

Where Rooks County Comes Together

SENTINEL-TIMES

Stockton Sentinel, LLC dba Sentinel-Times

ROOKS COUNTY, KANSAS

COMING TO YOU FROM THE HEARTLAND OF AMERICA

16 PAGES

Newsline



Important Dates To Remember:

October 13: Deadline to register to vote or update your voter registration to change address or name only to participate in the 2026 General Election.

October 14: First day of advance voting. Advance ballots by mail are transmitted. In-person advance voting may begin. Check with your county election officer for specific times and locations.

October 27: In-person advance voting must begin for all counties.

November 3: GENERAL ELECTION.

WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY		
Sunny with winds from the NE at 9 m.p.h.		HIGH: 68 LOW: 52
SATURDAY		
Partly cloudy with winds from the SE at 8 m.p.h.		HIGH: 74 LOW: 51
SUNDAY		
Sunny with winds from the NNE at 10 m.p.h.		HIGH: 72 LOW: 44

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SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK

I find rest in Gold; only he
gives me hope.
— Psalm 33:20 —



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EMMA GABEL AND OWEN BREWSTER were crowned Plainville High School's 2026 Homecoming Queen and King at the coronation ceremony held last Friday, prior to the football game against the TMP Monarchs.

Rooks County Valuations down almost \$5 million

By VIRGI LASKA
Sentinel-Times

According to the Rooks County Clerk's Office, Rooks County valuations dropped by \$4,909,088 in 2026, bringing the total from \$92,578,140 in 2025 down to \$87,669,052 in 2026. This marks a decrease of almost \$5 million for the year, continuing a trend from 2025, which also saw a reduction of a little over \$5 million. The 2026 decline is attributed

to decreases in Minerals, Personal Property, Oil, and Utilities, while Real Estate was the only category to see an increase.

Real Estate values fell in every township except Townships 10 and 12, and in Woodston.

Mineral valuations declined in Townships 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10, as well as in the City of Plainville.

Personal Property values dropped in Townships 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, and 11, as well as in all towns.

Utility valuations were down in Townships 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, along with decreases in Palco and Stockton.

Oil experienced the largest drop, falling \$4,607,103 from \$19,773,904 in 2025. Every township and town recorded a decrease in oil valuations for 2026.

These figures were used to compile the county budgets for the upcoming year.

See the related charts on Page 11A.

Give Fest Community Giving Day Returns October 7 with \$110,000 Match Pool to benefit 73 area organizations

Heartland Community Foundation is gearing up for another Give Fest, bringing communities across Ellis, Rooks, and Trego counties together for a day of giving, connection, and Oktoberfest-inspired fun on Wednesday, October 7.

This year, Heartland has committed a \$110,000 match pool, allowing donors to make their gifts go even further while supporting organizations making a difference throughout the region.

Online giving opens October 1 at Heartland-GiveFest.org and continues through Give Fest on October 7. In-person celebrations will also take place simultaneously in all three counties on Octo-

ber 7. Give Fest continues to grow from a giving day into a celebration of the organizations and people working to strengthen the Heartland region.

In 2025, 56 participating organizations raised nearly \$400,000 in a single day, thanks to generous donors, matching opportunities, bonus games, and tremendous community support. This year, there are 73 organizations signed up to participate.

"Give Fest is an opportunity to celebrate all the good happening across our communities," said Sarah Meitner, Executive Director of Heartland Community Foundation. "It brings donors and nonprofits together, introduces people to organizations they may

not have known about before, and gives all of us a chance to see just how much can happen when a community comes together around generosity."

\$110,000 Available In Matching Funds

During Give Fest, donations to participating funds will be matched proportionally, up to 100%, from Heartland Community Foundation's \$110,000 match pool. Donor gifts go into the organization's permanent fund at Heartland, where they are invested to provide a lasting source of support for the organization's mission. Heartland then grants matching dollars to

SEE HCF, 5A

Sponsor a Tiger for October 8th Homecoming Issue

Please call now or possibly be left out!

The October 8th Sentinel-Times will include our annual SHS Homecoming Feature, with individual pictures of the Tiger athletes (football and volleyball), cheer, dance, and coaching staff, sponsored by local merchants, organizations, and individuals.

If you or your organization or business would like to sponsor a Homecoming student or staff person, please call the Sentinel-Times Office at 785-425-6354 as soon as possible **no later than Friday, October 2nd.**

We want to make sure everybody has the opportunity to be a sponsor and show support for our teams.

The 2025 SHS Homecoming is Friday, October 9th, against Osborne.

SJM Recycling Joins Sentinel-Times Business Directory

Starting this week, SJM Recycling, located at 985 17th Road in Stockton, will be featured in the Sentinel-Times Business Directory. SJM Recycling offers convenient scrap metal purchasing and pickup services for a wide range of materials, including steel, copper, aluminum, brass, stainless steel, and more.

For fast, reliable recycling solutions, contact Stephen Martin at 785-425-8365.

Rooks County Shop building demolished; making way for the new structure

By VIRGI LASKA
Sentinel-Times

The Rooks County Commission met on Tuesday, September 22nd, and began the morning session with an executive session attended by commissioners Jake Prockish and Tracy Rudman, along with clerk Laura Montgomery. Commissioner Tim Berland was not present for the morning meeting. The Board did not discuss anything further when it returned to the open meeting.

Landfill supervisor Danny Knoll was next on the agenda, and they first discussed the damage to the vehicle at the landfill. Knoll will need to get pictures for the insurance company.

Knoll told the commissioners that JCT Enterprises had 15,000 railroad ties they wanted to bring to the landfill. The commissioners instructed Knoll to check with the State to see if the railroad ties can be stacked outside of the pits. If the State approves, Knoll will contact JCT.

Next, the commissioners called a ten-minute executive session to discuss non-elected personnel, with the two commissioners and Knoll in attendance. There was no further discussion when they returned to the open meeting.

Highway supervisor Tim Colburn then met with the commissioners. The old shop building has been demolished to make way for the new storage and office building. The department received \$1,285.20 from SJM Recycling for the scrap from the building.

Colburn presented the State fuel tax refund of \$7,125.83, which the commissioners signed for deposit.

The crew is currently hauling material on E Road. Colburn reported that 14 Road has been laid down.

At Colburn's request, a fifteen-

SEE COUNTY, 11A