OUTLOCK

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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business journal

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Join the Team for Giving Tuesday 2025

The Golden Belt Community Foundation is kicking off its 12th annual Giving Tuesday campaign, running November 1 through December 2, 2025 — and this year, it's all about teamwork.

Under the theme "Team Golden Belt," the campaign invites donors, nonprofits, and community members to come together as one powerful team to support local causes.

This year, 127 organizations across Barton, Pawnee, Rush, Stafford, and Edwards Counties are participating, each working to strengthen their communities through impactful projects and programs.

Matching dollars from the Patterson Family Foundation are available for gifts made to endowed funds, helping those contributions go even further.

On Giving Tuesday, December 2, donors are invited to stop by the Foundation office for snacks, drinks, and in-person giving incentives.

"This campaign is about showing what happens when we all play for the same team," said Mackenzie Mitchell "Together, we can build stronger communities across the Golden Belt."

Donors can join the team and give in three easy ways:

- Online: www.qoldenbeltcf.orq
- By mail: Golden Belt Community Foundation, P.O. Box 1911, Great Bend, KS 67530
- In person: 1307 Williams Street, Great Bend, KS 67530

To learn more or view the full list of participating organizations, visit www.goldenbeltcf.org.

Follow along and share your support using #GoldenBeltGives, #GivingTuesday and #TeamGoldenBelt.



Outlook Business Journal

GREAT BEND

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1125 Williams Great Bend, KS 67530 620-792-2401 www.greatbend.org

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Featured Ambassador: Charell Owings

Ambassador Club members assist the Chamber with networking events, ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings, and membership recruitment and retention. This group of volunteers allows the Chamber to cultivate business relationships and network with the area's most successful people. If you would like to become an Ambassador and represent your company, contact a member of the Chamber staff.

Q What Brings You Here?

A "My husband and I moved here in 2011 from Manhattan. We grew up in the Hays area and both moved to NWKS during High School. We joked that we wanted to be closer to home but not too close to home."

Q Your Day to Day Jobs

A "I do a little bit of everything. From operations, finances, event planning, fundraising, grant writing, and marketing. A small team requires a wide breath of responsibilities which is part of what I love about the job."

Q Surprise us!

A "I don't like talking in front of people even though it's a good portion of my job."

 $oldsymbol{Q}$ Your Inspiration

A "A desire to help people and leave a mark on individuals. Showing compassion and kindness are free and more needed than ever."

Q Wild Card - What would you be terrible at?

A "Food service."

 $oldsymbol{Q}$ Your Role as an Ambassador

A "I have been an ambassador for 3 years. I enjoy the relationships built with fellow ambassadors and being engaged in the community."





Charell can be reached at 620-792-2403 or unitedwaycentralks@hotmail.com.

Want to join?

Contact Julie Mazouch for all your ambassador needs! jmazouch@greatbend.org 620-792-2401



Barton County Food Bank



11.22.25

register at sunflowerdiv.com

Megan Barfield, IOM, Appointed to Midwest Board of Regents of Institute for Organization Management

A Leadership Training Program Produced by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Institute for Organization Management, the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, has appointed Megan Barfield, IOM. President of the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, to the Midwest Board of Regents. As a member of this Board, Barfield will implement the policies created by Institute's National Board of Trustees.

"A strong Board of Regents is essential to Institute's success," said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, vice president of Institute for Organization Management at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "These volunteers drive site attendance. provide recommendations for program improvement, and serve as an on-site resource for Institute participants."

Since its commencement in 1921, the Institute program has been educating tens of thousands of association, chamber, and other nonprofit leaders on how to build stronger organizations, better serve their members and become strong business advocates.

Institute's four Boards of Regents serve on behalf of the National Board of Trustees. Each Board of Regents is responsible for recruitment, retention, and marketing of the program nationwide. Each regent is an Institute graduate nominated by their peers.

Institute for Organization Management is the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. It is the premier nonprofit professional development program for association and chamber professionals, fostering individual growth through interactive learning and networking opportunities.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business organization representing companies of all sizes across every sector of the economy. Our members range from the small businesses and local chambers of commerce that line the Main Streets of America to leading industry associations and large corporations.

Learn more at institute.uschamber.com or @IOMeducates.



Nominate Outstanding Leaders and Businesses

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN!

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NEXTGEN LEADER OF THE YEAR



It's that time of year when we come together to celebrate the incredible individuals and businesses that make Great Bend a vibrant and thriving community. We're thrilled to announce that nominations are now open for the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce 2026 Annual Awards!

We invite you to help us recognize the best and brightest among us by nominating your peers for one (or more) of these prestigious awards

VISIT GREATBEND.ORG

DEADLINE 12.12.25

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



High Plains Farm Credit 1100 E 43rd Street Hays, KS 67530 (785) 625-2110 highplainsfarmcredit.com Agriculture



GB Tarp Company 254 SW 2 Rd Great Bend, KS 67530 (620) 617-3364 gbtarpcompany.com **Agriculture**



Vote Davis Jimenez for Great Bend Mayor Great Bend, KS 67530 (785) 289-8222

Government



Nisly Brothers, Inc. Hutchinson, KS 67501 (620) 662-6561 nislybrothers.com **Utility - Trash**

Membership questions?

Contact Julie Mazouch for all your membership needs! jmazouch@greatbend.org 620-792-2401







The City of Great Bend is thrilled to announce that the theme for the 2025 Home for the Holidays Parade is "Holiday **Movie Madness."** This year marks the 20th anniversary of the beloved community tradition, and the city invites residents, visitors, and organizations to join in celebrating the films that make the holiday season so magical.

