

2013 Chamber Award Winners Announced



Great Bend Regional Hospital Named Business of the Year

Great Bend Regional Hospital is a name that has only been around since 2009. However, its roots as the Surgical & Diagnostic Center of Great Bend have been firmly planted in the Great Bend community since 2001. Over twenty years ago, more than a dozen physicians worked together with a professional management company to open what would eventually become Great Bend Regional Hospital and the healthcare epicenter that it is today.

For its business success and longstanding commitment to the community, Great Bend Regional Hospital earned the title of "Business of the Year" for 2013. — *Cont. on Page 2*

Roger Murphy Recognized as 2013 Citizen of the Year

For over 50 years, Roger Murphy has been an active member of the Great Bend business community. His personal and professional accolades are quite extensive, but his commitment to innovation and his entrepreneurial spirit throughout the past five decades are the qualities that earned him the 2013 Citizen of the Year Award from the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development. He was presented the award at the 92nd Annual Meeting & Banquet, by 2012 award recipient and long-time friend Rick Ball.



— *Cont. on Page 2*



Kristy Hogan Deemed 2013 NextGen Leader of the Year

During the 92nd Annual Meeting & Banquet, Kristy Hogan was recognized as the 2013 NextGen Leader of the Year for her continuous efforts to improve the Great Bend community. This award program was launched last year as a joint effort of the Chamber's Board of Directors and the Barton County Young Professionals Group to recognize up-and-coming leaders for their volunteer service.

Kristy Hogan was raised in Great Bend, daughter of Ron and Kathy Straub. After graduating from Great Bend High School in 1998, she continued her education with a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Kansas and a Masters in Business Administration from Friends University. Kristy not only played for the KU Women's Golf Team, but was also the captain.

— *Cont. on Page 2*

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Don't Miss Chamber's Final Legislative Coffee March 15th

Don't miss the final Legislative Coffee for 2014, scheduled for Saturday, March 15th. These events give local individuals the chance to network with our legislators directly. After hearing a brief update from each legislator present, the audience is given an opportunity to ask questions about hot topic issues, such as health care, education, budget concerns, etc. All state senators and representatives are invited to these events.

All Legislative Coffees are held at the Kansas Oil & Gas Museum at 5944 10th Street and begin at 10 a.m. Doors open at 9:30 a.m., and donuts and coffee are provided. Legislative Coffees are sponsored by AT&T.



Barton Community College to Unveil Auditorium at After Hours March 27th



Barton Community College will host a Business After

Hours Event on Thursday, March 27th from 5-7 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building, 245 NE 30 Rd in Great Bend. There will also be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:15 p.m. The social event will serve as an unveiling for the newly renovated Fine Arts Auditorium. Chamber members are invited to come enjoy hors d'oeuvres, performances from BCC students, facility tours, and door prize drawings.

Barton Community College and the BCC Foundation have been fundraising for the auditorium renovation for several years. The renovation includes a new seating arrangement, lighting and technical equipment, artwork, and other upgrades. For more information, visit www.bartonccc.edu and plan to attend the event March 27th.

ChamberConnect Radio Show Airs March 6th

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 March edition of ChamberConnect will air on KVGB on Thursday, March 6th at 11:35 a.m.



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Great Bend Regional Hospital Garner's Chamber's 2013 Business of the Year Award for Excellence



(Cont. from Pg 1) The award was presented during the 92nd Annual Meeting & Banquet for the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development.

The Surgical & Diagnostic Center was opened in April 2001, striving to create an environment and culture of customer service for patients and their families. The facility started with 28 employees, with approximately 200 cases per month. By 2005, the physicians expanded the facility to include an extra operating room and an imaging center with MRI, DEXA, and x-ray services. Then in 2008, the major expansion began that would transform the growing company into Great Bend Regional Hospital.

"The initial investment of in the facility and state-of-the-art equipment was only the beginning," Administrator Pam Chambers says. "Since that time, we have continuously re-invested in the community through property taxes, a payroll with more than 320 employees, and numerous charitable contributions from the physician owners."

The hospital staff works with the Great Bend High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club each year to put on the Human eMotion Run/Walk/Bike event, which promotes a healthy community while raising money for the student group's extracurricular projects. They are also major advocates for the Family Crisis Center and other local charities, while providing millions of dollars in free health-care to the uninsured population in Central Kansas.

Great Bend Regional Hospital now boasts four operating rooms, a full Intensive Care Unit, Emergency Room, laboratory, ultrasound, nuclear medicine, respiratory therapy, and more. The Women & Children's Center has four labor and delivery rooms and four recovery and postpartum rooms, along with a nursery, level two nursery, and four pediatric rooms.

