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# Outlook Business Journal

[www.greatbend.org](http://www.greatbend.org)

*A Monthly Publication of the Great Bend Chamber  
of Commerce and Economic Development*

February 2015 • Volume 94 No. 2

## EXPANDING HORIZONS

**You're Invited to the 93rd Annual Meeting & Banquet Feb. 21**

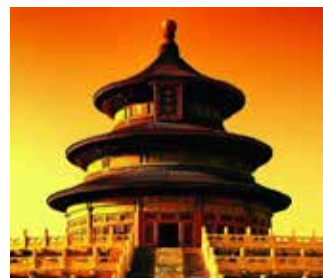
Seeking to support and propel the Great Bend business community, the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development will host its annual banquet to celebrate accomplishments of the past year. You are invited to attend the 93rd Annual Chamber Meeting & Banquet on Saturday, February 21st at the Great Bend Convention Center.

This year's theme, "Expanding Horizons" reflects the Chamber's new group travel opportunity to China in 2015, as well as the continuous Economic Development projects behind the scenes that will expand our community's horizons in the future. More about the travel opportunity will be provided at the Chamber banquet.

Beginning with a cocktail hour at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m. catered by Classic Inn, the evening concludes with the annual business meeting and then a dance from 9-11 p.m.

This year's annual meeting will include recognizing Chamber volunteers, as well as announcing the Business of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and NextGen Leader of the Year award winners. Members pay \$50 per person or \$600 for a corporate table of eight that includes program recognition and sponsor benefits.

To reserve a table or purchase individual tickets, visit [www.greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx](http://www.greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx). The deadline for reservations is Monday, February 9th at 5 p.m. For more information, contact Chamber Office Manager Roxanne Rich, 620-792-2401 or [rrich@greatbend.org](mailto:rrich@greatbend.org).





**"Outlook Business Journal"**

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# Monthly Spotlight on Barton County Young Professionals

An update on activities & events for members of the Barton County Young Professionals group.



During the month of January, the Barton County Young Professionals group put an emphasis on giving back to the community. The 3rd Annual YP Charity Supply Drive was held January 24th at Walmart, where YP members volunteered alongside members of the Rotary Club to collect nonperishable food and household supplies for food banks in the Barton County area. "YP is putting a big emphasis on giving back to the community in 2015," says incoming Steering Committee Chair Brandon Steinert. "Our members volunteer on so many boards and committees, but we will also be organizing projects of our own to make a positive difference."

The group has also partnered with the Rotary Club on another project - a playground for children under 5 years of age that will be known as The Tot Spot. The equipment will be located at Brit Spagh Park, next to the existing structure for elementary age children. The Tot Spot will primarily be funded by private donations, with support from the City of Great Bend up to \$5,000. The City Parks Department also agreed to install the new equipment, which will save time and money and ensure the equipment is safe for years to come. Anyone wishing to donate to the playground should contact AJ Chrest, [achrest@gmail.com](mailto:achrest@gmail.com). See a photo below.

In February, the group will gather for a networking mixer at Eldridge Fencing, 80 E. 10th Street, on Friday, February 27th from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Wally will be serving up pulled pork, free beer, and will be giving away a Traeger grill with accessory pack and other small prizes. Mixers are free to attend, and new members are welcome! Keep up with news and events for Barton County Young Professionals by joining the Facebook group and by signing up for the group's newsletter.



## Want to Become a BCYP Member?

Anyone who works in Barton County between the ages of 21 and 40 is welcome to join the growing group at any time. For more information or to join, email us at [bartonyp@gmail.com](mailto:bartonyp@gmail.com). And be sure to join the Facebook group as well!

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## Haz-Mat Response of Great Bend Celebrates Grand Re-Opening

Jack Stockdale was given a piece of advice many years ago that "the environmental stuff is where the future's at." He took that information and started researching opportunities to service the growing environmental industry and realized his advisor was right. It was then that he worked to found Haz-Mat Response, where he serves as CEO.

"We started in Olathe, Kansas and expanded to Great Bend and then North Platte because of its reputation for being the largest rail yard in the country. Our most recent expansion was Omaha, Nebraska," Stockdale says. "We service most of the Midwest United States, and can be almost anywhere with our specialized remediation, clean-up, and hazardous materials equipment in 2-6 hours."

The company has diversified since its inception, offering seven core areas of service. These include Emergency Response, Industrial & Remediation Services, Track Cleaning, Pit & Track Pan Cleaning, Confined Space, Rental Equipment, and Vacuum Truck Services.

"A lot of our business comes from the railroad companies, as the tracks require a lot of maintenance and train accidents can cause big messes," Stockdale says. "We've done everything from repairing a railroad that was bent into an S-shape by an earthquake to cleaning up big flammable spills after a train went off the tracks. Being flexible, diverse, and readily available is the main reason for our success."

Companywide, Haz-Mat owns a massive fleet of vacuum trucks, excavators, tractors, trailers, dumpsters, and other items that make it possible for them to respond to any situation when they get that phone call. Haz-Mat has about 70 technicians nationwide, with 11 of them based out of Great Bend. Four additional employees work in the Great Bend office, bringing total employment to 15. The local branch recently upgraded from a 2,400 square foot warehouse on Railroad Avenue to a brand new 11,500 square foot facility with ample office space, a conference room, shop space for equipment repairs, a wash bay, and plenty of storage.

Local manager Troy McFarren says, "We had outgrown our old building and it was proving difficult to keep our equipment and supply inventory where it needed to be. This new facility lets us maintain our equipment to the level that's needed to serve our clients."



