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Sen. Pyle files by petition for governor.

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Primary election held

■ 'Value Them Both amendment rejected

By Ali Holcomb

Abortion will continue to be a constitutional right in Kansas following the primary election held yesterday.

According to the unofficial results, 59 percent of Kansans who voted in the election voted against the "Value Them Both" amendment while 41 percent voted in favor.

If it would have passed, the amendment would have "affirmed that there is no Kansas constitutional right to an abortion" in the state and would have given state legislators the authority to pass stricter laws to regulate abortion.

In Jackson County, 2,338 people (52 percent) voted 'no on the amendment and 2,150 people (48 percent) voted 'yes.'

Between 50 to 52 percent of Jackson County voters turned out for the election, which is likely a new record for a primary, according to the Jackson County Clerk's Office.

A total of 899 voters voted in advance either in person at the Jackson County Courthouse or through mail-in ballot, it was reported.

Locally, the election went "pretty smooth," and the clerk's office had enough ballots to cover the large turnout, it was reported.

On the Republican ballot, incumbent U.S. Senator Jerry Moran will move on to the Nov. 8 general election after defeating Joan Farr. Locally, Moran received 2,229 votes and Farr received 498 votes.

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Cruise Night is this Friday

"Cruise Night" and GN-Bank's annual community appreciation dinner will be held Friday evening around the Holton Town Square.

"Cruise Night" kicks off at 5 p.m. on the Square and car enthusiasts, especially those with antique or classic cars, trucks and motorcycles, are invited to the Square to show off their vehicles.

There is no registration fee for "Cruise Night," and participants are invited to just "show up" that evening at the Courthouse courtyard.

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As part of her visit to Holton last Friday, Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly (shown above at left) stopped by the recently completed mural on the north side of the Jackson County Museum painted by Lindsey Kernodle (at right) of Wichita. The mural depicts a variety of animals and vegetation native to the eastern tall grass prairie.

Governor visits Holton on 'Prosperity' tour

By Ali Holcomb

Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly visited Holton last Friday morning as part of her "Prosperity On The Plains" tour. Gov. Kelly spent time at More Than Lemons and viewed the new mural on the north exterior wall of the Jackson County Museum.

Gov. Kelly joined Holton/ Jackson County Chamber of Commerce leaders to tour More Than Lemons on the east side of the Square and visit with owners April and John Lemon.

April presented Gov. Kelly sunflower and explained the omy and have helped drive our continue to restore second stories

Watch Your Glass orb scavenger hunt being held in Jackson County this summer.

She then invited Gov. Kelly to paint on a community canvas that was on display at the recent art walk and will continue to be painted on by community mempers in the future.

Gov. Kelly then viewed the Lemon Lofts apartments above the building, which were remodeled by John and are available to

"I'm visiting with entrepreneurs across Kansas because with a glass orb designed as a small businesses power our econ-

record-breaking economic success," Gov. Kelly said. "Thank you to Holton veteran and small business owner April Lemon for taking the time to talk about what my administration can do to help businesses like hers grow and succeed."

During the tour of the lofts, Gov. Kelly highlighted the affordable housing tax credit, which helps people restore the second stories of buildings, such as the Lemon Lofts, "making them living spaces instead of storage for pigeons.

around the Square," Gov. Kelly said. "It'll add to the vibrancy of the Square.

Gov. Kelly then walked to the new mural on the north side of the Jackson County Museum (see related article).

Jackson County was recently awarded \$8,400 in state funds through the Rural Mural and Public Art Program for a new mural project in the county.

At the mural, Gov. Kelly met with muralist Lindsey Kernodle and Suzette McCord-Rogers of the Jackson County Tourism

Gov. Kelly has been visiting

with small businesses owners throughout the state as part of the prosperity tour.

"We're doing a lot of good things, and it's important that they (small business owners) know we're doing those and that support is available to them. I also think it's important to recognize that they are the lifeblood of our state," she said. "Ninety-nine percent of all our businesses are small businesses. They employ over half of Kansans. I think it's important that we recognize them and continue to support them."

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Wichita artist completes mural at County Museum

By Ali Holcomb

vegetation native to the eastern tallgrass prairie was recently completed on the north side of the Jackson County Museum in

Muralist Lindsey Kernodle of Wichita finished the mural last Thursday evening.

Kernodle spent the past two weeks in Holton working on the mural and will return in October to be paint a second mural of the westerntallgrass prairie next to it.

The new mural is the first is A new mural of animals and a series of murals planned by members of the Jackson County Tourism Council and is located at the intersection of Fourth Street and Arizona Avenue.

"I've probably met 20 people a day working on this," Kernodle said. "A lot of people have stopped by and just chatted for 10 minutes. Everybody has been super welcoming."

Animals featured in the mural include a white-tail deer, bull snake, Northern bobwhite, bald eagle, coyote, raccoon, cottontail rabbit and a Monarch But-

The mural also features Big

Bluestem and side-oats grama grasses, a variety of wildflowers and trees in the distance. "It's about the ecosystem.