The enterprise continues to grow, adding new services to meet the needs of the community, including new equipment for digital mammography and low dosage radiation x-rays. As of December 2013, GBRH opened a new Medical Office Building, which houses Medical Records, Billing, and IT Services on the south side of the facility. The north side is occupied by the Hutchinson Clinic, where specialty physicians visit on a regular basis. Then in early 2014, the Emergency Room obtained a Level 4 Trauma Certification and is now offering Immediate Care services.

Today, the growing hospital employs 324 people with physician services covering family practice, OB/GYN, orthopedics, general surgery, ophthalmology, internal medicine, podiatry, pediatrics, cardiology, ENT, oncology, radiology, urology and pain management. In 2013, there were over 3,000 surgeries performed, both inpatient and outpatient. The OB unit welcomed 328 babies. The Emergency Room cared for over 8,000 patients.

"As Great Bend Regional Hospital continues to grow, the original goal stays at the forefront," Chambers says. "We strive to create an environment and culture of customer service for patients and their families, as well as staff and physicians." —

Entrepreneurial Spirit Earns Roger Murphy Recognition as 2013 Citizen of the Year

(Cont. from Pg 1) From a young age, Roger Murphy proved to be a tenacious leader. After graduating from Great Bend High School in 1957, he juggled college classes at Fort Hays State University, a busy farming operation, and seven years of service in the US Army Reserves. He married his high school sweetheart, Mary Lou Fisher, in 1960, in the midst of launching his first business venture, Great Bend Feeding Inc.

As with most successful businessmen, his interests and knowledge grew from farming and livestock to include real estate and banking as well. Because of this, Murphy's entrepreneurial spirit could not be contained to just agriculture. Over the years, he has founded or co-founded many other successful business ventures, including Alfalfa Pellets, American State Bank NA, Innovative Livestock Services, and Dillwyn Acres to name a few. He has also invested in several local projects, including CPI Qualified Plan Consultants and Fuller Industries.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Murphy also has an impressive volunteer service record. He helped found the Golden Belt Community Foundation, and has served as a board member for many organizations, including First National Bank, Barton County Historical Society, St. Rose Foundation, American State Bank, Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, Innovative Livestock Services, and more. He is also a member of the Prince of Peace Parrish and the Knights of Columbus.

His generous spirit and commitment to the community have earned him other forms of recognition in the past. In 2003, Great Bend Feeding was recognized as the Business of the Year, and in 2011, Murphy and his wife were honored by Barton Community College as the "Old Bill Honorarium."

Roger lives in Great Bend, with his wife Mary Lou of 54 years. They have two children, Kayla Murphy Fischer and husband Steve, and Andrew Murphy and wife Megan, and 5 grandchildren. —

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Kristy Hogan Recognized as Next-Gen Leader of the Year for 2013

(Cont. from Pg 1) She began her career with the family company, Straub International, at the age of 16, where she has worn many hats. Currently, Kristy serves as the Customer Service Relations Representative and is responsible for the annual customer service plans and marketing events at all seven locations. She has also been instrumental in creating a company mantra, and facilitating the Straub International Pentacle Certification Program. Kristy is responsible for leading all company exhibits at trade shows around the state, and led the formation of the company's annual Ag Summit for their customers.

"Kristy is always the first to step forward to help with a new project that may present itself," says David Tremain, General Manager for Straub International. "But her accomplishments go far beyond our company, and her personal successes are what really set her apart for this award."

Hogan's most notable volunteer achievements include the revitalization and growth of the Barton County Young Professionals Group and the founding of the Miss Barton County/Miss Golden Belt Scholarship Pageant in Great Bend. In 2012, she was selected as one of only 26 women from the State of Kansas to participate in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Excellence in Public Service Series. She is a 2010 graduate of the Leadership Golden Belt Program, and has also served on boards and committees with the Family Crisis Center, City of Great Bend Retail Roundtable, Explore Great Bend, Home for the Holidays Parade, Charity Chili Cook-Off, StoneRidge Women's Golf Invitational, Great Bend AirFest, and more. In 2013, Hogan also began a term as an Ambassador for the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development.

Kristy's service goes far beyond the committees and task forces she serves on. Behind the scenes, she and her husband, Toby, joined with a group of other investors to improve the inventory of quality rental homes in Great Bend. "The financial and emotional investment into this new business venture speaks to the commitment she continually shows for the betterment of the Great Bend community," says Jane Isern, a local attorney who nominated Hogan for the award. "She is always encouraging others to share in her passion for community, and her enthusiasm is contagious."

