



Jim & Melissa Brady

EVENTS

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# metro VOICE

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The Unbreakable Boy

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## NEW RESIDENT churchguide



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See Inside Back Cover!

## Valeo and FSGC plan to merge



Valeo Behavioral Health Care and Family Service & Guidance Center have approved plans to merge the two organizations by the end of the year. They said this merger will provide better access to top-quality care, improved outcomes and care coordination.

The two organizations each provide mental health and substance use treatment to more than 11,600 people each year. Each employs over 300.

They anticipate no layoffs or

■ Please see MERGE page 4

## From the Valley of Defeat to the Summit of Victory



By **Clint Decker**

College basketball fans live for March Madness. It is about this time a particular name is remembered each year – Coach John Wooden, the legendary coach of the UCLA Bruins.

He is remembered for the coaching success at UCLA, that most sports historians say will never be matched or likely even ri-

valed. It is an untouchable set of records. The ones most well known are the ten NCAA national championships in 12 years, 88 consecutive wins over four seasons and 19 conference championships.

Many fans of Coach Wooden might say he has been a winner throughout his entire life. As a player, he won championships in high school and college. As a coach, he had an 81% winning percentage

covering 40 years of coaching along with the UCLA championships.

However, when you look beneath the surface of Coach Wooden's resume, you can see he was not always a winner. He has known tremendous defeat. During the state title game of 1927 for Martinsville (Indiana) High School, he missed a key shot and lost the championship. Wooden

■ Please see VICTORY page 3

## Kansas follows DOGE lead with "COGE" effort



Taking a page from Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, (DOGE), the Kansas Senate has created the "Committee on Government Efficiency," or "COGE."

According to a release from Kansas Senate President Ty Masterson, (R-El Dorado), the committee has launched the Government Efficiency Portal on the Kansas Legislature website.

The portal includes a simple form that can be accessed at <https://kslegislature.gov/li/kansascoge/>. Alternatively, residents may email suggestions

■ Please see COGE page 2

## EasterFest returns to Great Overland Station for 10th year

Topeka EasterFest – the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair – returns to Great Overland Station for 2025, with more activities than ever! The annual event began in Gage Park in 2014, then moved to Garfield Park in North Topeka in 2017. This year, the 10th Annual EasterFest will be held Saturday, April 19 (the day before Easter), with a parade on North Kansas Avenue in the NOTO Arts District, followed by the Big Egg Hunt and Fun Fair at Great Overland Station.

Three thousand people have attended the event in the past to watch the parade, visit the Fun Fair, listen to live music, visit over 100 vendor & exhibit booths, attend the Health Fair and take part in the egg hunt or other activities.

Every year, dozens of churches, businesses and non-profit organizations take part in the parade, and set up vendor booths and kids' games as part of the family fun fair. There have

■ Please see EASTERFEST page 2



# Five things pastors, evangelists may be better off without doing

Filmmaker and author Phil Cooke is the son of a pastor and earned a doctorate in theology. A lifetime of being in and around churches inspired him to list five things he wishes pastors and evangelists would stop doing.

**Stop saying, “Turn to your neighbor and say \_\_\_\_.”** Your church members love you and won’t tell you this, so that’s why I’m here. One study indicates that 67 percent of new visitors won’t return to a church where the pastor says, “Turn to your neighbor.” (Not really. I made that up, but I’m pretending it’s true.) It feels forced, awkward and very cheesy. Trust me, your church members hate it.

**Stop being confusing.** We forget that a significant part of your congregation didn’t grow up in church. I know churches where 50 percent of the congregation doesn’t have a church background. And new visitors? Forget it. So, when did you last talk from the pulpit about why we

value and read the Bible? When was the last time you explained why we sing? Never forget that in a typical service, many people in your congregation don’t get things we take for granted.

And that includes posted signs, directions and helpful information. It’s more important than you think. Which means, do you know what else is essential? Your church communication team.

**Stop ignoring your livestream audience.** Remember how much work we put into producing livestreamed services during the pandemic, when churches were closed? Now, most churches broadcast their services online but don’t make much effort to connect with that audience.

**Stop using “fill-in” words -- Amen?** It’s my theory that because of our noisy, distracted culture, we often feel that we need to fill in the quiet moments in conversations or preaching. So we use nonsense

words – “like,” “you know,” “so,” “amen?” etc. If you study great speakers, you’ll discover they know how to use silence in a way that makes people think. It can make people sit on the edge of their seats with anticipation. So don’t undermine that moment by using a fill-in word that has no meaning. You should get comfortable with silence and make sure every word you say in the pulpit matters – because it does.

**Finally, stop ignoring red flags.** I use the term to describe seeing things that could blow up into a major crisis if you don’t deal with



them now, such as a youth director who’s spending a little too much time with a minor in the youth group, an executive pastor who comes in looking strangely like he has a hangover or a couple on staff who seem to work late – a lot. I’m not talking about being a behavior

cop, because false accusations can destroy lives. But I wonder how many significant crises we’ve seen reported at churches lately could have been avoided had someone not ignored something that didn’t feel right or dared to ask a senior leader about it.

## EASTERFEST

continued from page 1

been lots of floats with a variety of themes, and all shapes and sizes of other vehicles, as well as walking entries such as schools, military groups, marching bands and more. The event is coordinated by C5Alive.

“We’ve had a great response and new entries each year at EasterFest,” said Kevin Doel, one of the organizers. “I expect it to just keep growing every year.”

From 10am to 3pm, live music, vendor booths, food trucks and kid’s activities will be happening all over the grounds and inside Great Overland Station. This year, there will be more inflatables for kids of all ages to enjoy, and the petting zoo will also be back.

The Family Fun Fair will consist of activities geared toward children and families, as well as

health & wellness vendor booths, vendor exhibits, and more. Live performers will be on hand all day, such as live music acts, dance troupes, street entertainers, health & fitness demonstrators

and more.

Back are the ever-popular cupcake walks, along with face painting, and some new food trucks.

There is still room for more Easter-

Fest sponsors and participants for the Vendor Market, Entertainment Stage, Food Court and Health Fair. Volunteers are also needed to help with the entire event.

Major sponsors for EasterFest 2022 include Ernest-Spencer Metals, Stormont Vail Health, Emerald City Cosmopolitan Clun, Kaw Valley Bank, Health & Wellness Magazine, Big Phil’s Auto, SoulFire Nutrition, College HUNKS Movers, and Kansas Fencing.

Media partners and sponsors include TV25, WIBW, WREN Digital Media, Majic 107.7, Apha Media, KFGB 97.7 FM, and Metro Voice.

For more information or to volunteer, visit Topeka EasterFest 2025 on Facebook, email [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) or call 785-640-6399.



## COGE

continued from page 1

to [kansascope@senate.ks.gov](mailto:kansascope@senate.ks.gov).

“One of the reasons we created COGE was to receive ideas directly from Kansans on how government can operate more efficiently and effectively,” Masterson said in the release. This easy-to-access portal allows the public to submit ideas that the committee can then study and potentially turn into legislation.”

The action mirrors similar moves in other states.

The Missouri senate recently created its own DOGE portal as well.

Committee Chair Mary Elizabeth Coleman encourages residents to use the portal to spotlight inefficiencies and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely, Newstalk KZRG reported.

The committee, also being called the Missouri DOGE, will review submissions and incorporate public input into its efforts.

Senator Renee Erickson, chair of COGE, echoed that and encouraged Kansans to send in their ideas. “Our committee is eager to re-

ceive ideas from the people on how to ensure government is truly on their side,” Erickson, (R-Newton), said.

“The best ideas often come from citizens, not politicians, so I invite the public to submit their suggestions and not be shy. We look forward to reviewing that input in the weeks ahead.”

Musk’s DOGE has been moving quickly.

The federal version of DOGE has been moving fast since the inauguration, effectively shutting down the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), taking aim at the United States Department of Education among other actions.

The Wall Street Journal reports that DOGE aides have searched medicare agency payment systems for fraud.

“Representatives of Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency have been working at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, where they have gotten access to key payment and contracting systems, according to people familiar with the matter,” the WSJ reported.

—Patrick Richardson | Kansas Informer; [kaninfo.com](http://kaninfo.com)

## Understanding the Unequal Israel-Hamas Prisoner Exchange

The dangerous myth promoted by the mainstream media and accepted by most of the world is that Israel and Hamas are carrying out some sort of “prisoner swap,” albeit lopsided in numbers.

Nothing could be further from the truth, and it’s critical that the world understands this.

While Israel is releasing convicted murderers with blood on their hands, Israeli hostages include civilians ripped from their homes, attending a music festival and soldiers acting in self-defense. Palestinians being released include murderers convicted in bombings, stabbings,



shootings, hijackings, sexual assault and the list goes on.

For each innocent Israeli hostage, 30 or 50 Palestinian murderers are being released. It suffices to say that this “hostages for murderers” deal is no ordinary “pris-

oner swap.” As more hostages are released and victims reveal their personal stories, we continue to learn new details about the sheer brutality and cruelty unleashed against innocent Israelis.

False moral equivalence between casualties caused by Israel acting in self-defense and Hamas’ deliberate brutal attacks on Jews has tragically been accepted by most of the world. It is critical that Israel and the Jewish people win the war on the battlefield of public opinion.

## VICTORY

continued from page 1

says, “Losing that game was the most disappointing thing that happened to me as a player.” He started coaching a few years later in 1932 at Dayton (Kentucky) High School. His first season was six wins and 11 losses. It took him 28 years of coaching through the high school and college ranks before he won his first title. Then at UCLA in 1964, he captured his first of many NCAA national championships.

Like Coach Wooden, before we stand on the summit of victory, we often walk through the dark and lonely valleys of defeat. We see this as

a pattern in the lives of historically significant people, including the giants of faith in the Bible.

It is written about Noah that he was “...a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.” (Genesis 6:9)

Noah was called by God to build a boat (called an ark) that would be large enough to fit multitudes of animals, along with his family. Then afterwards torrential rains would fall upon the earth and flood it as a form of judgment because of the wickedness of humanity.

Some scholars say it took Noah upwards of 75 years to build the ark, which was constructed during a lawless time. The Bible says, “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every in-

tention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Gen. 6:5) This meant it was a very long 75 years. For the world at this point had never seen rain, nor a boat, so when Noah explained what he was doing it was likely he faced questions, doubts and ridiculed by his godless enemies. Yet, Noah persisted through it all, “By faith, Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark...and became an heir of righteousness.” (Hebrews 11:7)

When God closed the door after Noah boarded the ark and the rains started – it was victory. Then 40 days later when the rain stopped, the floods receded and Noah walked out of the ark to become the father of a new humanity and a new earth – it was victory.

The journey of Noah was not easy. God had him walk through some dark valleys before he could climb to the summit of victory. Why does God operate this way?

One word. Faith. God wants us to depend solely upon Him. Consequently, He takes us through circumstances where we are forced into a choice: God-dependency or self-dependency.

We thank God for the cross of Jesus. He modeled for us God-dependency on His journey to be crucified. And when He rose again from the dead, He provided a way for us to do the same. When we turn from ourselves, while walking through the dark valleys, and trust in Christ alone – we are lifted up to the summit of victory by the grace of God.

Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Please share your comment at [cdeckergreatawakenings.org](mailto:cdeckergreatawakenings.org) and follow his blog at [clintdecker.blogspot.com](http://clintdecker.blogspot.com).

## C5 “POWER” Luncheon to Tell ‘How to Stress Less’

The March C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held on the 13th at SHopper’s Kitchen, 250 SE 29th St., at 11:30am.

The program will feature Jim Hanna with a presentation on “How to Stress Less.”

Admission is free, and lunch can be ordered from the menu on site. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org).

“POWER” luncheons are held on the second Thursday of each month and are open to the public. C5Alive is dedicated to creating Christian culture in the Capital City, by developing and uniting leaders in community businesses, non-profits and churches.

Upcoming luncheon dates are April 10 and May 8, 2025.

C5 also hosts other events, including EASTERFEST, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair, held on N.

Kansas Avenue and at Great Overland Station on the day before Easter. This year’s celebratoin falls on April 19, 2025. Information and registration forms can be found at [www.C5Alive.org](http://www.C5Alive.org) under the EasterFest drop-down menu.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations.

C5 is currently holding a membership drive with special incentives for new members. Lower-priced memberships for small and home-based businesses are now available. Individuals without a business to promote may join for \$20. A list of current members is available on the website. For information about C5Alive, go to [www.C5Alive.org](http://www.C5Alive.org), [www.facebook.com/C5Alive](http://www.facebook.com/C5Alive), or call 785-640-6399.



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# KC pastor among presenters for online State of the Church 2025

Kansas City area Pastor Randy Frazee of Westside Family Church will be one of the participants in the virtual State of the Church 2025 Event Series on March 12.

“As a church that uses the church health dashboard to set our yearly strategy, we’ve grown so much,” said Frazee. “Our entire community, from staff and elder

board to congregants and neighbors, participates in discovering where God is leading us to see more lives actually transformed. I don’t know of anything else that could be more fulfilling as a pastor than that.”

The technology platform Gloop is sponsoring the event to educate, equip and inspire ministry leaders with new Barna Group research and tools that measure church health and support every person flourishing and every church thriving.

“This initiative really has two im-



portant components,” said Brad Hill, chief solutions officer at Gloop. “First, we’ll release monthly research that helps leaders see the state of the church in a very timely way. Second, our church health dashboards will give leaders a common framework to measure the health of their own community. Each event in this new series will highlight the latest trends, helping leaders keep their finger on the pulse of what’s happening and make more informed decisions.”

The free series, with Carey

Nieuwhof and Nona Jones as hosts, will focus on specific themes, such as church engagement, generosity and discipleship trends. Participants will receive early access to research findings and noteworthy ecosystem trends in church health. The series will include special guest appearances from a variety of experts, including:

- David Kinnaman, CEO, Barna Group
- Ed Stetzer, dean of Talbot School of Theology, Biola University
- Tara-Leigh Cobble, author of

“The Bible Recap” and founder of D-Group International

• Lisa Fields, founder of Jude 3 Project and author of “When Faith Disappoints: The Gap Between What We Believe and What We Experience”

“The way we gather information, learn and make leadership decisions is changing in significant ways,” said David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna

Group. “There’s no shortage of information in today’s world, but as Christian leaders, it’s critical to discern the trends that can help us step into this ‘new wineskin’ moment, one where we simultaneously embrace innovation and nurture our roots.

