



Kingman County to Hire HR Firm From Wichita

BY BOB MORRIS
Managing Editor

The Kingman County commissioners Monday voted to hire HR On Call out of Wichita to revise the county employee handbook and for an I-9 audit, while Sara Dwyer of HR On Call prepares a contract to send to County Counselor Brandon Ritcha to potentially offer additional human resources services. Dwyer has 30 years of experience in working for

human resources and was willing to offer her services to take some of the burden off others who have taken up HR duties after Stan Goetz retired a couple of years ago. County Commissioner Jack Thimesch noted that Goetz “kind of wore like five different hats” and, since his retirement, other county employees have taken some of the roles he filled. But he said that hasn’t worked as expected.

“My personal opinion is, we need some help,” Thimesch said. “We need to get through this. I think we’ve got issues up above, but personnel (issues) that could have been resolved had we had an outside HR to do that.” Dwyer said her first questions would be whether people are trained in their positions, if certain positions are top heavy or if some duties can be combined. That’s where having independent

guidance is useful to help with such decisions, she said. Dwyer said she looked at the county’s policy handbook and noted that the last updates to it were made in 2015 and 2017. She said there have been quite a few changes in state or federal law that haven’t been reflected in the handbook. “Here’s what I can tell you — 100 percent of handbooks that have not been done by a professional are

wrong,” Dwyer said. “So I would start there. I would say, it’s kind of like building a house. You’ve got to start with the foundation. “You’ve got to have a strong foundation. If you don’t have that strong foundation, then my hands are tied and I’m very limited in what I can do. Tear it down, start with a new handbook, build it back up.” She said the next step would be to have employee meetings about the new

handbook, so employees learn the expectations. Dwyer added that having an organizational chart would be useful, so people understand who they report to. Also, Dwyer said, an I-9 audit would be necessary to make sure those forms were correctly handled. An I-9 form is used to verify the identity and legal authorization of a new employee to work in the United States.

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Clarification Given on Local Daycare Discussions

BY BOB MORRIS
Managing Editor

The daycare center that was located at a building owned by the United Methodist Church, in Cunningham, didn’t receive grant money to be used toward the mortgage as was reported in the July 2 edition of *The Cunningham Courier* regarding daycare discussions at the June 29 Cunningham City Council meeting. While \$50,000 was requested to help with that issue, the request was not filled because of questions about the daycare being tied to a church. The error was made in reporting.

Julie Lyon, who had worked to obtain grant funding for multiple counties to help support daycares, explained during Monday’s Kingman County Commission meeting that there were questions raised about who would own the daycare and whether the daycare would still have to pay rent.

Lyon added that insurance costs have gone up by about \$4,000, thus adding to the challenges of keeping the daycare operational.

She said she is continuing to work with local parents to come up with a solution, to include utilizing funds remaining in the multi-county grant to get something established and have it be sustainable.

July 4th Celebration



SUBMITTED PHOTO/STEPHANIE JUMP / The Courier

America’s 250th: Cunningham Celebrates

The Cunningham community celebrated the nation’s 250th birthday in a big way last weekend. Spark in the Park brought volleyball teams out to battle it out for bragging rights. Free swimming, games at the ballfield and the traditional hamburger feed that was led by Oak Heart Foundation this year, were some of the other activities planned for the community.

Shots Fired in Northeast Kingman County

STAFF REPORT

A 29-year-old man was arrested early Saturday morning after a report of shots fired in northeast Kingman County.

Jonah Gustaf Nowak Sr. was booked into Kingman County Jail on two counts of attempted first degree murder and one count of criminal trespass, where he is still being held as of Wednesday.

According to a Kingman County Sheriff’s Office news release, deputies responded to a report of shots fired shortly after 1:30 a.m. Saturday. The initial investigation determined that a verbal altercation ensued between several adult males who were attending a July 4 event, the release stated.

The altercation escalated to one individual firing a handgun, the release stated. Two people and the suspect were injured. The suspect was arrested at the scene and all three were transported by various EMS agencies to Wichita hospitals for treatment, according to the sheriff’s department.

The release also stated that, while responding to the incident, a Kingman County Sheriff’s deputy was involved in a single vehicle crash on an unlit rural road. That deputy received minor injuries and was taken by EMS to a Wichita hospital, where the deputy was treated and released.

Kingman County to Make Choices to Stay Under Revenue Neutral Rate

BY BOB MORRIS
Managing Editor

If Kingman County wishes to stay within the revenue neutral rate, the county commissioners will have to make some decisions about what it can afford to put into the budget

Kingman County Financial Officer LaDawn Stegman reminded the county commissioners at Monday’s meeting that the deadline for all government entities

to determine if they will exceed the revenue neutral rate or not is July 20. Any entity that does not approve a notice of intent to exceed the revenue neutral rate by July 20 will not be allowed to exceed the RNR. That deadline is set to allow county clerks time to get notices out to property owners about any revenue neutral rate hearings scheduled. According to state law, any government entity that

exceeds the RNR — or the mill levy that will generate the same amount of revenue as the prior year — must schedule a public hearing. Stegman told the county commissioners that entities don’t have to exceed RNR if they schedule a hearing. County Counselor Brandon Ritcha added that is why so many governing bodies give such a notice, so that they have the option to exceed it if it comes down to that. The county budgeted

about \$7.4 million from ad valorem (property) taxes for 2026 and that’s the amount of money it cannot exceed in its 2027 budgeted revenues unless the county schedules a revenue neutral rate hearing. Stegman noted that, based on the salaries currently budgeted for 2027, plus benefits and overtime, the county is already close to \$6 million in expenditures. She said the county does get some other revenue, but the

bulk of it comes from property taxes, meaning there isn’t a lot left out of \$7.4 million in budgeted revenues once payroll is taken into account. County Commissioner Jack Thimesch agreed that it won’t be an easy task to figure things out. “We’ve got tough decisions ahead of us here yet, and they’re just going to keep getting tougher,” he said. Stegman said that the

county will also need to consider its usage of PILOT money and where the commissioners want it to go. She said potential uses include buying down the mill levy, giving a residential property tax rebate as Thimesch has suggested, or covering expenditures. But Stegman said that, while the \$2.19 million in PILOT revenue will help, she wanted to focus on

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NEWS

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COUNTY

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She said she could also look at positions to determine if some are top heavy, others are bottom heavy and how duties might be better shifted.