Kristy, and her husband Toby, live in Great Bend with their daughters, Baze (3) and Brooks (6 mos). —

Young Professionals Spotlight

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

During the month of February, Barton County Young Professionals members gathered for one of their quarterly networking and membership mixers, hosted by the Barton Community College Booster Club. The casual event was held at the Best Western Courtyard with free food and adult beverages and lots of door prizes helping attract 20 new members for the growing group of over 450 people.

In the month of March, BCYP members will have two opportunities to network. NEW this year is a Personal Development Series designed to help YP members grow as individuals. The first topic in this luncheon series will be "Planning for the Future" with an emphasis on retirement planning and saving for college education (520 savings plans). The meeting will be facilitated by local investment professionals John & Leslie Francis with Francis Financial Services. Members are invited to attend this free meeting on Tuesday, March 11th from 12-1 p.m. at the Pizza Hut Buffet, 4101 10th Street in Great Bend. No RSVP's are required. Future topics will include Setting up a Wills & Estate, Importance of Life Insurance, Getting the Most out of Employee Benefit Programs, and more.

Later that week, members are invited to bring their families to Up N Rollin Skate Center on Saturday, March 15th from 1-3 p.m. for a Roller Skating Party. The 2014 YP sponsors have covered the costs of the event, so admission is free of charge. Concessions and arcade games are also available. RSVP for the Family Skating Party to bartonyp@gmail.com or through the Facebook event in the BCYP Facebook group.

Keep up with news and events for Barton County Young Professionals by joining the Facebook group and by signing up for the YP email newsletter.

Want to Join?

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. And be sure to join the group on Facebook!



Want to Host a Young Professionals Event?

If your business is interested in hosting and/or sponsoring a Young Professionals event, the Steering Committee would love to hear from you. Submit your interest by emailing bartonyp@gmail.com. Sponsorships are available for mixers and family events.

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Highlighted Events in March

View & post all your community events at www.greatbend.org!

- 1... Sunflower Diversified Services Charity Gala, Great Bend Convention Center, 3017 10th, 6 p.m.
- 3... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main, 9 a.m.
- 3... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 3... Golden Belt Community Concert "Back on Broadway", Great Bend Municipal Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
- 4... Retail Roundtable Meeting, City Offices, 1209 Williams, 12:30 p.m.
- 6... Chamber Coffee: Johnson Electric, 2912 10th Street, 9:30 a.m.
- 6... Ambassador Club Luncheon, Chamber Office, 1125 Williams, 12 p.m.
- 6-8... BCC Musical "Sweet Charity", 7:30 p.m. Fri & Sat, 2 p.m. Sun
- 10... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main, 9 a.m.
- 12... Chamber Marketing Seminar & Orientation, 1125 Williams, 10 a.m.
- 13... Chamber Coffee: Hiss Sherman Wealth Mgmt, 2001 Broadway, 9:30 a.m.
- 15... Legislative Coffee, Kansas Oil & Gas Museum, 5944 10th Street, 10 a.m.
- 15... Young Professionals Family Skate Session, Up N Rollin Skate Center, 2805 9th, 1-3 p.m.
- 17... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main, 9 a.m.
- 17... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 20... Chamber Coffee: Golden Belt Home Health & Hospice, 3520 Lakin, 9:30 a.m.
- 24... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main, 9 a.m.
- 27... Chamber Coffee: D&A ProCollect, 2609 12th, 9:30 a.m.
- 27... Chamber Business After Hours Event: Barton Community College, Fine Arts Auditorium, 245 NE 30 Rd, 5-7 p.m.
- 29-30... Central Kansas Spring Expo, Great Bend Expo Complex
- 29... 20th Annual Jazz Festival, Crest Theatre, 1905 Lakin, 7 p.m.
- 31... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main, 9 a.m.

Register Now for Chamber Marketing Seminar Mar. 12

All Chamber members are invited to attend an informational seminar on Wednesday, March 12th designed to inform businesses about the numerous marketing services available to local businesses. The session will begin at 10 a.m., and will include coffee and rolls at no charge to participants. During the presentation, members will learn new ways to utilize Chamber perks to the benefit of their companies. This is also a great way to share ideas and network with other businesses.

The session will conclude in less than an hour, so you can get in and out with new ideas get started on! Hand-outs will be provided to all who attend. To RSVP for the free informational seminar, follow the website link below and register through the convenient online form. Questions may also be directed to Sales & Member Services Director Andrea Bauer, abauer@greatbend.org.

