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PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ALEX SCHMIDT

Approximately 70 local residents gathered at the intersection of South 8th and Main streets on March 28 to participate in the third national "No Kings" protest. The event was part of a coordinated day of action involving more than 3,200 communities nationwide.

Osage residents join third national 'No Kings' protest

BY SHAELY ODEAN
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Local residents gathered at the intersection of South 8th Street and Main Street on Saturday, March 28, marking the third time Mitchell County has joined the national No Kings movement to protest the current

presidential administration.

The event was part of a coordinated national day of action involving over 3,200 communities. Protesters in Osage described the gathering as a peaceful defense of democracy against what they characterize as a shift toward autocratic rule and unjust federal policies.

Alex Schmidt, a local organizer

and candidate for the Iowa House of Representatives in District 60, noted that despite Mitchell County's history of voting for Donald Trump, the local resistance has seen steady growth since its inception in early 2025.

PROTEST to page 10

Russell earns national recognition again as Becker's names MCRHC CEO among top leaders

For the fourth time, Shelly Russell has been recognized on a national stage for her leadership at Mitchell County Regional Health Center.

Russell, CEO of MCRHC, was recently named to the "Top CEOs to Know" list by Becker's Hospital Review, one of the nation's leading healthcare publications. The honor highlights influential hospital and health system leaders across the country and marks Russell's fourth time receiving the distinction.

To celebrate the milestone, Betty McCarthy, president of the MCRHC Board, presented Russell with a Leadership Excellence Award during a recent board meeting. The recognition acknowledged not only the national honor but also Russell's continued commitment to the organization and the community it serves.

Under Russell's leadership, MCRHC has continued to focus on expanding access to care, strengthening services, and supporting both patients and staff across Mitchell County. Board members noted that her steady vision and dedication have played a key role in positioning the organization for long-term success in an evolving healthcare landscape. The Becker's "Top CEOs to



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Betty McCarthy (left) presents a Leadership Excellence Award to Shelly Russell following Russell's fourth selection to the "Top CEOs to Know" list by Becker's Hospital Review at Mitchell County Regional Health Center.

Know" list is widely regarded as a benchmark of leadership excellence in healthcare, recognizing executives who demonstrate innovation, operational strength, and a commitment to improving patient outcomes.

For MCRHC and the Osage

community, Russell's recognition reflects both individual achievement and the broader strength of local healthcare — a point of pride for the organization as it continues to serve the region.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

After investigating a claim on social media that a woman believed she was being followed after leaving the CRC, officials say they did not observe any behavior that indicate an immediate threat.

Officials say no threat found after reported incident

BY CHRIS C. NELSON
Publisher, The Osage Oracle

Leaders in the community said a widely shared social media post describing a late-night encounter near the Cedar River Complex appears to be a misunderstanding, and emphasized that the CRC remains a safe, welcoming place for the community.

The post, which circulated quickly online, described a woman who believed she was being followed by someone after leaving the CRC. The situation prompted concern throughout our area and led staff to immediately reviewing surveillance footage from the exterior of their building.

"We started looking into it right away," said Nicole Dodd, director of the CRC. "As soon as we were alerted to the post, a staff member went right in to work to review our footage so we could get all pertinent information to the authorities."

Dodd said she first became aware of the situation through shared screenshots of the social media post. Because the CRC's camera system cannot be accessed remotely, staff coordinated an in-building review of the footage that same evening.

A Core Team Member at the CRC, reviewed the video and said it took time to establish a clear timeline of events.

"I wasn't sure of the exact timing at first," staff said. "But I was able to track when she arrived and what happened afterward."

According to the video footage, it shows the woman entering the building's vestibule but not proceeding into the 24 hour gym facility before returning outside.

"She had fobbed into the 24 Hour Fit Gym door, but didn't actually open the door to go inside," staff said. "She ended up back outside and was walking around the park and school area."

About an hour to an hour and a half later is when the person in question shows up on the video footage. Video surveillance showed the man referenced in the post appeared later in the evening, walking a dog, then resting on a bench near the property. They were wearing what appeared to

be a long black skirt and black jacket."

After reviewing the footage, the staff said they did not observe behavior that would indicate an immediate threat. The person walking the dog rested on the bench and walked the dog around the parking lot.

The video footage did not show them circling the vehicle or getting close enough to approach her. "There was always distance between them — probably close to 100 feet — and the person in question did not appear to follow her, but rather just exited the way they entered the area," said the CRC Staff.

While the surveillance system does not capture audio, making it impossible to confirm whether anything was said between the two individuals, staff said the visual evidence does not support the level of concern expressed in the original social media post.

"We can't speak to what may have been said," they said. "But visually, we didn't see anything that suggested there was potential for harm."

Dodd said she believes that the person sharing the information on social media likely was frightened upon realizing that she was not alone in the area. It is important to recognize that when individuals feel uneasy in certain situations, it's important to follow your instincts.

"I don't feel like this particular encounter is one that should make the community feel fearful that there is a person looking to do harm to others here in Osage," she said. "But if someone feels uncomfortable, that matters. She urges people to do their best to work right away with the proper authorities and to always try to document the specifics of any incident as soon as possible while the details are fresh in your mind."

CRC staff said the facility has multiple layers of security in place, including extensive camera coverage both inside and outside the building.

"We have cameras throughout the entire building and outside the facility," said Emily Ruehlow,

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