“Do you have somebody that doesn’t have enough to do?” Dwyer said. “Do you have somebody that’s overwhelmed and they can’t get their work done? What do we need to do to help these people?”

“And sometimes I have to make unpopular decisions. But when I tell you, I give you an opinion, there’s always a why. I don’t just give you the opinion and say, that’s it. I will always give you the why — why I think it’s important and why I think you should do it. And what could possibly happen.”

Currently, Tiffany Aumiller holds the duties of payroll and benefits administrator. She was present at the meeting when Dwyer

met with the commissioners. Thimesch said Aumiller has done a good job with her duties but wasn’t interested in HR duties. Dwyer said she understood, noting that payroll and human resources are two different things.

One thing Dwyer said an HR person can do is help with a sit-down interview and understand what questions to ask. That person can also do exit interviews to understand why they are leaving and what might

need to be changed at the office, if anything.

After discussion, Dwyer said she could start with the county handbook and job descriptions and the county commissioners indicated they would like her to go over the I-9 files. Thimesch made a motion to that effect, which passed 3-0.

Dwyer said she would also get a contract proposal sent to Ritcha for review, regarding what other HR services she could offer to the county.

RNR

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payroll to get an idea about where things will stand with the budget once the commissioners make a decision there.

“To me, until we get something more firm with payroll, the rest of the budget is going to be harder to do, because this is such a large amount of our ad valorem,” she said.

Thimesch said the county will need to keep in mind how much it is spending, as should all entities. He made

the remark that “we are inflation,” referring to entities making more expenditures and, thus, needing more revenue to cover them.

“All these things that people think that we can afford to do, do cost the taxpayer dollars, and they do add up,” Thimesch said. “At some point, even doing this property tax refund, how long can we do that with wind farm money, with the inflation that we’re in? We’ll eat it up.”

One thing that Thimesch hoped will help is that certain property tax exemptions

will end, such as the pipeline that runs through Kingman and was exempted by the state. That reduced county-wide valuation for taxation purposes by \$9 million.

County Clerk Carol Noblit noted there are expenditures that aren’t always under the county’s control. She noted that postage rates have increased, along with gasoline prices, the latter impacting anyone who utilizes vehicles for county work. Also, the cost of running elections has increased because of state requirements, with Noblit saying that her election costs

have increased 23.68 percent over the last four years.

The county commissioners didn’t take any action regarding the budget at Monday’s meeting and will continue to have more discussions. County Commission Chairwoman Julie Lyon indicated she would “hate to see this go over RNR” and hoped the county could hold the line.

County Commissioner Jeff Young agreed, noting that if the county stays below RNR, it would be the third straight year to do so, “which is pretty dang good.”



76 Years Ago in

The Cunningham Clipper
W.E. Bradley, editor

Crow Family Together For First Time Since 1942

A happy occasion in the Mrs. E. C. Crow family was celebrated on Monday evening of their week when all her children and their families were present for a family reunion. It was the first time all of the family had been together since 1942.

The reunion was held at the Hellar farm where the families enjoyed a picnic supper together.

The children and their families present were Mrs. E. C. Crow, Donna, Deem and Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Eula Witt and family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Crow and family of Hoisington, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Crow and son of Great Bend, Mr. and Mrs. E.B. Mooney and family of Burrton, Mr. and Mrs. Cline Southern and family of Larned, Mr. and Mrs. George Crow of Dallas, Texas, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Dafforn and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Alva Hellar and son.

Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Joe Theis announce the birth of a son, Saturday, July 1, at the St. Francis Hospital in Wichita. The baby weighed seven pounds, six ounces, and has been named Daniel Ray.

The 38 degree parallel now figuring so prominently in the news as the battle line between north and south Korea is not very hard to visualize by Kansans. That imaginary line running around the world divides both Korea and Kansas in the center. Cities in Kansas located directly on the line include Neosho Falls and McLains. Towns touching the line are St. John, Halstead, Nettleton, Reeve, McGraw, Burt, Geneva, and Harding.

Cheney Pastor Sees “Flying Saucers” Near Calista Last Thursday Evening

The Rev. Ross Vermillion, 26, a World War II bomber pilot, said he saw a flying saucer hovering over US Highway 54 near Cunningham late Thursday evening.

Rev. Vermillion, pastor of the Cheney Christian Church, and a former resident of Cunningham, said his wife, and the family of Dwayne Mulnix, druggist, of Meade, also saw the saucer and watched it for about 20 minutes.

As seen in the bright moonlight, the object was made of bright metal, Vermillion said. It had an elliptical body “as big as the cross section of a B-29,” and had a rotor turning counter

clockwise around the body.

The two families saw the object while driving along the highway. They stopped and watched it, then started to drive closer but it sped away, Vermillion said.

Rev. and Mrs. Vermillion were returning from Kiowa.

The U.S. Air Force has announced that it has dismissed consideration of flying saucer stories after making an investigation of the subject.

This is the Vermillion’s story:

“We saw a bright red light near Cunningham. Then a white light.”

“As we drove near the ship I detected a rotary movement on its outer ring. The object was about 250 feet in diameter, about 10 feet thick and had a small canopy raised about two feet on the top.”

“I slowed down and awakened my wife. When a car passed me I waved at the driver and cried, ‘flying saucer.’”

“At the bridge over the Ninnescah River I stopped and the driver of the other car—Mr. Mulnix—joined us. He told us that one of his daughters had seen the object near Greensburg and that he told her she was crazy when she said she had seen a flying saucer.”