Nominations Now Being Accepted for 20th Annual KDOC Business Appreciation Month

For two decades, the Kansas Department of Commerce has honored successful businesses during Business Appreciation Month (June). Nominations are now being accepted for those businesses that make our state a great place to live and work. The top nominees will be recognized at the Team Kansas awards banquet in June, and the winner will take home the 2014 Governor's Award of Excellence. Nominations will be accepted in four categories: manufacturing/distribution, retail, service, and hospital/non-profit. Businesses can be nominated by an individual or organization, or they can nominate themselves. The nomination deadline is Friday, March 21 at 5 p.m. To submit an online nomination, please visit www.KansasCommerce.com/BAM. For more information, contact Krista Mellen with the Department of Commerce at 785-296-7911 or kmellen@kansascommerce.com.

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A Fresh Approach, Building on Three Decades of Great Bend History

When Darren Dale first became acquainted with the spirit of Great Bend, his eyes got a bit misty. And, yes, they were tears of happiness.

"I went to that first meeting and saw 29 committee chairs; I got tears in my eyes," recalled Dale, president and chief executive officer of Star Enterprises TD LLC. "Seeing 29 people heading up the chain of command was extremely humbling."

Dale and his wife, Tana, are the backbone of the upcoming Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo, which is scheduled for April 9-11 at the Expo Complex. But he is quick to note that the 300-plus volunteers, the Chamber of Commerce, the city of Great Bend and Barton County Fair Board make the show a success.

"The chamber is so strong – such a positive influence in the community," Dale said. "And the city built a brand new loading dock at the Expo, and another entrance and exit. The Fair Board always goes above and beyond the call of duty. Everyone sees me but I couldn't do it without this local support."

More than 700 inside and outside booths manned by exhibitors are expected this year on 80 acres; it is one of the largest farm shows in the United States. Show hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 9; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on April 10; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 11. Staying open late until 7 p.m. on Thursday is a new venture this year to better accommodate the consumer population that works during the day. Corporate sponsors are KSN and American Hat Company Inc. Parking and admission are free.

When planning the Expo, Dale keeps one thing in the front of his mind – customer service. "We work for the vendors," he explained. "We want to give them a good show. When they are successful they will return year after year. The vendors' feedback is extremely positive. They like that it is easy to set up and tear down their exhibits."



www.GreatBendFarmAndRanchExpo.net

"We are not in the middle of a big city," Dale continued. "For example, when you go to larger cities, you have a semi that is 53-feet long and have to drive it through downtown. In Great Bend, you just go right up to the show grounds."

Vendors use the Expo not only for on-site transactions but also to make contacts. "A lot of them are meeting face-to-face for the first time with people they have been doing business with," Dale said. "Then later they can put a face with the name. It's all about the personal touch."

The Expo draws vendors from throughout the United States – from Washington in the north-west to Maryland in the east. Some also come from Canada and Australia. "These businesses can choose from so many trade shows. You have to make yourself stand out," Dale said, noting the reason for his special attractions.

For instance, Dr. Tom Noffsinger, DVM, will be a new addition this year with his low stress cattle-handling demonstrations at 2 p.m. Thursday, April 10. The goal is to encourage caregivers to understand more about cattle in order to apply handling concepts during calving, new cattle acclimation, processing, pen riding and sick-cattle management.

Other highlights include: horse-training demonstrations by Scott Daily of RFD TV each day in Expo III; Genex chute-side cattle service demonstration at 1 p.m. Friday, April 11; Loos Tales by storyteller Trent Loos at 12:45 p.m. Friday, April 11; sprayer demonstrations daily in Expo III; and KSN broadcasting live from the show all three days.

"These are the types of attractions that separate us from other trade shows," Dale said. "We are on the cutting edge of farming technology and livestock production."

Another reason the local show stands out among the rest is Show Chair Jan Westfall, Dale noted. "Jan is our Radar O'Reilly," Darren laughed. "She has the job done before you even ask her about it. She does a heckuva job; the show is a big part of her life."

In 1988, Westfall became involved in the previous show. She served on committees, co-chaired the event and was the first woman chair. This is her third year of working with the Dales.

"They work as a team," Westfall said. "Darren and Tana complement each other's talents. The farm show has grown since they have been involved because they revitalized it with all the new attractions. A lot has changed for the positive. I can see us going nowhere but up, Darren thinks outside the box."

Westfall also noted Dale has two other shows – in McCook, Neb., and Wichita Falls, Tx. Nevertheless, she said, he still takes time to visit Great Bend often, attending events such as the Chamber banquet and Barton Community College Foundation Auction.

