

Graduation weekend



Left, Jayhawk Linn graduates pop confetti after their ceremony held Saturday morning. The district graduated nearly 40 graduates this year. (See additional photos on Pg. B6.)



Right, Pleasanton High School graduate candidates give their moms flowers during their graduation ceremony held Saturday. (See additional photos on Pg. A6.)

Pleasanton requests 1-year automatic aid fire extension

Council opts to bolster fire department during grace period

BY JACKIE TAYLOR
LINN COUNTY NEWS
JACKIELCN1@GMAIL.COM

Continuing what ended in a tabled discussion two weeks ago on whether to keep or dissolve the Pleasanton Fire Department, the council met Monday night at the Community Center and again heard from the public speaking to save the city fire department. City Attorney Jacklyn Paletta explained to speakers that comments would be one-sided with the speaker sharing their ideas with the council not commenting back; rather, possibly placing something on the agenda for later discussion. After learning that several fire hydrants were bad in the city, a necessity for the fire department to gain, or maintain, a high rating with the ISO, Insurance Services Office (ISO) to assess a community's fire protection capabilities, city employee Jimmy Watts told the council that seven of nine hydrants work with thoughts that valves may need to be replaced in the two non-operational hydrants. The council discussed flushing the lines and asked that city crews flush them as required, twice a year, and make sure they run at

the required 500 gallons per minute flush rate. Watts said, "They've been neglected; it may take some time." Some in the audience asked what would happen to the funds collected yearly for the fire department and City Administrator Becky Hegwald said they could be placed in the police fund or used on any fund in the general fund — though she reiterated that the funds could not be used for streets. Paletta said reserve funds can be reallocated after debts are settled, i.e. firemen funds, after the budgeting session "as it is a legal process." Mayor Mathew Young then addressed rumors he'd heard and said, "It is not my intent to close the department; people deserve the best. If it's broke, let's fix it. I want the best solution; if it's not fixable, replace it. People deserve something that works." Councilwoman Angelina Randall told the audience that outfitting the firefighters could cost between \$5,000 to \$8,000 per complete turn-out gear set plus tools, etc. "The fire budget is \$22,000 per year and we have 22 slots for firefighters open. We have four firefighters right now. Radios cost \$1,000 to \$1,500 each." She then recounted ISO rat-

SEE AUTO AID, A2

Filing deadline approaches for local seats

BY TONY FURSE
LINN COUNTY NEWS
NEWSPAPERSRME@YAHOO.COM

Filing deadline is noon on June 2 for open positions on local city government and school district boards; as well as, for Linn County seats on the Marais des Cygnes K-State Research and Extension district board. Danielle Souza, county clerk, said that candidates can file for election at their city hall for municipal elections, with their unified district office for school board elections, and at the county extension office for the two Marais des Cygnes District positions, in all cases if the forms have been requested. As well, any candidate can file

directly at the county clerk's courthouse office. Souza said filing as dictated by the Kansas Secretary of State's office includes either a \$20 filing fee or a signed petition of not less than 50 electors residing in the same district. Municipal, school board, and K-State extension district elections are non-partisan. As compiled by Cheyenne Kern, county elections clerk, mayors and two council positions are up for election at both Linn Valley and Prescott. At the county's other five incorporated cities (Blue Mound, La Cygne, Mound City, Parker and Pleasanton), each has three council posts available. All three county unified

school districts have three four-year terms up for election. All three in Pleasanton USD 344 are at large, while both Jayhawk USD 346 and Prairie View USD 362 have district 4, 5, and 6 seats open. Four school board seats are also up for election in Anderson County USD 365, which affects Linn County only in a very small sliver in the northwest corner north of West 2200 Road between Ayers Road and the Anderson County line. Souza said that an Aug. 5 primary election would be necessary if any of the positions has a slate equaling a formula of a multiple of three per position plus one. For instance, four mayoral

