OUTLOOK

GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

business journal

1921 100 YEARS 2021

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Christmas is Over and Goose is Cooked -For Some

In 1929, a worried, tired, pregnant woman in Sweden thought about taking her life and that of her unborn child. Instead, she prayed to God, offering him her child. A son, Erik Gunnar Eriksson was born and was to be destined for a life of service. Eriksson, however, had different ideas!

With the idea that his mom's promises weren't necessarily his, Eriksson decided to live his own life and he did a pretty good job of it – until a grenade accidentally went off near him, mangling his hands and giving him third degree burns on his face. At this point, Eriksson changed his mind and decided to let God into his life. When his physical injuries were healed within a few minutes and when his heart was opened to receive God, Eriksson decided to go to Bible School. He was impressed with the evangelical "Tent Campaigns" he saw in the United States at that time, so he started working with three evangelists and became part of the Maranatha Revival in Sweden. Tent Mission was founded in Borlange, Sweden and it spread around the world bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to all who received it. Eriksson was on a Tent Mission event in Brazil when he visited a slum in the area. A woman brought him a dying child and on Christmas Eve, In 1970, Star of Hope was born to provide the humanitarian aid that is still so desperately needed.

Star of Hope also grew and is now a presence in a little over fifteen countries scattered over the globe. Their goal is to provide food, water, healthcare, education, love/care, village development, and sharing the gospel wherever it's needed, specializing in work with children. Over the last fifty three years, Star of Hope has made a significant change in our world. Starting with orphanages in Brazil, they have also helped with earthquakes in Mexico, refugee camps in the Sudan, the children affected by the radiation crises in Chernobyl, floods in China, tsunamis in southeast Asia, Kenyan prisons, and war-torn countries.

Having a presence in Romania for over thirty years, Star of Hope was on hand when the fighting broke out in Ukraine. Happily, facilities already in use for the disabled children in Romania were available to help those who were able to leave Ukraine, crossing the border to Romania. Aura Vatamaniuc, the Romanian operations manager for Star of Hope in Romania says, "The goal is for them [the disabled refugees] to live as normal as possible here. Helping them comes naturally to us because they are a target group that we have worked with for over thirty years."

Mark Presson, CEO of Star of Hope, says, "When our Star of Hope teams deliver these life-changing gifts to children and families, we personally witness the hope and gratitude in their eyes." As Matthew 25:40 says, "...whatever you did for one of the least of these... you did for me."

There are great needs in the world and Star of Hope is asking for your help to meet those needs. You can join others in giving to this amazing 501(c)3 organization by sending a monetary donation to www.starofhope.us/give or by choosing that perfect gift through their Shop at www.starofhope.us/shop. Christmas is over yet many children still have a dire hope for a message of love. Please help bring your best wishes to those in need around the world in the form of a gift.

GBEC Partners with NetWork Kansas & the Chamber for the 3rd Annual Barton County Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

Great Bend Economic Development and the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce welcome Barton County's third annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge this spring. This competition was created to challenge our youth, encourage our business community to partner with and mentor our younger generations, and foster an entrepreneurial spirit. NetWork Kansas holds regional and state Youth Entrepreneurship Challenges as part of its mission in developing entrepreneurship ecosystems throughout Kansas. The partnership with NetWork Kansas allows YEC contestants to use VentureDash, the contestant portal. Great Bend Economic Development and the Great Bend Chamber partner on this competition as both organizations are tasked with strengthening the area's workforce, and that means nurturing the next generation's entrepreneurs.

This competition will take place at the Great Bend Events Center on March 8, 2023. All participants will put together a tradeshow presentation of their business idea and share it with the public. They will also present their formal 4-minute presentation to the judges. This year, the competition has grown to include 7th graders through 12th graders. The public is invited and encouraged to attend this event to cheer on our student competitors and show their support for the next generation of business ideas.

After the tradeshow exhibition, the winners will be announced. There is $2500 in prize money to be divided among the top competitors. Third place will receive $500 second place will receive $750 and first place will receive $1000 and the opportunity to continue onto the Statewide competition. Audience members will also have a chance to vote for their favorite and award one competitor $250.

How students can participate

The competition finale is about three months away, so participants are encouraged to get started on their business plans. Students wanting to join the competition can go to the Great Bend Economic Development, Inc. webpage for more information on YEC at www.gbedinc.com/yec. This page holds sample business plans, links to resources on giving presentations, as well as a few of 2022's contestant interviews. Also, students can join the competition with a link to the VentureDash contestant portal. After a student joins the competition, they will be paired with a business mentor to help them iron-out details, ask them questions, and fine-tune the student's business plan and presentation.