In addition to the ag-related exhibits, the Expo also will feature food and drink vendors, a beer garden, golf-cart rental, and booths that feature jewelry, furniture, cooking items, outdoor supplies and other products. "It is focused on farming," Westfall commented. "But there is something for everyone to see."

Westfall also echoed Dale's comments about the hundreds of volunteers. "We not only appreciate them and their talents, we also are grateful to their employers for allowing them time off work," she said. "We also are thankful for companies that supply equipment and other items. If not for all these factors, we couldn't do the show." —

Reserve Your Exhibit Space!

Limited vendor space is still available for local companies! To reserve your booth, visit the website to print an exhibitor contract.

Volunteers Needed

If you are available to donate a few hours of your time to this valuable community event, please contact Jan Westfall at farmshow@greatbend.org.

Open Late Thursday!

NEW this year is the extended show hours on Thursday evening, where gates will remain open until 7 p.m. This gives consumers and small operations that work during the day to check out the show!



Focus on Food During Two Member Events During the Month of March:

Curves Annual Food Drive Means \$0 Service Fee

Curves of Great Bend is offering a FREE sign-up fee for all women who bring in cans of non-perishable food during the Curves Annual Food Drive during the month of March. Participate by bringing a \$30 donation, a grocery bag filled with non-perishable food items, or a friend who has a donation and receive a \$0 service fee during the promotion. Now is a great time to join Curves, with the new Jillian Michaels workouts, featuring the Curves Circuit strength training machines in conjunction with functional bodyweight-based exercises that ramp up metabolism and transform physique. Jillian Michaels is best known as America's health and wellness expert. The workouts boost intensity, build strength, burn fat and prevent plateaus. For more information, visit www.curves.com.

Taste of Home Cooking School Returns March 20th

Taste of Home's local culinary specialist Jamie Dunn will be at the Great Bend High School Auditorium on March 20th at 6 p.m., to share her home cooking tips and tricks while demonstrating step-by-step recipes for the season's best dishes. This event is brought to the Central Kansas area by your local "Hi Neighbor! Newspapers!" Pre-event exhibits will open at 3 p.m. The Taste of Home Cooking School is America's leading cooking school program, inspiring more than 300,000 passionate home chefs at approximately 300 events nationwide. Attendees experience exciting recipe demonstrations using ingredients that are easily found at the local grocery store and best of all, the dishes are submitted by home cooks from across the country. Attendees also receive gift bags including the Taste of Home Magazine. Attendees can also enter for a chance to win one of many door prizes. Purchase tickets online at www.midksnews.com.

20th Annual Jazz Festival March 29th

The twentieth annual Great Bend Jazz Festival sponsored by the Kiwanis Club will be held March 29 at the Crest Theatre. Doors open at 7:00. Adult admission is \$10, students \$5. Call 620-792-3595 for ticket information.

Featured artist for the evening of jazz will be Kerry Marsh, vocal jazz director from the University of Colorado. Marsh is a graduate of Great Bend High School. (www.kerrymarsh.com)

Jason Whitmore, a 2003 graduate of GBHS, will be featured on tenor saxophone with the Prairie Winds Jazz All-Stars. Jason is well known in the jazz scene around Wichita, KS

Volunteers in Action Seeks Drivers for Meals on Wheels Deliveries

Meals on Wheels is a non-profit organization that provides hot, well-balanced meals to persons over 60 years of age who are unable to prepare meals for themselves. The local operation is staffed by the Volunteers in Action center, and is seeking new volunteers to help expand the program.

Businesses are encouraged to sign up to take one or two days per week where employees can deliver meals over their lunch hours. Meals are delivered five days a week in Great Bend, Hoisington, and Ellinwood, and are prepared at the Great Bend Senior Center. Volunteers spend approximately 45 minutes to one hour to deliver 8-9 meals per route.

For more information or to get involved as a volunteer, contact Linn Hogg at 620-792-1614 or volunteersinaction@bartonccc.edu.

American State Bank Promotes Employees

Kristi Smith and Kami Schmidt of Great Bend have been promoted in the deposit and loan operations area at American State Bank and Trust Company, Great Bend. Smith will assume the lead position for deposit operations while Schmidt will assume the lead position for loan operations. They will be responsible for the day-to-day functions in each respective area.

Smith graduated from Great Bend High School in 1993 and attended the University of Kansas and Emporia State University, pursuing a degree in accounting. She's been with American State Bank for 12 years. Past duties have included teller/new account representative, internet banking coordinator and marketing coordinator. Schmidt graduated from Great Bend High in 2008 and attended Fort Hays State University for two years. She began work with American State as a part-time teller while attending high school, and returned to the bank in the loan operations department after college. She's been an American State employee for nearly 8 years.

