

Longhorns gird for battle vs. Linn

Thunder Ridge will play Linn in a Class 1A-Division II boys basketball semifinal Saturday at Osborne. Tipoff is 2:00.

The Longhorns (13-7) drew a quarterfinal bye when the Kansas State High School Activities Association released brackets Feb. 18.

The Bulldogs (13-10) advanced by defeating Wakefield (0-21) 77-30 Monday.

The No. 4 seed Longhorns would be hosting the No. 5 Bulldogs at Kensington if the TRHS gym did not have a restraining line on the court.

KSHSAA rules forbid the use of a restraining line for Class 1A sub-state semifinals and finals in both divisions.

The ban extends to all postseason contests in Classes 2A through 6A.

The two Mid-Continent League schools which flank

Kensington, Smith Center and Phillipsburg, were available to Thunder Ridge. Logan, which opened a spacious new gym three years ago, was also a possibility.

Instead, the Longhorns asked Northern Plains League rival Osborne for permission to host. The Bulldogs' gym meets KSHSAA requirements and is hosting 1A-Division I sub-state finals March 6-7.

Other NPL schools which can host later sub-state rounds include Lincoln, Rock Hills, Sylvan-Lucas and Tescott.

Axtell (22-1), which had a quarterfinal bye, hosts Pike Valley (5-18)/Natoma (4-18) in the other semifinal Saturday.

Saturday's winners play for the championship at Wakefield Friday, March 6.

Hanover (22-1) and Tescott (16-7) had byes in the other sub-state within the region. Saturday's semi-

finals have the Wildcats hosting Stafford (5-19) and the Trojans facing Randolph (13-12).

The winners of those matchups head to Wakefield March 6.

In Monday's quarterfinals, the Rams defeated Chase (1-21) 62-15 and the Trojans bested Lost Springs (7-14) 52-47.

SPLIT: Thunder Ridge lost 65-53 at home to Lincoln Feb. 17 and defeated Rock Hills 42-36 at Mankato last Friday to wrap up the regular season.

The game vs. the Grizzlies did not count towards sub-state seeding for either team.

Rock Hills (12-10) won its 1A-Division I sub-state opener vs. Lakeside Monday, earning a semifinal match vs. NPL champion St. John's/Tipton (19-2) in Beloit Saturday.

Thunder Ridge girls faced Tescott again

Thunder Ridge's girls basketball regular season concluded with a pair of defeats, 40-24 vs. Lincoln at home and 60-20 vs. Rock Hills in Mankato.

The Longhorns wiped the slate clean Tuesday for their first Class 1A-Division II sub-state contest.

Thunder Ridge (3-17) got a break when it drew

Tescott (9-13), even though the ladies from Kensington had to travel to Ottawa County.

The Longhorns came into the matchup with two wins vs. the Trojans, 28-20 Jan. 16 and 45-32 Feb. 13.

Tescott won its last two games after losing in Kensington, 53-38 vs. Natoma and 49-20 vs. Peabody-

Burns.

Tuesday's winner advanced to a semifinal this Monday at Linn (18-5). The Bulldogs drew a quarterfinal bye.

In the other half of the sub-state bracket, Randolph (15-9) hosts the winner of Wakefield (3-17) at Stafford (11-12).

Monday's winners ad-

Smith Center Chamber Chatter

By Joleen Brewer

This year the Chamber of Commerce in Smith Center is asking for community help.

The Chamber Banquet is fast approaching and they want to hear from you, the community.

This year the Chamber Board chose to honor three different categories for awards.

Nominations for Business of the Year, Outstanding Citizen of the Year and Outstanding Service Group of the Year, are the categories chosen. The Chamber Board believed the public should be where the votes come from.

A few points to consider when choosing a nominee are:

Business of the Year
Demonstrates outstand-

ing customer service and community involvement

Supports local initiatives, events, or charitable causes

Shows innovation, growth, or resilience in business practices

Creates a positive workplace culture and supports employees

Outstanding Citizen of the Year

Volunteers time and energy to improve the community

Leads with integrity, kindness, and inclusively

Inspires others through service, mentorship, or advocacy

Has made a lasting impact on Smith Center or Smith County

Best Service Group/Club of the Year

Organizes meaningful events or outreach efforts

Collaborates with other groups or businesses

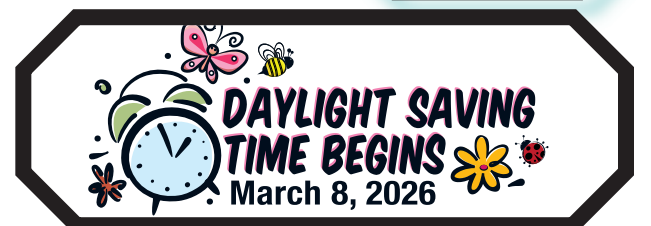
Promotes civic pride and community engagement

Demonstrates consistent dedication to their mission

Below is a from you may fill out and return to the Chamber office. You may also contact any Chamber Board Member for questions.