More information about the event is available at the website [www.stateofthechurch.com/events](http://www.stateofthechurch.com/events).

## MERGE

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staffing decreases with the merger, and they say clients can expect business as usual.

Both organizations became Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) in 2024. CCBHCs are required to provide mental health and substance use services to all individuals, regardless of their age, where they live or ability to pay.

Officials indicated the merger will create a single CCBHC that provides critical programs and services within the nationally recognized model without duplication.

The merger will also:

- Provide better access to care
- Provide top-quality, evidence-based care
- Provide improved outcomes
- Provide care coordination to help people navigate behavioral health care, physical health care, social services and the other systems

Merging also opens up resources to those working behind the scenes.

“For the boards, that means that we have access to bigger resources,” explains Ashley Gilfillan, who sits on Valeo’s executive board. “We know our foundations are very well respected in this community and they

do a lot of good as well so we are looking at our foundations as well and how they can help each other because they complement each other.”

As CCHBC’s, each organization was charged with vastly expanding services, a complex, costly and time-consuming process.

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# Metro Voice exclusive interview with 'Rule Breakers' director; Afghan girls' robotics team beats the odds in inspiring new Angel Studios movie

Not every champion bounces a ball, swings a bat or throws a pass. In a culture in which women have long been viewed as second-class citizens, an all-girl robotics team from Afghanistan broke all of the rules to prove there are no limits to what can be accomplished when hearts and minds are free.

Acclaimed director and screenwriter Bill Guttentag shares their inspiring story in "Rule Breakers," a film distributed by Angel Studios that will be released in theaters nationwide on March 7.

"In some ways, it feels like a two-hour ad for girls in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), which is really important," he told Metro Voice News. "But I also like to think we are a movie that's compelling and that people will want to see it. What we are trying to do in some ways is to be like a sports movie that makes you



care about the characters. That's important to us."

Guttentag is well-qualified to help the girls tell their story. He won an Academy Award for the documentary "Twin Towers." He also has earned a second Oscar, three additional Oscar nominations, a Peabody Award, three Emmy Awards, three additional Emmy

nominations, two Writers Guild Award nominations, a Producers Guild Award nomination and a Robert Kennedy Journalism Award.

With his track record, Guttentag can be selective about which projects to pursue. He immediately saw the potential in the story of the Afghan robotics team when one of his cowriters, Jason Brown, presented it to him.

"He is an excellent writer who had written about Roya Mahboob, who is at the center of the film," he said. "He called me and said, 'I have an idea that would make a good movie.' Anyone who has spent time in the entertainment industry has heard those lines before, and often they are not true, but in this case it was extremely true. I thought the story was compelling. I was touched by it."

Mahboob shared her story with Guttentag and Brown in regular Zoom calls during the pandemic. "It struck me not only as a meaningful story but almost like a sports story," Guttentag said. "Although the story is set in the robotics world, 'Miracle,' a film, I love, is set in the hockey world, and you don't have to be a hockey fan to think it's a great movie."

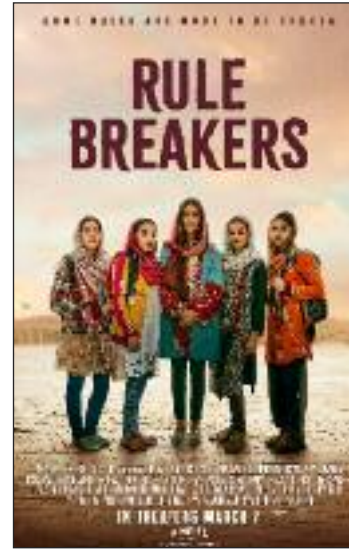
Elaha Mahboob collaborated with Guttentag and Brown on the script. Her input was invaluable in ensuring the accuracy of a cross-cultural production.

"In any film you do, you want to get the facts and the culture correct," Guttentag said. "Elaha was born and raised in Afghanistan and came to the United States to go to college. We spoke all of the time -- like daily -- about making sure we got the culture correct."

With a script in hand, the next challenge was securing funding and distribution for a thoughtful, inspirational film at a time when remakes and superhero movies dominate the box office.

"One producer of the film, Laura Overdeck, used to coach her son's robotics team and was a really good fit for us," he said. "We also were fortunate with our casting, because just about everyone we asked to be in the film said yes to us. Almost all of the actors in the film are first-generation Americans or Canadians of Afghan or Iranian descent.

"Once we had the cast and the financing, we made the film and are happy to work with Angel Studios in distributing it. The Angel people are



great to work with, and they still believe in theaters. The theater experience has taken some hits lately, but I don't think it's going away anytime soon. It's great to work with people who believe in that venue for showing movies. There is something special about it."

Guttentag hopes moviegoers will walk out of theaters not only entertained but inspired.

"One person said her daughter told



her she never really had thought about how easy it was for her to go to school and study computers, math and science," he said. "We want to highlight the idea of girls in STEM. I like to think we are not an eat-your-spinach type of movie where you are getting a lecture, but it highlights the grace, beauty and advantages of what happens when girls go into STEM. I hope people will talk about that."

"Rule Breakers," like all good sports movies, is all about persisting to overcome the odds.

"We all are looking for stories of triumph on some level," Guttentag said. "There are a lot of dark stories out

there, but in some ways this is an aspirational film. We are presenting people who are heroes, and we all hope that we will be more like the heroes in the film. We are choosing to celebrate the light as opposed to the darkness."

Although the robotics team persevered and triumphed, the resurgence of the Taliban has closed the window for other Afghan girls to pursue dreams of their own.

"Things have really gotten worse for girls in Afghanistan," Guttentag said. "The Taliban has banned girls' education beyond sixth grade. By an accident of geography, if you are a girl born in Afghanistan, once you hit sixth grade, that's the end of your schooling. It's completely tragic.

"Sometimes, people just need opportunities, whether its Afghanistan or the United States. There often are smart, dedicated people who want to achieve something but don't have the opportunity. We want to show what happens when you marry up sharp, wonderful people with opportunity. Often, great stuff comes out of it."

Guttentag encourages moviegoers to get out of the house for an experience that will introduce them

to a different culture and lift their spirits.

"When people go to movies, they give you two hours of their lives that they never are going to get back," he said. "As a filmmaker, you have to respect the audience, and you owe it to them to tell a compelling story. Fortunately, in our case, the story was very compelling. I hope audiences will be touched emotionally, they will cheer, they will enjoy it and they will feel like it was a good use of their time."

To watch the movie trailer or learn more about "Rule Breakers," visit [www.angel.com/movies/rule-breakers](http://www.angel.com/movies/rule-breakers).

-Alan Goforth / Metro Voice



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# FINANCIAL PLANNING



**DAVE RAMSEY**  
Financial author,  
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## Dear Dave,

I just finished paying off my credit card bills from last Christmas, and I've made a resolution that it's the last time I'm going into debt for the holidays. With that in mind, how do you feel about using layaway programs when it comes to buying Christmas gifts, instead of credit cards?

Marty

## Dear Marty,

Here's a good rule of thumb for pretty much all spending. If you can't buy it with cash up front, you can't afford it. The only thing I generally give folks wiggle room

on is when it comes to buying a house.

Now, sometimes there might be cases when certain popular items are on sale, and you can set them aside through layaway if you don't have cash at the moment. I don't have a huge problem with this sort of thing, as long as it's not habitual behavior. But in general, I'm not a big fan of layaway programs. I know they seem harmless to most folks, but some stores attach hidden fees and other "gotchas" to their layaway programs. On top of that, they're not the best answer to the problem of running up debt.

Think about it. Christmas comes at the same time every year, right? I mean, it's not like it sneaks up on you. So, wouldn't it be a better to start living on a written budget, and saving up money for Christmas ahead of time? Set aside a little bit each month, and by the time Christmas 2025 rolls around, you'll have a big pile of cash just waiting to be turned into Christmas gifts. And the best part? No financial hangover in January and February from

all the debt you piled up.

So, I want you to start living on a budget. Give every dollar you bring in a

job to do, on paper, before the upcoming month begins. Include Christmas gifts.

And always remember, Christmas is

about God's love for us. Not about impressing people by spending money you don't have!

# Ten Tax Tips for Retirees

By Susan Shumaker  
Tax Professional at  
The Retirement Team



As a registered tax professional at The Retirement Team, in Topeka, Kansas, I pride myself on helping retirees – and those about to retire – navigate the complexities of Federal and Kansas taxation. We have always said that Retirees are one of the highest and most unfairly taxed groups in America.

And now with the 2024 income tax season upon us, everyone should keep a keen eye on opportunities to save money and reduce their tax liabilities. Filing your tax returns can be complex, especially with continually evolving regulations, but retirees have access to unique benefits and deductions that should not be overlooked.

When it comes to retirement savings, minimizing taxes is key to maximizing your nest egg. Tax deductions and credits can be a vital tool in reducing the financial pressure, but they oftentimes go unnoticed. By understanding and utilizing these opportunities, retirees can keep more of their hard earned money.

It is important to take a moment to review your own tax situation and seek professional advice if necessary, ensuring that you don't miss out on the savings you deserve. You might consider working with a tax professional who is familiar with the tax laws affecting retirees. While the tax code is complex, a knowledgeable tax preparer can help identify any overlooked deductions and tax credits. Below, I have outlined just a few essential tax-saving tips, including strategies to help you potentially pay less tax and save more money for your retirement.

## 1. Increased Standard Deduction

One of the easiest and most substantial deductions for retirees is the increased standard deduction. For those 65 or older, the IRS allows a higher standard deduction compared to younger taxpayers. If you haven't itemized your deductions, be sure to take advantage of this tax saver.

## 2. You still have time to Contribute to Retirement Accounts

If you have earned income, contributing to a Traditional or Roth IRA can help you reduce your taxable in-

come or accumulate tax-free retirement savings. You still have time for this tax saver, as the deadline to make a contribution into your IRA for tax year 2024 is April 15, 2025.

## 3. Take advantage of "Catch-Up Contributions"

Having had more birthdays does have its advantages. Workers aged 50 or older can contribute an additional amount of \$1000 to an IRA. These catch-up contributions provide a valuable tax benefit while boosting retirement savings.

## 4. No Age Limit for IRA Contributions & an Updated RMD Age

Two recent changes under the SECURE Act 2.0 offer retirees additional flexibility in managing retirement savings. Taxpayers of ANY AGE can now contribute to Traditional IRAs if they have earned income, providing opportunities for continued tax-deferred growth. And for certain seniors the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) Age has increased to age 73, giving even more time for tax-deferred growth. Always be sure to visit with a qualified financial advisor or tax professional to discuss your own situation.

## 5. Take Advantage of the Saver's Credit

Low and moderate income retirement savers may qualify for the Saver's Credit, which may be worth up to 50% of retirement contributions, up to \$2,000 per person.

## 6. Residential Energy Tax Credits

There are currently Federal tax credits available if you installed a new furnace, central air conditioner, water heater, windows, exterior doors, insulation, solar, geothermal or wind property, panel upgrades, and even home energy audits. Besides saving on your energy bills, you could also save money on your taxes too. Each item is subject to certain qualifications and tax credit limits, with an annual limit of \$1,200.

## 7. Dependent Care Credits

You may be eligible to claim this credit if you work and you pay someone to care for a child OR a spouse or dependent of any age, that is incapable of self care. Adult day care qualifies for this credit, and it is subject to income limits.

## 8. Kansas Disabled Access Credit

This is a frequently overlooked Kansas tax credit that is available to in-

dividuals and businesses if you incurred certain expenditures to make your property accessible to the disabled. Wheelchair ramps and interior modifications are just a couple of the items that can qualify for this credit, which can be anywhere from 0% to 100% of the expense, and is subject to income limits.

## 9. Retirement Incomes that are NOT subject to Kansas Tax

There are many retirement incomes which are exempt from Kansas taxes, such as Military pensions, certain State or Federal pensions, Railroad Retirement, and even Federal TSP income. You need to make sure that these items are correctly addressed on your Kansas tax return, so always consult with a tax professional that is well educated in this area.

## 10. Kansas no longer taxes your Social Security !!

Beginning for tax year 2024, if your Social Security income is subject to Federal taxes, it is no longer subject to Kansas taxes!!! Woo-Hoo!!!

Taxes can be confusing, and it's easy to overlook opportunities to save. By keeping an eye out for commonly missed tax benefits, you can ensure that you're taking full advantage of the deductions, credits, and exemptions available to you. Remember to keep careful records, and if you're unsure about any item on your tax return, don't hesitate to consult with a tax professional.

By leveraging these tax-saving strategies, retirees can ensure their retirement savings go further, while meeting their tax requirements. Always consult a tax professional or financial advisor to optimize your particular situation and remember that even small adjustments can yield significant tax savings.

**Susan can be contacted at: 785-478-7808 or Susan@KSretire.com.**

The Retirement Team is a team of Financial professionals, which includes a Dave Ramsey SmartVestor Pro, that specialize in helping retirees keep more of their hard earned dollars. They are located at 5909 SW 28th St, Ste 100, Topeka, KS. The phone number is 785-478-7808.

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## How to Plan and Test Drive Your Retirement Plan

By Jim Hanna



Hanna

Two emotions are common for those who are nearing retirement – excitement and fear. Leaving the working world behind can feel empowering, however, apprehension about entering a new life stage may also creep in. If you're nearing retirement, you've likely taken steps to prepare financially for the future. But there's one important thing you might not have considered adding to your pre-retirement checklist – a practice run. Test driving aspects of your plan before you're actually in retirement can help provide a sense of security for this next phase of life.

**Consider what an ideal retirement looks like in the long term.** How you choose to spend your time (and in many cases, your money) in retirement is your decision to make, but it's not always an easy one. As we age, our interests, hobbies and relationships change. What you may consider your "ideal" retirement when you're 55 may not be the same as when you're 65. This evolution can make it hard to plan accurately for retirement. Consider sitting down with your spouse or family members to explore how aging and future milestones may alter your retirement. Your financial advisor can help you make a plan that aligns your ideal retirement with your financial situation.

