

Commissioners discuss new option for Devlin Road

BY BARBARA PROFFITT  
LINN COUNTY NEWS  
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During the meeting of the Linn County Commissioners on March 10, Renee Slinkard of rural Parker, asked once again that the county look into the possibility of paving a three and half mile section of Devlin Road.

Slinkard told the commissioners, as she had previously, that the road section to which she referred has not only become a heavily travelled road but also provides a shorter route for local residents to Highway 169 and therefore quicker access to

medical care, especially in an emergency situation. Slinkard stated that she had asked about a grant before that would help cover the costs.

Slinkard presented a cost-share program that Linn and Miami County can apply for together to achieve the goal of having paved road access all the way to Highway 169.

Commissioner Alison Hamilton spoke on the history of the requests from Slinkard. County Commissioner Jason Hightower noted that though it aids residents of Parker and Centerville it doesn't address the county as a whole or create access for a majority. Hightower suggested speaking with AMR to see if there

is really a bottleneck issue in that area.

Hamilton noted again that Slinkard had come in several times and Hightower stated he thinks that they need to show a need. Hightower stated that it was put out for bid once before and bids came back at a higher cost than the county was willing to put out at that time for a project of that size. It was then noted that Slinkard had asked that a grant that was received by the county be used for Devlin Road and Hightower explained that the grant in question had already been set for work on CR-1095 prior to her request.

Commissioner Jim John-

son then stated, in reference to the cost share grant that Slinkard had mentioned, "I wonder if we reached out to Miami County on this deal and they would do so if it would give us a better chance of getting it."

Johnson added that AMR needs to be involved and give their opinion on the need for it and Hightower agreed.

"That's what I'm trying to say right now - we need to get our stuff together to apply for this grant," said Hightower and Hamilton added that she agreed.

Kevin Stoughton, who lives on Devlin Road, spoke in regards to the heavy traffic he sees these days. Stoughton

SEE **DEVLIN ROAD, A5**

Board votes to extend Meik contract

Ray Scholarship discussed at USD 344 board meeting

BY JACKIE TAYLOR  
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Meeting Monday night, again with a packed board room, the Board of USD 344 voted to extend Elementary Principal Nathan Meik's contract through the 2026/2027 school year in a 4-3 vote; board members Cindy Inman, Kay Hardy, Linda Conley and Meredith Johnson voted yes to keep Meik. The vote came after an extended 45-minute executive session held for non-elected personnel.

Also approved was the probationary hiring of one to two assistant track coaches, if needed, based on the number of students who turn out for the track season. As of the last count, 28 junior high students and 30 high school students showed interest in the upcoming spring track season.

Rob Bonham, representing 1<sup>st</sup> Wealth Management of Hutchinson, spoke to the

board updating them on the status of the Ray Scholarship that offers full-ride scholarships to students attending four-year schools.

Bonham said the Donald and Betty Ray Scholarship began with \$4.1 million in 2019 and is currently sitting at a value of \$3.8 million; he said \$700,000 in scholarships have been given out with more coming this spring.

He outlined that in 2020 \$24,000 in scholarships were distributed, 2021 \$79,000, 2022 \$263,000 and 2023 \$72,000. The large amount distributed in 2022 he explained as the account is making more money than they can distribute to students and money was transferred to a different account to avoid paying IRS penalties.

Due to the income the money is making, Bonham said that USD 344 can give four Ray Scholarships this year, they normally have given three.

What is different now from when the scholarship first started being distributed is the scholarship amount

SEE **SCHOLARSHIP, A3**

Blu-Jay pie dump



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Slime and pie were the items of the day at the annual American Heart Association for Finn's Challenge Fundraiser; \$700 was raised with left, PE teacher Mindy Schuler, Principal Nathan Meik and Superintendent Don Epps being the recipients of the pies. The challenge was held last week at Pleasanton USD 344.

Chili feed raises \$1,800 for pantry

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A chili and soup feed held to raise funds for the Reach Out food pantry in Prescott last Saturday, March 1, raised a total of \$1,800 in funds.

