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ONLINE EDITION:
www.coffeycountyonline.com

Death Notices

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- ☐ Dean Evans, 91
- ☐ Sue Knapp, 79
- ☐ Lloyd Kraft, 91
- ☐ Leoma Massey, 68
- ☐ Allan Worley, 74

Average Gas Prices

Week ending March 3, 2020

Kansas Nation

\$2.17/gal. \$2.42/gal

▼ 5.3 cents ▼ 4.4 cents
KansasGasPrices.com

Public Notices

Pages 8 and 9

- ☐ Stephen Evans vs. Marietta Evans - Notice of Suit.
- ☐ Kristin Lewis vs. Andrew Lewis - Notice of Suit.
- ☐ Estate of Evelyn J. Kimmell - Notice to Creditors.
- ☐ Coffey County - Invitation to Bid 30% Magnesium Chloride.
- ☐ Coffey County - Invitation to Bid Asphalt Cold Mix Patching Material.
- ☐ Coffey County - Advertisement for Bids, 2020 Bridge Deck Repair and Resurfacing.
- ☐ In the Interest of Shiann La'Nae Morrison - Notice of Hearing.
- ☐ RJ Energy - Notice of Filing Application.
- ☐ Coffey County - Notice of Intent to Dispose of 2001 John Deere Tractor 6410.
- ☐ Coffey County - Invitation to Bid Self-Propelled Road Sweeper.
- ☐ Coffey County - Invitation to Bid Mowing Four Parcels.
- ☐ Lebo Garage Towing - Notice of Public Auction.
- ☐ USD 245 - Public Notice to Fill Board Vacancy for Remainder of Unexpired Term.
- ☐ USD 245 - Public Notice to Fill Board Vacancy Until the Next General Election.

Access public notices throughout Kansas at www.kansaspublicnotices.com

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The official newspaper of Coffey County

Burlington, New Strawn, Lebo, Gridley, LeRoy, Waverly, and Hartford

Lebo-Waverly USD 243
Burlington USD 244
LeRoy-Gridley USD 245



State Wrestling

Burlington wrestlers competed in both the historic KSHSAA Girls' Inaugural State Championship and the boys' Class 4A State Championship Feb. 27-29, with one boy earning a state medal.

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Coffey Health System finalist for AHA Rural Hospital Leadership Award

The American Hospital Association (AHA) recently announced Cody Regional Health (CRH) in Cody, Wyo. as the 2019 recipient of the Rural Hospital Leadership Award. AHA also recognized Coffey Health System, Burlington, serving the east-central Kansas community, and Hill Country Memorial (HCM) in Fredericksburg, Texas and as finalists for the award.

AHA Rural Hospital Leadership Award recognizes small or rural hospital leaders who guide their hospital and community through transformational change on the road to health care reform. They display outstanding leadership, responsiveness to their community's health needs and demonstrate a collaborative community process that has led to measurable outcomes. The award was presented at AHA's 33rd Rural Health Care Leadership Conference, Feb. 2-5, in Phoenix.

In Park County, where Cody Regional Health is located, heart disease was identified as the second highest cause of death, only second to cancer. CRH assessed data trends and partnered with Billings Clinic to build a conveniently located, high-quality cardiology center to reverse negative health outcomes affecting the community's cardiac health. CRH's interventional cardiology service helps to maintain continuity of care, lower readmissions and improve quality of life for the surrounding community. Over the past year, the cardiology program has grown through the successful recruitment of two full-time interventional cardiologists. To date, there have been over 130 cardiac catheterization procedures. CRH has not only addressed its community health needs by expanding access to specialty services, they have eliminated distance and travel as barriers to receiving care. This serves as an example of the many ways in which rural leaders are adapting to provide services most in need.

Hill Country Memorial (HCM)
Jayne Pope, CEO and her leadership team were recognized for their commitment to improving and expanding health coverage, ensuring health care is affordable and successfully leading transformative change for their hospital and community. HCM leadership launched the Salud for You (SFY) program partnering with local businesses to provide comprehensive health screenings, behavioral and dietary counselling and membership at the HCM Wellness Center. Due to the broad reach of the SFY program, 16 percent of



Photo submitted

A remarkable turnaround, high ratings and a cohesive leadership team contributed to Coffey Health System being a finalist for the American Hospital Association's Rural Hospital Leadership Award.

the uninsured population of Gillespie County have received services that otherwise were unavailable.