## Reserve Tickets for NEW Valentine's Day Fundraiser & Comedy Show

Habitat for Humanity has made a name for itself by hosting an annual dinner theater known as "Barton



County's Got Talent" every year since 2010. However, several factors have led the nonprofit organization's board to take a new direction for this year. The first ever "Barton County's Got Flavor" event will be held Saturday, February 14th, catering to those who want a unique Valentine's Day experience.

The new fundraiser will feature a food and beverage pairing competition followed by a professional improv comedy show. Guests will serve as judges for the tasting competition, sampling ten different pairings of food and drink. Tasting stations will be split between the Legends Gallery above the Rosewood Wine Cellar, 1901 Lakin, and the lobby of the Crest Theatre next door, 1905 Lakin, from 6-7:30 p.m. Once they have cast their vote for the best pairing, they will make their way to the auditorium for a comedy show at 8 p.m. that will surely have them rolling in the aisles.

"We are excited to bring a professional comedy duo known as The Foolish Toms to Great Bend for this Valentine's Day event," says Rachel Mawhirter, fundraising volunteer for Habitat. "If you enjoyed the television show 'Whose Line is it Anyway?' then you'll love this hilarious improv comedy show."

Proceeds from the event will be used to fund rehabilitation and Brushed with Kindness projects in Barton County in the coming months. "We are actively working on securing our next rehab project that will be started in the spring of 2015," says Kim Vink, Habitat Board Member. "Once we purchase a home, we will find a family in need who qualifies to purchase it through a zero-interest loan and then begin working side-by-side to help them put in enough sweat equity hours on the project."

Tickets are now available for just \$60 per couple, which includes the tasting competition and the comedy show. Tickets may also be purchased for the comedy show by itself for \$15 per person. For more information or to reserve tickets, contact Mawhirter at 620-786-4896 or email [habitatbartoncounty@hotmail.com](mailto:habitatbartoncounty@hotmail.com).

## Everything Under the Son Launches FREE Storytime Every Thursday Morning

Everything Under the Son at 407 McKinley now offers a free storytime every Thursday morning at 10 a.m., perfect for daycare providers and parents. Snacks are provided. No RSVP necessary.

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## Sunflower Bank Terminates Merger Agreement

Sunflower Financial, Inc. and First Western Financial, Inc. announced last month the mutual termination of their definitive merger agreement, dated September 2014. Although the original rationale for the merger had merit, the parties determined that terminating the merger was in the best interest of both companies and their respective shareholders at this time. The termination of the agreement was approved by both boards of directors.



Sunflower Financial, inc. is a holding company with \$1.7 billion in total assets, \$1.3 billion in deposits, and \$189 million of equity capital as of September 2014. Headquartered in Salina, Kansas, Sunflower is the parent company of Sunflower Bank, which has been serving commercial and consumer clients in Kansas, Missouri, and Colorado communities since 1982. For more details, visit [SunflowerBank.com](http://SunflowerBank.com).

## KWEC to Host Winter Family Programs

The Kansas Wetlands Education Center has the cure for boredom – winter nature programs! Kids will investigate feathers, birds and tracks, learning more about the world around them and the creatures living there. So don't delay, sign-up soon, as the maximum for each class is 20 children. Designed for children ages 6 through 12, one-hour programs will be offered at no charge from 10-11 a.m. each Saturday. Children age 7 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Registration deadlines in sequential order of the classes are Feb. 4, Feb. 11 and March 4. To register for classes, or for more information, call 620-566-1456 or 1-877-243-9268. Although there is no program charge, donations for supplies are always appreciated.

### Fabulous Feathers: February 7th

Take an up close look at feathers, from colors to function, discover what makes feathers special and make a feather star.

### "Love" Birds: Feb. 14

Make an edible birdhouse feeder birds will love and participate in the national Backyard Bird Count, after learning about our winter birds and how to recognize them.

### Making Tracks: March 7

Take a trip with some of the Cheyenne Bottoms animals by following their tracks. Find out how to identify animals by their tracks and make a plaster track cast.

Kids attending the winter program series will construct an edible birdhouse feeder, a feather star and a plaster of Paris track. This year's programs take place Feb. 7, 14 and March 7. Visit [wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu](http://wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu) for more information.

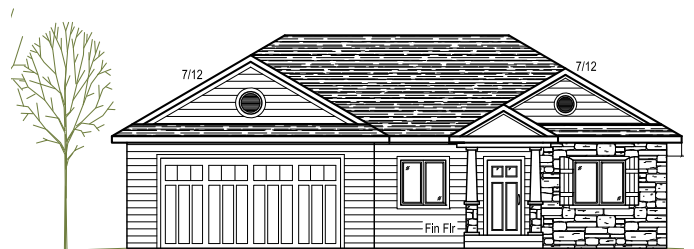
## Rural Housing Partners Launches Development Project in Great Bend

The City of Great Bend, the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development, and Rural Housing Partners are pleased to announce the development of eight single-family for sale homes in the Amber Meadows Subdivision. The homes will be developed on the west side of the subdivision on the newly constructed Prairie Rose Street. According to Ross Vogel of Rural Housing Partners, the homes are 1,450 square feet and include three bedrooms, two bathrooms, open floor plans, an unfinished basement, hardwood floors, granite countertops, oversized garages, attractive curb appeal, and the large master suite includes huge walk-in closets and double vanities in the bathrooms.

Construction is slated to begin the end of February and will be complete late this year. Vogel commented, "I give the highest of praise to Mayor Allison, the entire City Council, and City Manager Howard Partington for their innovative strategy of developing Prairie Rose for homes targeted for a price point not currently developed in the Great Bend."

Vogel added that interest in the project has been encouraging and expects the homes to sell quickly as they have in other communities where RHP has developed homes. The homes will be marketed by a joint effort of the Great Bend Board of Realtors. Potential buyers are encouraged to contact a local realtor for more information on the properties.

