

Talk of the Town

City of Victoria

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New signs greet Victoria visitors



One year ago right now three seniors in Kate James' high school civics class were working on a project to complete the requirements for the course. Their plan was to design and raise the funds for new signs to add a positive impression to drivers as they came and went from the city.

Christian Wellbrock, Cadence Dickey and Jessica Schroeder were the team that had the vision and did the work to bring the project to completion. The City assisted with the funding of the project.

And now they are in place .

City acquires new "officer"!

Recently, you may have noticed that the Victoria Police Department took on a new recruit in the form of a radar speed sign. The Ellis County Public Works was nice enough to allow this handy piece of equipment to join us for awhile. With a bit of help from City Superintendent Brad Schmidtberger, this new "officer" is catching speeders on a daily basis.

I'm guessing it will soon become the community's favorite because it has

only been handing out visual warnings instead of written citations. We haven't really discussed a name for it yet. I've been referring to it as Officer Flash. If you have a better idea, feel free to let us know.

A radar speed sign has always been a wish list item for our department. Cost has always played the biggest role when making the decision to pass on the purchase.

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City Officials

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City Clerk: Jamie Sterling

Utilities Clerk: Rachel VonFeldt

City Treasurer: Jerry Schmidtberger

City Superintendent:

Brad Schmidtberger

Public Works Assistant:

Terry Riedel

Jeff Dorzweiler

Police Chief: Cole Dinkel

Patrol Officer: Ryan Mauch

Fire Chief: John Weber

Assistant Fire Chief: Scott Wellbrock

As of the City Council meeting on Jan. 16, Council member Zach Kanzenbach resigned his position. Council voted to appoint Matthew Sander to serve as his replacement. He will be officially installed at the Feb. 20 City Council meeting.

City has new utilities clerk

Customers at City Hall now have a new person to help them with their needs. Rachel VonFeldt has replaced Nancy Piatt as the City's Utility Clerk.

Originally from the Catherine area, Rachel and her husband Scott have been residents of Victoria for about 15 years. Prior to accepting this position, she was a daycare provider.

Scott owns his own business, VonFeldt Farms and Trucking. Together they have three children: Camri, a sophomore, Kaden, a seventh grade, and Konnor, a fourth grader.

Rachel stays active in the community with PTO and VIP as well as teaching fifth grade religion classes. She also leads events for Hays Recreation Commission.

She is happy to have this new part-time position as it will allow her to attend her children's activities and not have a commute. She has been training for the past month and is enjoying the people she works with and the opportunity to become acquainted with new people.

Piatt is retiring after 10 years with the City.

HERZOGFEST VICTORIA, KS

The annual Santa Visit was held on December 11th at the park. Thank you to the Victoria Fire Department for bringing Santa on the fire truck. Children were excited to have a turn to sit on Santa's lap and share their Christmas wishes. Patrons enjoyed hot chocolate provided by the committee and special holiday treat bags donated by the City of Victoria.

The committee is full force into planning for the 2023 Festival. This will mark the 40th year for the Herzogfest. Right now we are looking for pictures from the past festivals. We would like to honor years past of the festival. Please share any photos with Andrea Schmidtberger at 785-656-2208. If you would like to retain your photo hard copies, she is available to scan and return the originals.

Were you a previous festival committee member? We are looking to make a list of past festival members in an effort to retain the history of the event and honor those that have helped to make it great over the years. Please reach out to a



current committee member with names of past members.

Herzogfest 2023 will include lots of classic festival traditions with even some fun up our sleeves. New activities and events are planned to be better than you've seen before. Mark your calendars now for the second weekend in August (11th & 12th)!

St. Fidelis News

St. Fidelis Thrift Store manager Rosie Kreutzer wants to thank everyone who supported it through either donations or purchases during the holiday season.

They are always happy to accept contributions.

"Officer Flash" (continued)

When the time comes that Officer Flash resigns from VPD, I'm hoping we can get something worked out through grants or normal funding to make the purchase of one possible.