How the community can participate

The community can help in a few ways, such as a sponsor of the live event, a business mentor, and/or a teacher champion. Depending on the sponsorship level, sponsors can speak to the contestants and community before we announce the winners at our live event and/or have their logo on all marketing materials. As a business mentor, you are matched with a student, to help them with their business plans and 4-minute presentation. Teacher Champions are needed as well, teachers can guide students from inside the classroom and have more facetime with students that may not have heard about the competition.

If you/your business would like more information about sponsoring the live event, being a teacher champion, or becoming a business mentor, please reach out to GBED staff at marketing@gbedinc.comor by calling 620-796-2407.

TCI Answering Services Expands into Northeast Kansas

TCI Answering Service, based in Great Bend, Kansas, is excited to announce its recent expansion to the Lawrence, Kansas area. TCI recently joined the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and celebrated its ribbon cutting on December 1, 2022. While the growing staff has been serving customers throughout the Midwest for over twenty years, having a more on-site presence in Northeast Kansas presents new opportunities to the communications company. "I'm eager to meet the business owners in the Lawrence area. It's a new market, which is so exciting to the team and I," says Shelly Peacock, Owner of TCI Answering Service. "We love connecting and helping businesses grow and build lasting customer relationships. We specialize in answering phones, of course, but we also offer so much more in the way of communications and customer service." TCI Answering Service began in Great Bend in 1986. In addition to answering phones for companies 24 hours per day, they also offer online chat monitoring, messaging software, and social media marketing. With 17 staff members in several states, TCI is equipped to serve businesses in any part of the United States 24/7/365. "We serve a lot of companies who have on-call employees, such as roadside assistance vendors, medical offices, funeral homes, plumbers, etc," Peacock says. "But we can also help cover the phones when a business is short-staffed, or just to provide office efficiencies and alleviate some of the customer service aspects off your staff's plates. We tailor our services, and always make sure we represent our clients well while interacting with their customers." Anyone interested in learning more or getting a quote on pricing can visit www.TCIansweringservice.com, or contact the TCI team at 620-792-1291. New employment opportunities may be available as well because of this expansion, and interested applicants can read about remote work opportunities on the website as well.

GREAT BEND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEATURED AMBASSADOR

CHARELL OWINGS
UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL KANSAS

What brought you to Great Bend?

My husband and I moved to the area in 2011 from Manhattan. We both grew up in Hays and Northwe Kansas and we knew we wanted to be closer to home, but somewhere different. We applied for jo across central Kansas and both found jobs in Great Bend, so we moved here and haven't left yet.

Where do you work and what do you do there?

One of the best things about my job is that it is rarely the same on a daily basis. A big part of my j is fundraising to support our 22 Community Partners and our Impact Programs, but that means I g to do workplace presentations, meetings with fellow non-profits about what their needs are, me with business partners about how we can collaborate. I get to plan and organize events and progra that range from family and child oriented, to our annual Kickoff Event and Beer & BBQ, to maki Valentine's for senior citizens. It definitely keeps me on my toes and keeps me sharp.

What's one thing about you that would surprise people?

If I could, I would love to go back to school and become a lawyer.

What energizes you and brings you excitement?

Seeing change and growth in the community excites me. Being a part of numerous collaboratio such as Central Kansas Partnership and COPE (Communities Organizing to Promote Equity) energiz me. There are so many people in this community who care so much and it is inspiring. I love seei organizations, businesses, groups, and individuals come together to work alongside each other-n competing-in order to improve our community.

At what job, would you be terrible?

I don't think I would make a very good waitress.

How long have you been a Chamber Ambassador and what do you like most about it?

I am coming up on my first year and I have enjoyed getting to know the other Ambassadors better a how it has gotten me out of my comfort zone to be more involved with everything that the Chamb does in our community.

About Chamber Ambassadors: The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Club is made up 30 men and women from the Great Bend business community who represent the Chamber in a numb of ways. To see more from the ambassadors, follow us on Facebook; Great Bend Chamber of Commer

Ribbon Cuttings!

Beugelsdijk Chiropratic Celebrates Completion of Exterior Renovation

Dr. Sam Beugelsdijk joined the Great Bend community over four years ago when his family relocated to the area in April of 2018 to purchase an existing chiropractic practice. Last week, Dr. Beugelsdijk celebrated the completion of an extensive renovation on the exterior of his downtown property on Williams Street in Great Bend by hosting a ribbon cutting with the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce. "We received a $20,000 grant from the Barton County Commission through their Façade Improvement Grant program, which helped jumpstart this major renovation," Dr. Beugelsdijk (Dr. B) said. "We worked with general contractor Andy Mingenback with Brentwood Builders and several other contractors to bring this vision to life, and we are thrilled with the final results." Other contractors involved included Devine Masonry and P&S Electric. Mark's Custom Signs also took down the old sign, added new lighting, and reinstalled after the other improvements were completed. "The finished product is night and day different than what was here before and we are so proud of how it looks now," Dr. B said. "Thank you to all the contractors who helped us with this transformation, and thank you to the County Commission for the grant that kickstarted this project." Anyone interested in learning more about Beugelsdijk Chiropractic, or making an appointment, can stop by 1309 Williams Street in Great Bend during normal business hours, or visit them online at www.greatbendchiropractic.com. Patients can also contact the friendly staff at 620-792-3678 to make an appointment. In network with most health insurance plans. Walk-ins are always welcome!