"Housing has been one of our top economic development priorities for several years," says Jan Peters, President/CEO of the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development. "We are thrilled that Ross has similarly identified the need for quality middle class homes, and is going above and beyond to meet that need in Great Bend. We hope this draws attention to our community for other development projects like this."



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# Highlighted Events in February

View & post all your community events at [www.greatbend.org](http://www.greatbend.org)!

- 1... Super Bowl Party, Stoneridge Country Club, 1438 24th Street, 3-9 p.m.
- 1... Boy Scout Chili & Chicken Noodle Soup Supper, Elks Lodge, 1120 Kansas, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 2... Barton County Commission, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 2... Chamber Ambassador Club Luncheon, 1125 Williams, 12 p.m.
- 2... Young Professionals Steering Committee Meeting, 1125 Williams, 4 p.m.
- 2... Grief Support Group Meeting, GBHHH, 3520 Lakin, 6:30 p.m.
- 2... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 3... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 4... Barton Basketball Games, Womens at 5:30 p.m., Mens at 7:30 p.m.
- 5... Chamber Coffee: Central National Bank, 1916 Main, 9:30 a.m.
- 5... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 6-7... FiberSpace2015, Heartland Farm, 1049 CR 390 in Pawnee Rock
- 7... Legislative Coffee, Chamber Office, 1125 Williams, 10 a.m.
- 7... KWEC Winter Kids Program, 592 NE 156 Hwy, 10-11 a.m.
- 7... Adopt-A-Pet, Orscheln's Farm Store, 5320 10th Street, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 7... 10th Annual CASA Chocolate Auction, Knights of Columbus, 723 Main, 6:30 p.m.
- 9... Barton County Commission, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 9... Grief Support Group Meeting, GBHHH, 3520 Lakin, 6:30 p.m.
- 9... Barton Basketball Games, Womens at 5:30 p.m., Mens at 7:30 p.m.
- 10... American Red Cross Blood Drive, St. Rose, 3515 Broadway, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 10... YP Personal Development Luncheon "Home Maintenance", Pizza Hut, 4100 10th Street, 12-1 p.m.
- 10... Cheyenne Bottoms Naturalists Meeting, KWEC, 592 NE 156 Hwy, 6-7 p.m.
- 10... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 11... Technology Roundtable, Chamber Office, 1125 Williams, 11:30 a.m.
- 11... RSVP/Volunteers in Action Open House, Burnside Room, 1214 Stone, 2-4 p.m.
- 12... Barton Performing Arts Scholarship Auditions, All Day by Appointment
- 12... Chamber Coffee & Ribbon Cutting: Credit Union of America, 4708 10th, 9:30 a.m.
- 12... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 12... Golden Belt Community Concert feat. Jason Coleman, 7:30 p.m.
- 14... KWEC Winter Kids Program, 592 NE 156 Hwy, 10-11 a.m.
- 14... Barton County's Got Flavor, Crest Theatre, 1905 Lakin, 6-7:30 p.m.
- 14... Comedy Show feat. The Foolish Toms, Crest Theatre, 1905 Lakin, 8 p.m.
- 14... Valentine's Dinner & Dance, Stoneridge Country Club, 1438 24th, 6 p.m. to 12 a.m.
- 15... Submission Deadline for March Issue of Outlook Business Journal
- 15... Knights of Columbus Pancake & Sausage Feed, 723 Main, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- 16... Barton County Commission, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 16... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 17... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 18... Barton Basketball Games, Womens at 5:30 p.m., Mens at 7:30 p.m.
- 19... Chamber Coffee: Central Kansas Christian Academy, 215 McKinley, 9:30 a.m.
- 19... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 21... BOCK Chili Challenge, American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 21... 93rd Annual Chamber Banquet & Meeting, Great Bend Convention Center, 3017 10th, 6 p.m.
- 22... College Goal Sunday at Barton Community College, 245 NE 30 Rd, 2-4 p.m.
- 23... Barton County Commission, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 24... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 24... Flyer Insert Deadline for March Outlook Business Journal Mailing
- 25... Barton Basketball Games & Sophomore Night, 245 NE 30 Rd, Womens at 5:30 p.m., Mens at 7:30 p.m.
- 26... Chamber Coffee: First Assembly of God, 601 Patton Rd, 9:30 a.m.
- 26... Bingo at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, 7 p.m.
- 27... Young Professionals Networking Mixer, Eldridge Fencing, 80 E. 10th, 6-9 p.m.
- 27... Shafer Gallery Opening Reception, 245 NE 30 Rd, 6-8 p.m.
- 27... Movie with a Message "October Sky", 3600 Broadway, 6:15 p.m.



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## Tune in to *ChamberConnect* Show Feb. 5

Tune in to KVGB 1590 AM on the first Thursday of every month to hear Eagle Radio's Patrick Burnett discuss the latest Chamber happenings with Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter.

The February edition of *ChamberConnect* will air Thursday, February 6th at 11:35 a.m. This month's show will be centered around the Chamber's Annual Banquet and some of the new educational seminars it will offer to area businesses later this year. Read more about these seminars on page 7.



## Cornerstone Orthodontics Hosts "Smiles for Jeans" Contest Feb. 2-16

Cornerstone Orthodontics would like to announce that from February 2-16, 2015 customers and friends of their growing orthodontic practice can register at The Buckle to win a free pair of jeans!



This promotion, called "Smiles for Jeans" is being conducted in conjunction with Dental Health Month, and Cornerstone Orthodontics wants to see you smile. Stop in The Buckle to win a free pair of jeans, and get a second entry by posting a selfie with the hashtag #smilesforjeans on Facebook or Instagram. Winner will be announced February 18th on the Cornerstone Orthodontics Facebook page.

