



NATION | Bearing down

Hurricane Irma targets Florida coasts after wrecking tropic isles. **B5**

WORLD | Power quake

Mexico hit by one of the strongest quakes ever, at least 32 die. **B5**

NEWS | New rules

K-State officials monitoring federal review of Title IX. **B8**

THE MERCURY

MANHATTAN, KANSAS

\$1.00

B1

News 24 hours a day at themercury.com

Friday, September 8, 2017

MHS ACT scores top state average

Dylan Lysen
dlysen@themercury.com

Manhattan High School students continue to outperform state and national averages on the ACT exam, but their performance declined slightly from a year ago.

MHS students earned an average composite score of 23.2 for the 2017 test, which is higher than the state average of 21.7 and the national average of 20.8, according to a USD 383 news release.

The ACT is a curriculum-based exam designed to measure the academic skills that are taught in schools and used to determine college readiness.

“Manhattan High School continues to outperform the state and the nation on this important college and career readiness measure,” said Greg Hoyt, MHS principal. “The performance of 2017 seniors is a credit to the seniors, their parents, and educators at all levels in USD 383. Today, more than ever before, it is imperative that students exit our building prepared for post-secondary studies or direct entry into the workforce.”

The MHS students also outperformed the nation on the number of students who passed the benchmarks for all four areas of the test — English, math, science and reading — with 43 percent of the MHS participants passing all four benchmarks, compared

SEE NO. 4, BACK PAGE

CITY NOTEBOOK

90th celebration



Staff photo by Taylor Irby

A view of the new gym at Manhattan Christian College. It's housed inside the Howie's Activity Center, a new building on campus.

Manhattan Christian College to open its first gym next week

Bryan Richardson
brichardson@themercury.com

Manhattan Christian College will open the first athletic facility in its history next week.

The opening of Howie's Activity Center at 1401 Laramie St. is a part of the college's 90th anniversary celebration, which will be commemorated with activities all week.

The college will host its first Thunder volleyball games at 3 and 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15, in the new gym.

Prior to that, the college will host the 15th Annual Leadership Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Thursday followed by the official ribbon cutting at 9 a.m.

The center is named after trash and recycling company Howie's Enterprises, whose

founders Howard and Joann Wilson provided the lead gift for the project.

MCC president Kevin Ingram said the center will give the college an athletic home to call its own and provide space for other events.

For more than 70 years, MCC has rented city facilities for student life activities and athletic events.

“We've succeeded in athletics without (a gym), but this is still very important,” he said. “The home advantage will be even better.”

Howie's Activity Center is the centerpiece of the college's Next Generation campaign, which began in 2015. The college raised \$3.4 million through donations from 468 alumni, churches, and friends of the college.

Ingram said Next Generation

was the most successful campaign in the college's history.

The campaign allowed the college to build an activity center, construct a parking lot, add lighting and security cameras, and install a card-entry system in a debt-free venture.

“It has been not only exciting to see the funding coming in, it's also been humbling,” Ingram said. “It's a huge honor that people would believe in MCC enough to entrust us to do this.”

Beautiful business

Manhattan Town Center's newest store will open next week.

Ulta Beauty will open at

SEE NO. 1, BACK PAGE

K-State Alumni Association mural pays tribute to campus beauty



Staff photo by Taylor Irby

K-State alum Marcus Gilbert designed a stained glass mural that hangs in the Alumni Center at K-State. The mural features 5,000 pieces of glass.

Dylan Lysen
dlysen@themercury.com

Marcus Gilbert said to have someone prominently display his artwork displayed for everyone to see is one of the greatest compliments he can receive.

The K-State Alumni Association did just that when it unveiled a 14-foot by 7-foot stained glass mural focusing on the beauty of K-State's campus last weekend. Gilbert, who graduated from K-State with a degree in fine art last winter, was chosen through a contest to design the mural now in the Alumni Center.

“It's a permanent piece of

K-State now,” he said. “As an artist, that's what we strive for: to have art that people are going to see now, 10 and 15 years down the road.”