**Test drive your retirement lifestyle.** Many people pledge a significant amount of savings towards a particular lifestyle in retirement. This could be a home in another part of the country, a timeshare or a trip abroad every year. Problems can arise if you have cemented a financial commitment to a certain lifestyle but change your mind down the road. It's natural to change your mind about what you want, but it's better to understand the potential implications of altering your plan before you actually retire.

For example, those who have based

their financial plan for retirement on the idea that they will be living in a new location may benefit from a practice run before making the big move. Consider an individual who has lived their entire life in New York, but moves to Florida when they retire – where taxes and cost-of-living are generally lower. Deciding after several years to relocate back to New York to be near family – where cost of living and tax rates differ – can mean savings may not go as far as planned. Be prudent and build some flexibility into your plan to avoid unintended consequences.

### Simulate your retirement expenses.

Practice can also be beneficial in another way – simulating how to manage your expenses in retirement. The idea that your cash flow no longer comes from a reliable paycheck, but from other sources like Social Security and personal savings can come as a shock – even to those who are well prepared for this change.

One idea to accomplish a sense of financial security is to run two accounts for a certain period of time. Through one account, manage all of your household and lifestyle expenses that you expect during retirement. This includes the costs for necessities like food, clothing, shelter, utilities, taxes and insurance as well as "nice-to-have" items like dining out, traveling, etc. Keep in mind that you may have to estimate or inflate your lifestyle expenses for retirement as they could rise when you have more free time.

Through the second account, manage all of your expenses that are expected to end in retirement like principal and interest on a mortgage payment (if your home will be paid off), current car payments (although car payments can certainly happen again in retirement), college costs for your kids and contributions to retirement plans. Keeping these two separate accounts will help you more appropriately plan for and quantify your expenses in retirement.

The best way to get a handle on these expenses is to experience them while you're

still working. Take that trip to Europe before retirement and find out first-hand what you can do within your budget. If the cost is different than expected, make adjustments to your financial projections to more accurately reflect reality.

**Perfecting life in retirement.** A little practice can go a long way toward easing emotional and financial concerns when it comes to making the jump into retirement. Consider working with a financial advisor who can help you determine a budget and a retirement income plan that fits your needs and desires.

\*\*\*\*\*

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# opinion

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## Trump's Economic and Political Challenges

By Kerby Anderson

During the 2024 presidential campaign, I did several commentaries on the challenges the next president would face in 2025. Donald Trump is now the president, and his administration and Congress face some significant political challenges.

Karl Rove recently listed them as "The Five Trials of Trump 47." One of those challenges is the need to approve a funding bill for the balance of the 2025 fiscal year or face a shutdown on March 14. The added challenges are getting both the House and Senate to approve budget resolutions, then going to conference committee, and finally taking up the difficult issues associated

with budget reconciliation.

In the background is a desire by the president and members of Congress to extend the Trump 2017 tax cuts. This requires some coordination since Senate Republicans prefer two reconciliation measures, while the House Republicans favor one reconciliation.

Another challenge is the need for Congress to raise the debt ceiling. It hit its \$36.1 trillion limit the day Donald Trump was sworn into office. We are a month past that limit. So far, the Treasury Department has been using what are called "extraordinary measures" to keep the government working.

Speaker Mike Johnson faces the challenge of trying to move legislation through the House with the narrowest



of margins. Representative Matt Gaetz already resigned. Representative Mike Waltz left to become national security advisor, and Representative Elise Stefanik is leaving to become UN ambassador.

These are just a few of the political challenges Trump, his administration, and Congress will face over the next few months. But there are more challenges on the horizon. Tomorrow, I will

■ Continued on next page

## God and America's Obesity Crisis



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### Speaking Truth

Based on government data in the 1960s and 70s around 13% of Americans were considered obese while less than 1% were defined as morbidly obese. However, in the 1980s and 90s waistlines began to dramatically increase. Today, according to USAFacts, obesity rates have tripled in America over the last 60 years with nearly 70% being either overweight or obese.

This has given rise to over 250 health problems like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, strokes, fatty liver diseases, some cancers, fertility issues, mental health problems and more. In 2016 over \$260 billion was spent on obesity related healthcare, while in 2024 it increased to \$385 billion.

We have a health crisis in America!  
Where is the church and Christian

ministries on this? Are we not pro-life? This crisis is leading to obesity-related deaths by the thousands and chronic related sicknesses by the millions. Our families, churches and communities are all touched by this.

Does God have anything to say about our health?

Jesus said, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31) This refers to loving and serving God with your whole being, which includes your body. For believers, taking care of our body is an expression of our love for God. For when we do, we can more effectively serve others, whereas obesity limits us in different ways. Additionally, it is written "... whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31) This is communicating that in all things, including what we eat and drink, we are to do for the glory (or honor) of God.

The goal of living a healthier life is first about God, second about others and last about you. It is not primarily

about YOU looking good in the mirror or YOU feeling good about yourself. The Bible says, "Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time, for strength, and not for drunkenness!" (Ecclesiastes 10:17) What is the purpose of eating and drinking? It is not for personal pleasure or self-indulgence, for that is where



many of our problems start. Rather, it is to produce the strength and energy we need to serve God and others.

What are some practical ways we can fight against obesity?

1. Live with belief. Believe it is possible for you to eat and live a healthier life. No matter what your past failures have been. No matter what your existing health problems are. No matter what your genetics are. Believe that you can overcome.

2. Live with a plan. Turn your belief into action. Seek out a practical diet

and exercise plan.

3. Live with a goal. Whatever your aim at is what you will hit. Set small reasonable weight loss goals.

4. Live with common sense. Make better choices. Eating smaller portions and fruits and vegetables is good. Eating larger portions and piles of cupcakes is bad.

5. Live for the glory of God. Do not live with guilt over your weight, nor compare your body to anyone else's. Fix your eyes on Jesus and live for His praise alone.

6. Live with a persevering mindset. Know this will be extremely difficult but determine that you will never quit! Never!

Jesus came to die and rise again that we might no longer be enslaved by the things of this world. He created you and He

knows the battles you face. In Christ, you have all you need to live a healthy life.

A prayer for you – Lord God, we ask for your help to begin living a healthier life. We need your enabling power. We are weak, but you are strong. Help us O God and grant us success. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings. Share your comment at [cdecker@greatawakenings.org](mailto:cdecker@greatawakenings.org) and follow his blog at [clintdecker.blogspot.com](http://clintdecker.blogspot.com).

# Presidential Power: Who Really Controls the White House?

By Robert White

During the last administration, questions about presidential power and White House decision-making have intensified. Obviously, it wasn't a Truman presidency, where a plaque on his desk read, "The Buck Stops Here." From President Biden's own words during press

■ Continued from previous page

talk about many of the economic challenges ahead.

As I write this, the U.S. debt clock shows that the country is currently \$36.5 trillion in debt. As you probably know, the national debt has increased under Republican and Democratic presidents and increased no matter whether Democrats or Republicans controlled Congress.

But it is also fair to say that the country's economic circumstances are much worse four years after Trump left office. Federal spending under President Biden and Congress increased dramatically.

Congress passed a \$900 billion so-called "Covid-Relief" bill just after Christmas 2020, as Trump was leaving office. At the time, you could make a case that this was more than enough. But by March 2021, President Biden and Congress passed his \$1.9 trillion "American Rescue Plan."

Did the country need a stimulus of that size? Former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers explained that the spending amount was much more than was needed to address any of the economic issues and warned that such spending would lead to inflation.

Even that much spending was not enough for Biden and Congress. Later that year, they passed a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill. He then proposed a \$2.2 trillion "Build Back Better Act." But by the end of 2021, inflation had reached almost seven percent. Some in Congress were nervous about the price tag so they downsized the bill and President Biden decided to rename it the "Inflation Reduction Act."

This is what the Trump administration has inherited and explains why the Department of Government Efficiency is looking for ways to cut spending.

conferences, "They don't want me answering questions," to an Easter Bunny at the White House Easter Egg Hunt, guiding Biden away from reporters. In the worst case, Speaker of the House Johnson revealed a troubling meeting where Biden appeared unaware of his own LNG export ban executive order, a decision directly affecting Johnson's home state of Louisiana.

Historical precedents of shared presidential authority show that each President allows his Cabinet, members of Congress, past Presidents, and even wives varying degrees of authority and autonomy, often without public knowledge. We know when the Vice President takes the reins, when a sitting President becomes indisposed, either through a medical procedure, or out of caution, but the public is usually informed, so as not to scare citizens of the country being leaderless.

With the Biden Presidency ending with evidence of diminished capacity, there have been questions about who was actually in charge of the day-to-day activities of the office. There have been many stories, even investigative findings that raise the question of who was in charge, but it may surprise many to discover that any American President could be in any way "absent without leave," but it has actually been more common than many think. When a candidate claims to have been involved with a decision, we question who made the final decision, what inputs were made, and how the chain of command was carried out.

The historical pattern of presidential succession challenges began notably on September 25, 1919, when after speaking in Pueblo, Colorado, Edith Wilson discovered her husband listless from a stroke. The leader of the United States through World War I, the architect of the League of



Nations was paralyzed. Edith Wilson, wife and physician, served as an unelected President, and thankfully no important decisions had to be made, but leaves us with the question whether she forged his signature on budget bills in the last two years of his Presidency.

The FDR White House demonstrated similar patterns of protected presidential image, going to extraordinary means to hide his incapacity due to polio. The press agreed not to photograph him in a wheelchair or being lifted in and out of vehicles, but during his refreshing trips to Campobello, the presidency went with him. However, due to secrecy during the Second World War, there were no references to the transfer of power to the sitting Vice President while out of the country meeting Churchill and Stalin. After being elected to his fourth term, his health declined, but his power remained autocratic until his death, Truman being kept out of most of the decisions.

Kennedy's health was hidden. His Addison's disease, primary adrenal insufficiency, was kept from the public. Between his Addison's and spinal osteoporosis pain he was on a medical diet that would have kept anyone from driving a car due to being under the influence of drugs. There are still questions today as to who was in charge, with the indication that his Attorney Gen-

eral — his brother — carried more influence than Lyndon Johnson, the sitting Vice President.

Toward the end of the Reagan presidency, Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and there were questions about whether Nancy, Ronald Reagan's wife, may have been relying on Astrology for some of the national policies. After being shot, many believe that when Reagan returned, he was not the same man.

It comes down to the question of how much the public is entitled to know: all of it, some of it, or perhaps nothing at all — and

that power is often shared with the press determining what to cover. We tend to hold our presidents responsible for everything that happens under their watch, but it is the nature of government that limits responsibility for individual events, protecting the man and the office.

This block from responsibility primarily due to the weight of White House decisions was reinforced last year

by the Supreme Court, extending protection to both the Office and the person in it. Generally over time, history comes out, and it is the difference between the published history and what we learn later on that presents the intrigue of the fiction writer. With the release of the investigations into the assassinations of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, one hopes that we may make progress in determining what really happened.

—Robert White is a financial planner and local historian. Search his name in our search bar for his other features.



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# Gaza Marshall Plan: Rebuilding Through Historical Lessons

International aid experts estimate \$20 billion for Gaza's reconstruction. While peace negotiations continue, Trump's recent comments about occupying Gaza set the world on fire, but I don't think he intended to make it the 51st state or even a territory. What he proposed was probably a reference to the Marshall Plan following World War II. In those terms it makes perfect sense that, when the fighting stops on a permanent basis, the Gaza Strip could become the jewel of the Mideast, a title once held by Lebanon.

## Historical Precedents and Punishment

Dating all the way from Roman times when Rome fought Carthage, after winning, they plowed salt into the fields of Carthage to leave the land barren.

After World War I, the allies opted to punish the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire by destroying them and requiring large reparations payments to ensure it never happened again. Germany was forbidden from building weapons, and their economic system was so destroyed that basic living needs almost required wheelbarrows of money, this being before the age of checks and plastic. It brought Great Britain to the Middle East, but in the end, it did not prevent World War II, in fact inspiring it.

## A Different Approach to Recovery

After World War II, the United States opted not to make the same mistake. Germany, left almost undamaged in World War I, was almost totally destroyed in World War II, and Japan was equally destroyed. In Japan, right after the surrender was signed, Truman put General MacArthur in charge to help rebuild Japan, and he left the



emperor in place to help in the peaceful transition. In Japan, like Germany, the American military worked hand in hand with Japanese and Germans, French and English to clear rubble and rebuild the infrastructure.

During the war, in 1944 Secretary of State Henry Morgenthau proposed the Morgenthau Plan to weaken or destroy arms and industry in Germany's Ruhr Valley and punish Germany during the occupation after the war. However, most of the plan was abandoned in 1947, as it was determined that the plan would have resulted in 25 million Germans dying of starvation. Beginning in 1947, the policies were designed to create a stable and productive Germany. The Marshall Plan, officially known as the ERP, European Recovery Plan began in 1948, donating \$13.3 billion (\$173.8 billion in today's dollars) to all of Western Europe with the goal of rebuilding war-torn regions, remove trade barriers, and modernize industry. It was

replaced by the Mutual Security Act in 1951.

## Challenges and Possibilities for Gaza

One of the intentions of the Marshall Plan was to put a stop to the spread of Communism, and Germany made for the perfect test bed, being divided by the various sectors. The Marshall Plan extended over all of the German sectors except the Soviet sector. The Soviets opted to punish Germany in opposition to the Western approach under Marshall. The difference between the German sectors caused frustration with the Soviets, and in 1949, the Soviets sought to take Berlin by blocking off the land routes between West Germany and West Berlin. The Marshall Plan answer was the Berlin airlift which broke the back of the Soviet blockade. The final benefit of the Marshall Plan was the destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

With history in mind, the concept of a Marshall Plan for the

Gaza Strip may not be that far-fetched, but there are some significant hurdles that have to be overcome. The reconstruction efforts face unique challenges. According to World Bank estimates, critical infrastructure damage exceeds \$18.5 billion. In the case of Germany and Japan, before any aid was given, both required an unconditional surrender, something that may be somewhat elusive under the current situation.