Cornerstone Orthodontics offers metal braces, clear braces, Invisaline, self-ligating braces and more. Their highly trained and qualified staff uses the latest technology, such as digital x-ray equipment, to ensure accuracy and efficiency with every treatment plan. Cornerstone also accepts all types of insurance and offers flexible payment plans to accommodate every budget.

For more information, visit [www.cornerstoneorthodontics.com](http://www.cornerstoneorthodontics.com) or call 620-792-4217.

## Great Bend Rocks Band Camp Seeks Rehearsal Space April 15 to June 15

The Great Bend Rocks Band Camp is an educational program that brings kids ages 11-18 together to learn and perform songs during the annual June Jaunt Festival in Great Bend each summer. The camp is trying to purchase some new equipment to better educate its students, and is currently selling raffle tickets at J&L Coins for some fabulous items that will be given away on Saturday, February 14th. Items include a 40 inch LCD Toshiba from Rent-A-Center, ICE Watch from Dawson Jewelers, gift basket from Rosewood Services, Sony Blue Tooth head phones from CPS, lunch buffets from Gambinos Pizza, and more. Tickets are \$5 each or \$20 for five tickets. You do not have to be present to win, and 100% of proceeds support the educational program.

The volunteer-led program is also seeking a rehearsal space that will be utilized from April 15th until June Jaunt is completed. The space needs to accommodate several dozen band students, and be available for weekly rehearsals with equipment stored throughout. For more information about helping students learn and perform, contact Chris Price at 620-282-7072 or [gbrbc@yahoo.com](mailto:gbrbc@yahoo.com). Also be sure to like the Facebook page.

## News & Updates from Rosewood Services

### Rosewood Aktion Club Donates Blankets to Crisis Center

Rosewood Miracle Workers Aktion Club wanted to give the gift of warmth this winter. So the club, comprised of more than 30 members from Rosewood Services, conducted a nearly month-long blanket drive in December. They concluded the drive by donating approximately 20 blankets and quilts to Great Bend's Family Crisis Center. Laura Patzner, the director of the Family Crisis Center, said they really appreciated the donation because they give out a lot of blankets to children for warmth and comfort. Rosewood Aktion Club is an affiliate of the national Kiwanis organization that promotes service in action for people with developmental disabilities. There are 12,000 members worldwide. The local club allows Rosewood clients to be actively involved in the community and to positively impact the lives of others.

### Six Employees Honored for Milestone Anniversaries

Six Rosewood Services employees achieved milestone anniversaries during 2014. Rosewood Services founder and executive director Tammy Hammond recognized them during the employee Christmas party last month. Rosewood employees who reached 10-year anniversaries are Linda Burton, House Lead in the Residential Department; Debbie Larkin, Senior Health Care Coordinator in the Medical Department; and Deb Smith, Case Manager. Employees celebrating five-year anniversaries are Edie Miller, Residential Department; Alex Hammond, Rosewood Ranch; and Rebekah Wilison, Day Services Department. Hammond commented that Rosewood's employees are the organization's greatest resource because they are involved in the daily lives of the clients they serve.

### Great Bend Cookie Contest Raises \$600 for Food Bank

A record number of people participating in the Great Bend Cookie Contest last November resulted in \$610 being donated to the Food Bank of Barton County. The Sixth Annual Great Bend Cookie Contest, held on Nov. 29, was sponsored by 17 local businesses, in conjunction with promotion of Small Business Saturday. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on that day, Rosewood Furniture Gallery supplied participants with decorative boxes, a list of cookie-contest businesses and a voting bracelet. More than 100 people gave a donation and took on the challenge of selecting the best cookie in Great Bend. Kustom Floor Designs won the "Best Cookie" award for the third straight year. But Rosewood Furniture Gallery came within two votes of unseating the repeat champs, making it the closest competition ever. The Food Bank serves more than 600 people monthly, who meet criteria for services.

### Rosewood Ranch Receives Grant for Therapy Program

Rosewood Ranch, a full-working horse ranch, near Pawnee Rock, that offers therapeutic riding sessions to people with developmental disabilities, was awarded a grant for \$1,800 by Children's Miracle Network Hospitals at Via Christi Health. The grant helped to underwrite the cost of hippotherapy sessions for 12 children who participated on a weekly basis this fall at the Ranch.

Rosewood Ranch is a certified member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International, the leading therapeutic horsemanship organization in the world. Maneuvering on horseback around barrels and poles, while placing flags and rings at different stations, allows riders to develop motor skills and improve muscle strength, balance, and dexterity. It has also been beneficial in advancing cognitive and emotional development.

## HaysMed and Centura Health Finalize Joint Venture to Co-Own St. Rose Health Center



The leaders of Hays Medical Center began noticing more and more patients from the Great Bend area were seeking health services at their facility. They also discovered that Centura Health's St. Rose in Great Bend was searching for new avenues to providing more services locally. The result is the signing of a joint venture, which means Centura Health and HaysMed now co-own St. Rose Health Center; the name had been St. Rose Ambulatory & Surgery Center.

covered that Centura Health's St. Rose in Great Bend was searching for new avenues to providing more services locally. The result is the signing of a joint venture, which means Centura Health and HaysMed now co-own St. Rose Health Center; the name had been St. Rose Ambulatory & Surgery Center.

"With so many patients coming to Hays from central Kansas, we were looking for ways to place the specialists and services closer to the people who need them," said John H. Jeter, M.D., HaysMed president and chief executive officer. "At the same time, Centura Health was reviewing options to expand the services that could be provided locally to its patients and the community."

"This joint venture is the natural progression of two forward-thinking facilities combining forces," agreed Dr. Jeter and Scott Taylor, CEO of St. Catherine Hospital in Garden City and St. Rose.

HaysMed has historically provided services beyond its home base of Ellis County. For more than three decades, it has collaborated with regional facilities in western Kansas on a wide array of projects, Dr. Jeter said.