“At first I thought we might be observing a helicopter. I looked close for retracting gear but saw none. The ship was over two tractors which were in operation on a small plot of ground.”

“The moon was shining brightly and the craft was plainly discernable.”

“We first saw it hovering over the slope of a hill. We drove almost directly under it and then we turned back under it and then we turned back to observe it more closely. It was at an altitude of between 300 and 500 feet and was suspended over two tractors in a field.”

“My wife expressed the belief that if it were a foreign craft it might have observers who thought the tractors were military equipment.”

“I believe it was an act of God,” the Rev. Vermillion said, “That they drove up and saw us looking at the ship.”

“After we had watched it for several minutes we decided that we would get in our cars and try to drive as close to it as possible. But as we approached the ship shop up at a 45-degree angle and disappeared. As it went up the lights dimmed out.”

Vermillion said he saw the testing of F-86 Shooting Stars and that he has seen B-47 jets in operation but that he never before witnessed acceleration like that of the unusual object.

“I am convinced that it is not radio-controlled. I think the pilot saw us. Why the ship was hovering is a mystery. The pilot may have been checking a camera, or since the plane was seen near Greensburg, he may have been checking traffic on US Highway 54.”

Former owner of a laundry in Cunningham, and pastor of the Cheney Christian Church since December, 1948, Vermillion was graduated from high school at Santa Ana, California, and then enter the U.S. Air Corps. He was with the 95th Bomber Group, 334th Bomb Squadron of the Eighth Air Force, was shot down over Berlin, Germany, March 17, 1945, and liberated a month later. He held the rank of second lieutenant when he was discharged. Rev. and Mrs. Vermillion have two children, Connie Lee, 4, and Kathy Ann, 21- months-old.

Rev. and Mrs. Vermillion visited friends and relatives in Cunningham, Sunday.

Cairo News Items
By White Eagle

The rain was fine and came after most of the wheat was harvested.

Ray Epperson was operated on as a last resort, but there is quite an improvement since the operation.

Shirley Hodgkinson worked at the Corliss Goyen home during harvest.

Jack Grier is wearing a plaster cast on account of a broken bone in his foot. He went to Wichita Thursday to have his wounds dressed and will go again next Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Crosley were Sunday dinner guests at the W. Westphal home in Turon.

Mr. and Ms. J. Webb returned from a visit with Mr. Webb’s daughter, Fay Webb, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, a week ago Monday.

Ralph Harrel went to Colorado Saturday to buy some cattle.

Local News Items

Dan Cusenbary left Wednesday morning on a week’s business trip to Texas.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Dafforn and sons spent Sunday in Wichita.

Mrs. and Mrs. Everett St. Aubyn and Jimmy and Russell, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Renner and Donna, Mr. and Mrs. John Baber and boys, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Wilson and girls, Mr. and Mrs. Cleve Baber, Mr. and Mrs. John Kaster and girls, Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Rogers and Jimmy of Wichita, Mrs. Bertha Baber, and Mrs. Myrtle Baber enjoyed a picnic at Cooley’s Grove, Friday evening.

OBITUARY

HELEN E. LONG

Helen E. Long, 97, died July 4, 2026, in Cunningham. She was born Oct. 4, 1928, in Kingman, the daughter of James and Mabel Hansen Luce. She attended the University of Wichita and graduated from Chillicothe Business College.



On Aug. 27, 1950, she married Bob G. Long in Cunningham. A lifetime resident of the Cunningham community, she and Bob operated B & H Electric and she was a long time teller at the First National Bank of Cunningham.

Helen was a member of the Cunningham United Methodist Church where she played organ for many years, and an associate member of the Pitkin Community Church in Pitkin, Colo.

Helen was very active in the Cunningham community volunteering her time and talents to many different organizations. She enjoyed spending time at the family cabin in Pitkin; playing games and cards with family; and watching sports, especially the Kansas City Royals and KU Jayhawk basketball.

Survivors include son Scott Long and his wife Allison Johnson; daughter Teri Orth and her husband Ben; and grandson Mike Orth. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, son Steve Long and her brother Austin Luce.

Funeral services were Wednesday, July 8 at the Cunningham United Methodist Church. Visitation was Tuesday, July 7 at the Church. Burial was in the Shelman Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Cunningham United Methodist Church or the Cunningham Library or the charity of the donor’s choice and may be sent to the Livingston Funeral Home, 1830 N. Main, Kingman KS 67068.

NEWS BRIEFS

CUNNINGHAM CITY COUNCIL TO HOLD SPECIAL MEETING

Cunningham City Council will hold a special meeting, Monday July 13 at 6:30 p.m. at 119 N. Main.

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OPINION

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Tallgrass and Tumbleweeds

By Gaille Pike

I hope you had a wonderful holiday celebrating the 250th anniversary of American independence.

I was much younger for the bi-centennial commemoration. But my recollections of it are vivid as are my childhood and teenage memories of Fourth of July celebrations.

Growing up and for many years after, the Fourth of July was celebrated on the Fourth of July. I'm not sure when that changed. Around these parts whether that happens or not is a guessing game.

Around here the municipal fireworks offered by surrounding towns always seem to explode the day before.

Sometimes two days before. I get the fact they spend a few bucks on these explosives and want as many people as possible to be able to enjoy them. But this year the Fourth of July fell on a Saturday and the town nearest to me still had their pyrotechnics on Friday.

These organizers had a year to figure this out. And I assume they had access to a calendar. There must be a reason,

but I am hesitant to ascertain why because frankly I don't care to know.

I want my Fourth of July on the Fourth of July. Just like I want my Halloween on Halloween, which also seems to meander about the days of the week approaching October 31st, according to some clandestine city government calculations.

If the goal is for enhanced attendance there is no reason for date-swapping. These holidays are traditionally celebrated at night. Most adults and all kids are usually not all that busy at night.

Am I being too old-fashioned? Am I being too much of a literalist? I think not. Because the dates for the Fourth of July and Halloween and all our beloved holidays were carefully chosen for a reason. And to juggle those dates about for the sake of expedience or convenience seems a bit disrespectful to me.