Rick Chochon, bank president and CEO added, "we are very grateful for the strong background and extensive experience that Kristi and Kami have provided for our organization over the years. Their knowledge and years of service to the banking industry continues to greatly benefit American State Bank and its customers."

For more information, call 620-792-8353 or visit www.americanstatebankna.com.



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Announcements from First Kansas Bank

Eric Schoendaler Joins First Kansas Bank as Loan Officer in Hoisington

Eric Schoendaler has joined First Kansas Bank as a Loan Officer according to Paul Snapp, President of the Bank. In announcing the hire, Snapp commented, "Eric has the experience and education to help First Kansas Bank deliver high quality service to our loan customers in Hoisington. He brings a Kansas farm background with common sense and a strong work ethic to our customers. We are excited to have Eric join our Bank Team."



Eric is the son of Ron and Deloris Schoendaler from Grinnell and graduated from Wheatland High School. While growing up, Eric worked in the family farming operation near Grinnell. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree from Fort Hays State University. Eric was on the honor roll at Fort Hays State University and was a member of the Omicron Delta Kappa and Sigma Alpha Pi academic fraternities as well as the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the National Society of Leadership and Success.

Pay it Forward Grant Issued to DARE Program

First Kansas Bank is giving back. During the holiday season for every new loan and deposit account opened, First Kansas Bank made a donation to the Golden Belt Foundation "Pay It Forward Fund," administered by the DARE program. This fund is available to local schools where teachers and administrators use the money to purchase clothing, supplies, and other basic necessities that arise for students in need.

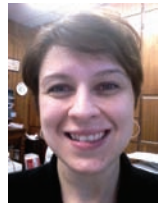
Officer Jefferson Davis, the local DARE officer for the Great Bend Police Department said, "This fund supports students, so they can be successful both in and out of the classroom. It can be used for anything they need."

First Kansas Bank President Paul Snapp commented, "Our bank team cares deeply about our communities and we wanted to give back to those in need. Employees also donated to the fund and were awarded casual dress days on Fridays and Saturdays during the promotion. It's a great privilege to serve those who are less fortunate, particularly our children."

First Kansas Bank has offices in Hoisington, Claflin, and Great Bend. For more information about either of these news items, contact Paul Snapp at 620-793-7005 or visit www.firstkansaskbank.com.

News & Events Information from the Hoisington Chamber of Commerce

January was the start of a new chapter at the Hoisington Chamber of Commerce, as they welcomed a new Executive Vice President, Kristi Lovett. She and her husband, Mark, have lived in Hoisington for seven years and are raising three children there. Before accepting the job at the chamber, Kristi worked at First Kansas Bank, and before that at the Hoisington Dispatch newspaper. Ever since moving to Hoisington, Kristi has been amazed at how easy it is to become involved in the community.



"In Houston, where I am from, the opportunities to be a part of the core of promotions and economic development are hard to come across. I am really looking forward to getting to know the community and our business members at a closer level and be a part of Hoisington's future," she explained. "The Chamber Board of Directors and Chamber members have been very welcoming. The previous director Stacey Bressler had everything down to a science. After so many years, it is a big change, but they have helped make the transition easy."

Kristi welcomes everyone to come by the Chamber office in Hoisington to introduce themselves, share their ideas for the community, or simply chat.

The Chamber's next events include a Legislative Coffee at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 1st and a Labor Day Clown Fundraiser on Sunday, March 2nd. Please contact the Hoisington Chamber for any details on upcoming events or visit their website at www.hoisingtonkansask.com.

HOISINGTON CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

March 1st - Legislative Coffee feat. Senator Mitch Holmes, Representative John Edmond and Sally Cable (our State Board of Education Representative), 8-10 a.m.

March 2nd - Labor Day Clown Committee Fundraiser, Knights of Columbus Hall, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Luncheon, 1:30 p.m. Bingo

March 7th - Kans for Kids Radiothon, Eagle Radio Stations, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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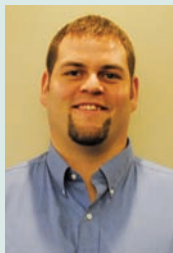
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Ambassador Profile - Matt Hiss

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 Big Bend Bike Rally. To find out how you can become a member of the Ambassador Club, contact us, 620-792-2401 or abauer@greatbend.org.



Where I Work

I am an Investment Advisor Representative and partner with Hiss Sherman Wealth Management Group. I also run and manage a branch in Atwood, Kansas. In my position I help people with financial planning, investments, insurance, estate planning, college planning, and retirement planning.