"We have a Critical Access Hospital system with 24 facilities and we send physicians to 30 hospitals to provide specialty clinics," he explained. "In addition, we formed a relationship with Pawnee Valley Community Hospital in Larned."

"HaysMed always believes in keeping access to health care as local as possible," Dr. Jeter elaborated. "You need to provide health care to people where and when they need it. When it isn't possible to provide care locally, we must ensure easy access to the next level of care when necessary. This is what it is all about."

The joint venture provides an even stronger alliance for St. Rose's primary-care providers who now have immediate access to more specialists, noted Leanne Irsik, St. Rose administrator. The joint venture extends the work Centura Health is doing in western and central Kansas, Taylor commented.

"We now have four affiliate hospitals, St. Catherine Hospital and the partnership in Great Bend," he said. "We remain committed to serving Barton County and the many rural communities across central and southwest Kansas."

The changes at St. Rose are a reflection of health-care services nationwide – more outpatient services in local communities with inpatient services at high-quality hospitals such as Centura Health's facilities and HaysMed where hospitalists practice their specialty, Irsik commented. "Our focus at St. Rose is the outpatient-care and clinic setting," she elaborated. "Goals are helping people stay healthy, and teaching those with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma and heart disease to manage their diseases so they can enjoy life instead of repeatedly going to an emergency room."

We are very excited about working together to develop a state-of-the-art center that patients can trust and be proud of," Taylor said. "Collaboration is the key to success in today's health-care environment and the partners in this venture are proven leaders in non-profit health care in Kansas."

## NEW Chamber Seminars Coming in 2015

### "Managing a Facebook Page" - Wednesday, March 4th

Members of the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development get access to special training opportunities. On Wednesday, March 4th members are invited to take part in special workshop on "Managing a Facebook Page" facilitated by Chamber Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter. This two-hour seminar will begin at 10 a.m. and is designed to teach small businesses how to better use their Facebook page to reach potential customers, build brand loyalty, and develop a personality for your products or services. Participants should already have a Facebook page created prior to attending, and are welcome to bring a laptop or tablet with them so they can start practicing right away. The seminar will begin at 10 a.m. with coffee and beverages provided throughout. As the noon hour approaches, lunch will be served and there will be time for one-on-one tutoring and Q&A as a group. Cost per person to attend this valuable workshop is \$30, which includes the meal, beverages, and handout materials. Seating is limited, so register early at <https://fs23.form-site.com/abauer/facebookseminar/index.html>.



### "LinkedIn for Professionals" - Wednesday, June 10th

Members of the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development get access to special training opportunities. On Wednesday, June 10th members are invited to take part in special workshop on "LinkedIn for Professionals" facilitated by Chamber Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter. This one-hour seminar will begin at 10 a.m. and is designed to teach professionals and small business owners how to use LinkedIn for networking, recruiting, and career growth. Participants should already have a LinkedIn profile created prior to attending, and are welcome to bring a laptop or tablet with them so they can start practicing right away. The seminar will begin at 10 a.m. with coffee and rolls served. Cost per person to attend this valuable workshop is \$15, which includes the refreshments and handout materials. Seating is limited, so register early. Online registration will be made available one month prior to the date of the seminar.



## Chili Challenge to Benefit GBHHH

The 16th Annual BOCK Chili Challenge, which includes tasting and judging, is set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21 at the American Legion, 1011 Kansas, Great Bend. All proceeds are earmarked for Golden Belt Home Health & Hospice (GBHH&H) patients. The Bikers of Central Kansas (BOCK) and the American Legion Riders are co-sponsoring the event, which is open to the public. Admission is \$7 and desserts will be available for \$1 each. Pre-registration is required by Feb. 16, with a limit of 17 entrants; there is no entry fee. Chefs should each bring a large roaster full of chili that is heated and ready to serve, if at all possible, BOCK President Danny Riggs said.

"Unfortunately," Riggs added, "there are so many people that need hospice care. We just want to give back to hospice because they helped us so much. We are hoping for a big community turnout to support this very worthy cause."

For more information about the Chili Challenge or to register, contact Lori Grauer Riggs, 620-639-2927, or Rae Ann Brack, 620-792-3934.



## St. Rose Merger with HaysMed Continues Positive Changes & New Services Added

### Dr. Watts More Integrated in Great Bend Area

Larry Watts, M.D., has become a familiar face to St. Rose Health Center but in upcoming months he will be introduced to others in the community. Dr. Watts, chief medical officer at Hays Medical Center, will be one of the more visible representatives of HaysMed in Great Bend. HaysMed recently became co-owner of St. Rose with Centura Health.

When he started visiting St. Rose last year, Dr. Watts noticed local residents dedicated to the legacy of the Dominican Sisters who opened the first St. Rose facility almost 112 years ago; followed by the opening of Central Kansas Medical Center in 1964. "There is this strong commitment to maintaining a quality health-care facility on the old Central Kansas Medical Center campus," Dr. Watts said. "No one wants the legacy of CKMC to disappear. And that includes all of us at HaysMed."

The new alliance with HaysMed will bring numerous benefits to patients and families, including an integrated health system, Dr. Watts said. "The medical records at St. Rose will be accessible to the physicians in Hays when a patient is referred to us. This will enhance the coordination of care between the two facilities."

The chief medical officer plans to be in Great Bend at least twice a month and to be active in the Rotary Club. Dr. Watts was a practicing OB-GYN for 25 years in the Kansas City area. He earned his bachelor's and medical degrees at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and a master's of health service administration from the University of Kansas.