Besides the government contri-

butions, much of the success of the Marshall Plan was investment in industry, private investment, Hilton, Ford of Germany, Boeing, and others, and they needed stability, and much of the key was opening the area up to commerce.

The history of the Middle East, and in particular Lebanon, and a prolonged war in what was the gem of the Mediterranean may also be a detriment. In the end it is a wonderful goal, but it is going to require capitulation by Hamas, and a stability not common to the area.

—Robert White is a financial advisor and serves as the Metro Voice history editor.




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# Poll Shows 81% Support for Key Policies of Trump Administration



A groundbreaking Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll reveals the majority of Americans back President Trump's sweeping reforms to government operations and spending policies. The comprehensive survey demonstrates unprecedented support across demographic groups for the administration's key initiatives.

Let's look at the findings:

## Trump's agenda

81% support deporting criminal illegal immigrants.

76% support a "full-scale effort to find and eliminate fraud and waste in government."

76% support closing the border with additional security and policies.

69% support keeping men out of women's sports.

68% support government declaring there are only two genders.

65% support ending race-based hiring in government.

63% support "freezing and re-evaluating all foreign aid expenditures and the department that handled them."

61% support reciprocal tariffs.

60% support direct U.S. negotiations with Russia to end the war in Ukraine.

59% support cutting government spending already approved by Congress.

57% support ending the ban on new offshore drilling.

Most Americans approve of President Trump's job performance — including pluralities of men, women, independents, and Americans who live in urban, suburban, and rural areas — while almost six-in-ten say he's doing a better job than President Biden.

The latest economic indicators show almost half of Americans believe the U.S. economy is "strong" under President Trump — the highest number since 2021 — while a

plurality say his policies will make them "financially better off."

Americans are significantly more optimistic about the direction of the country, with those who say we're on the right track up 14 points over last month.

## Government efficiency initiatives:

77% support a "full examination of all government expenditures."

72% agree there should be a government agency "focused on efficiency."

70% say government is "filled with waste, fraud, and inefficiency."

Two-thirds say Congress should join the "effort to reduce government expenditures."

60% believe the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) is "helping make major cuts in government expenditures."

## Equalizing Tariffs

61% support reciprocal tariffs.

57% say tariffs are an "effective foreign and economic policy tool."

54% say tariffs will help get "concessions from other countries."

## Leadership roles

Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, and Attorney General Pam Bondi all enjoy net positive favorability.

Political scientists say the greatest speed that any new president can act is in the first 100 days of an administration. Democrats last week voiced frustration with their inability to respond as well as the sense they are on

the wrong side of history in opposing many of the administration's goals.

Democrat Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries is one of them. "[Republicans] control the House, the Senate, and the presidency. It's their government. What leverage do we have? We are going to try to find bipartisan common ground on any issue," he said, criticizing other Democrats who want to fight the changes.

Recent polling analysis suggests that, with widespread public support, Trump may enjoy a honeymoon that lasts well into spring or even summer.

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## Spring activities coming to NOTO

**Art Opening** at NOTO Arts Center: Music & Memory – How Songs Shape Our Lives will open March 7. That special song... "our" song, the first dance, dedications, funeral songs... Music is involved in almost every aspect of our lives, and sometimes it's an earworm – that song that won't quit playing in your head! Music defines eras and becomes landmarks in our lives. This show will represent the feelings, activities, life events and social environment that inspired that music.

The exhibit will be featuring the art of Paula Marker, Erika Kjorlie-Geery, Azyz Sharafy, Shawn Delker, Pradeep Bangalore, Ana Diaz, Devi Rathod, Mark Hahn, Jeremy Wangler, Sandra Dawkins, Lois Van Lieu, Becki Waugh and Matt Coward, this exhibit will be on view and for sale during the months of March and April, during regular gallery hours.

Be sure to make plans to be in the pa-

rade or vendor market at the 10th Annual **Easterfest** Topeka Easter Parade & Fun Fair on Apr. 19, 10am-3pm, at Great Overland Station and on North Kansas Avenue. Topeka's annual Easter Parade will begin at 10am on Kansas Avenue at Kaw Valley bank, and proceed to the tracks in NOTO. Egg Hunt begins at 11:10am at the Great Overland Station. Food Trucks will be on hand and the Family Fun Fair, Vendor Market, and Health Fair will be 10-3, inside and outside Great Overland Station, including vendor booths, children's games, food, facepainting, inflatables, cake walks, petting zoo and more. Live music, gymnastics, ballet and other entertainment will be on hand. For info: Topeka EasterFest 2025 on facebook, [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) or 785-640-6399.

**First Friday Art Walk** hours are 10 am to 9 pm. First Friday Art Walk & Market



is the first Friday of every month. The North Topeka Arts District has become an attraction to Art Lovers and History Buffs alike with beautiful scenes of art and history. Entertainment can also be found on First Fridays, at various venues during the artwalk up and down N. Kansas Avenue, as well as streetside vendors. The restaurants, locally owned shops, art galleries antiques and studios have become a favorite art walk destination.

You can also visit 3rd Friday's NOTO Night Out! Many Merchants are also open longer hours on Second Saturdays.

For more event information visit [explorenoto.org/](http://explorenoto.org/).

More North Topeka events:

**WOODSHED MARKET** – Sundays 10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave.

**SPRING CRAFT SHOW** – Mar. 22, 9-3, Billard Airport. Check out many displays of homemade crafts and baked goods along with specialty products... something for everyone.

**SENIORS PITCH CLUB** - Every Tuesday 1 pm at Garfield Community Center. First visit free then a dollar per visit for coffee and replacement cards

**SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB** – Every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. 246-1291.

**VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS** – Every Wed., 10:45 bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. 1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 785-224-8803.

**OPERATION BACKPACK** – 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 286-1370.

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – 4th Tue. through Nov, 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served.

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# the events calendar

**FREE LISTINGS! E-mail your events to: [Voice@cox.net](mailto:Voice@cox.net); mail to Metro Voice, P.O. 5724, Topeka, KS 66605; fax to 785-235-3340 or enter online at [metrovoiceneeds.com](http://metrovoiceneeds.com) Get your event **Highlighted in Blue** in print, our online calendar and promoted in social media for only \$29!**

## CONCERTS

**KANSAS PRAIRIE PICKERS** – Fourth Sun. ea. Month, 1pm, Auburn Community Center. Foot-stomping, hand-clapping tunes. Concessions available

**GRAND OTTAWA OPRY** - 2nd & 4th Saturday, 5:30PM- pre-show, 6PM showtime, Ottawa Memorial Auditorium, 301 S Hickory, Ottawa. Tickets are \$15 and only at the door. Ph. 785-241-6762, email

[grandopry@gmail.com](mailto:grandopry@gmail.com). [GrandOttawaOpry.com](http://GrandOttawaOpry.com)

**WOOD VALLEY PICKERS** – Mar. 29, 7pm, Classic Bean, Fairlawn Plaza. Folk & Country, Free admission. 785-271-5005

**JIM & MELISSA BRADY IN CONCERT** – Apr. 4, 7-10pm, Wanamaker Woods Nazarene Church, 3501 SW Wanamaker Road. Doors open at 6pm. Concert begins at 7pm. No tickets are necessary. There will be a free-will "love offering" received during the concert. 785-273-2248; [office@wnnaz.org](mailto:office@wnnaz.org); [wnnaz.org](http://wnnaz.org)



**Jim & Melissa Brady**

Concert at **The Woods** at Wanamaker

**Apr. 4**  
**7:00 pm**

- Doors open at 6pm
- Free will offering

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**C5Alive POWER Luncheons** are held 2nd Thur. each mo.

**Mar. 13, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon**  
at Shopper's Kitchen, 250 SE 29th St.

**Featuring Jim Hanna on 'How to Stress Less'**

**Free Admission; Lunch available if desired.**  
Open to the public. RSVP to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org)

Save the Dates!

- Apr. 10: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
- Apr. 19: **EASTERFEST** 10-3 at Great Overland Station!
- May 8: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1

For info: [www.C5Alive.org](http://www.C5Alive.org) or [Facebook.com/C5Alive](https://www.facebook.com/C5Alive)

## SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

**HARVESTER'S PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS** - every second Sat., takes place at Christian Lord Ministries, 2421 SE California. Call 266-4979.

**HOPE HOUSE FREE COMMUNITY CLOTHING BANK** – Wed. 6-8pm and Sat. 12-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland

**HARVESTER FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** - 2nd Saturday each month, 1:30-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland

**FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET** – 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM, Shawnee Heights UMC, 6020 SE 44th

**INSIDE OUT FELLOWSHIP CHURCH** – Every Sunday 12pm service; Every Tuesday 7:30pm service. Location: 2409 NE Division St. For info: 785-380-7031 or [io@insideoutinc.net](mailto:io@insideoutinc.net) or [www.insideoutinc.net](http://www.insideoutinc.net)

**KIDS for JESUS!** - Wednesday's 7 - 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, enemies! For info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**MID-WEEK PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY - Wednesday's, 7-8pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. You are invited! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene**

**LOL "LADIES OF LAKEVIEW"** - Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Monthly Women's Ministry Events! (Cooking, Crafts, Outreach, Bible Study, Fellowship!) Call the church office for info: (785) 266-3247, Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene. Email: [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**ROOTED CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP**, Colosians 2:6-7. Monday's 12-4pm. Cooking class for 4th graders & older at noon. Call the Church Office for more information. Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Church: (785) 266-3247. Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene. [LakeNaz@aol.com](mailto:LakeNaz@aol.com)

**DRIVE-THRU ASH WEDNESDAY EVENT** – Mar. 5, 4:30-5:30pm, weather-permitting, Oakland United Methodist Church parking lot, N.E. Sardou and Green. Indoors in case of inclement weather.

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** – Mar. 5, 6pm, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

**SENIORS NUTRITIONAL LUNCH** – Weekdays, except holidays, at noon at Auburn Civic Center, 1020 N. Washington Street. Minimal cost per person. Reservations/cancellations required 24 hours in advance by calling Meals on Wheels of Jefferson & Shawnee Co. at 295-3980. Each meal includes 1% milk & sugar-free items for diabetics. 215-0064.

**MEDICARE MONDAYS** – First Mon. ea. month, 1-3pm. Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library, 1515 SW 10th. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging offers Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or [nhoni@tscpl.org](mailto:nhoni@tscpl.org)

**COUNTRY AND BALLROOM DANCING** - Thursdays 6-9pm. Croco Hall. Info: Edwina 379-9538, 478-4760.

**FIRST FRIDAY ART MARKET** – Downtown and NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, flea market items, snacks, beverages, entertainment and more.

**TOPEKA ACAPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS** – Topeka Acappella Unlimited is looking for female singers who

would like to sing four-part acappella harmonies. Topeka Acappella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Cindy Patton: 785-640-7403

**HARVESTERS MOBILE FOOD PANTRY**, 1st & 3rd Sat, 2-3pm, Shawnee Heights UMC parking lot.

**FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – 4th Tue. thru Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111. [RandelMinistries.com](http://RandelMinistries.com)

**TOPEKA PUBLIC LIBRARY PLAY BUS** – 9:30am-noon, Lakeview Nazarene Church, 2835 Croco. Every Tuesday, enjoy story time, play opportunities, books for check-out & take & make art. 785-266-3247.

**OPEN INDOOR COURT PICKLEBALL** – Sundays at 4pm, Berryton United Methodist Church (7010 SE Berryton Rd. All ages and abilities welcome.

**SENIORS PITCH CLUB** - Every Tuesday 1 pm at Garfield Community Center. First visit free then a dol-

lar per visit for coffee and replacement cards

**"PICKIN' ON THE PRAIRIE"**, a FREE Acoustic Jam at Great Overland Station every Sunday from 1-3pm. For info: 785-251-6944

**WOODSHED MARKET** – Sun. 10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave.

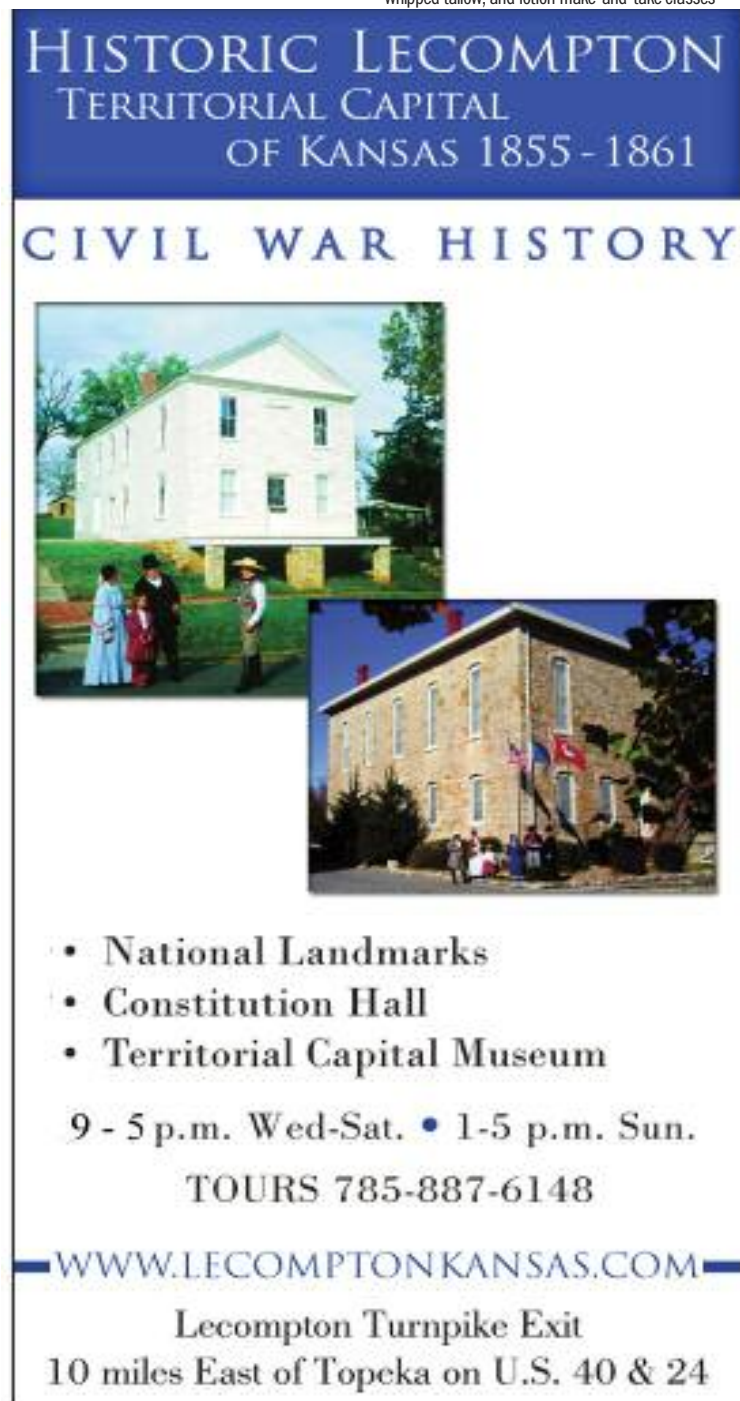
**FAMILY NIGHT AT COSMOS COURT** – Tuesdays, 5pm, Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas Ave. Pizza, salads, hot dogs, nachos, soup and more! Get a 16" Pizza, 2 side salads, and 4 cups of ice cream for only \$30! Also table games, etc.