Educational Background

After graduating from Great Bend High School, I attended and played football for Baker University. I graduated in 2008 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business with a concentration in finance and management. I also joined and served as treasurer for the Delta Tau Delta fraternity.

My Family

I am married to my amazing wife, Dena. Dena is a former teacher and is currently a stay at home mom with our newest addition, Baby Graham. Both of our families live in Great Bend, and it is great to have them nearby.

As an Ambassador

I have been a Chamber Ambassador since 2011. I really enjoy getting to tour and meet local businesses that I have never visited before. It has made me realize how great of a place Great Bend is for small businesses to thrive.

Hobbies & Interesting Facts

I am a member of the Barton County Young Professionals group and a former Habitat for Humanity Board Member. I am also an active member of First Christian Church, where I am on the Stewardship Committee. I enjoy playing golf, brewing beer & wine, playing morning basketball, coaching football, and doing home improvement projects.

USD 428 Commemorates Completion of GBMS Gymnasium & Safe Room Addition

Representatives from USD 428 and Great Bend Middle School welcomed numerous Chamber Ambassadors and community members for a special ribbon cutting ceremony in February to commemorate the completion of the Gymnasium Addition.

The addition of approximately 16,500 additional square feet made room for a new gymnasium with permanent bleachers that can seat approximately 850 people. The gym is lined and equipped to accommodate basketball, volleyball, and tennis as needed. It also featured a dividing curtain that can separate the smaller courts for tournament play.

Also included in the renovation was the addition of a new safe room that will be used for wrestling practices and other purposes. The safe room was built with concrete-filled, rebar-reinforced cinder blocks with a six-inch concrete roof. The room can hold 720 people.

"This project first came to the Board of Education in March 2012. Because of the school board's fiscal integrity, we were able to complete the project without a bond issue," says Dr. Tom Vernon, USD 428 Superintendent. "The total cost was approximately \$2.7 million, and it means that our students get to enjoy a safer and more energy efficient facility for years to come."

While the architect and general contractor were brought in as outside experts, the bulk of the work was completed by local contractors such as USA Gym Supply, Mark's Custom Signs, Parr Sound & Lighting, Abbey Carpet & Floor, Concrete Service, CV Cale, and many others.

For more information about the USD 428 project, contact the District Education Office at 620-793-1500.



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Three Rosewood Wines Medal in State KGGWA Tasting Competition



For the second consecutive year, Rosewood Winery has come home a winner from the Kansas Grape Growers and Winemakers Association Conference. The 28th Annual KGGWA Conference was held Jan. 17 and 18 in Topeka at Ramada West. In the "Taste of Kansas" wine competition,

conducted during the conference, three Rosewood Wines earned medals. Rosewood earned a gold medal for Sheza Lady Principle Peach Apricot Chardonnay. The Winery took home another gold medal for Spins Isabella Raspberry Dragonfruit White Shiraz. And Rosewood's signature wine, Boots Made For Walking Blackberry Cabernet, medaled again this year, after winning gold last year.

Now in its second full year of operation, Rosewood Winery is the only winery in the nation devoted to providing employment opportunities to people with developmental disabilities. Located on the grounds of the Rosewood Ranch, 9 miles west of Great Bend near Pawnee Rock, Rosewood Winery opened its doors in October 2012 and has been going strong ever since. Rosewood sells 21 varieties of wine at the Rosewood Wine Cellar at 1901 Lakin in downtown Great Bend. The wines can also be purchased at the Rosewood Winery, which is open on Thursday and Friday afternoons and by appointments. Check rosewoodcreations.com for a complete wine list and open hours at both locations.

CASA Fundraiser Deemed a Success

Wow, we did it again! The 9th Annual CASA Chocolate Auction was a huge success. The snow didn't keep people from coming out to join us again this year. We had a sold out crowd and with everyone being so generous, we met our goal. With the silent auction items displayed, chocolate fountains flowing, and socialization, the live auction went off without a hitch. It is truly amazing how this community and the surrounding area come together to support our wonderful cause year after year. We had numerous cash donors, event sponsors & item donors and without each and every one of you we would not be able to help as many children in our community as we do. We want to thank you for your support and give a special thanks to our dedicated volunteers who work directly with the CASA children. Like us on Facebook to see what is up next for Central Kansas CASA. - Angela Schepmann, Executive Director

Holy Family Earns Governor's Award



Students at Holy Family School in Great Bend cheered for academics last month when Principal Karen Moeder announced that the school had won the prestigious Governor's Achievement Award for the fifth time. The award is based on the results of last year's math and reading assessment scores. Approximately 100 students in grades 3-6 took the state assessments this time last year (March 2013). Only 42 elementary schools in the state received this award, meaning that their students scored in the top five percent of all public and private schools for both assessments, and also met a state attendance measure. "Our school's curriculum educates the whole child, which plays a big part in our students' success," Moeder says. "We also have an exceptional group of parents, students, and staff." For more information about the private elementary school, visit www.gbhollyfamily.org.