“It's just one of the ultimate compliments to be able to have a piece of art with my name on it at my alma mater,” he added.

The mural is on the first floor of the facility, adjacent to the Tointon Great Room, and it accompanies many K-State artifacts and memorabilia in the building.

The mural pays tribute to four buildings on campus — Anderson Hall, Hale Library, the Alumni Center and the Berney Family Welcome Center/WWI Memorial

Stadium — which represent K-State's history and tradition, academic excellence, student life and campus beauty, the alumni association said.

The mural, called “A Spot I Love Full Well,” was made possible through a donation from Gib and Brenda Compton of Park City. Both are graduates of K-State, Gib in 1980 and Brenda in 1977.

“A stained glass mural representing K-State has been a vision of ours for many years,” said Amy Button Renz, president and CEO of the K-State Alumni

SEE NO. 2, BACK PAGE

Fort Riley soldier found dead in JC home

Staff reports

A Fort Riley soldier was found dead in his Junction City home Monday, Army officials said Thursday.

The Junction City Police Department found the body of Staff Sgt. Garrett Swift's, 37.

Swift is the fifth Fort Riley soldier to die on or near post in non-combat roles since late July.

He was a fire support specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div.



SWIFT

“The soldiers of the 1st Battalion mourn the loss of Staff Sgt. Swift,” said Lt. Col. Richard J. Ikena Jr., commander of the regiment. “The battalion will continue to fully support Staff Sgt. Swift's family and teammates through these challenging times.”

Swift is originally from Charlotte, Michigan, and arrived at Fort Riley in November 2013. He joined the Army in 2006.

His awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, the Army Good Conduct Medal,

the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two campaign stars, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon and the NATO Medal.

Swift deployed to South Korea in 2007, Germany in 2010 and Afghanistan in 2009 and again in 2011.

The Junction City Police Department is working with the Fort Riley Criminal Investigation Command to investigate the death. Officials didn't give any details on how he died.

On Aug. 19, Pvt. John

SEE NO. 3, BACK PAGE

COLLISION



Staff photo by Taylor Irby

Firefighters work to stabilize the Riley County Seniors' Services Center on Friday after a car hit the building. Riley County police said the driver wasn't injured in the crash. Police declined to identify the driver because the didn't issue a citation.

MCC to open its first gym at ceremony next week

NO. 1, FROM PAGE B1

10 a.m. Friday, Sept. 15. The beauty retailer is taking the space formerly occupied by the mall's food court.

The products provided by Ulta include makeup, skincare, fragrances, haircare, professional hair tools, nail and the Ulta Beauty Collection.

New neighbor

A new gaming store has found a home in downtown Manhattan.

Owners of The Village Geek plan to open in the former Pigns BBQ space at 105 N. Third St. in October, said Gina Scroggs, executive director of Downtown Manhattan Inc.

This will be the company's second location. The first is in McPherson.

The store will sell new and used video games and board games, as well as comics, toys and collectibles.

More sales

After five straight months of decline, the downtrend in Manhattan's sales tax revenue halted ever so slightly with a 0.686 percent increase in August compared to August 2016.

The city had \$935,312 in sales tax revenue, according to the August sales tax report from the state, which reflects revenue distributed from June sales.

This is an increase of \$6,374 from August 2016's sales tax revenue of \$928,938.

Through the first

eight months of 2017, sales tax revenue is about \$7.12 million, a decrease of 2.59 percent or \$189,526 from \$7.31 million received during the same time period in 2016.

Overall, the city has received \$286,850 less in sales tax revenue than budgeted through August.

City servants

The Manhattan City Commission approved the following board appointments during its Aug. 15 meeting:

■ **Michelle Chance-Reay**, 3026 Cherry Road, has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Livie Olsen on the Arts and Humanities Advisory Board. Her term began immediately and will end March 31, 2018.

■ **P.J. Hopfinger**, 1632 McCain Lane, and **Glen Buickerood**, 2051 Kerr Drive, have been appointed to fill one-year student terms on the City-University Special Projects Fund Committee. Both of their terms began immediately and will end June 30, 2018.

