

PLENTY OF PAWN PLAYING

State chess whiz takes on 24 from Nickerson, **A3**



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WILDCATS PONCE

K-State kicks off season by clobbering S. Dakota **D1**



IT'S ALL BLUE AT KU

Jayhawks get jacked by Rabbits to open new era **D1**



After scoring 27 runs in two games, KC bats go cold in 2-game losing streak **D1**

Milo mania is money for Shield Ag, **C1**



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BUSINESS	C1



INTERCEPTED LETTER

Zach Short, hurt in farm accident

Dear Zach,

You are proof that miracles happen and prayers are answered.

Yours, Hutch

A harvest miracle

Farm community, family see effect of prayer after accident



Lindsey Bauman/The Hutchinson News

Zach Short is pictured with his wife, Jodi, and 2-year-old daughter, Brynlee, at their rural Assaria home on July 28. Zach is recovering from an Oct. 25, 2014, farm accident that cost him his legs and nearly his life.

By AMY BICKEL
Kansas Agland

A priest stood over Zach Short — who lay in a coma in a hospital in Wichita — ready to give him the last rites.

Zach wasn't breathing. His heart had stopped. So had his kidneys. His lungs were filling with fluid.

"We didn't know if he was going

to make it," his wife, Jodi, said softly. That night the doctor told her Zach was going to pass slowly; that his numbers were going to start to drop, she said.

Friends came in to say their good-byes, thinking this would be the last time they'd ever see their friend alive, three days after a farm accident sent 7,200 volts through his body.

Yet, in a rural community centered

on faith, along with a rich agriculture tradition, folks never stopped praying.

Every day at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., farmers parked their equipment during the busy season of fall planting and harvest to pray. A sign welcoming people to Zach's hometown of Assaria urged people to pray.

See **MIRACLE** / A6



Aaron Anders/Salina Journal

Hundreds of friends and family wait in the cold, windy weather in Assaria to see the return of Zach Short from the hospital on Oct. 24, 2014.

KANSAS AGLAND

Our fall issue of Kansas Agland examines how Zach Short and his family came through a horrific trial with the love, support and prayers of an extended community.

Kansas Agland publishes five times a year. It is produced by The Hutchinson News, Salina Journal, The Hays Daily News and The Garden City Telegram.

To read the current edition featuring "A harvest miracle," visit KansasAgland.com. More photos and video are also available online.

To subscribe to our free publication, email sbass@hutchnews.com. Kansas Agland covers 66 Kansas counties and is mailed to nearly 30,000 farmers.



Lindsey Bauman/The Hutchinson News

Right: Steve Peeples, President of Peoples Prosthetics, follows along behind Zach Short as he walks on his prosthetic legs on Aug. 25 in Wichita.

INSIDE

How to help the Shorts, **A6**
Electricity ranks sixth for occupational deaths, **A6**
Woman scalped by auger urges caution in dangerous field, **A8**

New USD 308 school boundaries to address disparity, cuts

By MARY CLARKIN
The Hutchinson News
mclarkin@hutchnews.com

Last fall, the average first-grade class size at Morgan Elementary School, 100 W. 27th, was about 25 students. Wiley Elementary School, 900 W. 21st, had an average first-grade classroom size of 15 students.

The distance between the two schools: Less than a mile and a half. Before the end of 2015, Hutchinson USD 308 Board of Education will

INSIDE

Q&A with USD 308 Superintendent Shelly Kiblinger, **A4**
Map of boundaries, **A4**
Schedule of meetings, **A4**

The boundaries will take effect for the 2016-17 year. Driving the new boundaries is the

desire to cut district spending and reduce the enrollment disparity.

"This is mainly about efficiencies," said USD 308 School Board President Jeff Nichols.

The district has "fewer and fewer dollars," he said, and "we have got to do something to equalize the number of students in buildings."

There is little room for major housing developments within USD 308 and projections point to shrinking enrollment. In 2014-15, Hutchinson's K-through-12 enrollment stood at 4,768.

By 2019-20, it is forecast to dip to 4,577.

Last school year, Hutchinson USD parents and school district employees met in a series of meetings to discuss the best way to save costs at the elementary level. The most preferred option was to remove one track of kindergarten-through-6 classes at McCandless Elementary School, 700 N. Baker.

That would enable the district to eliminate seven teaching positions. Assuming salary and benefits equal

See **SCHOOL** / A4

CONGRATULATIONS!

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