

(First published in The Sheridan Sentinel January 18, 2024)

**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SHERIDAN COUNTY, KANSAS  
PROBATE DIVISION**

In the Matter of the Estate of  
KARLA WESSEL, Deceased.

Case No.: SD-2024-PR-000003

**NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:  
You are hereby notified that a petition dated December 22, 2023, has been filed in this court by Christopher Wessel, as a surviving son of Karla Wessel, deceased, praying for administration of said estate and for the appointment of Christopher Wessel as executor of the estate.

You are further advised that the petitioner in this matter has requested administration pursuant to the Kansas Simplified Estates Act, and if such request is granted the court may not supervise administration of the estate and no further notice of any action of the executor or other proceedings in the estate will be given except for notice of final settlement of the decedent's estate. Should written objections to simplified administration be filed with the court, the court may order supervised administration to ensue.

You are hereby required to file your written defenses to the appointment of Christopher Wessel as executor of the estate on or before **February 19, 2024, at 11:00 A.M.** in this court in the city of Hoxie, Sheridan County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the petition.

All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within four months from the date of the first publication of this notice as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited they shall be forever barred.

/s/Christopher Wessel  
Christopher Wessel, Petitioner

/s/ Steven W. Hirsch  
Steven W. Hirsch #12789  
HIRSCH LAW OFFICE  
104 So Penn, PO Box 296  
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Attorney for Petitioner

(Last published in The Sheridan Sentinel February 1, 2024)

(First published in The Sheridan Sentinel January 18, 2024)

**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SHERIDAN COUNTY, KANSAS  
PROBATE DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
DONNA M. HAFFNER, DECEASED.

Case No. SD-2024-PR-000001

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that a Petition for Probate of Will and Appointing Executor under Kansas Simplified Estates Act was filed in this Court by Julie A. Carroll, an heir, devisee and legatee, and Executor named in the Last Will and Testament of Donna M. Haffner, deceased, praying that the instrument attached to the Petition dated November 2, 2011, be admitted to probate, and for the appointment of Julie A. Carroll as Executor of the Will to serve without bond.

All creditors of the above-named decedent are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within four (4) months from the date of first publication of this notice, as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

JULIE A. CARROLL, Petitioner

BAUER, PIKE, BAUER, WARY,  
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(Last published in The Sheridan Sentinel February 1, 2024)



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**Commission Minutes  
1/2/2024**

Now on this 2nd day of January 2024, the Board of Commissioners, Sheridan County, Kansas, met in regular session with Chairman Mike "Buck" Mader presiding. Other members present were David Stithem, Joe Bainter, Joe Pratt County Attorney, and County Clerk Heather Bracht.

At 8:00 a.m. Mader called the meeting to order. Those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Joe Herskowitz, Road & Bridge Supervisor, came to the table. Herskowitz stated that they do not plan to purchase new tires for the landfill loader. The tires that came off the loader originally had just been put back and they are in decent shape to put on and use.

The retriever had a problem last week but has been repaired so will hopefully get back to being used this week.

There was a discussion on various roads in the county, minimum maintenance roads, and whether there should be more of them, CDLs, and

training of new hires. The Board agrees that it is a benefit to everyone to keep up with training. Herskowitz will reach out to CAT about scheduling another class or two for this year.

Herskowitz will try and contact Scott Foote this week about striping on the feedlot road.

The Board and Herskowitz discussed the dollar amount paid for individuals hauling gravel. On a motion by Mader and second by Stithem the amounts will change to \$45 on 1-5 miles; \$65 on 6-10 miles; \$80 on 11-15 miles and \$110 for 16-20 miles. Motion carried 3-0.

There is water holding at the southwest corner of the shop. Doesn't look good. Pratt stated there will be a tax sale on Friday, January 5.

At 8:51, Mader made a motion to enter into executive session for a period of 10 minutes for the discussion of non-elected personnel. Bainter seconded. Carried 3-0. Present were the Board, Bracht, and Pratt. The door opened at 9:01 with no decision being made.