**CAPITAL CITY CARNAGE DEMOLITION DERBY** – Feb. 28-Mar. 1, Stormont Vail Events Ctr. [stormontvaileventscenter.com](http://stormontvaileventscenter.com) or 785-251-5552

**COUTURE FOR CANCER** – Mar. 1, 4-7pm, 534 S. Kansas Ave. An annual fashionable charitable event supporting the American Cancer Society.

**MIDWEST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE EXPO** – Mar. 1, 10am - Noon. Colonial Presbyterian Church: South KC Campus, 9500 Wornall Rd. Kansas City, MO

**KANSAS NOTIONS CLASSES** – Mar. 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, & 29, at 6pm, 2550 NE 31st St. Body butter, whipped tallow, and lotion make-and-take classes



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 tracy@kansanotions.com,  
[www.KansasNotions.com](http://www.KansasNotions.com)

**BLEEDING KANSAS - Sundays from Jan. 26-Mar. 2, 2pm, Constitution Hall Historic Site, 319 Elmore, LeCompton. A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war history of Kansas 1854-1865. Actors will portray Kansans from this turbulent era. Adm: \$5 adults.**

**ING NETWORKING LUNCH** - Mar. 5, 11:30am, Wings, Etc in Fairlawn Plaza. Order from menu if desired.

**WEEKEND TO REMEMBER** - Mar. 7-9. Overland Park Marriott, 10800 Metcalf Ave, Overland Park, KS 66210

**KANSANS FOR LIFE BANQUET 2025** - Mar. 11, 7pm Overland Park Convention Center, 6000 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS 66211. [www.kfl.org](http://www.kfl.org)

**C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON** - Mar. 13, 11:30-1, SHopper's Kitchen, 250 SE 29th. Featuring Jim Hanna on 'How to Stress Less'. Free admission. Meals available from the menu if desired. Please RSVP to [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) so we know how many to expect. Open to the public - bring a friend!

**SAVE THE DATE: C5 POWER Luncheon**, Apr. 10, 11:30-1.

**RIBBON CUTTING AND BUILDING DEDICATION** - Mar. 13, 4pm, 216 SW 7th St. Beckley Chiropractic & Wellness ribbon cutting at 4pm, followed by Building Dedication and refreshments.

**BLARNEY BREAKFAST** - Mar. 15, 7-10am, Blind Tiger. All-you-can-eat breakfast buffet, entertainment, raffles, and more while celebrity servers get their Irish on...earning tips for a great cause. Help fill their tip jars so proceeds can help your friends with disabilities served at Capper Foundation build their abilities. Tickets available at [www.capper.org](http://www.capper.org). Contact: Lacey Kinder, Communication Specialist; 785-272-4060; [lkinder2capper.org](mailto:lkinder2capper.org)

**TOPEKA IRESHFEST** - Mar. 15, Every Plaza. Begins at 10am with parade, music, food, vendors and kids activities. <http://TopekIrishFest.com>

**ING NETWORKING LUNCH** - Mar. 19, 11:30am, Johnny's Tavern. Order from menu if desired.

**SPRING CRAFT SHOW** - Mar. 22, 9-3, Billard Airport.

Check out many displays of homemade crafts and baked goods along with specialty products... something for everyone.

**HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS** - Mar. 28, 7pm, Stormont Vail Event Center.  
[www.stormontvaileventscenter.com](http://www.stormontvaileventscenter.com)

**SMOKE IN THE SPRING** - Apr. 7-8, Osage City Community Building. Taste of Osage City BBQ and fun. Live Music, Inflatables, & Fireworks!

**PAWS IN THE PARK** - Apr. 12, 10-2. Meet the community, shop vendors, help the animals. Lindsay.hubbard@hnhstoepka.org

**TOPEKA YOUTH FOR CHRIST COMEDY CAFÉ** - Apr. 11, 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane Ave. A Night of Laughter featuring comedian Pete O'Shea. Underwritten by table sponsors. Seating is limited. Make reservations at [www.topekayfc.org/event/comedycafe](http://www.topekayfc.org/event/comedycafe) or call the YFC office at 785-232-8296

**10th ANNUAL EASTERFEST: TOPEKA EASTER PARADE & FUN FAIR** - Apr. 19, 10am-3pm, at Great Overland Station and on North Kansas Avenue. Topeka's annual Easter Parade will begin at 10am at Garfield Park and proceed south on Kansas Avenue to the tracks in NOTO. Egg Hunt begins right after the parade at the Great Overland Station. Food Trucks will be on hand and the Family Fun Fair, Vendor Market, and Health Fair will be 10-3, inside and outside Great Overland Station, including vendor booths, children's games, food, face-painting, inflatables, cake walk and more. Live music, gymnastics, ballet and other entertainment will be on hand. For info: Topeka Easter Parade on facebook, [info@C5Alive.org](mailto:info@C5Alive.org) or 640-6399.

## MEETINGS & CLASSES

**CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUP OF TOPEKA** - 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7pm at the Hughes Room 205 of the Topeka Library. Workshop for aspiring writers. Each participant is asked to bring five copies of a two page type written sample of a work in progress. After reading the pages aloud each participant is allowed an equal number of positive and negative comments offered in a spirit of helpfulness. If you would like to read something email Charles at [jccocw@gmail.com](mailto:jccocw@gmail.com)

**CRAFTY, SKILLED OR CREATIVE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to develop outdoor lighted displays at Ward Meade Park events. Contact Elsie, 785-256-2920.

**CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA MEETING** - Join other concerned people to pray and unite in action for Shawnee Co. and our Nation. For info about monthly meetings: 785-260-5659 or [ks.cwfa.org](mailto:ks.cwfa.org).

**THE HEAT** - FREE fitness classes for the community. Located at Florence Crittenton Services Center for Integrative Health, 5423 SW 7th. [www.flocritkansas.org](http://www.flocritkansas.org)

**DEAF WORSHIP SERVICE** - 3rd Sun., 3pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 17th & Gage. Also, every Sun. 9:30am service is interpreted.

**TAI CHI FOR HEALTH** - Mon. 10-11 at Lowman United Methodist Church and Thu. 9:30-10:30 at Topeka Zoo. No training needed, just watch & follow. Contact Madon Daily at 505-424-8989 or [madondaily@gmail.com](mailto:madondaily@gmail.com). To Join from Home via Zoom, contact Madon for the Zoom link

**PICKLEBALL** - Mon. & Wed, 1-3pm, First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar Ave. Park on West Side, where the gym is located. Contact Dave Mathias, [davemathias@sbcglobal.net](mailto:davemathias@sbcglobal.net), or Betsy Thompson, [betsythompson@gmail.com](mailto:betsythompson@gmail.com).

**SHEPHERD'S CENTER BOOK CLUB** - 1st & 3rd Mon. 2-4pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1275 SW Boswell Ave. Call: 785-249-3258 or email [shepherdstoepka@yahoo.com](mailto:shepherdstoepka@yahoo.com) for the book of study.

**SMS - STRENGTH, MOBILITY, STABILITY EXERCISE GROUP (SMS)** Mon. 9-9:30am, Arbor Court, 4200 SW Drury Lane. Tue. & Thu, 9-9:30am, Rosehill Place, 3600 SW Gage Blvd # 97. Tue & Thu, 10-10:45, Grace UMC, 2627 SW Western Ave. Call Anne Crawford at 785-273-4527 or email [anne.crawford@cox.net](mailto:anne.crawford@cox.net).

**SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM** - Every Mon., Wed., and Fri at 1:30 at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church, 4525 NW Button Rd., 785-246-1737.

**TOPEKA LIONS CLUB** - 1st Mondays at Noon - 1 pm at The Capper Foundation, 3500 SW 10th Ave. Park on the North side. RSVP by Fri. for lunch/pay at the meeting. Visitors welcome. [TopekaLions.org/contact-us](http://TopekaLions.org/contact-us) to make reservations. WE SERVE!

**BOY'S TRAIL LIFE & AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS TROUPE** - Every Mon. 6pm, Cornerstone Comm. Ch., 7620 SW 21st. Faith-based scouting programs, age 5-18. Register: [cornerstonetoepka.com](http://cornerstonetoepka.com). 478-2929.

**TOPEKA NEEDLEWORK GUILD** - Every Mon. (except holidays) 9a-11a in the Menninger Room of the Topeka Public Library. Bring a project to work on as we share our needleworking skills and ideas. All are welcome

**CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP** - Monday's, 1-4pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

**SENIOR ADULT EXERCISE CLASS** - Tuesday's 10am, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. All exercises will be done from a chair, will help you get up out of a chair, & climb stairs safely! Contact info: (785)266-

3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

**TOPEKA LINCOLN CLUB** - 1st Mondays at Noon - 1 pm at The Capper Foundation, 3500 SW 10th Ave. Park on the North side. RSVP by Fri. for lunch/pay at the meeting. Visitors welcome. [TopekaLions.org/contact-us](http://TopekaLions.org/contact-us) to make reservations. WE SERVE!

**SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB** - Every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. 246-1291.

**NARVE (Nat'l Assn of Railroad Veteran Employee)** - 2nd Tuesday each month at 9:30AM @ Museum of the Kansas National Guard, 125 SE Airport Dr, Topeka

**MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES** - Tuesdays 11am-12:30. Amerus Room, YWCA, 225 West 12th. A new study group for Year One of Flo Menninger's course on Four Years through the Bible. Read and discuss Genesis through First Kings. Nominal charge for materials. For info call the YWCA at 233-1750 or Clara Gamache at 785-408-5433. (The Bible study is also taught on Sat. mornings on 101.5 FM radio.)

**FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES Aerie 4319** - 1st & 3rd Tue. 7pm; Auxiliary: 1st & 4th Tue. 6pm, 2941 SE Fremont Street. An international non-profit organization uniting fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills and promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope. [www.foe.com](http://www.foe.com) 785-266-7307

**DUPLICATE BRIDGE** - Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30PM at The Woman's Club of Topeka, 5221 SW West Dr. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett play duplicate bridge! It is great for your brain health. For additional information email [janescola@hotmail.com](mailto:janescola@hotmail.com).

**O.W.L.S. (Older Wise Loving Saints)** - meets the second Tuesday of the month. Location varies and can be found at [www.faithfamilylife.com](http://www.faithfamilylife.com)

**MAP GROUP (MEMOIRS, ANCESTRY, PHOTOS)** - VIA ZOOM - 4th Wed. 10-11:30am. Contact Rich McReynolds at [rlm4017@gmail.com](mailto:rlm4017@gmail.com). Via Zoom link

**FAMILY HISTORY WRITING GROUP** - 2nd Wed. 10-11:30am, Lowman United Methodist Church, room 12. Do you have great family stories to tell and want to pass them down to the next generation but don't know where to start? [shepherdstoepka@yahoo.com](mailto:shepherdstoepka@yahoo.com)

**S.W.A.G. (Spiritual Warriors Anointed by God) youth group** - Wed at 7:00 p.m. 3710 NW Topeka Blvd.

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist Church, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 272-0443.

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6:30pm, Bethel Baptist Church, 4011 N. Kansas Ave. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 286-0467.

**AWANA** - Every Wed., 6:30-8pm, Auburn Christian Church. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 256-2515.

**VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS** - Every Wed., 10:45 Bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. (1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. Free will donations accepted. For info: 785-224-8803 or [vip@topekanorthoutreach.org](mailto:vip@topekanorthoutreach.org).

**STUDENT IMPACT** - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Youth games, teaching, worship, small groups. For info: 272-0443.

**CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE** - Every Thurs. 7-9pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Worship for college students.

**TOPEKA TWILIGHT LIONS BRANCH CLUB** - 3rd Thursdays at 7pm at Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco. Social gathering, guests welcome. [Topekaiions.org](http://Topekaiions.org)

**TOPEKA COSMOPOLITAN CLUB**: The Club that fights Diabetes - Meetings: first three Thursdays of every month, 12 noon, at the Topeka Country Club.

**INTENTIONAL MOM** - 1st & 3rd Thurs., 9-11:30am, Topeka Bible Church Auditorium, 1135 SW College. For all moms, helping to be intentional! 234-5545.


**OPERATION BACKPACK** - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary School, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach: 286-1370.

**LINE DANCING** - 2nd & 4th Thu. 1:30-3:30 at First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar Ave. Contact Karen Botkin at 785-945-6785 or Jim Baer at 785-256-2432 or [jimbaer73@gmail.com](mailto:jimbaer73@gmail.com) to register.

**BRIDGE GROUP** - 1st & 3rd Thu. 1-3:30pm, at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 2021 SW 29th St. To play, arrangements must be made by Mon. 5pm with Joan Arterburn at 408-5174.

**TOPEKA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY** - 4th Thurs., 7pm, Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th St. No program in Nov. or Dec. Promotes & stimulates the education, knowledge & interest of the membership & the public in family history, genealogical records & research. 233-5762 or [tgstoepka.org](mailto:tgstoepka.org).