Cathedral Street has always been a problem when it comes to speeding. Now with the old fuel station closed by I-70, the amount of interstate traffic coming into the city limits has probably tripled. These travelers are usually in a big hurry to find a fuel station before they run out of the fumes they're driving on. It surprises me how many will run out of fuel while I have them stopped for speeding! We're hoping Officer Flash can become a successful traffic-calming influence.

With the new, improved Cathedral Street being so luxurious, it can make a tractor ride like a Cadillac, which tempts many to want to be more aggressive with the accelerator. For this reason, Flash has been much appreciated. I have observed how traffic responds to Officer Flash when it was deployed on the north end of Cathedral for southbound traffic entering the city limits. I was pleased with the overall awareness it gave to drivers.

Cathedral is not the only street where we plan to deploy Officer Flash. We've already used it on Hwy 40 as well. We will continue to keep Officer Flash mobile and productive within Victoria for as long as Ellis County Public Works allows. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at any time.

Chief Cole Dinkel (785) 735-9354


**Happy
Valentine's Day**

Victoria Community Coalition Update

The Victoria Community Coalition, working hard to repurpose the former rest home which is now named St. John's Place, has several items to report. First, they have officially been notified of their non-profit status having met all the requirements for a 501 (c)3.

During the month of December they completed two successful fundraisers. The two-day tour of homes promoted their cause and provided an opportunity for ticket holders to enjoy the beauty of seven area homes. Chad and Andrea Schmidtberger, Dan and Mary Kay Schippers, Austin and Sheena Gagnon, Shane and Stephanie Broyles, Leroy and LeeAnn Schmidtberger, Frank and Brenda Dreiling, and Sam and Marilyn Braun welcomed visitors and shared the holiday spirit. A December raffle featuring cash prizes as well as many area merchant gift certificates also added to their treasury.

During the last 16 months, several community meetings have been held getting input on the development of the property. The group completed the required and labor-intensive housing assessment and has logged over 1000 volunteer hours on various projects. The Coalition is now working toward a February deadline to apply for a \$650,000 grant known as an MIH from the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation.

—People in Our Neighborhood—

Wilmer Dinkel, Jr., is a man of many interests and hobbies: one of them is creating limestone rocks for people. He has been at it for almost twenty years and has many stories to tell of the customers he has sold them to as well as the many he has donated to good causes in the community and area including the Victoria Fire Station and the high school.

Many residents here in Victoria have his work in their yards but some can be found in distant places like Texas, Colorado, and beyond. Some families have purchased them for relatives as gifts and he has even done one as a pet tombstone.

Wilmer prides himself on customer satisfaction and enjoys the challenge of customizing rocks with images of trucks, motorcycles, team insignias, and more when asked. He sometimes enlists the help of his son Cole when he has a unique challenge. He has also met the request of restoring some that were in need of repair.

While he could have a business taking orders and working full-time, Wilmer says that would reduce the amount of enjoyment he finds in his work. He wants to keep it as a hobby.



The work of creating a final product is a multi-step, labor-intensive process, requiring a number of specialized tools. It is also 'dirty' work.

One of the other challenges involved these days is finding the rocks to be used and then transporting them can also become a challenge.

Wilmer loves to tell the stories of how some of his customers have found him by word of mouth or simply driving by his house when he was at work. He also has been able to make some new friends out of satisfied customers.

In his retirement, crafting something that will have lasting significance for someone gives him a great deal of satisfaction.

Citywide Cleanup Scheduled

The weekend of May 5-7 is set for the annual citywide cleanup. The dumpsters will be available for collection of large items at the recycling center.

Citywide garage sale will be Sat. May 6. If you wish to participate, the City office will again coordinate a list of participants and items for sale. Cost will be \$5.00.