Coffey Health System

Leonard Hernandez is CEO of Coffey County Hospital, a 25-bed critical access hospital in the Coffey Health System serving the east-central Kansas community. Since 2014, the hospital has experienced zero reported surgical site infections, rolled out emergency department telemedicine services, and organized and implemented a charity care and assistance program for disadvantaged patients. Community members, trustees and more than 300 Coffey County Hospital employees came together to ensure the health system would be financially healthy while continuing to provide access to affordable, quality care in its community.

Five short years ago, Coffey County Hospital was nearly a statistic — another rural hospital closure on a map with far too many red pins. An unfortunate series of CEO turnovers and financial mismanagement left the organization with several million in debt. The board of trustees had voted to close the long-term care unit, leading to tension with community leaders and staff. To top it all off, 2014 saw a \$4 million loss and technology issues that haunt CHS even today.

Fast forward to a new CEO, new organization structure, and a board of trustees and county commission

working together to achieve financial stability. In 2018, finances broke even. Proving the outstanding clinical care, the hospital earned a CMS five-star rating in 2018 and a four-star rating in 2019, well above the national average. Coffey County Hospital also earned its first national accreditation in the hospital's 65-year history.

That same long-term care unit that was doomed to closure a few years ago now holds a CMS five-star rating and is ranked number one in Kansas according to the Great Plains Quality Improvement Network.

"When I came here in 2015, I wasn't drawn in by the buildings, equipment, or data sheets," Hernandez said. "Joni and I could immediately see that it is the people who make CHS a special place. Few can truly understand the precarious situation Coffey Health System found itself in six years ago, but I can assure you that the leadership staff sacrificed a great deal to assure that Coffey County Hospital would be here for generations to come."

Financial Turnaround

Since 2014, Coffey Health System's annual gross revenue grew more than 24 percent from \$31 million to \$41 million in 2018. Gross revenue for 2019 came in at \$43.4 million. Annual net revenue increased from \$21.8 in 2014 million to \$25.5 million in 2018.

See **Award**, Page 10

COFFEY COUNTY COMMISSION

County employees to get 2.3% 'market adjustment'

Mark Petterson
Managing Editor

BURLINGTON — Coffey County Commissioners on Monday decided all county employees will receive a 2.3 percent wage increase, effective April 1. The "market adjustment" is based on consumer price index figures on Jan. 1.

While discussing the market adjustment, commissioners acknowledged that 47 county employees are on step six of the wage and classification scale, which means they cannot advance any further based on years of service or merit.

The 2.3 percent increase amounts to approximately \$172,000 more in annual payroll expense for the county.

Chairman Cody Haddock presided at the meeting with a full board that also included County Commissioners Tom Huginin, Bob Saueressig, Don Meats and Fred Rowley. Others present were Payroll Benefits Coordinator Denise Humlicek, County Counselor Wade Bowie II, Administrative Assistant Donna Berland. Observing the meeting were Illa Weeks and County Treasurer Karen Malek.

Jarrold Ecton approached the board with drainage ditch concerns. Robert Harkrader, a private lands conservationist, presented commissioners maps of the area, located on Emmer Lane just north of Gridley. Harkrader said the water comes down the county road then jumps across a portion of Ecton's field to a draw.

Coffey County Engineer Wayne Blackburn said there really was no ditch to begin with and the county may have to purchase additional right of way to fix the problem. Ecton said he was willing to work with the county in fixing the problem and he would replace the fence.

Commissioners asked Blackburn,

See **County**, Page 9

COFFEY COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP Annual soup lunch is March 10

BURLINGTON — An annual soup luncheon has grown into a major fundraiser for the Coffey County Cancer Support Group (CCCSG). This is an all-volunteer group lending a helping hand to Coffey Countians fighting cancer, as well as their family members and caregivers. The soup luncheon, in its 10th year, will be 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, at the 4-H Building in Kelley Park, Burlington. All proceeds are used to help with expenses of local residents affected by cancer.

Cameron Roth will be doing a live auction of cinnamon rolls, pies and handcrafted items starting at 11:30. A week in Branson, donated by Mayor Stan and Linda Luke, will go on the auction block at 12:30 p.m. Other items are a three-foot tall cross made of horse-shoes, baby blankets, wooden

nativity sets, wooden bench, cutting boards and coat/hat wall hanger. Other items continue to be donated. If you aren't able to attend, send a bid with a friend.

