

JAYHAWKS HAVE A BALL WITH SPECIAL OLYMPIANS

Sports, 1C



USA TODAY

Water crisis center stage at Democratic debate. **1B**

LAWRENCE

JOURNAL-WORLD®

\$1.00

MONDAY • MARCH 7 • 2016

LJWorld.com

An ash tree epidemic

City implementing up to 10-year plan to fight insects

By Nikki Wentling

Twitter: @nikkiwentling

Lawrence's horticulture and forestry manager, a 34-year veteran of the Parks and Recreation Department, is "kind of passionate about trees," at the least, she said.

A certified arborist since the 1980s, Crystal Miles has helped grow and maintain the urban forest in Lawrence, which has been part of The Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program for the past 37 years. Now, Miles and the rest of the horticulture and forestry staff are working to keep that designation by battling an epidemic that will kill all of the city's ash trees — including the thousands in the public right-of-way — in the next eight to 10 years.

"The thing I want to encourage us to think about is if we do nothing, they're all going to die, and we're going to have to cut them all down."

— Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Mark Hecker

"I call it catastrophic," Miles said.

Last Tuesday, the Lawrence City Commission unanimously — though reluctantly — approved spending \$238,540 this year on treating, removing and replacing ash trees infected with emerald ash borers.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture confirmed in October that the insect, a small beetle that's been spreading from Michigan since 2002, was present in Douglas County.

The female emerald ash borers are expected to emerge in April and lay

Please see TREES, page 2A



Mike Yoder/Journal-World Photo

LAWRENCE CITY FORESTER MIKE PERRYMAN USES A TRIMBLE, a hand-held mapping device, to inventory ash trees in the city's right-of-way Friday at Prairie Park. The Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department will be treating, removing and replacing ash trees over the next eight years as the city combats the emerald ash borer infestation.

Language barrier can sometimes slow down legal system

By Conrad Swanson

Twitter: @Conrad_Swanson

On Thursday, Navinkumar Patel, accused of stabbing his wife last summer at a Lawrence motel, pleaded no contest to felony charges of attempted second-degree murder and criminal threats.

Thursday was the court's fourth attempt to hear Patel's plea after his first plea hearing in late January was rescheduled because of a language barrier.

Patel, a native of India, speaks Gujarati and requires an interpreter to translate court proceedings.

A third attempt on the plea from Patel in late February was also pushed back because his attorney, John Kerns, said he needed more time to work with his client and the interpreter had limited availability.

Douglas County District Court often requires the use of interpreters, said Court Administrator Linda Koester-Vogelsang. More often than not the court needs someone to translate court proceedings to and from Spanish, but it's not unheard of for less common languages to need translating.

Please see LANGUAGE, page 4A



Patel

Lecompton man refuses to surrender to incurable brain condition

By Elvyn Jones

Twitter: @ElvynJ

Experience has taught Ron Collette that life is easier when he carries a cane.

It's not that the Lecompton resident needs one to get around. He is proud that at 58 years old he is eight years beyond a doctor's prediction of the age at which he would be permanently dependent on a wheelchair. The cane serves as a visual cue to others that his unsteady gait is not what it might seem to be.

"I had an officer try to write me up for DUI," he said. "He saw me at a gas pump and followed me into the store.

He thought I was drunk."

He had similar exchanges when he and his wife of 36 years, Denise, followed their now-grown son's and daughter's Perry-Lecompton High School sports teams. Event staff or security would pull him aside and ask if he was OK, obviously thinking he was intoxicated.

Ron said he often leans on another ruse when strangers ask about his incurable condition. He tells them he has multiple sclerosis. That's something they've heard of and can relate to, unlike the cerebellar atrophy he was diagnosed with 32 years ago. After being checked out by multiple neurologists,

Please see BRAIN, page 5A



Nick Krug/Journal-World Photo

LECOMPTON RESIDENT RON COLLETTE

has a rare brain condition and was told that he would be in a wheelchair by the age of 50. Now 58, Collette relies on a walking stick at times but is still on his feet. He is pictured in his home that he shares with his wife, Denise.

Afternoon storm



High: 72 Low: 59
Today's forecast, page 8A

INSIDE

Classified	5C-9C	Horoscope	6A	Television	6A, 8A
Comics	10C	Opinion	7A	USA Today	1B-8B
Deaths	2A	Puzzles	6A		
Events listings	8A	Sports	1C-5C		

Join us at Facebook.com/LJWorld and Twitter.com/LJWorld

Caucus lessons

5 things we learned from Saturday's Kansas Republican and Democratic caucuses. **Page 5A**

Vol.158/No.67
26 pages



GET UP TO A

\$70

COOPERTIRES PREPAID CARD

WHEN YOU BUY A NEW SET OF 4 QUALIFYING TIRES

COOPERTIRES TAKE THE MONEY AND RIDE 3/1/16 - 4/15/16

AND BUY 3 GET 1 FREE

ON SELECT IN-STOCK TIRES WITH INSTALLATION PURCHASE

*Reward Card eligibility is limited to tire purchases from participating dealers only. See redemption form for complete offer details. Offer expires 4/15/2016 Void where prohibited. The Reward Card cannot be reloaded with additional funds, nor can it be used at an ATM. Reward Card expires six (6) months after issuance. No cash access. Fees apply. For complete terms, conditions and fees, see the Cardholder Agreement in your card package. Reward Card issued by U.S. Bank National Association pursuant to a license from MasterCard International Incorporated. MasterCard is a registered trademark of MasterCard International Incorporated.

BIG TIRES

THE TEAM YOU TRUST™

www.bigotires.com

SPECIAL FINANCING AVAILABLE*

*See store for details

4661 W. 6TH LAWRENCE, KS 785.830.9090

2735 SW WANAMAKER TOPEKA, KS 785.271.0194

Mon-Fri 7am-6pm Sat 7am-5pm Sun 9am-4pm (in Lawrence)

On select in-stock Cooper Discoverer RTX and Sumitomo HTR A/S P02 tires. Installation charges extra. Up to 10% shop fee based on non-discounted retail price, not to exceed \$35. Disposal fees, where permitted. See store for pricing. Eligibility may vary depending on tire size and model. Not valid with other offers. At participating locations. Expires 3/20/16.