Brandon Carver, Sheridan County Sheriff, and Dana Hess,

**Commission Minutes  
1/9/2024**

Now on this 9th day of January 2024, the Board of Commissioners, Sheridan County, Kansas met in regular session with Chairman Mike "Buck" Mader presiding. Other members present were David Stithem, and County Clerk Heather Bracht.

At 1:00 p.m. Mader called the meeting to order. The Board started late due to weather conditions. Bainter was unable to attend.

At 1:01 p.m. Mader made a motion to enter into executive session for a period of 30 minutes for the discussion of non-elected personnel. Stithem seconded. Carried 2-0. Present were the Board and Bracht. At 1:30, the door opened and Mader made a motion to extend the executive session for a period of 15 minutes. Stithem seconded. Carried 2-0. At 1:43, Stithem made a motion to extend executive session for another 15 minutes with Mader seconding. Carried 2-0. The door opened at 1:59 with no decision being made.

Mader made a motion, seconded by Stithem, to approve the January 2, 2024 Minutes as presented. Carried 2-0.

The January 9, 2024 Warrants were approved and signed on a motion by Mader and second by Stithem. Carried 2-0.

A Treasurers Abatement was presented to the Board. Stithem made a motion to approve the Abatement, seconded by Mader. Carried 2-0.

The following warrants were approved by the board:

General \$ 2,599.71  
Road & Bridge \$768.20  
Public Transp \$38.08  
Forfeiture \$98.00

At 2:15 p.m. with no further business, Stithem made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mader. Carried 2-0. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Room.

Attest: Heather Bracht,  
County Clerk, Mike "Buck" Mader, Chairman

Communications, came to the table. There was discussion about holiday pay. It was stated it is unfair that Emergency Services do not get holiday pay if they don't work the holiday, but Courthouse and Road & Bridge employees are paid for the holiday when it falls on a Saturday or Sunday, so they are closed on Friday or Monday. Bracht clarified that the handbook stated law enforcement, EMS and dispatch are paid for the hours worked on the actual holiday. Because they are a 24/7 service, they have a different rule as it pertains to holiday pay. Dispatch wants a 'floating' holiday day for employees who are not scheduled to work. Discussion was tabled for further review and discussion.

The December 27, 2023 Minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Stithem and second by Mader. Carried 3-0.

The December 28, 2023 Payroll was approved on a motion by Bainter and second by Stithem. Carried 3-0.

There was a discussion on sick leave and the process of employees donating sick leave time to other employees who are out of sick leave or any other leave. Stithem made a motion that employees may donate sick leave if the employee's bank of sick leave hours is over 80 hours. No more than 40 hours per individual per calendar year can be donated. Mader seconded the motion. Carried 3-0. Example: employee has 85 hours accumulated sick leave. He is able to donate 5 hours to another employee. 100 hours, 20 hours could be donated. Hours would not be available to be donated again until sick leave is back up over 80 hours.

The following payroll was approved by the Board:  
General \$78,446.54  
Road & Bridge \$25,635.77  
Nox. Weed \$2,768.04  
Public Transp. \$974.50  
Landfill \$2,563.74  
MV \$7,658.33

At 9:48 a.m. with no further business, Mader made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Stithem. Carried 3-0. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Room.

Attest: Heather Bracht,  
County Clerk, Mike "Buck" Mader, Chairman

**Mae Cousins  
November 29, 1924 ~ January 9, 2024**



Velma "Mae" Cousins, 99, of Oakley, died Tuesday January 9, 2024, at the Logan County Senior Living. Mae was born November 29, 1924, at home in Oakley, to Simon and Myrtle (Deshong) Dawson; the sixth of seven kids. She was a lifelong resident of Oakley.

On June 22, 1944, Mae married Harold William Cousins of Menlo, KS. Mae then had to watch and wait as Harold was sent to Europe to fight in WWII as a Paratrooper. When Harold returned, they settled down in Oakley, raising five children. In the late 1960's Mae had to wait for a loved one to return from war a second time as her oldest son was sent to Vietnam.