People on the Move

Donna Krug, Cottonwood Extension District Director and Family and Consumer Science Agent is retiring after serving 37 years in Extension. Donna provided many workshops and educational programs related to health and wellness in Barton County. Workshops like Stay Strong Stay Healthy, and how to make Kimchi or sauerkraut are a couple of her favorites.

Some of her favorite memories are teaching 4th graders from across the county where their food comes from at Kid's Ag Day. She also has enjoyed watching kids grow up in the 4-H Youth Development program and has been around long enough that she is meeting the next generation!

Plan to help celebrate Donna's career at a come and go reception set for Sunday, January 29th, 1-3 PM at the Great Bend Activity Center, 2715 18th Street.

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People on the Move

Cody Thacker was looking for a position that offered the opportunity to support Pawnee Valley Community Hospital (PVCH), while simultaneously allowing him to become more involved in his community. His search led him to his new position as PVCH Foundation director. "This position affords me the opportunity to support our local, community hospital," said Thacker, a Kansas native. "I have a strong respect for what this hospital means to Larned, Pawnee County and the surrounding area. "In addition, I am now able to become better acquainted with more of my neighbors in central Kansas." As Foundation director, Thacker works closely with the non-profit entity's Board of Trustees. They collaborate on community relations, fundraising projects and events, private-donation oversight, endowment management and capital campaigns. In the short-term, Thacker is moving forward with Foundation projects already in motion. Thacker grew up just north of Offerle; his parents live on a farm there. He lives in Larned where his twin sister and one brother reside too. He graduated from Spearville High School in 2010 and is currently studying for his bachelor's degree in business administration/ marketing through Fort Hays State University. Previous employment includes area field manager at U-Haul International in Larned; sales representative at Midway MFG in Kinsley; clubhouse manager at Cimarron Golf Club in Cimarron; and sales representative for Lewis Automotive in Garden City.

Valeria Mendez Joins Nail-technician Team at Renue Salon

The new nail technician at Renue Salon, Spa and Fashion Boutique, 1419 Main, is gratified that she has found a home at long-time Great Bend business. Valeria Mendez, a Ness County native, is now accepting clients who seek professional nail care. "I already feel comfortable at Renue because it has been a successful fixture downtown for about 15 years," Mendez said. "Since I am an independent contractor, the stability is important." Mendez added that she is pleased to be part of the nail-technician team at Renue. Her colleagues are Angela Liebl, Lisa Linsner and Evann Newton. "This is a friendly, professional group," she commented. "I anticipate the four of us can satisfy our clients' needs." Mendez graduated from the Hays Academy and is licensed by the Kansas Board of Cosmetology. She began her nail-technician career during the spring of 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic. She worked from her home in Bazine and at a Dodge City salon. Mendez now lives in Great Bend. Her brother and mentor, Juan Mendez, also lives here. Susan Williams, salon and retail coordinator at Renue, said "we are very excited to have Valeria join us. The demand for nail care is so significant that we needed to add to our team to properly serve our client base. Valeria is a perfect fit for Renue and our community."

Central Kansas Partnership Youth Crew

Youth Crew has had a busy few weeks and one of our many projects this holiday season was participating in Trail of Lights at Britt Spaugh Zoo in Great Bend. We had 16 YC members volunteer to greet cars, hand out goodie bags, hand out YC bracelets and candy, and take donations for Trail of Lights. We partnered with our friends from #zeroreasonswhy for this event. It was a steady evening for visitors and the youth brought in over $250 dollars in donations. It was chilly and windy but the youth hung in there and put forth an amazing effort for their community.

Golden Belt Gives Results

Golden Belt Community Foundation just completed its ninth Giving Tuesday campaign, wrapping up and announcing the results during a Great Bend Chamber of Commerce Coffee Thursday morning. Giving Tuesday started as a day for anyone, anywhere to give, and it has grown into the biggest giving movement in the world. Giving Tuesday harnesses the generosity of millions of people around the world to support the causes they believe in and the communities in which they live. Celebrated on the Tuesday following U.S. Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday inspires millions of people across the globe to show up and give back to causes and issues that matter to them. This year over 1,000 gifts were made to support 104 local charitable organizations and endowment funds raising a total of $288,512. "This year marked GBCF's 9th year to be a Giving Tuesday partner," stated Mackenzie Mitchell, Development and Communications Coordinator, "and again this year we invited all charitable organizations in Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford counties to participate."

