticeship in Oskaloosa before working at funeral homes in Manhattan and Ottawa. On September 8, 1981, he and Loretta joined Gene and Arvilla Parker at their North Topeka mortuary and was manager there until his retirement on March 25, 2018. He was recognized at the Kansas Funeral Directors Association for being licensed for 50 years. During his years as a member of the Kansas Funeral Directors Association he served as a district president and was a member of the National Funeral Directors Association.

His Masonic career started as being raised a Master Mason on February 19, 1969, in Valley Falls Lodge No. 21, AF & AM, where he served as Master for two years and at that time was the youngest man to ever serve as Master of a Kansas Masonic Lodge. He served as Master of Golden Rule Lodge No. 90 AF & AM in 2010. He joined both the Topeka York Rite Bodies and Topeka Scottish Rite Bodies in 1970. On November 19, 2011, the Topeka Scottish Rite Bodies coronated him with the Thirty-third Degree Inspectors General Honorary. Jeff was appointed to the Arab Shriners Divan in 2011 and served as their Potentate in 2017. He also served as a Director and Executive Vice-

President of the Kansas Masonic Foundation.

Jeff had been a member of Manhattan's Sunflower Lions Club (Past President), Solar Kiwanis Club of Manhattan; North Topeka Kiwanis Club (Past President); and Sunrise Optimist Club of North Topeka.

Surviving is his wife, Loretta, of the home; children: Quentin Ashley and M. Ilene Hurst of Overland Park and Jay Robert Hurst and Valerie VanDerSluis of Topeka; and six grandchildren: Garrhett Paul and Anna Hurst, Cecily Faith Hurst, Jonathan David "Jack" Hurst, Corey Matthew Hurst all of Overland Park, Benjamin Richard VanDerSluis, Madilyn Michelle VanDerSluis of Topeka.

Funeral services were May 19 at First United Methodist Church, Topeka, followed by Rose Croix Services conducted by Topeka Scottish Rite Bodies. Interment was in Valley Falls Cemetery with Masonic graveside services conducted by Golden Rule Lodge No. 90, AF & AM.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Shriners Hospitals for Children, 4400 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63110 or RiteCare Topeka Scottish Rite Bodies, 4228 SW 29th Terrace, Suite A, Topeka, KS 66614.

Dove Southeast Chapel, 2843 SE Minnesota Ave., is assisting the family with service arrangements. To leave the family a special message online, please visit www.DoveTopeka.com.

Paid obituary

NEWS

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PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Valley Falls Vindicator May 22, 2025)It

ORDINANCE NO. 25-4

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION R-313 OF THE CITY CODED OF THE CITY OF OZAWKIE, KANSAS REGULATING SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS AND REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OR PORTIONS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT THEREWITH.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF OZAWKIE, KANSAS:

SECTION 1. That Section R-313 2 of the Code of the City of Ozawkie is hereby amended to read as follows:

R-313 2 Political:

(a) Political signs not exceeding three (3) feet by two (2) feet, may be erected on private property, for a period of forty-five (45) days prior to scheduled election. Signs larger than three (3) feet by two (2) feet are prohibited.

(b) Said signs should be removed within two (2) days of completion of election.

(c) Any such signs shall not be placed upon city owned property.

SECTION 2. REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES. All ordinances or parts or Sections of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the official City Newspaper.

PASSED by the council on this 12th day of May, 2025.

APPROVED by the Mayor on this 12th day of May, 2025.

/s/ Loren Lutes

LOREN LUTES, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Mazi Barnes

MAZI BARNES, City Clerk (SEAL)

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Published in The Valley Falls Vindicator May 22, 2025)It

ORDINANCE NO. 25-5

AN ORDINANCE SETTING THE LICENSE FEE FOR CITY BUSINESS LICENSES AND SETTING THE PERMIT FEE FOR THE SALE, DISPLAYING FOR SALE, OFFERING FOR SALE, OR GIVING AWAY OF FIREWORKS, AND REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OR PORTIONS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT THEREWITH.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF OZAWKIE, KANSAS:

SECTION 1. The license fee referenced in Code Section 5-201 of the City Code, "to conduct, pursue, carry on, or operate any calling, trade, profession, or occupation in the city if the person's principal place of business is within the city" shall hereby be increased from \$10.00 to \$25.00. All other provisions of Code Section 5-201 shall remain the same.

SECTION 2. The permit fee referenced in Code Section 7-205 of the City Code, for the sale, displaying for sale, offering for sale or giving away of fireworks, is hereby set at \$500.00 per year.

SECTION 3. REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES. All ordinances or parts or Sections of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the official City Newspaper.

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ATTEST:

/s/ Mazi Barnes

MAZI BARNES, City Clerk (SEAL)

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