I suppose there is an upside, like going out to see fireworks three nights in a row from three different towns. And

I guess fireworks sales will benefit.

But doesn't that kinda' minimize the uniqueness of the event? Doesn't that weaken the impact of the whole United States of America blowing the heck out of everything at the same time? Now that's unity. That is how it should be. E Pluribus Unum – from many to one.

I was lucky enough many years ago, long before holiday date-swapping, to be flying into Philadelphia at dusk on Independence Day. And that city, where independence was defiantly declared 250 years ago, knows how to light up the sky. Even on approach from 100 miles out every city, town and hamlet thousands of feet below me was rocking the night. The fireworks were so thick you felt you could walk across them all the way to the Atlantic. And there it was and should be. E Pluribus Unum. Happy Independence Day (whether you celebrated on the 2nd, 3rd or 4th) to all.

Keep your eyes on the stars and your back to the wind.

Twins

By Dean Marple

True, they were twins, but they were nothing alike. Jacob was a quiet, thoughtful, 16-year-old who thought before he spoke. He was someone who liked to please people. Ethan had only one speed, and that was full speed ahead. He believed in acting now and worrying about the consequences later. As far as Ethan was concerned, half the fun in life was not knowing where you were headed. Right now, they were headed to the barn to muck out the horse stalls, and as usual, Ethan was doing most of the talking.

"Come on, Jacob, what do you say? Sure sounds like a good deal to me. Just think how much you'll like it tomorrow. You could sleep in late if you wanted while I'm out here slaving away. What do you think, Jacob old buddy?"

"So, you're saying if I clean out both my horse's stall and yours today, you'll clean both stalls tomorrow?"

"Yep, that's what I'm saying. You know I'll do it for both of us tomorrow."

Jacob paused, then asked, "What's the deal? What's the rush today?"

"Uh, well, uh, I told Olivia I'd pick her up this morning and I need to get going."

"Gee, Ethan, why didn't you say you had a date?"

"It's not really a date; we're just going to hang out this morning. But maybe, if I'm lucky, I can coax her into a date later tonight. She's pretty."

Jacob had to laugh. Ethan was wild about a different girl every week, and apparently Olivia was this week's pick. "OK, brother, if it's that big of a deal, go ahead, take off. Don't worry about tomorrow, I've got you covered."

"Thanks! You're the best! I'll tell you all about it when I get home," Ethan shouted as he hurried out the door.

True to his word, Ethan couldn't stop talking about Olivia when he got home. She was gorgeous, wonderful, heavenly, his soul mate for life – or at least for this week.

"Jacob, can you believe it? She said yes! I'm taking her to the county fair tonight."

"Ethan, aren't you forgetting something? After it cools down tonight, Mom

asked us to weed the garden. She's worried the weeds will choke out the string beans if we don't get in there."

"Oh, man, I forgot. Maybe we could do it tomorrow?"

"No way, Ethan. It's supposed to be 95 tomorrow. We need to do it tonight."

Ethan was momentarily quiet and then assumed an all too familiar pleading look. Jacob knew what to expect. "Jacob, old buddy, you know I'd do anything for you. How about helping a brother out? You wouldn't want me to disappoint Olivia, would you?"

Jacob could only chuckle at Ethan looking like a 3-year-old begging for a piece of candy. "Go on, I'll take care of the weeds. Say hi to Olivia for me."

And so, the week progressed toward Friday with Jacob doing most of the work and Ethan rambling on about girls, cars, movies, girls and money. Friday was payday, and Ethan needed gas money because Olivia was not the type of girl you asked to walk to a date.

The twins did not receive a set allowance. Instead, the amount varied depending on how many jobs they did

around the farm during the week. Just like always, after the Friday evening meal, both boys sat down with their father. As expected, Jacob received a fair amount of cash, but to Ethan's surprise, the only thing he received was some blunt advice from his father.

"Ethan, there's no money for you this week because you didn't carry your share of the load. You'll find the world is not very forgiving to unreliable people, and you need to learn that lesson now. Think about it," was the last thing Ethan's father said as he left the table.

Unfortunately, reflective thinking was not Ethan's strong suit. "Jacob, hey, I'm in a bind. How about giving me a loan until next Friday?"

"No."

"Ah, come on."

"No. I need the money."

"You? What are you going to do with the money?"

"I'm going to the fair. I hear Olivia needs a date."

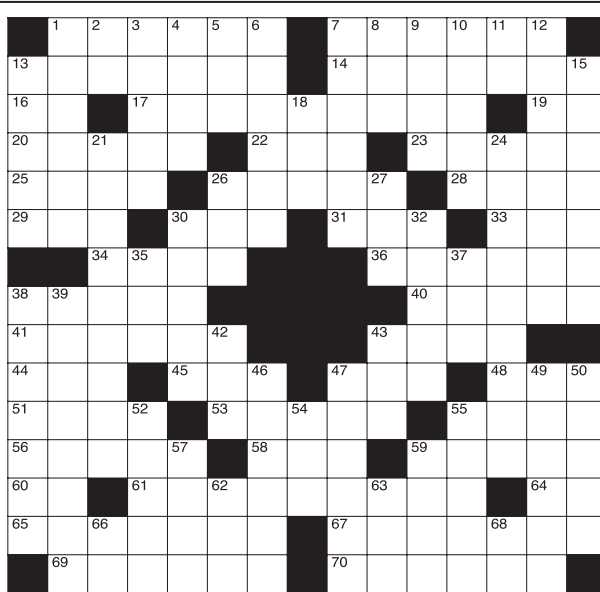
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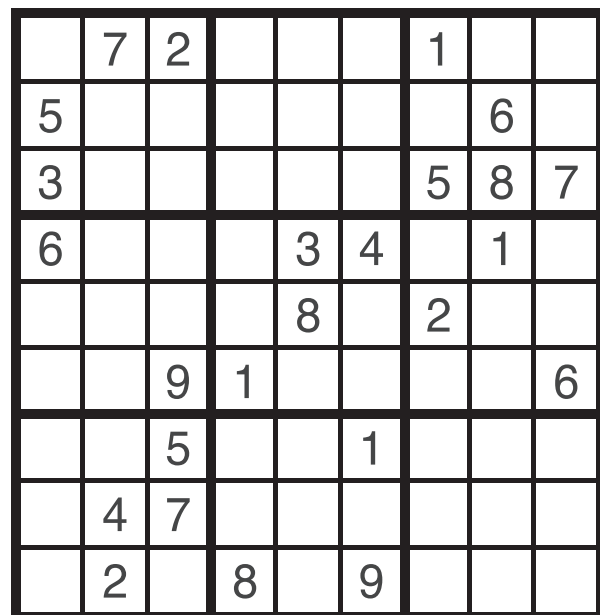


