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Charge says man freed in Anderson County killed WYCO cop

Without moves by judge and prosecutor, Harris would have been in jail

BY MICHAEL RYAN

THE HEARTLANDER

GARNETT – Shawn Harris would have been in prison Saturday, July 26; unable to shoot and kill a Wyandotte County deputy as he's charged, if a prosecutor elsewhere in Kansas had followed through on a case last year, The Heartlander has learned.

The former county attorney in Anderson County southwest of

Kansas City had charged Harris, 38, in two separate cases last year: one involving physical abuse of a child, and another alleging he failed to report a change in his status under the Kansas Offender Registration Act, which covers repeat violent offenders.

He was allowed to plead no contest Dec. 17 to two misdemeanor or battery counts in the child

abuse case and was put on probation – when he could have been put in prison for over 11 years for the original charges.

“He pled in that case – a case that he was facing 136 months of prison time over,” says puzzled longtime KC-area bondsman Brian Underwood.

“He was allowed to plead to a misdemeanor, was granted probation and then released from custody in

Anderson County that same day.”

Moreover, while it sounds mundane, the charge involving a Kansas Offender Registration Act violation could've also imprisoned Harris for a long period: he could've received 46 months in prison in that case as well.

But for some reason – perhaps as part of a plea deal in the

child abuse case – court records indicate then-County Attorney Elizabeth Oliver simply dismissed the registration act case Dec. 17, the same day Harris pled to lesser charges in the abuse case and was granted probation.

Harris was thus released in both cases – ultimately free to allegedly shoot the deputy on Saturday – even though he already had a “Category A” criminal history, the worst possible under Kansas law.

In fact, Harris had long ago earned his Category A criminal

SEE **COURT** ON PAGE 11



Members of the Seekers Not Slackers 4H Club deal with temperatures in the 90s to staff their club parade float during last week's Anderson County Fair parade. Complete results and more photos

THE ANDERSON COUNTY REVIEW 8-7-2025 / KRIS HIX from the 2025 edition of the fair will be published later this month in the Review's special “Winners Circle” results magazine.

Robb found competent

No decision made yet whether to charge as adult in church burning

BY DANE HICKS

THE ANDERSON COUNTY REVIEW

COLONY – Having determined that 17 year-old Kaiden Robb of Colony is competent to stand trial on charges that he assaulted a family member and burned down the Colony Community Church the day after Christmas in 2024, district court officials are now going about the process to determine whether he will be charged as an adult or a juvenile for the crimes.

Anderson County Attorney Steve Wilson said a review hearing July 29 had been a status check on the case but the court had not yet set a determination of Robb's prosecution status. Court records



Robb

SEE **ROBB** ON PAGE 7



Jump in delinquent taxes may show impact of property market

GARNETT – The impact of recent years' higher property values and climbing tax bills associated with them may be showing up in the county's delinquent tax rolls, with a 20% increase in delinquent taxes owed this year compared to last year.

An annual publication of delinquent property tax payers and the amounts they owe is published in today's newspaper in keeping with state law, showing a significant increase in both the amount owed and the number of property owners who haven't yet paid their taxes this year.

For 2025, 501 properties owe \$510,028, compared to \$423,973 owed last year on 470 separate parcels. A portion of that amount owed, more so on properties that have been delinquent the longest, is interest and fees.

Property taxes are based on the estimated value of a home, business, or agricultural land according to actual sale prices of comparable properties. A hot market for land and homes in recent years spurred those values, resulting in higher tax payments when cities, counties and school districts failed to adjust their mill levies

applied to those new higher values in order to keep property taxes minimal. Low interest rates nationwide spurred that demand for existing property. Interest rate increases intended to tamp down post-Covid inflation started in March 2022 and ceased last year, bringing about a leveling of home and property demand and prices. Between 2022 and 2023, Kansas Department of Revenue data shows Anderson County saw a significant increase in total property taxes levied—

SEE **DUE** ON PAGE 12

“Sovereign Citizen” movement poses challenge for cops

GPD officer gets training to enforce law over movement that says most laws aren't legal

BY DANE HICKS

THE ANDERSON COUNTY REVIEW

GARNETT – Garnett police officers are receiving training on the fringe “Sovereign Citizen” movement as the anti-government extremist cause gains more attention for its run-ins with law enforcement.

Garnett Police Chief Kurt King told city commissioners in a weekly activities report that one of the department officers had recently attended the Small and Rural Law Enforcement Executive Association National Conference in Lawrence and received specific instruction on recognizing symbols of the Sovereign Citizen movement as well as instruction regarding encounters with the group, some members of which don't recognize government or police authority.

Rooted in anti-government ideologies dating back to the 1970s and 80s, sovereign citizens claim they are exempt from taxes, driver's licenses, vehicle registration, and even the authority of the courts. The movement is not a centralized organization, but rather a collection of individuals who share the belief that the U.S. government is illegitimate. Their rationale varies, but typically involves pseudo-legal interpretations of the Constitution, the Uniform Commercial Code, or outdated interpretations of maritime law.

Some followers argue that by declaring themselves “sovereign,” they can opt out of citizenship responsibilities while still living within U.S. borders. They often file fraudulent documents, such as bogus liens or fake legal notices, to intimidate or retaliate against public officials—a tactic known as “paper terrorism.”

Though many sovereign citizens are nonviolent, law enforcement officials have identified the movement as a domestic terrorism concern due to its unpredictable and occasionally deadly confrontations. One of the most tragic examples occurred in 2010, when two West Memphis, Arkansas, police officers were killed during a traffic stop by a father-son sovereign citizen duo armed with assault rifles.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has labeled sovereign citizens as part of the “anti-government extremist” threat spectrum. Their actions have ranged from courtroom disruptions and identity fraud to armed standoffs. Even mundane interactions—like traffic stops—can escalate quickly when an individual refuses to comply, citing non-recognition of authority.

King said his officer was trained in



King

SEE **TRAINING** ON PAGE 7