**KINGDOM ADVISORS TOPEKA AREA STUDY GROUP** - 3rd Thu., 11:30am-1pm via Zoom. Christian financial professionals: financial planners, accountants, attorney's & insurance agents invited. For info: [kingdomadvisors.org](http://kingdomadvisors.org) or Jim Hanna, [james.c.hanna@ampf.com](mailto:james.c.hanna@ampf.com) or 785.357.6278 x19.



YOUTH FOR CHRIST

# COMEDY CAFE

A Night of Laughter  
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**The Comedy of Comedian**  
**PETE O'SHEA**

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6:30 pm

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The Comedy Cafe is underwritten by individual table sponsors: seating is limited




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- Quinceañeras
- Fundraisers
- Corporate Events



**The Woodshed**  
Event Center



1901 N Kansas Ave  
785-213-3561  
[thewoodshedtopeka.com](http://thewoodshedtopeka.com)

**A GOOD YARN CLUB** – 2nd & 4th Sat., 9-11am, Wanamaker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wanamaker. Doing Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Charities, free yarn, needles, hooks & patterns. All are welcome. Info: Anne, 785-272-9249 or kittens812@sbcglobal.net

**TOPEKA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY** – 4th Fridays, 7-15pm, 1st Congressional Church, 1701 SW Collins.

**BIBLE QUIZZING** – 1st Sat. Learn God's Word & have fun with area Christian youth age 9-19. YFC/YEA style quizzing & rules. 913-593-6427 or biblequizzing.org.

**MONTHLY SCORE MEETING** – 1st Sat., 8-9:30am, Washburn Tech, 5724 SW Huntoon (enter east doors facing Huntoon). No RSVP or fee is required. Small business owners are invited to a Breakfast Roundtable discussion with members of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Info: 234-3049.

**TOPEKA GREAT LIGHT AGLOW** – For info contact Vickie Lynch at [greatlighttopeka@gmail.com](mailto:greatlighttopeka@gmail.com).

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**HOPE AND HEALING ACADEMY** harnesses the power of horses to transform the human spirit. For info: 785-224-4232 or [www.hopeandhealingacademy.com](http://www.hopeandhealingacademy.com).

**OVERCOMER'S OUTREACH ANONYMOUS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP** – Mondays 6:30-7:30pm, at Be Filled Of South Topeka, 200 Airport Rd, Bldg. 818 Suite 1. Led by Pastor Bill Ritchey. 785-817-2802

**BINDING UP THE BROKEN HEARTED** – Sessions offered for women who suffer from the after-effects of abortion. All the women who lead these sessions have had an abortion and have received healing from God's Word. For info, contact local Healing Hearts representative Shelly Brush, First Southern Baptist Church at [shelly.b@healinghearts.org](mailto:shelly.b@healinghearts.org). All communication is confidential and secure.

**MIDLAND CARE GRIEF SUPPORT** Groups: Building A, 200 SW Frazier Circle; **Every Mon.**, 4-5pm: 12 Week Adult Group for Recent Loss **1st and 3rd Thu.**, 10:30am & 5:30pm—Ongoing Adult Group **1st and 3rd Thu.**, 5:30pm: Ongoing Young Adult Group (4-18 years of age) For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet. Group and individual grief support available upon request. Info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS** – Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides an opportunity for caregivers to get together and share their ideas and feelings. **2nd Monday**, 3:30pm, Topeka public library, Anton Rm. **3rd Friday**, 12 noon, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, 2910 SW Topeka

**ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT** – Providing services for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome. Kay Lyn at [KLCarlson20@cox.net](mailto:KLCarlson20@cox.net).

**AL-ANON** is a support group for families and friends of alcoholics. For information on meetings in the Topeka area email [ais-topeka@kansas-al-anon.org](mailto:ais-topeka@kansas-al-anon.org) or 785-215-1045. All correspondence confidential

**PURSUIT FOR SEXUAL PURITY** – Men struggling with pornography & sexual addiction. This bible study/ accountability group uses the Pure Desire book by Ted Roberts. For info: 249-9509. All inquiries confidential.

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUPS** – Monthly support group meetings for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. All of our programs have moved from in-person to virtual.

Caregiver support group via Skype 9:30am every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at [hdyoung@alz.org](mailto:hdyoung@alz.org) or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

Caregiver Support Group via Google Hangouts, 4:30pm every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at [hdyoung@alz.org](mailto:hdyoung@alz.org) or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

**COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS/BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP** – 4th Mon. in Formation classroom at Most Pure Heart of Mary, 17th & Stone. Discussion starts 7pm; fellowship & refreshments 8:30. 785-272-4895

**CAREGIVERS GROUP** – Caring Hearts of Hope meet 2nd & 4th Tuesdays 5:30-6:30pm at Highland Heights Christian Church. Encouragement in God's word and prayer as well as conversation and sharing, open to all those who care for others with illnesses such as Alzheimers, dementia, cancer or other debili-

tating illnesses or injuries. For info: "Weekly Class List" at [www.highlandheightsccc.com](http://www.highlandheightsccc.com) or call 785-379-5642.

**FIBROMYALGIA & CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP** – 2nd Tue., 7-9pm. First Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: Randy at 785-969-4038 or [TopekaCFS@outlook.com](mailto:TopekaCFS@outlook.com).

**GRANDPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP** – 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, 2nd floor meeting room, St. Francis Hosp, 1700 SW 7th. For info: Sharla, 286-2329; Jennie (English/Spanish) 231-0763.

**GRIEF SUPPORT** – Sponsored by Heartland Hospice for those dealing with death or major loss: **1st Mon.**, 5:30-7:30pm, Individual appointments; other times are available. Call Terry at (785)230-6730. **3rd Thurs.**, 11am, Lunch After Loss, Paisano's Ristorante, Fleming Place, SW 10th & Gage Blvd., For reservations or info: 785-271-6500.

**HEALING AFTER LOSS TO SUICIDE (HeALS)** – Topeka support group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 6:30-8, at 1st Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: [Topeka.heals@gmail.com](mailto:Topeka.heals@gmail.com) or 785-380-9309.

**PRISON OUTREACH MINISTRY** – Every Tue., 7-9pm, Topeka Women's Prison, 815 Rice Rd. Reaching out to those who can't come in, finding freedom behind bars, inspiring inmates to seek salvation during a difficult time. Providing support & guidance through the Holy Spirit to offer strength. Director: Don Garner, 286-0489 or [faithfamilylifeministries@gmail.com](mailto:faithfamilylifeministries@gmail.com).

**BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE** – NE Kansas Chapter (B.A.C.A.) 3rd Sun., 4 pm American Legion, 3800 SE Michigan. Open to the public. For info: 817-5801.

**DIVORCECARE PROGRAMS** – (For updates check [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org)) locations and times:

**WED.** – 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane. Cost: \$15. Child care provided. For info: 379-0505 or [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org).

**WED.** – 6:45 – 8:45pm, Walnut View Christian Church, 3634 SE 37th St. (just East of 37th & Croco). Cost: \$10 registration (scholarships available). The video seminar series featuring some of the nation's foremost experts on divorce and recovery topics, combined with support group discussion of the materials. Complimentary child care children up to the fifth grade. Info: 266-7550 or [walnutviewcc@att.net](mailto:walnutviewcc@att.net).

**WED.** – 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 785-286-1204, [www.northland.cc](http://www.northland.cc)

**PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** – First Thursday, 3pm, St Francis Hospital, Room 300 on 2nd floor. For info: Jim 785 806 3266

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY** – Every Fri., 6pm, 1912 Gage Blvd. A Christ-centered program, based on 8 principles found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Applying these Biblical principles, become free from addictive & dysfunctional behaviors. [crtopekaks.org](http://crtopekaks.org).

**NICOTINE ANONYMOUS** – Every Fri., 6:30pm, Town & Country Church Renaissance Room, 4925 SW 29th St., use west door cross red foot bridge. A fellowship of men & women helping each other to live free of nicotine. No fees. 402-321-486; [Laobomaha@att.net](mailto:Laobomaha@att.net)

**TOPEKA NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP** – For families & friends who are affected by someone else's narcotic addiction. Every Mon. 7pm; Every Sat. 10am. First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar, Enter Door A, Room 211. [www.naranonmidwest.org](http://www.naranonmidwest.org)

**COVENANT KEEPERS** – 3rd Sat. Group for people who want to see their marriage saved when their spouse wants out. 816-453-0884 or 816-966-0927

**MOMS-IN-TOUCH PRAYER GROUP** – Every Wed., 2:30-3:30pm, Library at Cair Paravel-Latin School. Experience God's power through prayer as we lift our students, teachers, staff, administrators & board up to the Lord. For info: 357-0369.

**GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS** – Every Wed, 7pm, St. Francis Hospital, meeting room #8.

**Send your calendar  
events to [voice@cox.net](mailto:voice@cox.net)  
See complete calendar at  
[metrovoicenews.com](http://metrovoicenews.com)**

# Faith-Based Movies Drive Box Office Success, so Hollywood Legend Pat Boone Advocates

Film and music legend Pat Boone explains why Hollywood needs to return to faith and family-friendly content, citing their proven success at the box office.

"People waste millions making sordid, corrupt films that fail," he said at the MovieGuide Awards. "But if you want to make a successful, profitable film, make it family friendly, make it faith friendly, make it a good story and do it well, and you've got a great shot."

Boone made his first professional recording debut in 1955 and appeared in more than 40 television and movies over the course of his career. However, he said the current state of Hollywood differs from his experience, criticizing the production content of recent films that put the nation in a negative light.

"We used to be the best commercial for America in the world, we made good films and we always made America look great," he said. "We became the envy of the rest of the world. We gotta start and



continue to produce really good, positive things that make people glad to be alive and not afraid to be or sorry to be alive."

Statistics reveal success of faith-based films consistently demonstrating strong returns on investment, averaging 1.5 times their production budgets.

"I make movies and I sing and I do all the things I've done as a career because I like doing it," he said. "But, of course, you like it a lot better if it's successful. But

faith-based films, and even for that matter, music, television all do better with families in mind, if children are in mind and if something in your heart communicates that you want the best and not the worst."

As a devout Christian, Boone never steered away from his beliefs, singing or acting style but rather found an audience for which he was well suited.

WSJ reports growth in family-friendly content, showing strong market potential in today's diverse media landscape.

"You won't always make money doing whatever it takes," he said. "If you want to prosper, you want to prosper doing good. It pays to find the goodness in our God-ness. It would be better if we're godly."

Mario Lopez hosts the MovieGuide Awards, broadcasting at 7 p.m. on March 6 on the Great American Family channel.

## Iraqi Jewish Exodus: \$34 Billion in Assets Lost in 1951

The mass exodus of Iraqi Jews in 1951, resulting in \$34 billion in seized assets, represents one of history's largest forced displacements. A new report from Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC) reveals this forgotten chapter of Middle Eastern history, brought to light as President Donald Trump's recent proposal to relocate Palestinians from Gaza sparks fresh debates about population transfers in the region.

"In the 20th century, the breadth and scale of the near-total displacement of Jews from eleven Muslim countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf region ranks among the more significant cases of mass displacement in modern history," said Rabbi Dr. Elie Abadie, copresident of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries.

The comprehensive study, released this month, details the largely unknown transfer of more than 135,000 Jews from Iraq to Israel and other countries, beginning in 1951. British, American and Iraqi authorities negotiated to transfer the Jewish population while resettling Palestinians in Iraq. Though never formally agreed upon, the exodus proceeded, effectively ending Iraq's 2,500-year-old Jewish community.



Forensic accounting reveals that assets, institutions and property seized from Jews in Iraq total more than \$34 billion in today's valuation. From the one million Jews in 1948 based in 10 Arab countries plus Iran, today, less than 1 percent remain. The mass departure, known as Operation Ezra and Nehemiah, stands as one of the largest organized airlifts in history.

"The historic significance of the Iraqi Jewish community cannot be overstated," said Dr. Stanley Urman, executive director of JJAC. "Over centuries, Babylonian Jews played a central role in Judaism, producing the Babylonian Talmud and influencing Jewish communities worldwide. The abrupt cancellation of this culture

constitutes a tremendous loss to civilization."

The remaining Jews faced increasing oppression under the Baath regime, culminating in public executions in 1969. By the early 1970s, nearly all Iraqi Jews had fled.

"The Jews felt themselves to be an integral part of Iraq during the first four decades of the 20th century," said Maurice Shohet, president of the World Organization of Jews from Iraq, who fled the country with his family in 1970. "We need to preserve the unique aspects of the Iraqi Jewish story. It is the burial place of the prophets Ezekiel and Nahum, the oldest Jewish community in the world. This story must be preserved and told."

# entertainment

Spring is on the way, and so are several new Branson shows and attractions

## The Unbreakable Boy tells true story of family

The Unbreakable Boy tells the true story of Austin, a boy who was born with brittle bones and autism, and how his sunny outlook on life changes those around him for the better. His family struggles to understand him, especially his father, Scott, who has an alcohol problem. The family undergoes trials and tribulations until the father strikes up a friendship with a preacher in Alcoholics Anonymous. The preacher encourages Scott to talk to God. Meanwhile, the mother, Teresa, who had a troubled life before she met Scott, regularly attends church with her two sons and prays to God. Also, Austin has a positive impact on everyone, including the other children at his school. Eventually, the father decides his son is perfect just the way he is.

In *The Unbreakable Boy*, Austin tells viewers his story. His parents, Scott and Teresa, start dating, and soon she becomes pregnant. Although Scott wasn't ready to be a father, he accepts the responsibility and prepares for the baby. Teresa reveals that she has osteogenesis imperfecta (OI), which means her bones are brittle and break easily. OI is genetic, but Scott tells her not to worry.

Austin is born and, although no one knows it yet, he has OI. It's not until he's a toddler that it's discovered. He falls off a table and breaks his arm. The stress of keeping Austin from breaking bones creates tension between Scott and Teresa, which is increased when Scott finds out Teresa has been married twice before they met. He asks her to marry him. She initially says no but later accepts, and the two wed.

Life goes on for the family. They move into a bigger house. Teresa gives birth to another boy, Logan, who doesn't have OI, and Austin continues breaking bones. Scott and Teresa also notice that he's different from other kids, and a doctor confirms that Austin is also autistic.