### St. Rose Now Offers Free Nurse Hotline Service

Most everyone has experienced something like this – especially at night or on weekends. After returning from a doctor's appointment, another question about treatment arises. Or the drugs don't seem to be working after a surgical procedure. Or maybe you need a little reassurance that doctor's orders are being followed correctly. These are just a few examples of when a new St. Rose Health Center service will come in handy. It is called One Call Nurse Hotline and is a benefit resulting from the new St. Rose partnership with Hays Medical Center.

There is no charge for the service and anyone may use it. The number is 1-855-429-7633; it is available from 4:30 p.m. to 8 a.m. Monday through Friday, as well as 24 hours a day on weekends and holidays. HaysMed has been offering this service since August 2013.

**About St. Rose Health Center:** A non-profit entity, specializing in primary care, and prevention and wellness. Services include Urgent Care, St. Rose Family Medicine, Great Bend Internists, imaging, infusion clinic, WellnessWorks, one-day surgical procedures and a comprehensive Specialty Clinic. St. Rose is co-owned by Hays Medical Center and Centura Health.

## "What is an Optimist?" A Column Submitted by Optimist Dennis Lutz

If asked, "What is an Optimist Club?" I would reply the usual, "It is a civic club dedicated to serving the youth of our community." Being asked this recently jarred my old brain, and prompted me to look back at that answer.

I am an optimist that happens to be a member of the Great Bend Optimist Club. Over the years of my membership, memories of current and past projects: Christmas tree sales, Ralph Terry league baseball, Pheasant Hunter's Breakfast at the American Legion, Punt Pass & Kick, Pitch Hit & Run, Oratorical Contest, and other projects... what really makes me the most proud are the persons I was blessed to serve and serve with. In my forty-six years with this organization, our membership has served this community with distinction on numerous boards, panels, councils, and committees outside the organization. Look into any activity in the city calling for volunteer help, and you will find an Optimist with work clothes, ready to help.

Our association with the youth is very self-serving, in that we benefit as much from the project as the youth involved. In our years of dedication to the youth, we have basked in the glory of their achievement. How can it get any better!?

The Great Bend Optimist Club meets weekly. For more information or to join, contact Optimist member Derek Fredrick, [dfredrick@waterstruevalue.com](mailto:dfredrick@waterstruevalue.com).

## 3rd Annual Casino Night for BCYP Members Mar. 21

The Barton County Young Professionals group will host their 3rd Annual Casino Night on Saturday, March 21st. The event will include a delicious catered meal, casino games, raffle prizes, and a free photo booth!

Tickets will be sold for \$30 per person, and any proceeds from the event will be donated to The Tot Spot, one of YP's community impact projects in 2015.

The Barton County Young Professionals group is operated under the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development, and strives to accomplish three goals: 1) facilitate networking, 2) give back to the community, and 3) develop young leaders. For more information about the Young Professionals program or to get involved, contact Chamber Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter at 620-792-2401.



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## Sunflower Diversified Services Provides News & Event Reminders

### Johnson Volunteers for E.R.N.

As executive director of Sunflower Diversified Services, Jim Johnson recently volunteered to become an active member of the Employment Resource Network.



This InterHab network has been in place for a number of years but recent federal decisions have triggered the need to re-focus attention on employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, Johnson said. InterHab is the statewide association that represents Sunflower and similar agencies by advocating for rights to employment, education and an independent lifestyle. The overall goal is to understand federal rules and work with state leaders to develop a plan that satisfies expectations.

### Sunflower EEC Welcomes High-Tech Vision Screener

When Cathy Estes presented information about the need for a new vision-screening device to the Great Bend Noon Lions Club, she was hoping her audience would come through for children with sight problems. Sylvia Reinhardt of the Kansas Lions Sight Foundation joined Estes at the same meeting, and shared specific information about the PediaVision Spot Vision Screener. The Spot is designed for children as young as 6 months. It will detect astigmatism, nearsightedness, farsightedness and differences between the two eyes. A "gaze analysis" helps determine eye misalignment, lazy eye and pupil size abnormalities. The local Lions club pledged \$2,000 and their secretary sent a letter to the other clubs in our five-county service area. \$2,500 came from funds at the Golden Belt Community Foundation. The results is the \$7,600 Spot is now in place at the Early Education Center at 1313 Patton, but is owned by the Great Bend Noon and Evening Lions.

### Donations & Support Needed for Annual Charity Gala

Preparations for the 10th Annual Charity Gala sponsored by Sunflower Diversified Services are in high gear with just a few weeks left before the event. The non-profit agency's biggest fundraiser of the year is set for Saturday, March 7 at the Great Bend Convention Center. Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. While Sunflower has received many items for the silent and live auctions, more are needed, said Connie Oetken, director of development. Tickets are \$100 each for a prime rib or chicken breast dinner. Wine is served free at each table and an open bar is available. **About Sunflower Diversified Services:** Sunflower serves infants, toddlers and adults with disabilities and delays in Barton, Pawnee, Rice, Rush and Stafford counties.

## Great Bend... Naturally!

Column by Cris Collier, President  
Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau



As we are preparing to publish our new official Great Bend Visitors Guide I ran across this wonderful article. Thought it really told the story best about the importance of visitor guides. This article was written by John Hudak, Destination Marketing Association International.

### Two New Studies Deem Official Visitor Guides Valuable

Yes, it's true that nearly 70% of all travelers do not even use an "official" visitor guide from a DMO (destination marketing organization – CVB), but the ones who do use them are money in the bank for destinations. Two new major studies on the role and effectiveness of Official Visitor Guides have just been released, and the findings are enlightening and insightful. One study, conducted by Temple University Laboratory for Tourism and eCommerce includes 5 State and 5 City DMO's from various parts of the United States, and the other conducted by Destination Analysts samples 11 CVB's in the Western US. Both studies included varying budget size DMO's from large to small. Only one DMO participated in both studies.