Mae was a fixture around Oakley. She could normally be seen checking you out at Traders, and later IGA. Mae could also be found waiting tables and cooking at her brother Darrold's restaurant, The Little Café in Oakley. Later in life she worked at Costal Mart. The handmade crafts that Mae and Harold made could be bought at her Nephew David Nelson's restaurant, The Colonial Steak House.

Mae's grandchildren would come and spend the summers with her. All were expected to help around the house. Mostly working in Mae's huge garden, setting, and clearing the dinner table. The one thing everyone could expect at Mae's house was a huge meal. Mae loved to cook.

Mae was preceded in death by her parents; her husband Harold; brothers, Archie age 2 1/2, Gilbert, Darrold and Si Dawson; sisters, Cora Vavricka and Louise Nelson; sons, Simon and Randy Cousins; grandchildren, Michelle Cole and Marvin Cousins and many nieces and nephews.

Mae is survived by her children, Harold "Richard" Cousins, of Oakley, Sheryl Cousins of Snellville, GA, Sandra "Sandy" (Gary) Cole, Broken Arrow, OK; daughter-in-law Ginger Cousins, of Oakley; eight grandchildren, Wesley Simon Cousins, Wichita KS, Lee (Emily) Ludolph, Monroe, GA, William (Wendy) Cousins, Hoxie, KS, Jamie (Jessica), Clovis, GA, Laura (John) Dill, Broken Arrow, OK, Brett Bowman, Snellville, GA; Cody (Tedi) Cole, Jenks, OK and Shannon (Dwight) Green, Clamore, OK; fourteen great grandkids and three great-great grandkids.

A small service with burial in the Oakley City Cemetery took place. A memorial service will take place over Memorial Day weekend. Memorials may be made to ASPCA and sent in care of Baalmann Mortuary, PO Box 391, Colby, KS 67701. For information visit baalmannmortuary.com.

**Gary Hall  
April 23, 1943 ~ January 9, 2024**



Gary Ray Hall, 80, of Elk City, was born April 23, 1943, to Jack and Oleta Hall. He left this earth on Tuesday, January 9, 2024. He was saved and baptized at a young age in Retrop Baptist Church.

Gary started school at Retrop, OK, and attended there until the school closed at the end of his 8th grade year. He then attended Carter School where he met the love of his life, Loretta Coe. He graduated in 1961 and he and Loretta were married on June 1, 1962, and were married for 60 years until her death in June 2022.

Gary spent most of his life farming and being involved in various business ventures. In his later years he worked for the county.

Gary is preceded in death by his wife, Loretta; his son, Cary; his grandson, Dustin Gordon; his parents, Jack and Oleta Hall; his in-laws, Van Coe, Sr., and Harvey and Nanie Lou Sanders.

Gary is survived by his daughters: Shelley Gordon and husband, Joe, Carter, OK; Stephanie Shaw and husband, Wally, Dalton, TX; son, Cody Hall, Bethany, OK; daughter-in-law, Linda Hall, Yukon, OK; sister, Brenda Wootton, Norman, OK; brother-in-law, Van Coe and wife, Teresa, Moore, OK; sister-in-law, Diane Blackburn and husband, Tom, Moore, OK; grandchildren, Carli Hicks, Chelsea Koronka and husband, Paul, Garrett Thornton and wife, Kristin, Corbin Hall and wife, Monica, Keegan Hall, and Kinsley Hall; granddaughter-in-law, Ashley Blair and husband, James; great-grandchildren, Harrison Gordon, Hunter Gordon, Holly Gordon, Hayden Blair, Emily Hicks, Addy Hicks, Carter Koronka, Caylee Koronka, Kennedy Hall, Knox Hall, and Kasen Hall.

The family met with friends and family at Affordable Cremation Service-West for a time of fellowship on Saturday, January 13, 2024, as there was no public funeral service. Immediately following the family held a private service with the burial being held at Fairlawn Cemetery. Arrangements are under the direction of Chris Whinery and the staff of Affordable Cremation Service-West. Condolences can be made online at [www.classicfunerals.com](http://www.classicfunerals.com).

