



INDEPENDENT ELLSWORTH COUNTY REPORTER

Fall sports are here!
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Crime stats follow Kansas trends

BY JENNIFER MCDANIEL
Ellsworth County I-R

While Ellsworth County as a whole appears to be following a state trend when it comes to violent and property crimes, the incidence of becoming the victim of a serious felony crime continues to remain relatively low here — shared only with some of Kansas' most rural counties.

Earlier this month, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation released its 2019 Kansas Crime Index Report, compiling crime statistics reported by state and local law-enforcement agencies across Kansas. Data found in the report is derived from standard offense and arrest reports submitted to the Kansas Incident Based Reporting System by local law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

The report not only shows the number of reported index crimes occurring in Ellsworth County and its individual communities last year, but shows the rate of these crimes occurring per 1,000 people. Index crimes are separated into two categories: violent and property.

Offenses falling into the violent category include murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault/battery. Burglary, theft and motor-vehicle theft are classified as property crimes. According to state officials, the crime index rate is defined as the total number of index crimes per 1,000 people.

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2019 state report shows fewer crimes

BY JENNIFER MCDANIEL
Ellsworth County I-R

A recent crime index report from the Kansas Bureau of Investigation indicates the state's overall crime rate dropped last year.

That's the good news.

But a closer look at the data shows violent crime not only increased in Kansas from 2018 to 2019, but came in well above the state's 10-year average.

The 2019 Kansas Crime Index Report, released earlier this month, compiles crime statistics reported to the KBI by state and local law-enforcement agencies across Kansas. Data found in the report is derived from standard offense and arrest reports submitted to the Kansas Incident Based Reporting System by local law enforcement agencies across Kansas.

According to state officials, the crime index rate is defined as the total number of index crimes per 1,000 people. Last year, the state's crime index rate dropped from 31.4 in 2018 to 29.3 last year.

Index crimes are separated into two categories: violent and property. Offenses falling into the violent category include murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault/battery. Burglary, theft and motor-vehicle theft are considered property crimes.

Violent Crime

A total of 12,694 violent crimes were reported in Kansas last year,

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BILL BECKMEYER/Ellsworth County Independent-Reporter
Kindergartners at EES enjoy some sunshine on their first day of school.

Classes started this past week in the Ellsworth-Kanopolis-Geneseo School District for the 2020-21 academic year. To students, teachers and other district staff ...

Welcome Back



BILL BECKMEYER/Ellsworth County Independent-Reporter
Back into the swing of things. EES kindergartners take a break from classes to enjoy time outside.

Insurance Building prepared for another round of updates

BY LINDA MOWERY-DENNING
Ellsworth County I-R

Downtown Ellsworth's signature Insurance Building is back on track for renovation.

Construction is expected to start Nov. 1 on the interior of a local landmark that dates back to a time when large ranches dotted the countryside.

Dru Richard, treasurer of the National Drovers Hall of Fame board of directors, said officials recently signed a contract with Doubrava Woodworking, Inc., for the first phase of the interior renovation.

Work will include:
• Demolition of the remaining old first floor, presently at ground level.
• Removal of the existing basement plaster.
• Tuck and point of basement walls up to the level of the original first floor, four feet above ground level.
• Installation of new basement concrete.

The work is funded by a \$69,840 Heritage Trust Fund Grant through the Kansas



State Historical Society and \$17,450 in matching donations to the Hall of Fame, owners of the building.

The first phase is expected to be finished by the end of January. That wasn't the original plan, but the coronavirus delayed the project for several months, Richard said.

"We had hoped to be done by November, yet here we are just starting."

This will be the second grant Drovers has received from the Kansas State Historical Society. The first one, more than a decade ago, was combined with a major

contribution from Central Kansas rancher Jack Vanier to stabilize the building and restore the distinctive oriel, which helps define the character of Douglas Avenue.

Richard, who also is active in the Ellsworth County Historical Society, compared the Insurance Building to a society project finished several years ago. He said enthusiasm for the historical society project, a building with a meeting room and other features, accelerated after people began to see activity.

There will still be a ways to

go after the first phase of the interior renovation is finished and Drovers will need support to move forward, Richard said.

"The next step in the project is to install [a] new first floor, which is estimated to cost over \$50,000. Another grant will be applied for in 2021 for 2022 for this phase of the project," he said.

The project has changed over the years. At one time, the design called for two other Douglas Avenue buildings to be used for the Hall of Fame, a tribute to the men and women of the cattle industry.

The purpose remains, Richard said, however, the focus is now on the Insurance Building, which will eventually house displays and a small theater.

"It will be a nice facility," he added.

The Insurance Building was built in 1887 by Frank Easterly and at one time housed the Powers Bank, a major financial player in the cattle industry.

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006.