One finding consistent in both studies was that the OVG's increased the number of attractions and events people consumed during their trips. The WACVB study actually calculated that the OVG's helped cause visitors to increase their length of stay by an average of 1.9 days. The extra lodging and daily spend put OVG readers in the "high value" category. The WACVB study showed the mean household income of readers to be \$93,030, and the mean age to be 53.3 years. Both studies confirmed that the OVG reader tends to be Baby Boomers and older, but Millennials still comprised 20% of the total.

One study showed that more than 50% of people requested their visitor guide more than 5 weeks prior to travel, and while both studies revealed that more than 70% of the readers had already planned to visit prior to ordering, one study showed that of the people who were "undecided" prior to ordering the guide, about 83% were influenced to choose the destination after reviewing it. Another key finding was the amount of time spent reading the OVG's. Forty five percent spent more than 45 minutes reading the guides, and another 53% spent between 15 and 45 minutes. Clearly, the quality of time spent with OVG's helps convince consumers to visit more attractions, attend more events, stay longer, and spend more money.

As consumers continue to evolve and use alternate sources of travel planning and travel inspiration tools, it is clear from these two studies that there is still significant ROI (return on investment) in OVG's both for DMO's and consumers.

For more information about the Great Bend area or to advertise in the local visitors guide, contact the CVB at 620-792-2750.

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## Ambassador Bio - Amanda Hackerott

The Ambassador Club is made up of 30 men and women from the Great Bend business community who represent the Chamber in a number of ways. They host the weekly Chamber Coffees, attend Business After Hours and Ribbon Cuttings, serve on Chamber committees, and assist with member recruitment and retention efforts. They also volunteer at numerous Chamber events, such as the Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo and the Annual Banquet. To find out how you can become a member of the Ambassador Club, contact us, 620-792-2401 or [abauer@greatbend.org](mailto:abauer@greatbend.org).



### Where I Work

I am a Vice President/Loan Officer at Farmers Bank & Trust because they met everything I was looking for in a bank to continue my career - strong community ties with a solid history. I originate consumer, real estate, and commercial loans and work closely with customers to help them meet their goals.

### Background

I have worked in the banking industry for the last 18 years, beginning my career in Longmont, CO and then Seattle, WA. I've done everything from bookkeeping and personal banking to management and lending. I missed the small town community feel, and in 2012 moved to Great Bend to be closer to Russell, where I grew up.

### My Family

I have two amazing children. I have a daughter attending K-State University pursuing a degree in English, with a dream to work for Hallmark. My son attends Great Bend High School and is on the bowling team.

### As an Ambassador

I've been an ambassador for almost a year, and love being able to learn about the community through Chamber events. My experiences so far have really opened my eyes to all that Great Bend has to offer. I love getting to know people and do my part to improve the community.

### Hobbies & Interesting Facts

I grew up in a custom farming family and learned how to drive a combine before I knew how to drive a pickup. I enjoy relaxing walks and exploring our community.

## Becker Tire Receives Distributor Award

Members of Becker Tire's management team Gary Albright, President & CEO, Steve Burhenn, Executive VP & CRO, and Willy Allen, Executive VP were in Orlando, Florida to receive a 45 year distributor award from TBC Corporation.

Becker Tire is a direct distributor for TBC Corporation, one of the nation's largest marketer of tires for the automotive and truck replacement market.

TBC distributes directly to large distributors throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Becker Tire was recognized as one of their oldest and longest running distributors.



## Shafer Gallery Unveils Educational Exhibit

The Shafer Art Gallery has installed an educational display to illustrate the complex process the Gallery's namesake Gus Shafer utilized to create his famous bronze statue collection. The exhibit was paid for through private donations from the Bill McKown estate. McKown's generosity is recognized via signage, which names the exhibit "Bill McKown Presents: How to Make a Metal Horse." McKown passed away in April of 2014.

The exhibit was created from scratch by Chase Studios of Cedar Creek Mo., which specializes in natural history exhibit design and fabrication. They are the same company that produced the exhibits at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center.

The exhibit intends to offer an educational element in the Shafer Gallery. "Providing educational opportunities to our citizens and especially to our children is one of the most important services a museum or gallery can perform," Barnes said. "Basically, the education kiosk brings a major museum quality educational experience to the doorsteps of our classrooms and our communities."

The impressive display has almost ceiling high art work and large statues of horses in various stages of the sculpting process. Young visitors can interact with the kiosk at two activity stations. At one station, they can use special sculpture clay to make figurines like the ones that would be created by the artist and cast into bronze at the foundry. At the other station, they can take pre-cast urethane animal figurines and place them into their matching epoxy molds mounted on the display background. Not only do these activities meet educational teaching standards but they are designed to be fun. The Shafer Gallery is open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.



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## Insurance Planning Welcomes Nick Klug to Great Bend Team

Kansas City area native Nick Klug has joined the Great Bend office of Insurance Planning, Inc., as a commercial account representative.

Klug, born and raised in Olathe, has several years' experience in the insurance industry in claims service and business and commercial insurance. He is a graduate of Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.



He is a golf enthusiast and enjoys reading and following KSU sports activities. Klug is the grandson of Leon and Lois Klug, and Harold and Connie Lueker, all of Hoisington.

Insurance Planning of Great Bend is located at 1901 12th Street, with offices in Hays and Russell. Its business and commercial services include specialized insurance coverage for the oilfield, manufacturing, healthcare institutions and contractors. It is the largest independent insurance agency in the region and is licensed in 35 states. For more information, visit [www.insurance-planning.com](http://www.insurance-planning.com).

## Update from the Hoisington Chamber

Join us for the Hoisington Chamber's Legislative Coffee on Saturday, February 28th at 10 a.m. in the Activity Center Meeting Room, 1200 Susank Road in Hoisington.

