



Courtesy photo

Parsons High School English teacher Linda Moore holds her Teacher of the Year Award bestowed by the Student Council. It is the first time the award has been given in nearly two decades.

## Moore gets Teacher of the Year Award from PHS student council

Colleen Williamson  
Parsons USD 503

Changes in one area tend to impact other areas, and the ripple effect sometimes impacts traditions that fade into the past, such as the annual Parsons High School StuCo Teacher of the Year Award that vanished nearly two decades ago.

Every year, in the old PHS auditorium, the Student Council had an awards night.

"It used to be that we had departmental awards, like the science department would give an award to the top student in science, and the math department would give an award. It was kind of a fun night," StuCo sponsor Paul Duroni said. "It was the thing at the end of the year. That was where they announced all the big scholarships and things, and at the end of the ceremony would be the Teacher of the Year Award. All the teachers were there and the heads of all the departments. Principals were always there."

Duroni said the ceremony had been going on for as long as he could remember, even before his first time serving as StuCo sponsor. Then the awards came to an end, though unintentionally.

In 2006, PHS was undergoing its major bond renovation project, during which the old auditorium was being converted into a community room and a new auditorium was to be constructed. No StuCo awards ceremony was held that May, because there was no place for everyone.

Work on the auditorium continued into 2007. Again, there wasn't a StuCo awards night. However, that year, the recently founded Parsons Education Foundation sponsored the inaugural PEF/PHS Scholarship and Awards Banquet at the Parsons Country Club, and 16 scholarships were awarded. This morphed into annual scholarship awards being taken over by the PEF.

Work on the auditorium was delayed by rain and bad weather throughout the winter of 2007 and spring of 2008, so by May 2008, the auditorium remained incomplete. Again, there was no StuCo ceremony.

During this time, the students running the organization had changed. StuCo leaders graduated and were gone; traditions and ideas left with them. New students came in with new

ideas.

Duroni had given up being StuCo and National Honor Society sponsor for a few years during this time. When he took it over again, he found everything had changed. The StuCo Awards Night had faded away.

Every year, new groups of students join the council and are looking for things they can do for students, the staff and the school.

At a meeting recently, the students were brainstorming. During the discussion, Duroni said he started telling the students about how things used to be. He recalled the StuCo Awards Night.

The organization has minimal funding compared to what it used to, so the students have to make decisions that fit their tighter budget.

"Back in the day, they used to sell donuts out in the commons area every day, and they'd make like \$5,000 a month. Now we can't do that. They've changed all the rules," Duroni said. "The only funding they really have now is from the occasional fundraiser, like working concessions or a bake sale at a game, and the Gatorade machine and pop machine in the teacher's lounge."

The winter formal and handing out brochures at graduation take precedence, Duroni said. "They thought they could at least bring back the Teacher of the Year Award. They were like 'Yeah, let's do it.' So we bought a plaque and they nominated a handful of teachers. ...

"Then they voted. Mrs. Moore won it, so we got the plaque personalized for her."

She received her award last week.

"It's just one of those things that one little award was easy to bring back, so I encouraged them, 'Let's do this, because the teachers don't always get recognized, even though there is teacher appreciation week or whatever.' This time of year, it's stressful and busy and there's state assessments and all this and that. It's a perfect time to recognize the teachers right before we get to recognize the graduates."

"They brought it back, and I'm glad they did. I was also pleased it was a core teacher that won the award because they don't always get the accolades some of the fun teachers get like CTE, or P.E., art or whatever that are just easier for the kids to connect with."

## Supreme Court affirms product liability immunity of gun maker, seller in civil suit

By Tim Carpenter  
Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA — The Kansas Supreme Court agreed Friday with a district court decision tossing a lawsuit filed by a former Emporia State University football player shot by a teammate who mistakenly believed that disassembling his newly purchased handgun required pulling the trigger.

