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CALLEN CORR

South Barber Eighth Grader Wins Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

BY FAITH COULTAS
Staff Writer

Students who attend the North and South Barber school districts in grades seven through 12 have the opportunity to compete in an annual entrepreneurship challenge for the chance to win a cash prize and a spot in the State competition.

This competition is part of a state program called the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) and was brought to Barber County once it was noticed that several youth and young adults were trying to start businesses within the county. The annual event allows competitors to present their business and business models in hopes of winning funding and grants for their ideas and dreams.

The local competition was held recently and is fairly

new to Barber County as it was started in 2025, making this year's competition the second one held in the county.

"We have a partnership with Barber County Development, and we work statewide with K-State Research and Extension, as well as Network Kansas to be able to host the event," Barber County Extension Office's Family and Consumer Science Agent Robin Eubank-Callis said. "There is an application process to be in the events that allows us to send the winner to the state level."

The competition allows any student – public or home school – to apply and participate as long as they are within the seventh-12th-grade level range. The competition requires students

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Warner Addresses Social Responsibility

BY JASON JUMP
Editor

Google representatives hosted the second of two town hall meetings last week at the Barber County Heritage Center in Medicine Lodge a night after meeting in Sharon.

The same presentation was given at both town halls, and while a number of the same concerns were regurgitated from the night before, there were some new questions and concerns raised on the second night.

One of those concerns came from Sharon resident Mica Warner, who attended both town halls. The Medicine Lodge native said she wanted to address a topic that she had not heard

others broach during the ongoing conversations that have been had within the community and with Google since the community learned of the plans for the Project Helium data center, which has been proposed for the area just a mile north of the city of Sharon and Highway 160.

Warner prefaced her concerns by saying how much the community loved its children. She said she also served for a number of years on the school board.

"Our community love their kids. (We are) very, very supportive of our kids," she said. "And, anybody can tell you that's been here."

Warner then proceeded to talk about several children that has committed

suicide and the potential connection to the use of AI chat bots.

Megan Garcia sued Character.AI in 2024 after her teenage son, Sewell Setzer III, committed suicide after his self-professed love affair with the chatbot, according to an Independent article on Oct. 24, 2024 and an article by People on the same day.

Warner said the lawsuit alleges that in Setzer's final conversations the chatbot told the 14-year-old boy to "come home to me as soon as possible my love."

The Barber County resident talked about Juliana Peralta, who she said confided suicidal thoughts and mental

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JASON JUMP / The Premiere

Crew members from Medicine Lodge's Landwehr Roofing continued a roof replacement on the historic Harper County Courthouse in Anthony on Monday. The local company was awarded the more than half-of-a-million-dollar project with a unanimous vote of the Harper County commissioners back in February. The restoration project mobilized in early March and is expected to wrap up the second or third week of May.

Local Company Restores Roof on Historic Courthouse

STAFF REPORT

Damage caused to the Harper County Courthouse roof caused in April 2024 is finally getting repaired.

Landwehr Roofing, of Medicine Lodge, was awarded a contract earlier this year to replace the clay-tiled roof on the historic courthouse, located in Anthony, according to Harper County Building and Grounds Director Josh Teel.

The April 30, 2024 storm caused both wind and hail damage. Teel said some of the roof tiles were chipped, but the majority of the damage was caused by wind getting underneath a collection of tiles and creating a

"wave" effect where the tiles were slightly displaced.

Harper County contacted about a "dozen companies" regarding the project, which costs will be taken care of by the county's insurance provider KCAMP, according to Teel. He said only four estimates were received for the commissioners to review back in February of this year. The commissioners unanimously, 3-0, approved the estimate of \$593,000 from Landwehr Roofing to complete the repair job using a "synthetic roof tile," which is "lighter, stronger, and more easily obtainable," according to the Feb. 6 commission minutes. The synthetic

roof tiles increased the cost of the project by \$29,000.

Teel said while the courthouse is a state historic site, the project did not need approval from the Kansas Historical Society. The building and grounds director said KHS was made aware of the project, but because it was a roof replacement the repairs did not need approval.

Mobilization of the roof restoration began on March 11, according to Teel, and the project is expected to be completed April 8, although he said high wind days and potential rain in the near future could potentially delay the project.

City of Sharon to Host Seed Exchange, Garden Fair Soon

PRESS RELEASE

The Seed Exchange and Garden Fair in Sharon is a delightful community event that brings together gardening enthusiasts, local farmers, and curious visitors.

This annual gathering offers a unique opportunity for participants to exchange seeds, share gardening tips, and learn about sustainable practices. Attendees can browse a variety of heirloom seeds, native plants, and organic gardening supplies, fostering a spirit of collaboration and environmental stewardship.

Workshops and demonstrations by local experts provide valuable insights into topics such as soil health, pest management, and water conservation. The fair not only promotes biodiversity and local agriculture but also strengthens community bonds, making it a cherished tradition for those passionate about gardening and sustainability.

This April 18 will be the second year the fair will be at the Sharon School – from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. featuring vendors and their home made crafts and projects. This year there will be a food vendor with home made items on the menu for patrons to enjoy.

The city is always looking for more vendors. Call the Sharon city office at (620) 294-5432 or email sharoncityclerk@outlook.com to request a vendor application. Booth fees are only \$10. Bring seeds, bulbs, plants, etc. and exchange them for some that you don't have. If you are an avid gardener, and would like to share your gardening tips, you are welcome to speak to small groups in a seminar type setting.

Bill Gives Small Number of Local Voters Power Over Property Tax Increases

BY MORGAN CHILSON
Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA – The Senate and House narrowly passed a bill giving 10 percent of registered voters in a taxing area the ability to stop some property tax increases, a

move one senator called "tyranny of the minority."

Both chambers debated House Bill 2745 Friday. It passed the Senate 22-18 and the House 63-59. It now advances to Gov. Laura Kelly.

Another proposal attempting to change the

Kansas Constitution to limit property tax increases was shot down by the House but referred to a conference committee for more discussion. Senate Concurrent Resolution 1603, which needed support from two-thirds of both chambers,

failed in the House 59-63.

The resolution, which would have been on the August ballot for voters to decide, limits the assessed valuation of residential, commercial, and agricul-

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