Hoisington's Chamber is also proud to introduce it's newly designed logo, created by Lindsay Bogner of Hoisington. Under the direction of Executive Vice President Kristi Lovett, the Hoisington Chamber is in the process of modernizing, streamlining, and improving its services and community events in 2015.



## WELCOME to these NEW Chamber Members!

### Behrends Tax & Accounting Solutions, LLC

Brett & Adam Behrends  
2001 Broadway  
Great Bend KS 67530  
(620)791-8575  
*Accountants*

### ElderCare Inc.

Gaila Nielsen  
PO Box 1364  
Great Bend KS 67530  
(620)792-1241  
*Home Health Services*

### Central Kansas Breast & Surgery Clinic

Ana Refinetti, MD  
3520 Lakin, Suite 107  
Great Bend KS 67530  
(620)792-1227  
*Physician Clinic*

### TLC Pet Salon

Lori Felsburg  
2232 10th St.  
Great Bend KS 67530  
(620)617-6066  
*Pet Care*



## United Way of Central Kansas

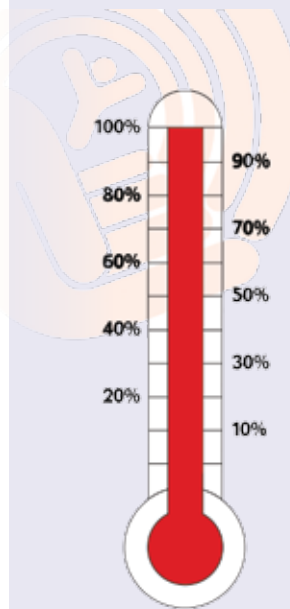
1125 Williams in Great Bend, KS 67530  
Office Phone: (620) 792-2403  
[unitedwayofcentralks@hotmail.com](mailto:unitedwayofcentralks@hotmail.com)

*Submitted by Executive Director Julie Smith*

## United Way Campaign Update

It is official! United Way of Central Kansas, due to the generosity of our wonderful community, we have met and exceeded our goal of \$270,000! The goal was increased from last year 9% to meet the growing needs of United Way's community partners.

Special thank you to all involved with United Way of Central Kansas, the Executive Board of Directors, office help Paula Mauler and Charell Owings, and the 2015 Co-Chairs, Dr. Charlie and Denise Joslin, Laura and Jim Smith, and Dr. Perry and Krista Smith. They have been great leaders and representatives for their communities. United Way continues to make a difference in the community and without the countless volunteers, payroll advocates, businesses and many others that have given their time and talent, this campaign would have not succeeded. I am especially proud that the money stays in our community, to do the most good.



We are honored to have partnered with the Cities of Great Bend and Claflin, the Thelma Harms Trust, CUNA Mutual, Barton County Young Professionals, and the Golden Belt Community Foundation to make the new Born Learning Trails in Great Bend and Claflin a reality. UWCK is also helping pilot a new program in the Ellinwood School District, "Crunch out Obesity" with emphasis on health and nutrition for our youth. United Way continues to make an impact on Health, Education and Income and look for new and exciting programs in 2015! On behalf of our Board and all the agencies, a heartfelt thank you!

*"Blessed are those that can give without remembering and receive without forgetting."*

## Technology Roundtable Meeting Feb. 11

The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development would like to invite local businesses to participate in our quarterly Technology Roundtable Luncheons that give tech-savvy professionals or curious lifelong learners an opportunity to keep up with trends and developments in business technology.

The winter quarter meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 11th in the Spray-Holt Family Board Room at the Chamber Office, 1125 Williams, starting at 11:30 a.m. The topic will be "Challenges of Windows 8 & What to Expect in Windows 10" with the cost per person being \$10, which includes lunch. To register, go to [greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx](http://greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx).





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**February 12, 2015**

**Credit Union of America • 1207 Main Street**

A financial cooperative providing personal and business banking solutions, come help Credit Union of America celebrate 40 years of service in Great Bend. Ribbon cutting to follow the Coffee at 10 a.m.

**February 19, 2015**

**Central Kansas Christian Academy • 215 McKinley**

Central Kansas Christian Academy is a non-denominational community Christian school that provides an exceptional educational opportunity for children in Kindergarten through the Eighth grade. Our strong curriculum not only promotes learning, but also growth in the student's spirit. CKCA combines Christian character training with an excellent academic program that we believe will build a strong foundation for your child's future.

**February 26, 2015**

**First Assembly of God • 601 Patton Road**

The First Assembly church in Great Bend Kansas extends an invitation to you to be a guest at one of our dynamic services. We understand that quality relationships develop when people with shared interests connect on common grounds. Sunday morning service is held at 10:30 a.m.

**March 5, 2015**

**Catholic Social Service • 2201 16th Street**

Catholic Social Service provides help for people in need regardless of their faith. We advocate on their behalf and we invite other people of good will to join us. [www.catholicsocialservice.org](http://www.catholicsocialservice.org)



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Employment – Barton County	November 13	November 14
Labor Force	16,644	17,173
Employment	16,138	16,652
Unemployment	506	521
Unemployment Rate	3.0%	3.0%
KS Unemployment Rate	5.1%	4.2%

City/County Local Sales Tax Distributions Report	November 13	November 14
Sales Tax for Barton County at 1.00%	\$396,563	\$463,498
Sales Tax for Great Bend at 0.75%	\$197,402	\$246,001

Building Permits	November 13	November 14
Commercial – GB	5	4
Residential - GB	10	14

### Sources:

City of Great Bend, [www.greatbendks.net](http://www.greatbendks.net)  
Kansas Department of Revenue, [www.ksrevenue.org](http://www.ksrevenue.org)  
Kansas Department of Labor, [www.klic.dol.ks.gov](http://www.klic.dol.ks.gov)