■ **Stan Morgan**, 2112 Buckner Drive, has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Stephanie Morris on the Human Rights and Services Board. His term began immediately and will end March 9, 2018.

■ **Curt Herrman**, 3405 Woodduck Way, has been appointed to fill the unexpired USD 383 term of Leah Fliter on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. His term began immediately and will end June 30, 2019.

K-State alumni mural pays tribute to campus

NO. 2, FROM PAGE B1

Association. "The Alumni Center was designed to serve as a welcoming home base for alumni and friends returning to campus. The many artifacts and memorabilia displayed throughout the facility are reminders of K-State's traditions and this new mural now serves as a centerpiece for our heritage."

The Alumni Center selected Gilbert to design the mural through a 2016 contest. The competition had one guideline: create a drawing of classic K-State icons showcasing the university's tradition and history.

Gilbert said he walked around campus to take in the scenery and the essence before making his design.

"Some of the features in (the design) are inspired by little bitty nuances around campus," he said. "I just used that as inspiration to design it."

He said he originally used Bill Snyder Family Stadium as a focal point, but decided to take it out and focus more on campus because there is more to

K-State than athletics. "There's so much more here," he said. "We focused on the more important parts of student life," he said. "It has a little bit of all things... the beauty of campus, the age, the future and the past."

A team from Rayer's Bearden Stained Glass in Wichita created the mural from Gilbert's design using about 5,000 hand-cut pieces of colored glass. The Comptons' company, Compton Construction Services, made the wood framework for the mural and was responsible for the installation at the Alumni Center.

"We are passionate about K-State and very pleased in the way Marcus's design captures the beauty of campus and the pride alumni have for K-State," the Comptons said. "Rayer's Bearden Stained Glass did a masterful job in translating the design and handcrafting it into the stained glass mural. We are honored to be able to pay tribute to K-State in this way and to share this work of art with all who visit the K-State Alumni Center."

Fort soldier found dead

NO. 3, FROM PAGE B1

Martinez, 19, was found unresponsive in his barracks room and was transported to Irwin Army Community Hospital, where he was later declared dead. The incident remains under investigation by the Fort Riley Criminal Investigation Command office.

Three other Fort Riley deaths all involved shootings.

Spc. Richard Cox, an indirect fire infantryman, died from a gun-

shot wound on Aug. 16 at Stormont Vail Hospital. Officials haven't released details on the circumstances of the shooting.

Spc. Peter Robbins, a field artillery Firefinder radar operator with the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, was shot by police in Junction City on Aug. 9.

Staff Sgt. Alejandro Jonathan Franquiz was found dead in his car from a self-inflicted gunshot wound in Geary County on July 31.

K-State monitoring review of Title IX rules

Staff and wire reports

K-State is monitoring the U.S. Department of Education's plan to review President Obama-era policies on Title IX related to sexual assault, the university said in a statement on Friday.

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos declared on Thursday that "the era of 'rule by letter' is over" as she announced plans to change the way colleges and universities handle allegations of sexual assault on campus.

"As the Department of Education moves through the public no-

tion and comment process on Title IX, Kansas State University will monitor this process and will remain in compliance with the law," K-State officials said.

DeVos vowed to replace a set of rules enacted by the Obama administration in a 2011 memo known as the "Dear Colleague" letter, which she said created a system that failed students.

"Instead of working with schools on behalf of students, the prior administration weaponized the Office for Civil Rights to work against schools and against students," she said in

a speech at George Mason University.

DeVos repeatedly spoke about protecting the rights of both victims and students who are accused of sexual assault, saying the conversation has wrongly been framed as "a contest between men and women."

She didn't detail how the rules will change but said her office will seek feedback from the public and universities to develop new rules.

As of July, K-State was under federal investigation for five alleged Title IX violations related to its handling of reports of

sexual assault among students.

K-State is also the focus of two federal civil lawsuits from former students Tessa Farmer and Sara Weckhorst, alleging the university did not investigate when they reported they were raped at off-campus fraternities. The students have argued the law requires K-State to perform those investigations.