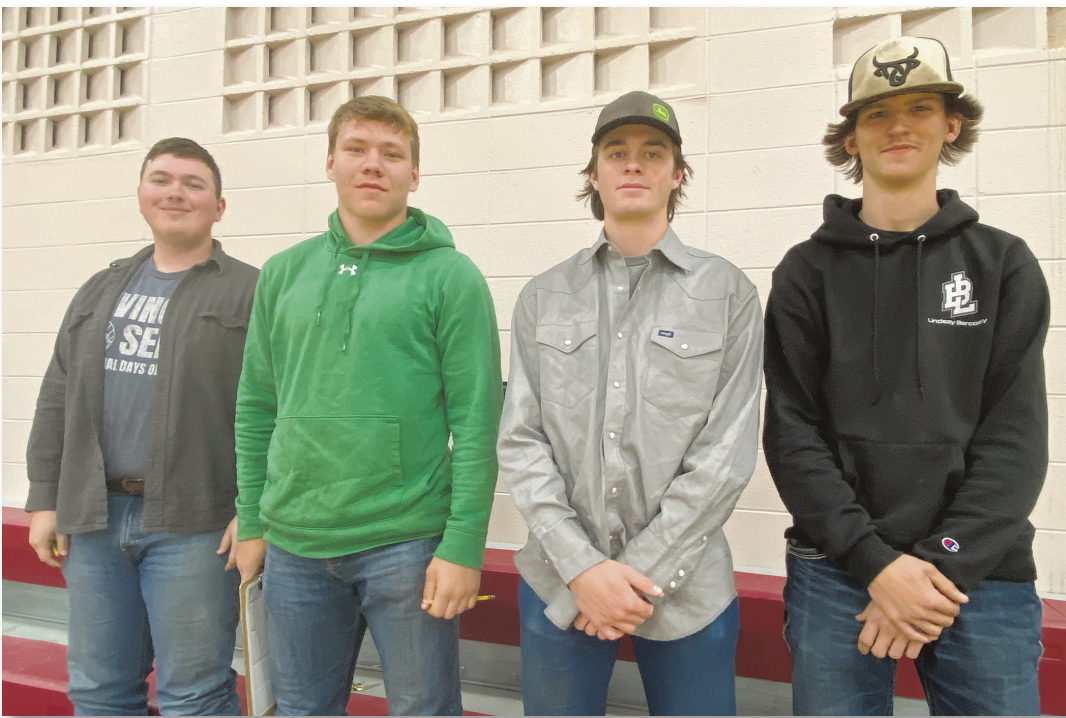
candidates in a city would necessitate a primary, as would 10 candidates for city councils with three openings, seven candidates for councils with two openings and for the Extension board, four candidates for any individual seat for either USD 346 or 362, and 10 candidates for the three USD 344 at large openings. In the first four years (2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023) since Kansas City/school elections were moved from April to November, Linn County has not needed a primary election. The general election for the local positions is Nov. 4, with those elected beginning their new/first terms officially next Jan. 12, 2026.

Free summer meals for kids age 1 to 18 in Pleasanton

BY BARBARA PROFFITT
LINN COUNTY NEWS
LINNCOUNTYNEWSREPORTER@GMAIL.COM

Faith Chapel Church and the Kansas Food Bank have partnered to provide summer meals for children in Pleasanton as part of the USDA Summer Food Service Program. Meals will be distributed as a "Grab & Go" each week. Meals will be distributed at the church, located at 103 E. 7th St., 5 to 6 p.m. on Thursdays, from May 29 to Aug. 7. Each child will receive a SEE MEALS, A2

FFA Champions



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Left to right, Kimball Uphoff, Parker Schwarz, Mason Mitzner, Parker Embree after their good showing at the State FFA Ag Mechanics Championship.

Prairie View FFA captures State Ag Mechanics Championship

SUBMITTED BY TRENTON SMEDLEY
PVHS FFA CHAPTER ADVISOR
MANHATTAN, KAN. - The Prairie View High School FFA Chapter has secured a remarkable victory at the

Kansas FFA State Agricultural Mechanics Career Development Event (CDE), demonstrating exceptional technical skills and teamwork that will propel them to the national competition in Indianapolis

this October. The four-member team, consisting of Parker Embree, Mason Mitzner, Parker Schwarz and Kimball Uphoff, demonstrated outstanding SEE FFA CHAMPS, A2

Commissioners hear update, discuss aid agreement for Pleasanton FD

BY BARBARA PROFFITT
LINN COUNTY NEWS
LINNCOUNTYNEWSREPORTER@GMAIL.COM

During their May 12 meeting, the commissioners questioned Linn County Rural Fire Chief Randy Hegwald on where the county stood with mutual aid agreements with municipal fire departments, in particular the one for Pleasanton. Commissioner Jim Johnson noted he had received several calls and asked Hegwald for an explanation on the automatic aid agreement. Hegwald explained how the original agreement expired in 2018 and a new agreement has been sent to the cities. Johnson noted he had asked Hegwald how much aid the county department is currently providing for Pleasanton and Hegwald told commissioners that in 2023 the Pleasanton Fire Department was pagged to 26 calls and had responded to four while the county responded to 20 of

them. Hegwald noted some of those calls had been medical related and ambulance crews had called off the fire department prior to them responding. Hegwald then stated that in 2024 there were 31 calls with the city responding to 10 of them and the county responding to 18. Hegwald then explained that, so far in 2025, there have been 18 calls and the city ran six of those and the county has run 10. He added that on average there are five firefighters per call not counting the two salaried employees that are paid at \$35 per person per call. Johnson then asked about responses to calls in the other cities with municipal departments and Hegwald stated rural fire is generally second on scene and then explained how the standard operating guidelines outline what is dispatched depending on the nature of the call. County Counselor Jacklyn Paletta noted that the county is currently operating under the SEE AUTO AID 2, A2

To contact our staff, see our listing at www.linncountynews.net



DEATHS
John Ted Miles

HOW TO REACH US
808 Main St., PO Box 478
Pleasanton KS 66075
913-352-6235
www.linncountynews.net

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