**STATE OF THE STATE**

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from state income tax for all taxpayers saving \$152 million. The Kansas standard deduction for personal income tax would increase to \$5,000 for individuals, \$10,000 for married filing jointly, and \$7,500 for head of household, producing \$90.5 million in tax savings. The state grocery sales tax would end on April 1, 2024 and include diapers and feminine hygiene products saving taxpayers \$79.7 million. The first weekend of August would be a 'back-to-school-state-sales tax holiday' (as exists in surrounding states). Increase the residential exemption on the 20 mills school property tax from \$42,000 to \$100,000, producing taxpayer savings of \$93.4 million in 2025. Double the current childcare tax credit,

saving Kansas families \$6 million yearly.

Kansas is one of just ten states that have not expanded Medicaid. Every state that borders Kansas has expanded Medicaid with the voters in Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and South Dakota doing so by voter referendum. There would be a hospital surcharge and incremental federal dollars covering the expansion cost with no impact on the State General Fund. There would be a work requirement. Mental health services would be expanded for incarcerated individuals (relieving county/local jail financial strain) and those in need of behavioral health and substance use treatments. Medicaid expansion is a workforce issue by providing a healthier workforce to keep employees on

**Funding Opportunities for Arts and Culture in Kansas**

**Topeka** — Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of Commerce David Toland today announced the launch of two new Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC) grant programs, Arts Everywhere Grants and General Operating Support Grants, ushering in a new era of support for the arts in Kansas.

The enhanced grant programs reflect Commerce's dedication to expanding funding opportunities for a more diverse range of organizations and projects throughout the state, all with the goal of leveraging the arts to grow the Kansas economy.

Building on the success of the prior Arts Integration and Strategic Investment Programs, Arts Everywhere Grants will open up funding opportunities to a broader range of projects and organizations. This program will support projects that bring the arts directly to communities, ensuring cultural enrichment is accessible statewide. Arts Everywhere Grants are intended to fund individual arts- and culture-based projects.

Non-profit organizations and community groups are encouraged to apply for Arts Everywhere Grants and transform their unique creative visions into impactful experiences for Kansans.

The General Operating Support Grants program will provide financial assistance to Kansas public and private non-profit arts and cultural organizations. This initiative recognizes the vital role these organizations play in fostering creativity, preserving cultural heritage, and enhancing the economy and quality of life in our state.

Organizations with a demonstrated commitment to arts and culture are invited to apply for General Operating Support Grants to support ongoing operations and initiatives.

While the introduction of these two grants marks a new chapter, KCAIC reaffirms its continued support for the popular Public Art & Murals program and the Visiting Artists program. These programs remain largely unchanged, continuing to bring vibrant public art and enriching artistic experiences to communities statewide.

For more information visit: <https://bit.ly/3O6hREe>.

the job, assist small businesses who don't offer health insurance to retain employees and create jobs and new revenues across the state.

The education goals begin with a historic investment in early childhood care and education. The Governor is proposing \$56.4 million to fund coordinated efforts for childcare and early education. The Governor continues to fully fund K-12 at constitutional levels, marking the 6th consecutive year. Begin a plan to fully fund special education at the level required by law. This effort will take five years with annual contributions of \$79.9 million to reach full funding by 2029. Continue to invest in post-secondary education through student affordability measures, workforce development, capital projects and cybersecurity. Recognize state employee contributions with a 5% statewide pay adjustment.

The State General Fund profile for 2023 to 2028 looks very strong. Ending balances border on 40% which is well over the normal 10% target. In addition, the Budget Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day) balance continues to increase from \$1.6 billion in 2023 to almost \$1.9 billion by 2028. The Governor's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 base spending adjustments are a 2.2% increase over the FY 2024 approved base budget. After adjusting for one-time expenditures, the budget is structurally sound.

The FY 2025 Governor's Budget Report