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mended
- 7. Hymns
- 13. Commercial transport of goods
- 14. Poked holes in the ground
- 16. They precede C
- 17. Branch of knowledge concerned with wealth
- 19. Larry and Curly's pal
- 20. Injured
- 22. Popular type of dance
- 23. Moon crater
- 25. American state
- 26. Places to lock valuables
- 28. Stalk that supports the capsule
- 29. Keyboard key
- 30. "___ death do us part"
- 31. A type of cage
- 33. A place to sleep
- 34. Annual music awards show
- 36. Made over
- 38. Hard, stony substance
- 40. Incantations
- 41. Long-legged, wading bird
- 43. Breathe noisily
- 44. Congressman
- 45. Rip off
- 47. Golf score
- 48. Popular pickup truck
- 51. Where infants sleep
- 53. Music term
- 55. Small opening in a surface
- 56. Musical term meaning "very"
- 58. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 59. Treats with powder
- 60. Email subject line feature
- 61. A British lawyer
- 64. Expression of laughter
- 65. Farmer's calendar
- 67. Seeds used as food
- 69. Eurasian shrubs
- 70. Periods of inactivity

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hard things to kick
- 2. Collective of countries
- 3. Letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 4. One-time Alabama running back Eddie
- 5. One's sense of self-esteem
- 6. Of the teeth
- 7. Treat with care
- 8. Type of whale
- 9. Curved structure
- 10. Emits coherent radiation
- 11. One of the Gospels (abbr.)
- 12. Smallest interval in western music
- 13. Netherlands seat of government
- 15. Gives to charitably
- 18. Lout
- 21. Pastas
- 24. Release from restrictions
- 26. Female sibling
- 27. Title of respect
- 30. Silver coins
- 32. Region in India
- 35. Partner to cheese
- 37. Dark or dusky
- 38. Pacific Northwest tree
- 39. Exaggerate
- 42. Toddler
- 43. Touch lightly
- 46. Fundamentals
- 47. Jeopardies
- 49. Curved structures
- 50. Isolated, flat-topped hills
- 52. Forming the bottom layer
- 54. Reciprocal of sine
- 55. Genus of Old World birds
- 57. New York college
- 59. Cloak
- 62. Kawhi Leonard's team (abbr.)
- 63. Vietnamese offensive
- 66. "The Great Lakes State"
- 68. "___ myself and I"



A E U Q I N U U B R W N E H C I N D S E
 E P L N Y G H P L O I O C H W K L V E Q
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RETAIL SUPPORT WORD SEARCH

AUTHENTIC, BOUTIQUE, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY, ECONOMY, ENTREPRENEUR, GROWTH, HANDMADE, LOCAL, LOYALTY, MARKET, NICHE, OWNERSHIP, PASSION, PERSONAL, QUALITY, SELECTION, SERVICE, SHOP, SMALL, STORE, SUPPORT, UNIQUE, VARIETY

Fresh From the Hen House

By Ashley Burkhardt Walter

We've had a turkey and a goose sitting on eggs in the barn for what has apparently been 28 days already. I only knew it had been 28 days after my youngest came running across the yard and into the house with a big grin on her face. She had spied a little head poking out from under the turkey hen. Since we have farm cats, and unless we can relocate the mama and babies to a safe place, we usually take the babies and put them in a brooder to grow.

Now, when she heard a baby goose, I wasn't as thrilled to take the baby from its mama because Daddy was nearby guarding. My oldest humored me and held the male goose back while I grabbed the cute little gosling and left Mama to sit on the rest of her eggs. I believe that very same day, my youngest also watched a caterpillar she had been keeping in a jar emerge as a butterfly.

Days later, my husband came into

the house and asked my youngest if she had put something into the incubator 28 days ago. Maybe it slipped her mind, or maybe someone thought a duck egg was something else, but a sweet little duckling had hatched. Ducks are the one bird we hesitate to hatch too many of. Though my youngest would hatch every one of them if she could, they are just messy little things. With all of the involvement my youngest has with hatching, raising, and rescuing birds – and, well, anything that breathes – it makes me wonder about her future. She'll be far more than a crazy cat lady.

We milked just one cow starting this past weekend. Our Brown Swiss has entered her dry period, when she puts her energy toward her condition and her growing baby instead of milk production. Her milk production had really dwindled over the past couple of weeks, so she herself had already switched her focus from giving us

milk to growing her baby, but I just was not ready to stop milking her. We absolutely love our thick, creamy Jersey milk, but I may love a glass of Brown Swiss milk even more. It will be nice to get in and out of the barn a little faster for morning milking over the next couple of months. I'm just thankful to still have a decent supply of fresh raw milk from Pepper, our Jersey, until we start swimming in Brown Swiss milk again after she calves.

We have officially started county fair week, and it may have begun with me stepping in literally the only fresh cow patty to be found in the whole driveway Sunday morning...in my flip-flops. I'm choosing to believe that got the bad luck out of the way early. Here's to a week full of hard work, fun, and projects that reflect months of learning.

Look forward to a recipe next week. Follow us on Facebook at Vintage at Heart Homestead.