None of this slows Austin down, though. He's excited to start eighth grade and considers everyone he meets his friend. Scott and Teresa continue to fight about everything from Austin's OI to Scott's work hours. Things get worse when he loses his job. Teresa reveals they are way behind on bills, because she's been prioritizing paying for Austin's medical bills. So, the family is forced to move to a smaller house.

Scott's alcohol intake increases during these stressful times, and Teresa tells him to stop drinking. He verbally agrees but secretly continues to drink. Meanwhile, Austin's school moves him to special needs class, which leads to a violent outburst from Austin. He's hospitalized for a psych evaluation, and Scott and Teresa feel powerless to help him.

Things start looking up for the family once Austin is released from the hospital, but on New Years Eve, Scott takes the boys to a party. He gets drunk and drives home. The next morning, Teresa kicks him out of the house, because he crashed the car into a tree in their front yard.

Scott starts attending AA meetings, while Teresa homeschools Austin because she doesn't want him in special needs classes. Will the family be able to improve their lives?

*The Unbreakable Boy* is a heartwarming true story of one family's journey to understanding the beauty in their son's differences. For example, at one point Scott reflects on how he had spent so much time wondering how to "fix" Austin when, really, Austin was the one who "fixed" him. Lead actors Zachary Levi, Meghann Fahy and Jacob Laval give excellent performances, and the script, adapted from a book of the same name, is wonderful.

*The Unbreakable Boy* has a strong Christian worldview. It promotes faith, family, kindness, forgiveness, and prayer. The movie stresses embracing others' differences and recognizing it's what makes us special. The family attends church and are shown praying. Also, the father, Scott, strikes up a meaningful relationship with their preacher, Rick. Rick encourages Scott to talk to God. However, there are many scenes involving alcohol abuse because of the father's struggles with alcoholism. It also has some light foul language and a brief violent scene. So, MOVIEGUIDE® advises caution for older children.

Content: (CCC, BB, L, VV, AA, M) Sex: No sex or nudity

—movieguide.com



Spring is on the way, and so are several news shows and attractions in Branson. It's been a long winter, but spring really is on the way. Branson has added several new shows and attractions for families eager for adventures close to home.

DAVID, Sight & Sound Theatre's newest production. DAVID is an inspiring tale of a boy's ascent to the throne that will hit the stage in March at Sight & Sound Theatre. The brand-new live production of DAVID depicts the unprecedented victories that lead to devastating failures as this poet, warrior and king climbs his way back to the top by becoming a man after God's own heart. With original music inspired by Psalms, DAVID is a state-of-the-art theatrical experience for the whole family. Watch scripture come to life on a 300-foot panoramic stage with sound effects, live animals, brilliant costumes and original music scores.

Truth Traveler. Get ready to take your seat in the Truth Traveler time machine and journey back to the time of Noah in an immersive virtual reality experience. A lovable robot, will be your guide as you witness the building of Noah's ark, experience the flood, venture inside the ark where the animals live and more -- including some exciting surprises along the way.

The Branson Comedy Bash. The Branson Comedy Bash, coming in March, is the newest family comedy show in Branson. The show will harken back to 60s and 70s style television variety shows and tickle the funny bone of all who love sketch comedy, magic, variety acts and downright funny songs.

The Masters of Escape & Mirage. Not only does this attraction redesign the concept of escape rooms through amazing special effects and incredibly interactive room designs but it also

houses a virtual reality arena, the first of its kind in the Branson area. Team building events, special celebration package and the option to book an exclusive escape room or VR session are available for groups as well.

New Additions to Silver Dollar City Explore the Spring Exposition from April 10 to May 12/ Join master gardeners as they demonstrate techniques in raised beds, then grab a partner for an old-fashioned hoedown with the new Kinfolk Bluegrass Band on an oversized dance floor. Gaze up at the new Parasol Sky over Valley Road as pops of color stretch two stories overhead, or stop and listen to the new ragtime piano showman on the gazebo. Aside from this brand-new spring festival, 12 new shows and the expansion of The Plaza both are happening in Silver Dollar City this year.

The Sound of Simon and Garfunkel. This show pays homage to the timeless and iconic melodies of the legendary duo, Simon and Garfunkel. It takes audiences on a nostalgic journey through the rich tapestry of folk and rock music that defined an era. Immerse yourself in the soul-stirring harmonies and poetic lyrics that made Simon and Garfunkel truly unforgettable.

Cliffhangers Golf Course. Opening this summer, Johnny Morris and Big Cedar Lodge are proud to announce Cliffhangers the newest addition to the world-class golf lineup at Big Cedar Lodge. The stunning 18-hole, par-3 course will feature holes ranging from 60 to 165 yards in length. Running adjacent to Tiger Woods' Payne's Valley, the groundbreaking project features breathtaking views of the Ozark Mountains and massive waterfalls. Cliffhangers will showcase drastic elevation changes, both large and small targets, tucked pins, severe slopes and movement on the greens.

## Nicole C. Mullen Stars in 'The American Miracle' Revolutionary War Drama

Award-winning singer Nicole C. Mullen discovered a powerful story of freedom when she stepped into the role of Elizabeth "Mumbet" Freeman in the upcoming film *The American Miracle*, which is based on Michael Medved's best-selling book. Nicole said, "I remember we were walking through history growing up and it was not a favorite subject. I felt my color was excluded or misrepresented."

As she grew, she learned more true history and appreciated the people who were part of her history. It was an



honor to play the role of Elizabeth "Mumbet" Freeman. MumBet served as a slave who won her freedom in court in 1781, leading Massachusetts to free all their slaves. She realized, "We had founding fathers and moth-

ers who truly wanted freedom for all people and yet we failed to gain that at the origins of our country."

For Nicole, true freedom is in the Lord. She does not consider herself half-American, and more importantly, she knows she is a full citizen of heaven. She states, "We are still called to be one nation under God. There will be tensions, but we can decide what to do." She encourages people to live free from stereotypes that may cause low self-expectations that make people feel limited.

During production, she learned a lot about the life of Elizabeth Freeman who heard the words of the Declaration of Independence and sought legal

help for her freedom. She had a harsh master and ended up with the life and family she wanted. Producer Doug Maddox stated, "We were so honored to have Nicole C. Mullen on our set playing the first African-American freed slave during the Revolutionary War. She's a delight to work with and her song freedom remix is featured in the American miracle movie."

Nicole sings and dances with joy at the end of the movie. It's a reminder for viewers to appreciate freedom. The docudrama includes experts in American history who share truths about the founding of the United States. It releases June 7 and 8, the weekend before Father's day. The film begins with the 50th anniversary of this nation, the day that both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died. It includes the full reading of the declaration. Battles scenes, political arguments, and other struggles for freedom depict the truth and miracles of God that led to the victory against the British, the mightiest nation on earth at that time.

Known for *Patterns of Evidence* archeology-based docudramas, this is Tim Mahoney's first work in *Patterns of Providence*. Mahoney is the CEO of Heroic Films which will release true, inspiring true stories throughout history.

Other stars in the film include Pat Boone as the elder Thomas Jefferson, Kevin Sorbo plays the younger Thomas Jefferson, and Daniel Shipley plays the elder George Washington. Cameron Arnett portrays Peter Salem, a slave-turned-revolutionary war hero who killed British Major John Pitcairn at the Battle of Bunker Hill. It's a moving film to watch and discuss as a family.

—By Karen Whiting

## 'Vindication' series solves crimes from a faith-based perspective



The Bible has a lot to say about murder, robbery and humanity's sin nature. That's why it only makes sense to create a faith-based television crime series. "Vindication" is now available on multiple streaming platforms.

Jarod O'Flaherty developed the series after he watched a mainstream crime drama with his wife, who is a fan of the genre.

"I wasn't really into them," he told "The Epoch Times" about police dramas. "One night when she was watching one of these shows, it sparked the idea of what would it be like to blend a faith-based storyline with one of these cop shows."

About half of all Americans say they enjoy crime shows, with 13 percent saying it's their favorite, according to YouGov. Meanwhile, faith-based movies and TV shows are rising in popularity.

"I think there's going to be a shift into the episodic space by faith-based content creators where right now there are only a couple," O'Flaherty said. "You don't see many faith-based series, because they are hard to produce. One season of our show is the equivalent to three feature films. That's a lot of work to keep the resources and the people together."

"Vindication" follows detective Gary Travis, who is a born-again Christian

but young in his faith. In each episode, he handles cases that test his wisdom, faith and resolve.

"Detective Travis is not going around quoting scripture and preaching sermons to everyone," O'Flaherty said. "Instead, he is learning this new faith-guided lifestyle as he goes about dealing with difficult situations as a law enforcement officer."

"Vindication" focuses on the positive instead of dwelling on the gory details of crime.

"We follow people's lives, what's happening with them and then God naturally shows up at different points," O'Flaherty said. "We don't try to fear images into your brain of how awful a crime was. Instead, there's a focus on the good that's happening around it."

Although the main character is a Christian, episodes rarely take place in a church, because O'Flaherty avoids stereotypes. "In our lives, we don't go to church and everything gets instantly solved," he said.

The first three seasons currently are streaming on PureFlix and RedeemTV. Seasons one through three also are available for rent or purchase on Amazon Prime, while seasons one and two are free on YouTube, Tubi and PlutoTV. Angel Studios is premiering season four on March 20 exclusively on the Angel Studios apps and Angel.com.

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## 6 Steps to Spring into Lawn and Garden Care

If cooler weather has you longing for sunny days outdoors, take heart. Once spring rolls around, you can prepare your yard for months of warm-weather enjoyment with these tips.

### 1. Clear the Yard

Remove any leaves, rocks or sticks that may have accumulated then cut the grass as short as you can.

### 2. Dethatch

Use a thatching rake to remove dead roots and grass.

### 3. Treat Weeds

Apply herbicide to treat



weed-infested areas. Allow the weed killer to work for about a week then rake to remove dead weeds.

### 4. Add Seed and Fertilizer

Depending on your lawn's needs, overseed or spot seed to fill in thin spots. Use a grass variety that matches your climate for best results. Select and apply fertilizer consistent with your grass type then water thoroughly.

### 5. Clear Garden Beds of Debris

Remove leaves and other matter that piled up in your garden during the cooler months. Gently turn the soil and work in fresh fertilizer.

### 6. Start Planting

Early spring is the time to divide perennials and plant hardier vegetables, such as onions and potatoes. You can also start indoor seeds, if nec-

essary, and move plants outdoors when the weather permits.

Getting some of your lawn and garden care underway now

can make those warmer, sunny days feel closer in no time. Find more seasonal tips for prepping your yard at eLivingtoday.com.

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# sports

## Eagles QB and coach give 'all glory to God' after Super Bowl LIX win



After losing the Super Bowl to the Kansas City Chiefs two years ago, Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts vowed to get back. He had played one of the best games of his life, only to come up a field goal short.

That loss, however, was one of the biggest driving factors in getting Hurts and Eagles not only back to the Super Bowl, but also leaving as champions.

Hurts was named the game's MVP.

It may not have been possible were it not for the crushing defeat two years ago in Phoenix.

"Going through those emotions and processing those things and processing that experience lit a great flame in me and enhanced my desire to win significantly," Hurts acknowledged Sunday night in his postgame press conference.

Hurts also said this championship "means a lot" when looking back over his football journey, which he described as "unprecedented." He won a college football national championship in 2018 with Alabama, but was benched at halftime of that game, only to watch Tua Tagovailoa lead a comeback win in overtime. Hurts was relegated to being Tagovailoa's backup the next season, and he later transferred to Oklahoma to finish his college career.

He was a second-round pick by the Eagles in 2020, a time when Carson Wentz (now a Chiefs backup) was leading the Eagles. After 12 games, they replaced Wentz with Hurts, who's been the Philly starter ever since.

Through it all, Hurts has said he aims to never get too high or too low. And he looks to the Lord for guidance.

"God is good. He's greater than all the highs and the lows," Hurts told Fox Sports on the field Sunday night. "Personally, I've just been able to use every experience and learn from it. The good, the bad, all of it, using it as fuel to pursue my own greatness. I couldn't do any of these things

without the guys around me. We had a special group this year. We were able to learn from the past, get some nice, new pieces, and get over that hump."

Hurts has shared about his faith in God many times before, including this past week.

"My faith has always been a part of me," Hurts told Sports Spectrum on Tuesday. "I've always wanted to root myself in that and keep Him in the center of my life and everything that I do. So through the highs and the lows, He's greater than all of them, and that's something that I can always acknowledge."

Hurts' head coach, Nick Sirianni, also gave glory to God after the game.

"God's blessed us very much," he said on the field. "He gave us all the talents to be able to get here. So first and foremost, thanks to Him." The coach later added, "Thank God, thank You Jesus."

## No. 1 Auburn men's basketball bonded by faith, 'having a relationship with God'

Never in the history of the Southeastern Conference had there been a No. 1 vs. No. 2 matchup in men's basketball until No. 1 Auburn went into Tuscaloosa in February and defeated archrival Alabama. The Tigers' 94-85 victory gave them sole possession of first place in the conference and kept them at the top of the Associated Press poll.

"I think the thing I'm proudest of is that all eyes of college basketball were on the state of Alabama and the SEC," head coach Bruce Pearl said after the game. "What this conference has done in men's basketball is historic. You never know whether or not a game can live up to the hype. We were very prepared. Coaches did a great job with the game plan."

National player of the year candidate Johni Broome led the way for Auburn (23-2) with a game-high 19 points, 14 rebounds, six assists and two blocks. Five other players reached double figures, and the Tigers connected on 12 of their 30 3-point attempts. The win was Auburn's fourth in six games against teams currently ranked in the top 10 of the AP poll.

In rising to the top of men's college basketball, many within the Auburn program have publicly shared about their faith in God. And it's evident in how the team celebrates big shots.

At one of Auburn's practices earlier this season, senior center Dylan Cardwell no-



a preseason trip to the Middle East, where some players were baptized in the Jordan River just like Jesus was. Cardwell even wrote a blog describing the team's experience.

That wasn't the only overseas trip for Cardwell. On the broadcast of the Tigers' Feb. 11 win at Vanderbilt, his recent mission trips to El Salvador and Honduras were highlighted.

Cardwell posted a video of the segment on social media and gave thanks to God.