Entrepreneurs Now Being Accepted for 8-Week Kansas Ice House Program

Do you want to be extraordinary? Are you determined to make your life count? Entrepreneurship is a mindset that can empower ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary. The Kansas Ice House Entrepreneurship Program is designed to inspire individuals or groups to change their lives, become better employees, and empowering them to be extraordinary.

This is not about starting a business – or it could be.
This is not about quitting our jobs – or it could be.
This is about thinking differently about our future.
This is about being a better employee.
This is about being a better community member.
This is about creating and living the life that we imagine.
This is about expecting more for our lives.
This is about empowering ordinary people to be extraordinary!

Session Dates:

March 12 – Great Bend
March 19 – Hoisington
March 26 – Great Bend
April 2 – Hoisington
April 9 – Great Bend
April 16 – Hoisington
April 23 – Great Bend
April 30 – Hoisington



Eight community courses will be held between March 12th and April 30th in Great Bend and Hoisington at 6 p.m. each Wednesday evening. Participants are encouraged to arrive early for a light supper before class. Fee is \$50 per person with \$25 refunded upon completion of the course. Space is limited, so register today by visiting www.kansasicehouse.com or contacting Jan Peters at 620-792-2401 or Jonathan Mitchell at 620-653-4125. The Kansas Ice House Program is sponsored by the Great Bend/Barton County E-Community, Hoisington E-Community, and NetWork Kansas.

Update from the Great Bend Pilot Club

For over 25 years, the Great Bend Pilot Club has been selling thousands of geraniums each year to help fund their community projects and sponsored educational programs on brain safety and awareness. They also purchase car booster seats for children, quilt blankets for children in foster care, participate in the Alzheimer's Walk and Relay for Life, and partner with the Great Bend High School Family and Consumer Science classes' baby simulator programs to raise teen awareness about shaken baby syndrome.

One of the club's biggest promotions, however, is Brain Awareness Week from March 10-17, 2014 which is designed to further the mission of Pilot Club and raise awareness for brain related illnesses and the benefits of brain research. The local Pilot Club is an outreach organization for the Dana Alliance, a national alliance formed around the dissemination of information on the brain in an understandable and accessible manner.

As part of Brain Awareness Week, the Pilot Club is currently selling their beautiful geranium plants to fund their activities. Plants are available in several colors or as hanging baskets, and will be delivered in early May in time for planting. Orders can be placed with any Pilot Club member, or by contacting Betty Schneider at 620-793-3181 or betty.l.schneider@gmail.com.

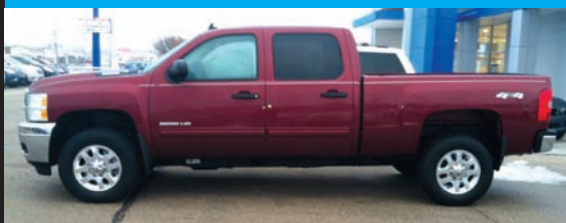


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March 13, 2014

Hiss Sherman Wealth Mgmt. • 2001 Broadway

Hiss-Sherman Wealth Management is a locally owned independent financial and investment advising business owned by the partners Bob Hiss, Matt Hiss, and Dennis Sherman with over fifty years combined experience.

March 20, 2014

Golden Belt Home Health & Hospice
3520 Lakin Ave, Ste 102

Golden Belt Home Health and Hospice is a faith based non-profit agency providing home health services on a short-term or long-term basis to assist with their medical needs. Hospice care is designed to help the person make the most of each day of their remaining life, with care centered on comfort measures.

March 27, 2014

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Employment – Barton County	December 12	December 13
Labor Force	15,772	16,519
Employment	15,171	15,970
Unemployment	601	549
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	3.3%
KS Unemployment Rate	5.3%	4.9%

City/County Local Sales Tax Distributions Report	December 12	December 13
Sales Tax for Barton County at 1.00%	\$393,706	\$477,437
Sales Tax for Great Bend at 0.75%	\$207,133	\$243,406

Building Permits	December 12	December 13
Commercial – GB	8	5
Residential - GB	13	10

Great Lakes Airlines Flights - December 2013

Flights from Denver	36
Flights to Denver	34
Boarded 65 Passengers	