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We welcome readers and subscribers to submit letters to the editor, sharing their opinion(s) on issues of local, state, national or international concern. Please limit your letter to 650 words, and email them to jasonjump@thecunninghamcourier.com. All letters must be authenticated prior to being published, so please include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Your name and city must be included in print for the letter to be published. We do not publish anonymous letters. Deadline is Monday at noon. Letters longer than 650 words may be edited by staff if necessary. Letters will also be corrected for grammar and style. Potentially libel or slanderous material will be edited out. Letters to the editor may not be used to endorse or call for a vote on a political candidate or advocate for an issue unless the content is paid in advance.

NEWS

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Jason Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email jasonjump@thecunninghamcourier.com

PUZZLE ANSWERS

H	E	A	L	E	D	P	S	A	L	M	S		
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Misc.
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FOR SALE

The City of Turon is selling our fogger as is and will be taking sealed bids on it and will open the sealed bids at the next meeting on July 13th, 2026, at 7 p.m.

CITY WIDE GARAGE SALE

The City of Turon is having a city-wide garage sale at the city park Sept. 19, 2026, from 8am-2pm, everyone is responsible for their own cleanup, sign-up is in the city office our number is 620-497-6443, and the hours are M-F 8-11 and 12-3.

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Seth Thibault, OD
Andrew W. Piester, OD**
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Pratt, KS 67124
620-672-5934
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604 N. Walnut
Medicine Lodge, KS 67104
620-886-3222
8 a.m. to noon / 1 to 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
**Seth Thibault, OD
Andrew W. Piester, OD**
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Kingman, KS 67068
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NEWS

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Jason Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email jasonjump@thecunninghamcourier.com

KINGMAN COUNTY SHERIFF BLOTTER

Sunday, June 28

Traffic Stops	2
Civil Paper Service	1
Trespassing	10000 Blk NE 10 St, Murdock
Trespassing	4700 Blk SE 150 Ave, Cheney
Traffic Complaint	3900 Blk NE 30 Ave, Kingman
Follow Up	15000 Blk NE 50 St, Cheney
Agency Assist/KWP	15000 Blk NE 50 St, Cheney
Suspicious Person	N Red Barn & W Kansas, Kingman
Agency Assist/KHP	2000 Blk W Hwy 54, Kingman
Motorist Assist	8000 Blk E Hwy 54, Murdock
Accidental 911 Dial	10000 Blk SE 20 St, Kingman
Non-Injury Accident	SE 40 St & SE 100, Murdock
Miscellaneous	120 N Spruce St, Kingman

Monday, June 29

Traffic Stops	1
Civil Paper Service	6
Miscellaneous	5700 Blk NE 10 St, Kingman
Court/Inmate	130 N Spruce St, Kingman
Abandoned Vehicle	NE 30 St & NE 20, Kingman
Trespassing	2200 Blk E Bluff St, Kingman

Tuesday, June 30

Traffic Stops	2
Court	130 N Spruce St, Kingman
Disabled Vehicle	E Hwy 54 & NE 150, Cheney
Animal Complaint	SE 90 St & S Hwy 14, Kingman
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	12000 Blk SW 100 St, Zenda

Wednesday, July 1

Traffic Stops	4
Civil Paper Service	1
Transport/Prisoner	120 N Spruce St, Kingman
Agency Assist/Medical	400 Blk E Leiter, Cunningham
Miscellaneous	1000 Blk E Hwy 54, Kingman
Miscellaneous	15000 Blk NE 50 St, Cheney
Theft	600 Blk N Main St, Spivey
Transport Civilian	4000 Blk E Hwy 54, Kingman
Follow Up	600 Blk N Main St, Spivey
Suspicious Activity	100 Blk W 3rd Ave, Norwich
Traffic Complaint	E Hwy 54 & NE 40, Kingman

Thursday, July 2

Traffic Stop	1
Transport/Inmate	120 N Spruce St, Kingman
Transport/Inmate	120 N Spruce St, Kingman
Non-Injury Accident	SE 160 & N Hwy K2, Norwich

Harrasment	1200 Blk NE 150 Ave, Cheney
Accidental 911 Dial	15000 Blk NE 50 St, Cheney
Injury Accident	600 Blk N Robbins Rd, Norwich
Abandoned Vehicle	SE 140 & SE 170 St, Norwich
Miscellaneous	N Pine St & E A Ave, Kingman

Friday, July 3

Traffic Stops	3
Suspicious Vehicle	NE 30 St & N Hwy 14, Kingman
Miscellaneous	N Main St & E A Ave, Kingman
Accidental 911 Dial	16000 Blk NE 50 St, Cheney
Suspicious Person	600 Blk N Spruce St, Kingman

Saturday, July 4

Traffic Stops	2
Disturbance	13000 Blk SE 20 St, Murdock
Injury Accident	10000 Blk SE 40 St, Murdock
Miscellaneous	120 N Spruce St, Kingman
Suspicious Person	15000 Blk E Hwy 54, Cheney
Miscellaneous	16000 Blk SE 30 St, Cheney
Animal Complaint	5200 Blk SE 20 St, Kingman
Animal Complaint	E Hwy 42 & S Hwy 14, Rago
Agency Assist/KMPD	400 Blk E C Ave, Kingman
Non-Injury Accident	SE 60 St & SE 80 Ave, Murdock

KINGMAN COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

Judge Roseanna Mathis

Thursday, July 9

2025: State of Kansas vs. Phillip Duebonae Redrick, motion.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Angela D. Rennaker, hearing.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Paxton T. Goldston, hearing.
2025: State of Kansas vs. Ace L. Watson, sentencing.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Aiden Christopher Rau, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Robert Samuel Gladwell, hearing.

2026: State of Kansas vs. Shane Leon Driver, hearing.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Harvey Lee Anderson, hearing.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Jacob Joe Bigger, diversion.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Andrew A. Camp, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Paola Rodriguez Robles, diversion.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Roy Lee Smith, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Marshall Lane Ratzlaff, first appearance.