K-State contends it's not required to investigate off-campus assaults.

Jared Gihring was recently sentenced to nearly 13 years in prison for raping Weckhorst.

Former KSU director: Expose yourself to info

Alec Hathaway
Contributing writer

Today we have the benefits of a robust multiple media system that is great for our communities, Everette Dennis told students of Kansas State University on Thursday.

Dennis, CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar and a former interim director of K-State's Miller School of Journalism, spoke on Global Media in the Digital Age at the Leadership Stud-

ies Building on campus.

"The worst thing in the world is to just reiterate your own prejudices," he said. "Expose yourself to knowledge and information because only then will you understand the bigger picture of what's going on in the world."

Dennis touched on topics from social media advancements to comments that President Trump has made in regard to the media and how those comments can shape the public's view

of the media.

"Digital convergence of all media makes it hard to catch up," he said. "These days you can't tell the difference between radio stations and television stations. Once you go online you'll hear podcast on the television stations, and you'll see videos on the radio stations web page."

Dennis also said technology allows "enhanced freedom of expression."

K-State provost and

senior vice president April Mason organized the lecture.

"Global media sources are all around us, touching our lives in nearly everything we do," Mason said. "How can we develop the skills to evaluate all the information we receive to help form our own opinions? I think we heard from Dr. Dennis how important that is."

Alec Hathaway is a student in the Miller School of Journalism at K-State.

House sends \$15B Harvey aid bill, debt hike to Trump

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House voted overwhelmingly on Friday to send a \$15.3 billion disaster aid package to President Donald Trump, overcoming conservative ob-

jections to linking the emergency legislation to a temporary increase in America's borrowing authority. The legislation also keeps the government funded into December.

The 316-90 vote would

refill depleted emergency accounts as Florida braces for the impact of Hurricane Irma this weekend and Texas picks up the pieces after the devastation of the Harvey storm. All 90 "no" votes were cast by Republicans.

It's just the first installment of a federal aid package that could rival or exceed the \$110 billion federal response after Hurricane Katrina, though future aid packages may be more difficult to pass.

MHS ACT scores top state, national average

NO. 4, FROM PAGE B1

to 29 percent in the nation.

USD 383 said 281 students took the test and earned an average score of 22.4 in English, 22.9 in math, 23.7 in reading and 23.2 in science.

Statewide, 24,741 students took the test and earned an average score of 21.1 in English, 21.3 in math, 22.3 in reading, and 21.7 in science.

Although MHS outperformed the state, it saw a decrease in its composite score compared

to 2016, when MHS students averaged a composite of 24. The school also saw a decrease in the percentage of students reaching all four benchmarks, 43 percent compared to 48 percent the year before.

"For us to improve as a district, it is imperative that we be as transparent with our relative shortcomings as we are with our successes," said superintendent Marvin Wade. "The two test (years) involve different sets of students, yet the reality is we want significantly higher per-

centages of our students to leave USD 383 ready to be successful lifelong learners, earners and citizens."

Wade said the school district will analyze data from the ACT report and focus on indicators of student preparation to help the school district make decisions on how to improve college and career readiness.

"I am proud of our students, teachers and parents, and look forward to the many successes we'll celebrate together in the future," he said.



State Employees

Help enrich our lives.

State of Kansas employees share our state's great history, keep us safe on our highways, help us enjoy our state parks, and offer many other valuable services.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas supports state workers with worry-free coverage, access to the broadest provider network, and assistance from Kansans serving Kansans.



75
Years

Commitment • Compassion • Community

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S TRIBUTE TO K-STATE

On Sept. 2, the K-State Alumni Association unveiled a stained-glass mural paying tribute to four iconic buildings on campus — buildings that represent K-State's history and tradition, academic excellence, student life, and campus beauty. The stained glass masterpiece is the newest K-State artifact on display at the Alumni Center and is located on the first floor. The mural, entitled "A Spot I Love Full Well," was made possible through the generosity of Gib Compton '80 and Brenda Schneider Compton '77 of Park City, Kansas. Read more on page 10.





2017 donor reception and mural unveiling