Mitchell further explained that there were 4 new organizations participating, and that each organization chose whether to get any gifts received as a grant back to their organization – or to use the gifts to build their endowment fund at GBCF. About half of the organizations will be receiving the gifts as grants to be put to immediate use supporting a wide variety of missions and causes. "Today GBCF will be awarding over $228,000 in grants," Mitchell explained. The 2022 Top Ten Giving Tuesday organizations and funds raised are:

1) Prince of Peace Catholic Church $40,261.06
2) Barton County Historical Society $33,554.44
3) Holy Family School Endowment $15,706.44
4) GPS Kids Club Endowment $12,434.33
5) United Way of Central Kansas $11,141.47
6) Prairie Godmother Fund $9,697.04
7) Golden Belt Humane Society $8,003.75
8) Family Crisis Center, Inc. $7,208.96
9) Community Food Bank of Barton County $7,104.66
10) Meals on Wheels of Barton County $6,567.80

"Thank you for your support, participation, and spreading the word about Giving Tuesday", said Christy Tustin. "Giving Tuesday couldn't happen without you". Year four for the Most Generous City Award, which was calculated with gift totals by zip code per capita. Pawnee Rock received the 2022 Most Generous City award, and the foundation will make a grant of $1,000 to an organization or project in that community. In 2023 Giving Tuesday will be celebrated on November 28th. For questions about Golden Belt Community Foundation or Giving Tuesday, please contact the foundation at gbcf@goldenbeltcf.org or (620) 792-3000.

Family Crisis Center Receives $10,000+ from Members of 100+ People Who Care Group

The Family Crisis Center, Inc. is pleased to announce that they are the 2022 fourth quarter recipients of $10,000+ in charitable donations from members of the 100+ People Who Care in Barton County group. The vision of The Family Crisis Center is for communities to be empowered by awareness, resources, and accurate information so we recognize victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse in all its forms and provide advocacy and support. In addition to providing families of abuse with access to community resources, the center operates their Child Advocacy Center and their Domestic and Sexual Violence Center and shelter. The Family Crisis Center, Inc. also exists to promote education in the communities they serve through presentations to civic groups, schools, and organizations in hopes of identifying victims and increasing awareness. The quarterly pledges of the 100+ People Who Care members will assist the center in purchasing curriculum to be utilized with middle and high school students which will address personal safety, body awareness, and stranger danger. Funding will also assist with resource staff needs for presentations, brochures for parents, and curriculum for parenting classes. To learn more about The Family Crisis Center, Inc. please visit their website at https://www.familycrisiskansas.com and be sure to like the organization's Facebook page.

The next giving meeting for the 100+ People Who Care group will be held Tuesday, February 14th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., at the Best Western Angus Inn Courtyard. At that time, representatives from The Family Crisis Center, Inc. will return to provide an update on how the organization is utilizing the $10,000+ gift. Members will also vote to select and nominate local, charitable organizations to receive future funds. More details can be found on the group's website, www.100bartoncounty.org, or on their Facebook page.

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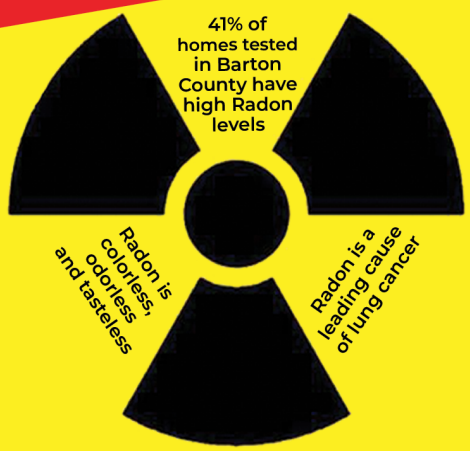

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People on the Move

AFLAC Leaders Rooted in Great Bend

Great Bend is and has been the soil that grows leaders with National influence. One former Great Bend resident and two current residents are making big moves in the area with AFLAC. Beginning of 2022 AJ Chrest began the role of Aflac Kansas Market Trainer, leading agents and coordinators across the state in developing their business. She is one of 48 Market Trainers in the Nation and hopes to bring the Great Bend mentality of business owners supporting other business owners to the National level.