Chamber Banquet tickets are available at the Chamber office. \$25.00 for all Chamber Members and \$35.00 for non Chamber Members.

Voting Deadline is MARCH 6th



GriefShare to begin meetings

The Downs GriefShare Support Group plans to begin its weekly meetings at 2 p.m. March 1 at Zion Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1019 Blunt St, Downs.

The grief journey is lonely but you don't have to make it alone. At GriefShare you will find caring people who have experienced grief and have rebuilt their lives.

The meetings consist of a video seminar, discus-

sion of the video and take-home materials for personal study exercises that reinforce the weekly session topics. There is a different topic each week. To learn more, go to: www.griefshare.org

Members are encouraged to attend as many of the 13 sessions as possible. They can start at any time. For more information email: zlcdowns@ruraltel.net or call 785-454-3733

•Redmen

4 (1-3), J. Fagan 4 (2-2), M. Fagan 3 (1-2), Doane 3 (1-2), Ca. McKelvey 2 (1-1), Lehmann 2 (0-2)

Assists-Brady Wilson 4, Brant Wilson 4, J. Fagan 2, Doane 2, Lehmann 1 Steals-Ca. McKelvey 1,

Doane 1, Lehmann 1, M. Fagan 1, Brant Wilson 1 Blocks-Brady Wilson 1 Turnovers-8

•Shadow Riders

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Shady Lady on the left, Kansas Belle in the middle, and 3rd place on the right.

settled Kansas Belle finished 14th and Shady Lady finished in 25th place. Friday night was a night to rest and ready one for the National competition to begin on Saturday.

The day dawned clear but remained chilly as the National shoot began with 39 women, 100 men, and 5 youth shooters. The shooting continued hot on 4 different ranges and 8 rounds were completed this day allowing time to dress for the banquet that evening. The food was very good and the awards for the category and Florida state were awarded at the banquet. The Florida clubs also had many door prizes which were also awarded.

Sunday began with a bracket shoot for all contestants. Here the shooters are placed in groups according to their second fastest time during the main match. Both Shady Lady and Kansas Belle competed in the Deputy bracket. Here 37 shooters (both Men, Women, and Youth) battled it out for the top 5 places. Kansas Belle finished in 4th place and Shady Lady came in 15th. The remainder of

the day finished the National competition and saw Kansas Belle finishing in 16th (just out of the awards) and Shady Lady finishing in 27th.

Following a long day of travel back home it was great to get to some warm weather and a lot less traffic. Although, the competition was great it is always good to get home and await the next shoot.

Kansas Belle and Shady Lady was next travel (by ground) to the Oklahoma State competition in March

followed closely by the Texas State Companionship.

Cowboy Fast Draw is a family friendly sport with shooters ranging in age from 8-90. More information can be obtained by visiting the website www.cowboyfastdraw.org or by contacting Deborah Hadley at dkhadley1@yahoo.com or Sheary Pumphrey. If interested please contact either and come and try out an exciting sport.

Your Subscription Helps Keep Local News Thriving

Please join us for a
60th Wedding Anniversary
Open House for
Delmer & Glenda Rothchild
March 8th
from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at
Downs United Methodist Church.
Cake and drinks will be served.
All friends and family are welcome!
Your presence is the only gift requested.

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Total fouls-13

STARTING MARCH 5, 2026
The Smith County Pioneer will be Printed on Wednesdays and available on THURSDAYS.

NEW DEADLINES
Legals & Obits
Mondays by 4PM
Copy, Minutes, Ads, Photos, & News
Tuesdays by Noon.
Submit all to pioneer@ruraltel.net or Call Joleen or Pam at 785*282*3371 or stop by our office at 112 W. Kansas St. Downtown Smith Center

Smith Center Chamber & Main Street Nomination Form

Celebrating Excellence in Our Community

Please help us honor those who make Smith County wonderful! Submit your nominations for the following categories:

- ! Business of the Year
- ! Outstanding Citizen of the Year
- ! Outstanding Service Group of the Year

Deadline for submissions: March 6, 2026

Submit completed forms to: scchamber@smithcenterks.com or return to the chamber office

Nominee Information

Category (select one):

- Business of the Year
- Outstanding Citizen of the Year
- Outstanding Service Group of the Year

Nominee Name: _____

Business/Organization (if applicable): _____

Contact Info (if known): _____

Your Information

Your Name: _____

Phone or Email: _____

Relationship to Nominee (optional): _____

Nomination Statement

Please describe why you believe this nominee deserves recognition. Share specific examples of impact, leadership, service, or innovation. (Attach additional pages if needed.)