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ONLINE EDITION:
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Death Notices
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☐ Jill Brozek, 54

☐ George Harris Sr., 84

☐ Forrest Robrahn, 93



Advance Voting

Advance voting is available to Burlington USD 244 voters at the Coffey County Clerk's office, during normal business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. The only question on the ballot is whether or not to approve a \$45 million bond issue to fund a new elementary school north of the high school and athletic fields.

ELECTION UPDATE

Candidates
file for city,
school seats

With less than six weeks remaining until the filing deadline, more candidates are entering races for open city and school board positions in Coffey County.

The deadline to file for office is noon on Monday, June 2. The general election is set for Tuesday, Nov. 4. If required, a primary election will be held Tuesday, Aug. 5.

The following seats are up for election, with all

See **Election**, Page 8

Public Notices
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☐ New Strawn Board of Zoning Appeals- Hearing for Conditional Use, 333 N. 5th Street.

☐ City of Burlington - City Treasurer's Quarterly Report.

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



USD 245 breaks ground on improvements

LeROY — Shovels hit the dirt Monday morning, April 21, as LeRoy-Gridley USD 245 held an official groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the start of multiple school facility upgrades funded by a \$2 million bond narrowly approved by voters in May 2024.

Board of Education members Johannah Snovelle (president), Sarah Stewart (vice president), Craig Nickel, and Kenton Ludolph joined Superintendent Matt Thomsen, students and school patrons at the ceremony to commemorate the occasion.

“This is a proud moment for our district and the communities we serve,” Thomsen said. “The journey to today started back in 2021, and what we’re seeing now is the result of years of planning, listening to our patrons, and staying

focused on our students’ needs.”

The district’s first bond initiative since 1980 passed by a slim 214-209 margin, following months of community input, surveys, and public meetings. The bond funds will support con-

struction of a high school science classroom, a vocational agriculture and metals shop in LeRoy, two modular preschool classrooms (one each in LeRoy and Gridley), and a new fire alarm system at Southern Coffey County Elemen-

tary in Gridley, which is already installed and operational.

Construction timelines are as follows:

- PreK classrooms: targeted for completion by August 2025
- Science and agriculture

classrooms: expected by November 2025

The bond will be repaid over 10 years, requiring an average tax increase of 8.5 mills. For most residential property owners, this

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LeRoy-Gridley USD 245 school board members Craig Nickel, Kenton Ludolph, Sarah Stewart and Johannah Snovelle “break ground” in a ceremony Monday morning attended by students from throughout the district.

Burlington City Council hires new police officer

Mark Petterson
Managing Editor

BURLINGTON — The Burlington City Council approved the hiring of Mark Ashley as a full-time police officer during its April 16 meeting, filling one of two vacancies in the department.

Ashley, who currently works in the city’s water department, was recommended for the position by

Interim Police Chief Mike Roney following a recent round of applications. He will begin his new role on May 5 with a starting wage of \$21.47 per hour.

Roney said officers have been handling multiple criminal cases in recent weeks, including drug arrests, theft, battery, and harassment reports. The department has also resumed issuing nuisance property letters following

spring cleanup, which saw many residents take advantage of the opportunity to remove debris.

Council Member Maxi Berryman commended the department’s continued work in addressing nuisance violations. Roney also recognized Animal Control Officer Bonnie Foster during National Animal Control Officer Week and thanked emergency dispatchers in hon-

or of National Telecommunicator Week.

The council also authorized Water and Wastewater Superintendent Danny Hawkins to advertise for a soon-to-be vacant water operator position. City Hall remains short-staffed, and City Clerk Anne Brown said background checks are underway for administrative applicants.

State Representative Brad Barrett presented an

“official certificate” from the Kansas House of Representatives to Police Chief Mike Roney and Firefighter Adam Hoch. The framed certificate recognizes their heroic actions in rescuing three family members from a Jan. 7 house fire. The city made a similar presentation at its Feb. 24 meeting.

In other business:
See **Council**, Page 9

Speaker urges USD 244 Board to reconsider religious instruction policy

BURLINGTON — A school patron, representing more than 150 petition signers, urged the Burlington USD 244 Board of Edu-

cation Monday night, April 14, to revisit a proposal that would allow public school students to participate in released time reli-

gious instruction (RTRI) during school hours.

Jeff Suter, speaking on behalf of the Burlington LifeWise Academy Steer-

ing Committee, addressed the board during public comments at the April 14 meeting. He asked the district to reconsider its de-

nial of a formal request to appear on the agenda with a draft policy proposal.

“Our request, where adopted by public schools, provides an approach to building student character that has proven to be a highly effective complement to the school’s effort to grow students into educated, responsible individuals,” Suter said.

RTRI programs are permitted under a 1952 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, he noted, provided they are held off school property, are privately funded, and have parental approval.

Suter said the group submitted its request in accordance with board policy but received no acknowledgment of the proposed



Jeff Suter speaks to the Burlington USD 244 Board of Education on behalf of the Burlington LifeWise Academy Steering Committee that is supported by more than 150 petition signers.

BURLINGTON USD 244 Departing teacher shares thoughts, summary of achievements

Katie McMurray
Reporter

BURLINGTON — A Burlington High School teacher who resigned from her position shared thoughts regarding her time at BHS and achievements she and her students have made during her two years at

BHS. BHS Family and Consumer Science teacher and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America advisor Brianna Kirby attended the meeting to address the board, as she wanted them to hear some words directly from her regarding her resignation

and her time at Burlington. She said she had been informed by BHS Principal Jodi Grover that she was going to be recommended for non-renewal.

“I am grateful for these two years I worked at Burlington High School and I

See **USD 244**, Page 7

County to advertise road projects, custodian

BURLINGTON — The Coffey County Commission took action on road projects, equipment purchases, and staffing needs during its regular meeting April 14.

The board approved a \$103,480 purchase of a 2025 John Deere 335P compact track loader from Murphy Tractor of Topeka for the

Road and Bridge Department. Commissioners also authorized the solicitation of bids for two hot mix asphalt projects: an 8-mile 3-inch overlay on Angus Road (A2501-C), from K-58 Hwy. to 14th Road, and a 4.5-mile 2-inch overlay on Fauna Road (A2502-C), from 12th to 16th Road, and a portion of Emmer Road.

Funding will come from Public Works and Highway Improvement funds.

Road and Bridge Superintendent Ryan Durst said dust control has been applied to Eighth Road, between Shetland and Wayside roads, which is part of the local detour during

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Michael Abendroth takes the oath of office from Coffey County Clerk Angie Kirchner at the start of the Coffey County Commission meeting. During an April 10 Republican convention voting precinct members selected Abendroth from three candidates to fill the District 1 county commissioner seat vacated by Tom Huginin, who moved out of district. The certified election results were forwarded to Governor Laura Kelly, who made the official appoint. District 1 includes Burlington Wards 2 and 3. The seat will be up for election in November 2026.