Former educator and coach of USD 428, John Wetig, took his skills to Aflac and has been coaching agents in developing their careers for several years. Starting in Jan. 2023 he will begin the role of Regional Coordinator, leading teams across metro Wichita, central and western Kansas, including the local Great Bend district. He will be 1 of only 5 Regional Coordinators in the State of Kansas.

Davis Jimenez Great Bend native, Chamber Ambassador, and City Councilman; has been promoted to District Coordinator with Aflac. He will support current Great Bend area Aflac agents while developing the next generation of Aflac agents that will provide the care and service policy holders and employers have come to know and appreciate.

If you are looking for a great opportunity to partner with a leading brand name and want to be involved in a challenging and rewarding career with unlimited growth potential, look no further. Right here in Great Bend, Ks the opportunity exists to be part of a Fortune 500 organization that offers unlimited income potential, paid training, a fun supporting culture, and a positive impact on others. Contact Davis Jimenez at 620-282-2475 for more information.

Wahlmeier Retires After 34 Years at Stueder Contractors

Brian Wahlmeier, master plumber and master mechanical technician is retiring after 34 years with Stueder Contractors on December 31, 2022. Brian, also known has "Wally" started work at Stueder's on October 20, 1988. "He is very talented and knows his profession better than anyone you'll ever meet," said Terry Stueder. "While he may not like a lot of attention, we're so proud of the way he has represented Stueder Contractors over the years." Brian graduated from the plumbing program at Northwest Kansas Vocational College, now Northwest Kansas Technical College, in Goodland. Brian has trained many Stueder's technicians over the years and they all admire and respect him. He becomes friends with the entire crew, young and old. Brian's words of wisdom are to "Enjoy what you're doing and have fun!" His favorite part of his job over the past 3+ decades with Stueder's has been the people - customers and co-workers alike. In his retirement, Brian is looking forward to taking a break and picking up his golf clubs a little more. He has four grandkids in the Great Bend area that are sure to keep him busy with bowling and other activities.

Continued on page 6

Barton Historical Society & Public Library Recieve "Community Grant" from Grain Belt Express

Recently, Great Bend Chamber's Edith Solorzano caught up with Ron Gillette, field representative with Invenergy Transmission. Gillette explained his increased trips to Kansas where he can be found handing out money to worthy projects and programs.

Q. For the folks that don't know, can you explain what Grain Belt Express is and what you do?

A. Grain Belt Express is a transmission line, it transmits renewable energy that's generated in the Midwest, including central Kansas. Wind energy and is transmitted throughout the Midwest grid and distributed throughout the Midwest grid. It's clean, renewable, reliable energy produced and delivered in the Midwest. In Kansas, there are 3 years of projects in construction as part of Phase 1. This will generate 19,000 jobs in the state of Kansas; jobs in the facility to build the turbines and to deliver the power. $6.6 Billion dollars is what we are going to spend during Phase 1 in Kansas alone. It's a huge investment.

Q. Tell me about yourself?

A. My name is Ron Gillette and I work for Invenergy Transfer. My role is community relations for the Grain Belt Express with a focus on outreach and building relationships in the communities we serve. I offer support for the projects and interface with the local communities keeping them informed of project updates specific to Grain Belt Express.

Q. What can you tell me about the Community Grant? Is this something that Grain Belt has always done?

A. Yes! Our community grant program offers grants in the amount of $500 to worthwhile programs and projects. Grant applications are reviewed and awarded quarterly to any 501(c)(3) organization with a qualifying community-oriented request. We really focus on giving back to the communities we are working in and truly being a part of those communities.

Q. Is there a limit on how many grants you guys give out?

A. No, we don't have a limit on our grants. Every quarter, we review the applications received and if we deem it appropriate, we issue a grant. There is no number on it.

Q. I'm told you travel a lot in your role. How much traveling would you say you do?

A. Some days I travel 200 or 300 miles! That's the only way to build a community relationship and get the word out about what we do, how we do it, and information about Invenergy. I want to be in-person visiting the community and community leaders. Our project runs across 10 counties in Missouri, 14 counties in Kansas, from Dodge City and up through Barton County, back up through and crossing into Missouri by St. Joseph and then ending on the Illinois / Indiana border. It's very fulfilling getting to meet a lot of people and different organizations. It's awesome and I've met just a lot of good people across the Midwest as I travel with grant awards and educating the communities what we're doing with the green energy, and the importance of reliable, clean energy. I don't think people realize how important it is, to have the power. You can generate the power, but you got to have a way to deliver the power to the communities, to the residents, and so on so forth.

Q. How can people find you? Social media, website, etc?

A. We have a website you visit at www.grainbeltexpress.com. It shows the different states we are in: Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois. You can click on the appropriate state to learn more. We do have a Facebook page, for people to connect and of course they can contact the local chamber of commerce as they have my name and number, but the website is a really good source of information.