According to director Karen Springer, the benefit saw 11 pots of chili, seven pots of soup and one pot of ham and beans donated along with a myriad of desserts.

"We fed over 105 people that evening, and when it was over we had just two bowls of chili and a quart of soup left," said Springer of the event.

The funds raised will be used to help purchase food items for the pantry that are not otherwise provided, such as through the Kansas Food Bank or through private donations.

"Even the Kansas Food Bank is low on food right now," Springer added, "especially meat."

"It generally costs us \$1,200 to \$1,400 a month to keep the pantry stocked," she added, "so this will certainly help."

"We are so appreciative of all who donated food and time that evening and to everyone who came and gave so generously," she stated, adding, "and we appreciate all of our volunteers, both at the pantry and during events such as this."

If you would like to donate funds to the pantry please send them in care of Prescott City Hall, or contact Karen Springer.

St. Patrick's Day is this Monday! Happy green beer, corned beef & cabbage or whatever brings in Irish memories!

SEE **MINOR PLAT, A2**

Resident questions legal opinion on approved minor plat

BY BARBARA PROFFITT  
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On March 10, Jan Long-

necker spoke to the Linn County Commissioners regarding a legal opinion given at the previous meeting on March 3 on the minor plat that was approved by a former Planning and Zoning Administrator for a property near Parker. Longnecker began by stating he wasn't able to attend the March 3 meeting and added that it was 'disappointing.'

"I'm not sure the second opinion you got was on the handling of this particular plat," Longnecker said.

He then proceeded to address current county regulations and noted that the regulations, in particular Section 6.201a of the subdivision regulations, defines a minor plat as less than ten acres unless a larger acreage is approved by the planning commission.

"They (referring to the Planning commission) never approved 20-acres, in fact, they had already turned it down," stated Longnecker.

Longnecker then read the section of regulations in question as well as portion of the comprehensive plan that ties

directly to that section.

He then questioned the impression it leaves with county residents and stated that allowing this to stand would be "grossly unfair to landowners." Longnecker also stated that the action, or lack thereof, sends a message to developers.

The resident then reminded commissioners that three of the five lots created by the minor plat have already been sold.

Commissioners then discussed the matter with current Planning and Zoning Administrator Kent Harris and asked about building permits requested for that particular minor plat and Harris stated he would look into it.

Longnecker then asked Harris about the minor plat in question which he stated says that no dirt is to be moved for any reason on either side of an existing ravine and pointed out a new bridge has been built over the ravine.

"Who would give permission on that?" asked Long-

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Grace Naylor works with Jacoby Johnson on her InnoMark marketing business at the Youth Entrepreneur Challenge; she won the event and will represent USD 362 in Manhattan.

Youth Entrepreneur Challenge sends one to Manhattan

SUBMITTED BY CHASITY WARE  
LINN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR

March 4, 2025, the 3rd Annual YEC (Youth Entrepreneur Challenge) was held at the 4-H Building in Mound City. There were eight businesses (seven from Pleasanton and one from Prairie View for a total of 12 students).

The contest was sponsored by the county's Economic Development Committee and Network Kansas.

Grace Naylor, a senior from Prairie View won the event and was awarded \$1,000 and will represent Linn County at state YEC in Manhattan on April 17, 2025. Naylor had a marketing business titled InnoMark and was mentored by business teacher, Jacoby Johnson.

Second place was a business titled Barking Biscuits (bis-

cuits for dogs) that included students, Rees Chapman, Serenity Coen and Katlyn More from Pleasanton.

Third place was a business, Whiff and Wonder (perfume made with essential oils) that included students, Wyatt Carver, Shiloh Skipper and Lillian Williamson all from Pleasanton.

Other businesses included were Abanicos Almau (hand painted fans), Gavin Luxe (beaded bracelets), MA Delivery (homemade strawberry cheesecakes), Rooted Remedies (homemade salve) and Sewn Snuggles (tied fleece blankets).

We kicked the morning off with Erika Gilbert, Events by Erika, sharing her business path from a small-town Pleasanton girl, becoming a teacher and now completing requests by some of the big-

SEE **YEC, A2**

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**DEATHS**  
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