The tallgrass prairie doesn't exist many places," she said. The tallgrass prairie once cov-

ered 170 million acres of North America, but within a generation, most of it was transformed into farmland, she said. Today,

less than four percent remains intact, mostly in the Flint Hills.

Kernodle worked with members of the Jackson County Tourism Council to create the design of the mural.

"I did some research on the different types of grasses and animals that are native to the tallgrass prairie," she said. "We've been planning for almost a year."

Kernodle is a freelance illustrator who has been painting murals for the past four years.

She earned a bachelor's degree in biology and a minor in art from Washington University in St. Louis. She then graduated from the Science Illustration graduate certification program at California State University.

She worked four years as a graphic artist at the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita.

"I have a passion for communicating the importance of ecosystems," she said.

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Entrepreneurial spirit drives White

Editor's note: This article is fifth in a series about young professionals in the Jackson County community who returned to the community after college to build successful ca-

By Brian Sanders

Kennedy White was gifted with an entrepreneurial spirit. After graduating from Holton High School in 2012 and during his studies at Washburn University, White (shown at right) was able to start and grow a consulting firm that helps businesses create more value for themselves by identifying tax exemption opportunities within their util-

ity charges. "It just seemed like this great opportunity," said White, son of Dennis and Joni White. "So I decided to pursue that."

The business that White created, SmartSave, enabled him to travel the country, helping businesses large and small to identify and take advantage of tax exemption opportunities, even though it was later acquired by a larger financial firm that enabled him to follow another career path that kept him close to his home

Today, he continues the

with gan SmartSave while working with father his White Law fice on Holton's Town Square, dealing mainly business and real estate law.

work he be-

dream life I envisioned here in Holbeton ing able to move back

here and serve the community and the people that I know and love and to be able to raise my kids here," he said.

After high school, White said he wasn't quite sure what he wanted to do with his life. He enrolled in Washburn University's School of Business, studying business finance and entrepreneurship, a study path that would lead to the creation of a business originally known



was working on a school project and found out about this special tax exemption was available manufacturing companies restaurants in the area... I'd heard that none of them were taking advantage of this particu-

some kind,"

he said. "I

lar tax exemption, so I looked into how to help them take advantage of it."

That particular exemption, he said, allows businesses to get refunds based on the sales taxes they pay on energy costs. The goal of "D18" — which eventually grew into Smart-Save — was helping businesses make good use of that exemption and plan for future energy and tax savings.

"I was amazed by the idea "I knew I wanted to start a that these businesses weren't

taking advantage of the exemption, and I knew I could assist them in saving that money," White said. "I could assist them in saving that money, and they could get a refund on the sales taxes they'd paid in Kansas for the

last three years." White and his upstart firm started out with smaller business, then on learning that many other states besides Kansas provided businesses with similar exemptions, decided to reach beyond the Midwest. Soon, he was working with such companies as U.S. Steel and Godiva Chocolate to help them make the most of those exemptions.

But as his graduation from Washburn in 2016 loomed, White decided that he wanted to continue to grow Smart-Save but also come back to Holton and work with his father. Passing the bar examination and getting his law degree which he did in 2019, also Washburn — would also enable him to assist with the sales tax consulting business,

"It just seemed like a nobrainer," he added.

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City's property tax mill levy unchanged for '23

By Brian Sanders

The Čity of Holton will collect \$76,510 more in local taxes with its new proposed budget for 2023 while keeping its overall mill levy the same, the Holton City Commission learned

this week. During the commission's regular meeting on Monday, Overland Park-based financial auditor Mike Peroo met with commissioners to report on the city's proposed budget for 2023, which would keep the ad valorem property tax levy unchanged from the 2022 budget at 59.117 mills. The proposed mill levy is more than the "revenue neutral rate" of 55.797 mills, a number determined based on the amount of property tax revenue expected to be generated in 2022.

Although the mill levy will not change, it is expected to generate more in 2023 based on a \$1.4-million increase in the city's assessed valuation. In 2022, the city's valuation was listed at \$23,667,497, while in 2023, the valuation was listed at \$25,075,740.

Based on the 2022 valuation, the 59.117-mill levy was expected to generate \$1,405,893. Based on the 2023 valuation, the same mill levy is expected to generate \$1,482,403 — an increase of \$76,510, according to information provided by Peroo.

Peroo's annual report to the commission also included comments on the city's utility funds - particularly how the city's cash position is affected by each utility department's expenditures. The city has "an excellent cash position" at 271 "days in cash," he said, noting that cities should have at least 90 days in cash to be in good

The "days in cash" in the city's water fund has been increasing over time due to good spending habits, Peroo said, noting that fund's 308 days in cash is well over the 180 needed for the fund to be in good shape.

But the city's electric fund, he noted, was down to nine days in cash, and the sewer fund was

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THURSDAY'S FORECAST Sunny, High 92