United Way of Central Kansas Making Valentine's Day Sweet!

Box of Love will back again this February with a Valentine's Day surprise for homebound seniors. These mini a tote bags will be filled with a memo magnet, facial tissue, word puzzles with pencil, toothpaste and toothbrush, chocolates, and non-slip socks. UWCK works with nursing homes, ElderCare Home Services, Golden Belt Home Health & Hospice, and Meals on Wheels to distribute these sweet goodie bags.

New this year, you can brighten someone's day for only $10 a box including delivery on February 14th. Boxes will be available for purchase from January 1st through February 6th for residents of Barton and Pawnee Counties. Forms are available via email (contact the UWCK Office @ 620-792-2403) or online at the UWCK website. (Scan QR Code)

This would not be possible without the support of our sponsors: Cuna Mutual Group, University of Kansas Health Systems, Midwest Energy, and Thrivent Financial. Thank you for making Box of Love possible!

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United Way of Central Kansas

International Star Recognition for Kansas Wetlands Education Center

Kansas Wetlands Education Center has been recognized as one of the world's best wetland visitor centers. Their success was announced at the Conference of the global Wetlands Convention, known as Ramsar COP14, underway in Geneva, Switzerland. The Star Wetland Centre Award is a new initiative to recognize best practices in eco-tourism and education at wetlands. It is coordinated by Wetland Link International (WLI), a support network for staff and volunteers at 300 wetland visitor centers. Kansas Wetlands Education Center is one of 23 centers worldwide, and one of only 2 in the United States, that have been selected by an international panel of experienced wetlands professionals. "It's an honor for the Kansas Wetlands Education Center to be included in a list of other awesome wetlands centers internationally," says Curtis Wolf, Director of the Kansas Wetlands Education Center. "While our wetland center is only a small dot on the map, we are encouraged to know we are contributing to a larger shared goal of educating people across the world about nature, conservation, and appreciation of our natural resources." "The judges were particularly struck by the high-quality programming," says Chris Rostron, the Head of WLI and leader of the Star awards process. "Kansas Wetland Education Center accommodates very wide visitation thanks to good disabled access and audio tours, along with a strong online offering including 360-degree virtual tours and the 'watcha doing rob' video series. The Stars have been awarded to 23 wetland visitor centers around the world at a ceremony at the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar COP14).

About Kansas Wetlands Education Center

Opening in April 2009, The Kansas Wetlands Education Center (KWEC) is dedicated to educating the public about wetland communities, their importance, and the need for conservation and restoration, with emphasis on Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. They accomplish this through interactive exhibits and interpretation, educational programs, outreach, and fostering partnerships with stakeholders. Representing the goals of a number of partnering agencies, including Fort Hays State University, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, and The Nature Conservancy, the KWEC has a multifaceted mission: Provide visitors with an informative and educational experience. Serve as an educational resource for schools, teachers, and other groups interested in conservation and eco-tourism. Inform visitors of the economic impact of Cheyenne Bottoms to the local and state economy. Cheyenne Bottoms is a Ramsar Convention designated Wetland of International Importance and a globally important stopover for thousands of migratory shorebirds and waterfowl; the site also supports other threatened or endangered birds during nesting, staging, or wintering periods. It is a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network site of hemispheric importance to shorebirds. Cheyenne Bottoms is made up of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (19,857 acres), and The Nature Conservancy's Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve (7,848 acres).

About Wetland Link International

Wetland Link International (WLI) is a global network of wetland education centers. We define a wetland education center as "any wetland where there is interaction between people and wildlife and CEPA (communications, education and public awareness) activity occurs in support of wetland conservation aims." WLI is supported by two staff based at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) at Slimbridge, UK, and a strong regional presence in Asia led by the Ramsar Regional Centre – East Asia. These staff, plus occasional volunteers, share news, opportunities, and requests on behalf of the network by email, Facebook, and Twitter. The emails include two newsletters per year, prepared as PDFs to facilitate printing. We also produce three members' webinars each year. Contact Chris Rostron, Head of WLI, Chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk

Heart of Kansas Heart Walk 2023

Join on us On February 4, 2023, from 9am- 11am in the Activity Center located at 2715 18th Street to support the American Heart Association by raising funds! For every dollar donated, a staff member at Heart of Kansas Family Health Care will walk a lap. Heart of Kansas is proud to support an organization that focuses on mission-critical work within our community, by putting a spotlight on health equity and working to ensure everyone has an opportunity to live longer healthier lives. All the money donated goes directly to The American Heart Association to support their mission of providing science-based information, health resources, community programs, research, and patient support throughout Kansas. Your support will be used to address access to healthy foods, work to improve high blood pressure and chronic health conditions, eliminate tobacco and vaping, address mental well-being. Come support Heart of Kansas and the American Heart Association. Let's see who can walk and raise the most money!Teams and individuals can register for the event by going to the American Heart Association Website under The Heart Walk events section. Every walker can make a small donation, buy a raffle ticket, or just walk for a healthier happier heart while getting a healthy breakfast. Hope to see you there!