2026: State of Kansas vs. Chaz Joseph Henry Teafatiller, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. John Ivy Shoemaker, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Nubia Vanessa Melendez, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Emiliano Perales Gonzalez, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Rashan D. Browning, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Shawn Michael Mardis, first appearance.
2026: State of Kansas vs. Katy R. Pisano, hearing.

KINGMAN COUNTY JAIL BOOKINGS

July 1: Justin Eugene Hess, 44, held for Department of Corrections for court hearing, transported back to DOC.
July 1: Serena Marie McIlrath, 62, warrant arrest, \$2,500 OR bond.
July 4: Steven Glenn Kind, 33, driving with suspended license, habitual traffic violator and no proof of insurance, \$7,500 bond.
July 4: Jonah Gustaf Nowak Sr., 29, attempted first degree murder (two counts) and criminal trespass.

USD 332 BOE AGENDA

Cunningham USD #332 Board of Education Meeting
 104 W 4th
 Cunningham, KS 67035
 July 13 at 7 p.m.
AGENDA
 I. Call to Order
 II. Approval of Agenda (AI)
 III. Guest Recognition
 IV. Approval of the minutes of the June 8, 2026 regular meeting (AI)
 V. Approval of financial reports and payment of bills (AI)
 VI. Organization (AI)
 a. Appointments (Consent):
 i. Clerk- Stacy Webster
 ii. Treasurer- Aimee Ogg
 iii. Depository- Ninescah Valley Bank
 iv. Auditor-Busby Ford Reimer
 v. Attorney-KASB
 vi. Official Newspaper-Cunningham Currier
 vii. Freedom of information officer- Dr. Aramberger
 viii. Custodian of records-Stacy Webster
 ix. Truancy Officer-Principal Dunlap
 x. KPERS Representative-Stacy Webster
 xi. Local Homeless Liaison- Dr. Aramberger
 xii. Hearing Officer for Suspension and Expulsion-Dr. Aramberger
 xiii. Food Service Representative- Barb Schultz
 xiv. Hearing Officer for Free and Reduced Meals-Dr. Aramberger
 xv. Compliance Coordinator for Federal Anti-Discrimination Laws including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504 (ADA) - Dr. Aramberger
 b. New Fiscal Year action items:
 i. Resolution 2027-001 Establish USD #332 Petty Cash Fund and Cunningham Schools Petty Cash Fund
 ii. Resolution 2027-002 Establish a School Activity Account
 iii. Resolution 2027-003 Establish Depository
 iv. Resolution 2027-004 Authorize Payment of Warrants Before Board Action
 v. Resolution 2027-005 Maintain a Direct Deposit Account
 vi. Resolution 2027-006 Waive the Annual Requirement of General Accepted Accounting Principles and Fixed Asset Accounting
 vii. Resolution 2027-007 Establish Board Meeting Date.
 viii. Resolution 2027-008 Rescind Previous Policies and Adopt Policies to Govern the District During the 2025-2026 School Year
 ix. Resolution 2027-009 Comply with Immunization Laws and Regulations
 x. Resolution 2027-010 Home Rule
 xi. Resolution 2027-011 Agreement for Administrative Services for the 403b Retirement Program
 xii. Resolution 2027-012 Approve Employee Section 125 Plan
 xiii. Resolution 2027-013 Adopt Hazard Mitigation Plan
 xiv. Authorize disposal of old records
 xv. Authorize district participation in federal programs
 xvi. Adoption of 1,116 hour school year
 xvii. Approval to liquidate surplus property
 xviii. Approval for participation in the Federal Food Service Programs.
VII. Reports
 a. Superintendent Report – Dr. Aramberger
 b. End of Year Budget report
 c. Principal Report- Mr. Dunlap
 d. Special Education-Bjorn Halderson
VIII. New Business (AI)
 a. Approve membership in KASB and KASB Legal Assistance
 b. Approve membership in ESSDACK
 c. Approve membership in Kare
 d. Approve Handbook
 e. Budget- needs assessment, Revenue neutral rate.
 f. Approve fees
 g. Approve removal of student activity line items
 h. Approve positions
 IX. Adjournment

KINGMAN COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES

June 29 Meeting

Chairwoman Lyon called the Board of County Commissioners meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. June 29, 2026, in the County Commissioners room at the Kingman County Courthouse.
 Julie Lyon, Chairwoman
 Jack Thimesch, Commissioner
 Jeff Young, Commissioner
 Carol Noblit, County Clerk
 Brandon Ritcha, County Counselor
 Visitors: Dale Enyart; Bob Morris, Kingman Leader-Courier; Shae Brooks, Kingman Fire Chief;
 Online Visitors: B; Caller 01; Caller 1; AS; D H
 Staff: LaDawn Stegman, Financial Officer; Charles Arensdorf, Public Works Director.
 Brandon Ritcha, County Counselor gave the invocation.
 Chairwoman Lyon asked if there were any additions to the agenda.
MOTION: Commissioner Young moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Thimesch seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.
 Chairwoman Lyon asked if there was any public comment.
 Dale Enyart discussed the City of Kingman Meeting and said that it was a good meeting and decisions were made. Also, he attended the Commissioner District #1 Candidate Forum in Norwich last Thursday.
 8:35 a.m. Shae Brooks, Kingman Fire Chief was in with an update on the AFG Grant that was applied for in the amount of \$727,463.12.
 The grant is for the purchasing of the following equipment:
 49-SCBA Air Packs
 6-3 Section Cylinder Racks
 1-Cascade System
 143-Cylinders
 65-SCBA Face Masks