In 2018, Andre Lewis bought a Beretta APX 9mm handgun at Bass Pro Outdoor World in Olathe. While idling his Dodge Charger at a downtown Emporia stoplight several months later, Lewis decided to show his front-seat passenger, Marquise Johnson, that he knew how to take the gun apart. Court records show Lewis was convinced the gun wouldn't fire with the magazine removed and that the trigger had to be pulled before disassembly the weapon.

Lewis was wrong on both counts, and the bullet that had been in the chamber struck Johnson in his left leg. The wound resulted in amputation of the limb below the knee.

Johnson's attorneys filed a product liability lawsuit against gun manufacturer Beretta and retailer Bass Pro Shops. The suit alleged Bass Pro sold and Beretta manufactured a defective and

unreasonably dangerous handgun.

The District Court in Lyons County granted summary judgment in favor of the firearm maker and seller based on a reading of the federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. The PLCAA forbids lawsuits against manufacturers or sellers when a person criminally or unlawfully misused a firearm. This federal immunity designed to shield the gun industry wouldn't hold if the gun was used as intended or in a reasonable way.

The case attracted an amicus brief from Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund that argued the immunity law applied only if the "volitional act, apart from the discharge, constitutes a criminal offense."

In a split decision, the Kansas Court of Appeals reversed the district court and determined the federal statute didn't offer immunity to defendants in this case because Lewis didn't intend to discharge the gun.

In an appeal to the Kansas Supreme Court, however, the firearm manufacturer and dealer argued the Court of Appeals came to the wrong conclusion about application of the federal law and that liability immunity existed because Lewis deliberately pulled the trigger.

## BARTLETT

Continued from Page 1.

said.

The first grant was \$100,000 in 2023. The district received the second grant of \$47,850 in 2024 and is applying again this year.

"The goal is we want to show sustainability of the project. If the grant goes away — at some point it will — we want to continue this to get through our third and fourth house," Wyrick said.

The first grant paid the students for their work and extended the contract of building and trades teacher Tyler Cares by two months. The other half of the money bought tools and equipment for the program. The smaller grant will be used on the second house in Bartlett, he said.

The profit made from the sale of the first house will go toward startup money for the second, Wyrick said.

"We're not looking to make money. We just can't lose money. So far we have been. I think it's going to work out," Wyrick said.

A curriculum change allowed students to work on the project longer during the school day. Most classes last 53 minutes, which would not allow for much progress. LCHS Principal Stacy Smith reorganized the building and trades classes into a three-hour block. Of the 25 students enrolled, about 18 made the three hour block work in their schedules, she said.

The students are also building a 1,500 square foot lodge for the trap shooting team and a 3,800 square foot barn-dominion for a customer. A barn-dominion combines architectural elements of a barn with the functionality of a modern home.

She said there is a three year waiting list for people who want the building and trades students to build their home.

The home building program started in Altamont, where LCHS students erected over 80 homes since the beginning of the program some decades ago. With limited room for new construction in Altamont at this time, the program looked to build in other communities. After Bartlett, the trade program will look at other communities, Wyrick said.

He said the students did all the work on the Bartlett house except for Sheetrock. They can install Sheetrock but had others do that to save time.

Godinez said he was excited to see the program blossom in Labette County, especially because the project involved a number of agencies working together, including Commerce and the Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission.

Jim Zaleski, the city of Parsons' economic development director, was also involved in helping the housing initiative.

"Everybody working together. ... That's what it's all about," Godinez said.

"I was really excited when we talked about it. And even then ... it was just going to be such a long path. I'm blown away," Godinez said. The program will meet the need for affordable housing going forward.

"It's bankable. It's affordable. It really fits," he said.

"What I've loved is that you've done such a good job that we can now say what can be done. ... You created a model," Godinez said. He said once these changes start, they can create a domino effect.

"This would not have been possible, this project, in the summertime, without this grant. Because there's no way we would have been able to do that," Wyrick said.

"It's all about education. It's all about bringing young families into communities," he said.

Lt. Gov. David Toland was to attend Friday's event but was not able to. He plans to be in Bartlett in July.

## SPEAKER

Continued from Page 1.

through the ranks to become Northern Region superintendent at the Harriman Dispatching Center in Omaha, Nebraska. After a 40-year career, he retired in 2013 and has continued to share his extensive knowledge of railroad operations and their lasting impact on local communities.