American Heart Association®
Heart Walk®

Heart of Kansas Family Health Care, Inc.
"We Care about your Health"

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS IN JANUARY

5...Chamber Coffee: Great Bend Economic Development. Doors open at 9am, program at 9:30am. Can't make it? Watch online on the Chamber's Facebook Page or Youtube Channel.

7...RK Gun Show, 3111 10th St., 9am-5pm

8...RK Gun Show, 3111 10th St., 9am-5pm

9...Central Kansas Partnership Community Meeting, 1300 Kansas Ave., 1:30pm

12...Chamber Coffee: Anytime Fitness. Doors open at 9am, program at 9:30am. Can't make it? Watch online on the Chamber's Facebook Page or Youtube Channel.

13...VFW Post 3111 Karaoke Night!, 504 Washingotn St., 9pm

14-21...Winter Big Bag Sale, All day

14...Photo Fundraiser for Golden Belt Humane Society, 1904 12th St., 9am-4pm

15...VFW Brunch, 504 Washington, 9:30am

15...Dancing with the Cougars, Studio 34, 2pm

16...Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Chamber Closed

17...Shop Talk in 60: New Year New Strategies, 12pm

19...Chamber Coffee & Ribbon Cutting: Great Bend Housing Authority. Doors open at 9am, program at 9:30am. Can't make it? Watch online on the Chamber's Facebook Page or Youtube Channel.

19...Dancing with the Cougars, Studio 34, 6:30pm

20...Shafer Art Gallery Exhibit Reception, Shafer Gallery, 6:30pm

22...Dancing with the Cougars, Studio 34, 2pm

26...Chamber Coffee: Central Kansas CASA. Doors open at 9am, program at 9:30am. Can't make it? Watch online on the Chamber's Facebook Page or Youtube Channel.

27...Military & First Responders Night Out, 916 Williams St., 6pm

27...Dancing with the Cougars, Studio 34, 6:30pm

28...Barton Athletics: Hall of Fame Induction, Kirkman Activity Center, 2pm

Recurring Events:

Great Bend City Council Meetings, 1st & 3rd Mondays, City Hall, 1209 Williams, 6:30 pm

Barton County Commission Meetings, Wednesdays, Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main St, Rm 106, 9am.

Be Well Barton County Family Friendly Bike Ride, starts at Jack Kilby Square, 6 pm (every Friday in Sept.)

Visit greatbend.org/events/calendar for a full list of great events taking place throughout the month!

Virtual Chamber Events (Chamber Chat & Virtual Coffees) can be found: via Facebook (www.facebook.com/gbcoc) or YouTube (tinyurl.com/ybepgrt6)

GREAT BEND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WELCOME to Our *NEWEST* Chamber Members

DAWSON JEWELERS
Dana Dawson
contact@dawsonjewelers.com
(620) 793-7884
1301 Main St.|Great Bend, KS
dawsonjewelers.com
Jewerly

BOB'S INDUSTRIAL COMPRESSOR ENGINE SERVICE, LLC
Robert Schneider
olmitzbob55@hotmail.com
(620) 786-4509
187 N HWY281 | Great Bend, KS
Oil Field Services

KLEEN SMART
Mayra Kurtz
mayracoronel85@gmail.com
(620) 282-8536
1413 Main St.|Great Bend, KS
Residential & Commercial Cleaning

New?

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SCAN ME

No formal press release? No communications department? No problem! Simply scan and let us know what's going on in your business, and we'll do the rest!

$25 TICKETS OR 5 FOR $100
ONLY 5,000 TICKETS AVAILABLE

Drawing to be held March 30, 2023
Sunflower Diversified Services Pancake Feed @ 6:45pm

WIN THIS CAR!
NEW Trailblazer Activ

Sunflower
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES, INC.

Tickets available at:
Westside Market
www.sunflowerdiv.com
scan QR code

THANK YOU!
Sunflower Diversified Services Foundation, Inc. & Ellis Chevrolet

Proceeds support persons served at Sunflower Diversified Services
Official rules available upon request or at www.sunflowerdiv.com.