For Cardwell, the "call God" celebration is a chance for the Tigers to turn the focus away from themselves and place it back on the Lord.

"It's unique to see guys use their platform to glorify God, especially just a small gesture like that," he said. "... I'm just grateful for the opportunity to put that message forward, rather than harp on our own successes."

Broome, one of the top players in the country, wore a "Product of Christ" sweatshirt while sidelined with an ankle injury last month. He believes the common bond the players have found through their relationships with God has been vital to building chemistry.

"I'd just say it's the connection we have, the brotherhood, our faith," he said. "We have Bible study and things like that. That's just a way for everybody to open up. That's how we build our foundation, our brotherhood. That's something that's unmatched."

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In 2022, Coach Pearl took the team on

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# 50+ Lifestyles

## A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

### How to Plan for Retirement

Being financially secure in retirement starts while you're still working. Because you likely don't want to remain in the workforce forever, creating a plan can help ensure you're confident in living comfortably in retirement when the time comes.

Retirement plans and financial aspirations are deeply personal and often tied to family life, ambitions and values, meaning it's entirely up to you when to start planning and saving for your post-work years. However, the worrying reality is that many households across the U.S. don't feel in control of their finances. According to a study from World Financial Group, 11% of households have "forfeited contributions to their retirement accounts," a decision that will have an impact later in life.

To ensure you're prepared, consider these steps to plan for retirement.

#### Understand When You Can Retire and How Much Money You Will Need

Because nearly everyone has different goals for retirement, there's no one-size-fits-all approach to when and how much money you'll need to stop working. Assess your unique situation – including all your forms of income, assets and savings – and calculate what you'll need to maintain your standard of living and cover expenses, including any discretionary spending, in retirement.

#### Choose an Appropriate Retirement Plan for Your Needs

In addition to figuring out how much you should save, having the right savings vehicle is an important consideration. A good place to start is an employer-sponsored retirement plan with fund-matching, such as a 401(k). If a workplace retirement plan is not available, consider setting aside money for retirement through an IRA that provides access to a range of investments, including stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Some insurance

products may also provide benefits during retirement, such as life insurance coverage, supplemental income and tax advantages.

#### Take Stock of Your Current Assets

Your current assets include more than just what's in your bank account. Beyond your paycheck, factor in real estate, investment accounts and any insurance policies you may have. If you need help understanding your finances, take a financial literacy quiz to test your knowledge and then consider meeting with a financial services expert.

#### Create a Retirement Budget and Look at Ways to Reduce Expenses

Your retirement budget should look similar to yours while still part of the workforce. Start by accounting for how much money is coming in and how much is going out toward fixed expenses like utilities, cellphone bills, insurance premiums, rent or mortgage and vehicle payments then track other expenses like groceries, gasoline and other spending toward non-essentials like entertainment and clothing. From there, look for ways to cut expenses to stretch your funds further, such as canceling a streaming service, dining out less or skipping a new movie release.

#### Account for Unexpected Expenses

Before retirement, consider how you'd handle unexpected expenses such as a medical emergency, home or vehicle repair or moving into an assisted living facility. Suppose you don't have the appropriate health and homeowner's insurance coverage. In that case, you may be covering those costs out-of-pocket, which could limit or hinder your financial flexibility on a fixed income.

Test your literacy and find additional resources to plan for retirement at [WorldFinancialGroup.com](http://WorldFinancialGroup.com).



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# Squeezed by high prices? 18 ways to save at grocery store



Grocery prices remain stubbornly high, putting a strain on many family budgets. “The Epoch Times” offers several tips for saving money at the supermarket.

• **Make a shopping list and meal plan.** Decide on the meals and snacks you’d like to have for the week, and create a list that only includes the necessary ingredients. Sticking to the list can help you avoid impulse purchases.

• **Shop alone if you can.** Impulse buying can be one of the costliest habits at the grocery store. Shopping with others may increase the likelihood you’ll buy something on a whim.

• **Shop on the quietest days of the week.** When you’re in a busy store, it can be more difficult to take a

good look at the selection and find particular brands or sizes that are most cost effective. It might take some trial and error to determine the slower times at the store, but once you’ve figured it out, stick with that time.

• **Swap ingredients for less expensive options.** Consider swapping your meat choice or vegetable choice for a lower-cost options. Depending on your dish, you may be able to swap out a certain vegetable for one that is in season and cheaper.

• **Buy generic products.** There’s no denying that brand-name products are more expensive than their generic counterparts. While saving an extra \$2 or \$3 may not seem like much, saving a few extra bucks on 20 items can add up.

• **Avoid buying hygiene products at the grocery store.** Many people buy household products at the grocery store without realizing how much they’re likely overpaying for those items. You often can find hygiene products for less at places such as Walmart or Target.

• **Stick to the store’s perimeter.** Generally, the aisles in the center of the supermarket contain processed foods, which tend to be pricey, while the outer walls are where you often will find things such as fruits, vegetables and other unprocessed foods that can be more cost effective.

• **Pay with a grocery rewards card.** Grocery rewards credit cards offer cash back or points on purchases at the supermarket. Getting a little bit back from each shopping trip will help offset the costs of inflation.

• **Use a calculator while shopping.** This can be especially helpful if you’re sticking to a strict budget. Keeping track of your ongoing tally can help when trying to decide whether to buy something that wasn’t originally on your list.

• **Shop sales.** Be sure to check your local newspaper circulars, store apps and a store’s website to know what’s on sale and when. It can pay to plan your menu based on what’s currently on sale.

• **Join grocery store loyalty programs.** Plenty of grocery stores have loyalty programs you can sign up for that will earn you points and send you coupons, often integrated into the store’s app. A lot of stores will also have discounts specifically for loyalty members as well.

• **Take advantage of curbside pickup.** If you’re too tempted to overspend in the store, shop ahead on your store’s website or mobile app. Many stores let you choose between picking up your order curbside or having it delivered. You may find curbside pickup to be more cost-effective, because delivery fees can be expensive.

• **Buy items in bulk and freeze the extras.** Some foods are significantly less expensive when purchased in bulk. So for foods that you are able to freeze, consider buying in large

quantities and freeze what you don’t need right now.

• **Shop on a full stomach.** This is an age-old tip for grocery shopping. Going to a grocery store when you’re hungry could cause you to overspend. You may be more likely to grab groceries you don’t need and more impulse purchases.

• **Buy produce that is in season.** Produce is more expensive when it’s out of season. Understand what produce is in season and when so you can enjoy fruits and vegetables when they’re tastiest and least expensive.

• **Shop bulk bins.** Don’t forget to make use of bulk bins if your grocery store features them. Bulk bins

allow you to scoop into a bag the exact amount of things you need such as grains or nuts. If you’re just buying a small amount, you also are less likely to waste any.

• **Compare prices among stores.** Stores such as Aldi, Walmart and Trader Joe’s tend to have lower prices than other grocery stores. Don’t forget about wholesale clubs such as Costco and Sam’s Club, which can get you more for your money.

• **Limit shopping trips.** The more time you spend at a grocery store, the more time you have for impulse buying. Determine how often you actually need to go to the grocery store and stick to the schedule.

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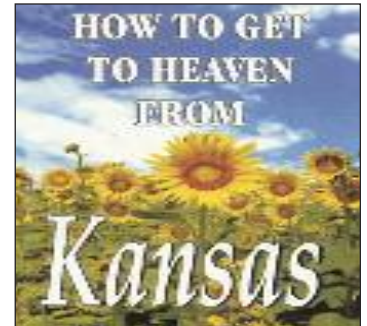
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1. Realize you are a sinner. Everyone starts the same place spiritually. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23). Sin's penalty keeps you out of Heaven and condemns you to Hell, separating you from God. Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death." Sin brings both physical & spiritual death. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14).

2. Realize Jesus paid the penalty. Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection provided a way for you to go to heaven and restore your relationship with God. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8). Since Jesus, God's Son, was the only One who could pay for our sin, He is the only Way to Heaven.

3. Repent of your sin and receive Jesus as your Savior. In order to go to Heaven from KANSAS, or anywhere else, you must accept Christ by calling on Him in prayer. He tells us in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Use the following prayer, or one similar to it, to receive Him now:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe that you died and rose again for me. Please forgive me of my sin, become Lord of my life, and take me to heaven when I die. I am trusting you completely, and in nothing I can do. Thank you Jesus! Amen.

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2401 SE 11th St., Topeka KS 66607

Supt. S. C. Mitchell, Pastor

## 16. HOUSE OF THE LORD CHURCH

A Spirit-filled, Word-centered church

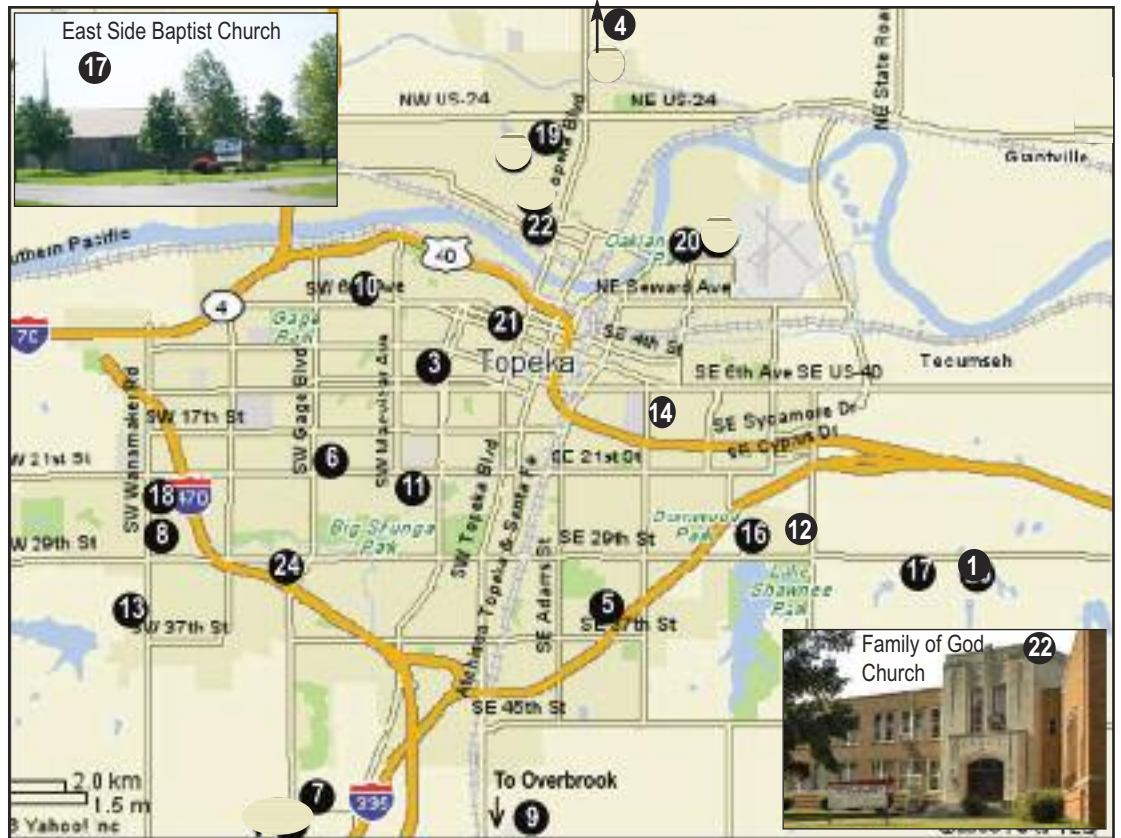
2531 SE Wittenberg Rd., Topeka

Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm

Wed. Prayer & Praise 7pm

785-266-LOVE (5683)

J. Michael Borjon, Pastor



## 17. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

4425 S.E. 29th St., 785-379-9933.

Sunday Worship 10:00am & 5:30pm

Sunday Evenings at 5:30pm:

- AWANA
- Student Ministries
- reJengage
- www.esbcks.org

## 20. HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH

1937 NE Madison St,

Topeka, KS 66608 • 785-506-4594

Pastor Dale Stockburger

Sunday Worship: 11 am and 6pm

Sunday School: Sun 10am

Wed. Evening Worship: 7pm

## 21. HARVEST FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

Meets at 522 SW Polk

785-220-5418

Pastor Rey Rodriguez

Sun. Worship 10:30 am

Sunday School 9:15 am

Bible Study Wed. 7 pm

www.harvestfamilyfellowshiptopeka.org

## 22. FAMILY OF GOD CHURCH

1231 NW Eugene St.

Topeka, KS 66608

Pastor Roger Randel

Sunday School 9am; Worship 10:30am

Wednesday Bible Study 7pm

785-234-1111

FOGchurch.com

## 24. TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST

Holding to the authorized King James Version and

the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Wednesday 6 p.m.

Pastor Bob Spagnuolo 785-273-3506

meeting in our home:

4307 SW 30th Ter., Topeka

www.TrinityReformedBaptist.org



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and 1101 SW Mulvane

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10TH ANNUAL TOPEKA

SAVE THE DATE!

# EASTER FEST

EASTER PARADE + FAMILY FUN FAIR!



It all takes place at Great Overland Station and on N. Kansas Avenue!

Fun Fair open 10 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station, with Live Music 10:45 am - 3 pm!

Parade starts at 10 am at N. Kansas Avenue & Fairchild St. by Kaw Valley Bank, and goes to the tracks in NOTO.

Big Egg Hunt follows parade at 11:10am at Great Overland Station! Food Trucks open 9 am - 3pm at Great Overland Station. Vendor Market and Health Fair open 10 am - 3 pm at Great Overland Station, with craft stations, face painting, Easter Bunny photos, Petting Zoo, Inflatables, Carnival Games, Cup Cake Walks, Health exams, products & demonstrations: Dance, Martial Arts, Gymnastics, Ballet, Vision Screening & more!

Volunteers needed! Contact:

info@C5Alive.org or 785-640-6399

For booth, sponsor & parade entry information:

info@C5Alive.org or 785-640-6399

Funds raised will be shared with a local non-profit serving local families



SATURDAY, Apr. 19, 2025 • 10 AM - 3 PM

TopekaEasterParade.com • "Like" us on Facebook: Topeka Easter Parade & Family Fun Fair