Soups on the menu include vegetable, ham and bean, potato, chili, charro beans, chicken taco, chicken noodle, broccoli cheese and enchilada. Additional varieties of soups will be delivered the day of the event. The soups and desserts are prepared and served by members and friends of the group. Cost is \$5 for three soups and includes a dessert and drink, with dine in and carry-out service available. Soups available for delivery are chili, potato and vegetable.

Donations of crockpots or roasters of soup are welcome, and donors should call Martha Newkirk for more information at (620) 203-9010. To order soup

for delivery, contact Newkirk or Sherri O'Keefe (620) 203-0927.

The Coffey County Cancer Support Group is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization open to anyone currently fighting cancer, a caregiver or family member of someone fighting cancer, cancer survivors, anyone who has lost a loved one to cancer and anyone interested in helping the group. Monthly meetings are 7 p.m. the last Thursday of each month at the Burlington Branch Library meeting room. CCCSG helps cancer victims emotionally and financially by providing gas cards and assistance with medical or other bills. For more information about the support group or the soup luncheon, contact Rosie Riley (620) 490-0181, Newkirk (620) 203-9010 or O'Keefe (620) 203-0927.

Storm spotter training Tuesday

BURLINGTON — Anyone interested in learning more about severe weather and how to recognize it should plan to attend a storm spotter talk at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, at the 4-H Building, 605 S.

Third Street, Burlington. This is sponsored by the National Weather Service and Coffey County Emergency Management. For more information, contact CCEM at (620) 364-2721 or 800-947-4685.



NEW STRAWN CITY COUNCIL

Planning for Strawnfest 2020 continues

NEW STRAWN — The New Strawn City Council approved a motion at its Feb. 13 monthly meeting allowing Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC) to host its "Party in the Park" in conjunction with Strawnfest 2020 and the 50th Anniversary of the City of New Strawn.

Public planning meetings are being held to work out details for the June 20 celebration. The last meeting was held Tuesday, Feb. 25, at New Strawn City Hall. Council member Jeanne Haas said more electrical plug ins definitely will be needed this year. Areas will be marked where electricity will be needed and 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative will be contacted to coordinate electrical service for Strawnfest 2020.

Mayor Mark Petterson presided over the regular monthly meeting with council members Richard Croll, Gary Haehn, Rhonda Taylor, Jim Weeks and

Haas present. Others present were City Superintendent Ron Parkey, City Clerk Joni Hernandez, City Attorney Tom Robrahn, Zoning Administrator Martha Newkirk and County Commissioner Bob Saueressig.

The governing body met in a 15-minute executive session with City Attorney Robrahn to discuss job duties under the non-elected personnel exemption to the Kansas Open Meetings Act.

Croll reported the remodeling project at the community building is coming along. As of Feb. 13, sheetrock had been installed and painting will begin soon.

Weeks had a handout of pictures of buildings in need of attention. The chlorine room building and the "old" New Strawn water plant have over 40 years of chlorine that has worn and deteriorated the buildings. Repairing

and painting rusted areas was discussed as well as possibly replacing the building. Parkey stated a building with an 8' roof would be easier to maintain.

Taylor said the county has advised the city to be frugal with its salt mix as more quantities are not available at this time. She stated it is necessary to be reactive versus proactive until after winter weather season.

Haehn received a letter from Tammy Hughes, of Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, with a \$1,000 donation check for park improvement. Haehn said he would like to see Bermuda grass planted on the two islands at the city lake. Weeks recommended planting should take place the end of May or first of June.

In other action, the council approved:
✓ The Jan. 9 city council meeting

- minutes.
- ✓ Warrants dated Jan. 10 through Feb. 13 for \$80,697.07.
- ✓ January payroll for \$18,971.59.
- ✓ 2020 Contractor License for Abendroth Builders.
- ✓ A bid from National Sign Company, Inc., for street sign replacement not to exceed \$4,500 to be paid from Special Highway Fund.

Staff Reports

Parkey submitted a written report to the council, which included: shoveling the ends of culverts, straightening sign posts, getting electricity working at the Jones Park Shelter House, handling emergency locates, cleaning up snow, doing inventory, paperwork, making a list of street and traffic signs needing to be replaced, picking up a

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