Hutchinson Clinic Physicians Serving the Great Bend, Hoisington & Ellinwood Areas

GREAT BEND:
Hutchinson Clinic Great Bend / 3715 6th Street
Dr. Jamil Ahmed, Cardiologist
Dr. Aaron Thiessen, Ear Nose & Throat
Dr. Curt Thompson, Interventional Radiologist
Natalie Williams, PA, Pulmonolgy

ELLINWOOD:
Ellinwood Medical Clinic / 611 N. Main
Dr. Jamil Ahmed, Cardiologist

HOISINGTON:
Clara Barton Medical Clinic / 250 W 9th St
Dr. Costy Mattar, Cardiologist
Dr. Christine Sanders, OBGYN
Dr. Curt Thompson, Interventional Radiologist

Exceptional Care Close to Home
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CHAMBER COFFEE SCHEDULE

Every Thursday | Doors Open at 9am | Program at 9:30am

Tune in on Facebook or YouTube for Virtual Coffees

January 5th, 2023
GREAT BEND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
3111 10th St.

The Great Bend Economic Development, Inc. is a public/private partnership focusing on the economic development efforts in Barton County, KS. The board is made up of City Council members, County Commissioners, Chamber Representatives, various leaders in the community, and the general public. We are a dedicated group of business sector stakeholders. This board employs an Executive Director to implement and oversee the efforts of the Economic Development.

January 12th, 2023
ANYTIME FITNESS
3721 10th St.

At Anytime Fitness Great Bend, the support is real and it starts the moment we meet. Our coaches don't have one plan that fits everyone, they develop a plan that fits you – a total fitness experience designed around your abilities, your body, and your goals. Your plan will contain a 360 approach to your health and will cover important areas other gyms simply can't. The first step? Contact us today so we can get started. We can't wait!

January 19th, 2023
GREAT BEND HOUSING AUTHORITY
1101 Kansas Ave.

The Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA) provides affordable housing through two different programs. The first program is a Section 8 project-based low-income housing program providing affordable housing at the High Rise, located at 1101 Kansas Avenue in downtown Great Bend. The second program is the Section 8 tenant-based housing assistance program for low-income individuals to apply for assistance for privately owned housing with other landlords in the Great Bend community. Both programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). GBHA is operated by a team of friendly professionals who work full-time at the High Rise in downtown Great Bend. The staff is overseen by a volunteer Board of Commissioners, who are appointed by the Mayor and City Council for the City of Great Bend.

January 26th, 2023
CENTRAL KANSAS CASA
Holiday Inn Express, 3821 10th St.

Central Kansas CASA, Inc provides trained community volunteers who maintain regular contact with the children whom they are appointed to, their parents, foster parents, the Court, and various agencies that provide the children with the specialized services they require. CASA volunteers monitor compliance with court orders and make recommendations to the court to promote the child's best interests. CASA volunteers are the "eyes and ears of the Judge" until safe and permanent homes are found for the children whom we serve.

February 2nd, 2023
MATTRESS SOLUTIONS BY MILLERS OF CLAFLIN
3511 10th St.

Millers of Claflin is a 5th generation, family-owned business that has served Kansans since 1903. They have the largest selection in home furnishing from Kansas City to Denver and now they are expanding again. Mattress Solutions, the most complete selection of mattresses, adjustable bases, and massage chairs is now open in Great Bend.

3307 10th Street • Great Bend, KS 67530
McDonald's
is providing coffee for Chamber of Commerce coffees.

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Join us for a dynamic, in-person, interactive seminar which will keep your business growing and thriving!

Thursday Evenings • February 9, 16, 23; March 2, 9, 23 & 30, 2023 • 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

$300 for all seven sessions (Sessions, meals and materials included in cost.)

Front Door Community Center, 1615 10th Street, Great Bend, KS

Sessions

- Management & Company Culture
  Mark Mingenback, Business Consultant & Sally Mauler, The Buckle
- Human Resources
  Brenda Kaiser, Barton County; Lynda Jamison & Sam Jacobs, Adams Brown, LLC
- Financial Resources
  Paul Snapp, First Kansas Bank & Sara Hayden, Great Bend Economic Development
- Legal Considerations & Accounting
  Molly Bailly & Taylor Calcara, Watkins Calcara; Barry Bowers, Spectrum Partners
- Buying and Leasing Property
  Kim Vink & Glenna Achatz, Coldwell Banker
- Creating Vision for Your Business and Effectively Marketing it to Potential Customers
  Rachel Mawhirter, Marketing Maven
- Q & A with Panel of Small Business Owners

For more information or to register, contact Krystall Barnes at barnesk@bartonccc.edu or (620) 792-9332. **(Registration Deadline: Monday, January 23, 2023)**

Seating is limited, so register today!!

MARKETING MAVEN
Making your business look good.

GB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Barton Community College FOUNDATION
245 NE 30 RD • Great Bend, KS 67530

BARTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Non-discrimination Notice: Barton Community College is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Visit equal.bartonccc.edu for more information.