"We are excited to welcome Tommy Lightfoot as our guest speaker for the Katy Days Bluebonnet Banquet," said Steve Farrell, event coordinator. "His career in the railroad industry and his continued commitment to preserving its history make him the perfect speaker for this special event."

The Bluebonnet Banquet is a highlight of the Katy Days Festival, which celebrates Parsons' railroad heritage.

Tickets for the event are \$20 per person, and RSVPs are required by May 16. Tickets can be purchased online at bit.ly/BlueBonnet2025 or by mail. Please note that actual tickets will not be issued, but a list of reservations will be available at the entrance.

For more information, or to RSVP, please visit [www.katydays.com](http://www.katydays.com) or contact Steve Farrell at 620-423-4346.

**KATY DAYS** is an annual event that celebrates Parsons' railroad heritage. The festival honors the legacy of the Katy Railroad and its influence on the region, bringing together families, railroad enthusiasts and community members for a weekend of history, fun and celebration.

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### LEGAL

(First published in The Chanute Tribune Tuesday, April 29, 2025)

#### NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR MERGER OF BANK HOLDING COMPANIES

Community Bancorp, Inc., Chanute, Kansas intends to apply to the Federal Reserve Board for permission to merge with another bank holding company, Farmers National Bancshares, Inc., Stafford, Kansas. We intend to acquire control of Prairie Bank of Kansas, Stafford, Kansas, as a result of the bank holding company merger. The Federal Reserve considers a number of factors in deciding whether to approve the application, including the record of performance of banks we own in helping to meet local credit needs.

You are invited to submit comments in writing on an application filed with the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City electronically to [KCAApplicationComments@kc.frb.org](mailto:KCAApplicationComments@kc.frb.org) or in hard copy to: Jeff Imgarten, Assistant Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, One Memorial Drive, Kansas City, Missouri 64198. The comment period will not end before May 29, 2025 and may be somewhat longer. The Board's procedures for processing applications/notices may be found at 12 C.F.R. Part 262. Procedures for processing protested applications/notices may be found at 12 C.F.R. 262.25. The Federal Reserve will consider your comments and any request for a public meeting or formal hearing on the application/notice if they are received in writing by the Reserve Bank on or before the last day of the comment period.

### LEGAL

(First published in the Parsons Sun Tuesday, April 29, 2025)

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CITY OF PARSONS, KANSAS  
BONDED INDEBTEDNESS

JANUARY 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025

	Balance January 1, 2025		Balance March 31, 2025	
	Issued	Paid	Issued	Paid
Kansas Revolving Loan Fund				
Sewer #1435	\$466,178.83	\$231,388.69	\$234,790.14	
EPA Compliance #1957	\$3,451,397.57	\$154,999.23	\$3,296,398.34	
General Obligation Bonds-				
2021 Series	\$2,250,000.00	\$33,750.00	\$2,216,250.00	
Lease Purchase - 2103 Corning Ave.	\$103,742.49		\$103,742.49	
Lease Purchase - Caterpillars	\$38,153.97		\$38,153.97	
Lease Purchase - Case IH 130A Tractor	\$19,911.06	\$4,951.31	\$14,959.75	
Lease Purchase - Fire Truck	\$399,613.69	\$48,086.11	\$351,527.58	
Municipal Bldg-100 Year Repairs	\$913,700.70	\$41,577.29	\$872,123.41	
Lease Purchase - Equipment	\$333,600.09	\$17,734.26	\$315,865.83	
Lease Purchase - Diehl Water Meters	\$1,906,683.38	\$60,492.91	\$1,846,190.47	
KPWSLF- Lead & Copper Evaluation	\$165,320.00	\$3,309.10	\$162,010.90	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,048,301.78</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$596,288.90</b>	<b>\$9,452,012.88</b>

Ross Albertini  
Interim City Manager

Jamie L. Janssen  
City Clerk

Deborah L. Nash  
City Treasurer