REMINDER

- ✓ Dogs owners, please be responsible and pick up after your pet when out walking.
- ✓ Pet tags and ATV renewals are due now .
- ✓ We still need cell phone numbers on file for customers who have given up their land lines.
- ✓ Our ACH customers have gone up by over 50. If you would like to sign up, we can mail or email the form or stop in the office.
- ✓ The Victoria Fire Department continues to offer the special free fire alarm program co-sponsored with the Kansas State Fire Marshall. If you would like to be on the list, contact City Hall.

The Hays Bookmobile will be in Victoria on Feb. 6, from 3:00—4:00 pm and on Feb. 18 from 1:00—2:00 pm. If you have a library card, you can reserve your books online and they will be on board for pick up on either of those days.



Students have voice on Site Council



When the Victoria Elementary Site Council conducts its meetings, two elementary students have a place at the table. Principal Deena Clark invited fifth grader Cash Griffin and sixth grader Katelyn Haddock to serve as members since they are 'stakeholders' in the business that is conducted. They both readily agreed and each made a presentation at the January meeting: Cash on the Rock Star Wall of Fame and Katelyn on the sixth grade participation in KMCA,

Student representatives also serve on the Victoria Junior/Senior High School Site Council. They are Gracie Sterling and Quincy Pickering.



Coach Rick Keltner

While Victoria boys' head coach Rick Keltner is new to Victoria, he is a veteran to coaching: eight years at Tipton, 34 years at Hays High and two years as assistant at LaCrosse. Keltner says, "45 years of coaching and if we count the other high school sports, it comes to 117 seasons. Hard to say that and not feel pretty darn old."

Keltner says that in retirement he worked on writing a book and watching other teams play. But despite being married to a "wonderful woman" for 47 years, he got bored and missed coaching. When asked by LaCrosse Superintendent Bill Keeley to assist their head coach Kyle Schmidt (VHS class of 2011) he decided that would give him a new purpose.

Keltner says, "I am blessed to get to coach these guys and we are getting better every day and have had some good moments. We play a challenging schedule

and will continue to improve." Keltner thinks the team's quickness is good and the guys play hard. "As long as we keep our composure, we will play some good basketball and hope to represent Victoria as a bunch of guys who work hard, play together, play smart and care about each other. As long as we do those things, we will have no regrets and those characteristics are a blueprint for a pretty good life away from basketball."

"I am thankful for the kind words, support and patience the people of Victoria have shown. They have a passion for their kids and competition. So far I have been impressed with the number of people who care about the kids and our team. As a parent and a grandparent, I understand that we share many of the same goals for our young people. I appreciate the chance and do not take my responsibilities lightly. I realize no coach pleases everybody and can only promise to do my best."

New Shopping Spot

For Knights and Squires fans looking for apparel, they now have a location to shop. At Frank's Oilfield Service Office located at 416 Main, shoppers will find a good selection of hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, and more for anyone wanting to add to their wardrobe or for gifts for Knights' and Squires' fans.

You can also purchase a Knights Nation flag just like the one they are flying in front of the Main Street Office.

Art students spread holiday



Victoria Elementary students spent December learning about joy as part of their social emotional learning curriculum. Each month a new word is featured and students are shown ways that their actions and attitudes can benefit others as well as their own well being. Early in December, district art teacher Kaylene Gabel was approached by Melissa Wellbrock, parent of a third grader. She works at Brookdale Assisted Living Center in Hays. She shared the story of a gentleman named Elmer who was turning 100 in December. Sadly, Elmer doesn't have much immediate family in the area. Knowing how much her daughter loves art, Melissa asked if it would be possible to have the kids of VES pull off the feat of making 100 birthday cards to celebrate Elmer's big century mark. Mrs. Gabel thought it would be an epic opportunity to show the power of art, giving, and ultimately that word of the month: JOY! And it was beyond joyous. Melissa delivered the 100+ cards to Elmer at a party held in his honor. He was completely surprised and in disbelief that all those cards were made just for him.

Reflecting on the project, Mrs. Gabel stated: "Punting on a year of coloring Santas or making holiday snowmen projects seemed like a no-brainer. This gesture, especially right before the holidays, is hopefully something the kids will never forget. I know I won't."