Commissioner Thimesch discussed the fire in Cunningham due to lightning strike.
 8:47 a.m. LaDawn Stegman, Financial Officer was in with the letter from AdamsBrown for the Commissioners signature.
 Ms. Stegman reviewed 2027 budget requests with the Commissioners.
 Commissioner Thimesch discussed the overtime and having it where departments would have to ask for overtime when needed.
 Ms. Stegman left the meeting at 9:35 a.m.
 Jaryth Barten, Senator Moran Representative was in to introduce himself to the County Commissioners.
 Commissioner Thimesch let Mr. Barten know that the State and Federal Representatives need to work on exemptions and not put tax burden on the taxpayers.
 Mr. Barten left the meeting at 9:39 a.m.
 9:39 a.m. Charles Arensdorf, Public Works Director was in with the following permit for:
 1. Drive entrance for Mark Elpers North side of Section 10, Township 7, Range 05W
 NE 50th Street.
 Mr. Arensdorf let the Commissioners know that Pearson Construction is about 4 weeks out on the Hot Mix Overlay on NE 10 St.
 Mr. Arensdorf left the meeting at 9:48 a.m.
 Carol Noblit, County Clerk submitted the Commission meeting minutes from June 22, 2026, for approval.
MOTION: Commissioner Thimesch moved to approve June 22, 2026, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 3-0

vote.
 Commissioner Thimesch let the Commission know that he received correspondence from Mr. Beshore and they will address the request.
 9:52 a.m. Amanda Stucky, Planning/Zoning Director was in with a request from Scott Tanner, BHC drainage and road plans for the Silver Creek Addition to change from the plan submitted.
 Commissioners let Ms. Stucky know that they would like to keep with the plan submitted or a new plan would be submitted.
 Ms. Stucky left the meeting at 9:55 a.m.
EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Thimesch moved to go into executive session at 9:56 a.m. with Brandon Ritcha, County Counselor to discuss matters of pending litigation pursuant to the exception under the Kansas Open Meetings Act for discussion of matters which would be deemed privileged under the attorney-client relationship, and they will return to open session in the board meeting room at 10:11 a.m.
 Commissioners returned to regular session at 10:11 a.m. with no action taken.
 Commissioner Thimesch updated the Commissioners on the City of Kingman meeting he attended last week.
 Commissioner Young discussed that he is in favor of adding the county stipend into the pay.
 Chairwoman Lyon discussed that she attended the planning/zoning meeting and the Commissioner candidate forum last week.
MOTION: Commissioner Young moved to adjourn the regular board meeting at 10:25 a.m. Commissioner Thimesch seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.

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SPORTS

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Jason Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email jasonjump@thecunninghamcourier.com

CHS Cheerleaders Featured in Vype, Attend WSU Cheer Camp

BY STEPHANIE JUMP
Staff Writer

The Cunningham High School cheerleaders have had a busy summer and school hasn't even started yet. The CHS cheer team was featured in the newest Vype Magazine and attended cheer camp at Wichita State University.

Coach Nichole Kerschen thought the feature in Vype was spam at first but after a couple more emails, she responded back to the magazine.

"Back in April, I got an email from the Vype Magazine asking if they could do a feature on the Cunningham High School cheerleaders," Kerschen said. "They sent me a questionnaire about the cheerleaders. I think it is such an honor to be featured in the Vype, because these girls have had three of the longest seasons possible."

Kerschen said that cheering for State football and State basketball tournaments pushed the girls and not a lot of teams got that opportunity.

The cheer team was just getting started as this past week, the high school cheer squad attended the WSU Cheer camp.

"I had heard great things

about this camp and was really wanting to take the girls to a multi-day camp," she said. "We liked that this was close to home and was a two day camp."

"We learned three dances and multiple cheers to add to our repertoire. Our favorite part was one-on-one coaching with the WSU cheer coach and their cheer squad."

The CHS cheer team came away from camp with the Best Team Dance Award.

"At the end of the camp, there was a showcase of our personalized routine choreographed for us," said Kerschen. "We did about 2-3 hours of stunting each day. This helped our girls gain more confidence in their stunting and fix some old habits."

Kerschen praised the WSU cheer camp saying that it exceeded their expectations.

"It was hard work, long hours, hot and sweaty, but it was such a great bonding/building time with each other. We are excited to go to the camp again next year," she said.

Kerschen said her favorite part of the camp was that it was a jump start to the season and that the team is already getting ready for the 26-27 season.



STEPHANIE JUMP / The Courier

The Cunningham High School cheer squad recently attended a two day camp at Wichita State University under the direction of head coach Nichole Kerschen. The CHS cheerleaders have also been featured in Vype Magazine this summer. From L to R are: Coach Nichole Kerschen, Maelyn Jump, Nora Huff, Grayci McCurry, Raven Koester, WSU Cheerleader Kennedy Jefferies, WSU Cheerleader Franklin Owens, Carly McGuire, Keyonna Raney and Gracie Smyth.

The CHS cheer team returns several veteran cheer members to the squad and added a few "new" faces.

Seniors are Gracie Smyth, Nora Huff and Grayci McCurry. Sophomores Maelyn

Jump, Keyonna Raney and Raven Koester and freshman Carly McGuire round out the team for the upcoming school year.

"We have a lot of new ideas for the start of the year," said

Kerschen. "Our three seniors have a bunch of ideas they want to incorporate over the course of the year to make their senior year the best year yet."

Kerschen said the team is

excited to start the season off with the Little Wildcat Cheer clinic for the first football game.

"This year will be filled with a lot of Wildcat spirit," Kerschen said.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Volleyball Champs: July 4th Spark in the Park Tournament Winners

Spark in the Park volleyball tournament had seven high school teams and four junior high teams participate in the annual 4th of July tradition held at the sand volleyball pits at the Cunningham Park on July 4. The event is a fundraiser for Cunningham Recreation. LEFT PHOTO: The high school winning team was (L to R) Emily Ogg, Logan Kinsler, Cole Hageman, Skyler Thimesch and Rylie Ward. RIGHT PHOTO: The junior high champions consisted of (L to R) Leah Rogers, Jalynn McGuire, Shandi Romine, AnnMarie Kerschen, Amercy Sickles, Willow Preisser and Mia Dillon.

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