From A Christmas Story to Elf, It's a Wonderful Life, and yes—even Die Hard for those who count it among their holiday favorites—parade participants are encouraged to bring their favorite holiday movie moments to life. In keeping with tradition, participants are asked not to include Santa Claus on their floats, as the jolly man in red will make his grand entrance at the end of the parade.

Adding an extra touch of local spirit, Great Bend's own Cole Reif of Kansas Sports Chatter will serve as emcee for the evening. The parade's Grand Marshal will be announced at a later date.

A Full Day of Festivities

The Home for the Holidays Festival takes place annually on the Saturday after Thanksqiving—this year on **November 29**, **2025**—to officially kick off the Christmas season in Great Bend. The celebration begins early with family-friendly events and activities throughout the day, including:

- The Rosewood Services Cookie Contest
- The Dilly & Doc Pop-Up Market
- The Window Decorating Contest, hosted by Great Bend Economic Development
- · Golden Belt Model Railroad Display
- · The Christmas Craft Mall
- · Pawsitive Luminaries, hosted by Paws & Claws / Adopt a Pet

The lighted parade will step off at 5:30

p.m., traveling along Main Street from 19th to 12th Street. Judges will evaluate parade entries before the parade begins, allowing spectators to know the winning entries as they roll by. Awards will be presented in the following categories:

- · Youth Group
- · Civic Group or Club
- Float That Best Depicts the Theme
- · Best Private Entry
- · Church Group
- Grand Marshal's Choice Best in Parade

Evening Celebration in Jack Kilby Square

After the parade, the celebration continues in Jack Kilby Square, where families can enjoy:

- The Annual Lighting of the Mayor's Tree
- Free hot dogs and hot chocolate
- Ice skating
- · Horse-drawn wagon, carriage, and trolley rides
- Train rides
- · A Christmas petting zoo
- Visits with Santa and tours of "Santas Around the World" (1223 Main Street)
- The announcement of cookie contest winners
- The official opening of the Trail of Lights for the season

Parade Participation and Registration

The City of Great Bend encourages individuals, businesses, clubs, churches, and organizations to participate and help make the 20th Home for the Holidays Parade the best yet.

Parade entry forms are due by November 14, 2025 and can be:

- Emailed to acrities@greatbendks.net
- · Mailed to 1209 Williams St, Great Bend, KS 67530
- Dropped off at City Hall between 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-5 p.m., Monday through Friday

Entry forms can also be found online at the City of Great Bend website or picked up at City Hall. Participants will receive detailed instructions and parade lineup information by November 24, 2025, via email.

For businesses or organizations planning to host additional holiday-themed activities on November 29, contact acrities@ greatbendks.net to be included in official promotional materials.

Crest Theater to Celebrate 75 Years with Recreation of Grand Opening



Bob Marsh and the Great Bend Community Theater invite the public to a celebration of the Crest Theater diamond anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 9, 2025. The Crest will present two showings of the 1960 grand opening film, "Two Weeks With Love," starring Jane Powell and Ricardo Montalban.

The recreation of the Nov. 9, 1950, grand opening will allow attendees to step into the 1950 era of new style, comfort and technology that the Crest brought to Great Bend. Historic automobiles will line the curb, the marquee will light the evening and the ticket booth will grand entrance. The lobby and mezzanine will display history of the theater and the streets of Great Bend. Concessions will be available. Uniformed usherettes will provide a historic program and attend to every need.

Doors open at 1 p.m. with the first of the two screenings beginning at 2 p.m. and the other at 6:30 p.m. Admission is only one dollar for all ages, courtesy of celebration sponsor Max Nichols and the Nichols Family Trust. The one-dollar admission fee accounts for the original 1950's ticket cost of 65 cents along with a 35-cent charge for popcorn.

There is no reserved seating, and all tickets must be purchased at the box office on the day of the event. The theater seats 337, so it is advised to arrive early to ensure a spot.

Attendees are encouraged to have some fun and come dressed in their best 1950

Hollywood Grand Opening attire, Great Bend, Kansas, style. Each screening will feature a "Best 1950 Dressed Contest". Participants will have their picture taken with the Crest 75th Anniversary backdrop and receive a digital copy emailed to them. During the opening remarks, six winners will be announced and awarded a prize.

To kick off the 75th anniversary celebration, the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, Nov. 6 at 10 a.m. at the Crest Theater. The event will set the stage for a weekend full of festivities, honoring one of the community's most beloved historical landmarks.

Chamber President and CEO Megan Barfield said, "The Crest has been part of Great Bend's story for 75 years, welcoming families, friends and visitors through its doors. We're honored to help celebrate this milestone and to recognize the theater's lasting place in our community's history and future."

The Chamber invites the public to take part in this special occasion and help celebrate the Crest's milestone anniversary. The ribbon-cutting will be a symbolic opening to the anniversary weekend, offering the community a chance to come together in recognition of the theater's past, present and bright future. Great Bend Mayor Cody Schmidt will also present a Proclamation for the Crest.

Brief History

Prior to its Nov. 9, 1950, grand opening, the corner of Lakin Avenue and Kansas Avenue was occupied by the Kansan Theater. The Kansan was demolished to build the current-day Crest Theater as a more modern building was needed to meet fire standards.

The Crest Theater was considered cutting-edge at the time, with 985 seats between the orchestra and balcony, along with Perlite ceilings, fireproof seats and curtains, a pay phone, miniature water fountain, a cry room and reservable party room. The eye-catching marquee of 860 flashing bulbs, 20 floodlights and 3,000 feet of neon tubing continues to proudly ignite downtown Great Bend to this day.

Many small-town and city historical theaters closed throughout the 1960s and 1970s as populations depleted. The Great Bend Crest Theater shut down in 1979 before resuming operations in 1992 from the collaboration of the City of Great Bend and the Great Bend Community Theater organization.

Since then, the Crest has been restored and modified with an extended stage, updated bathrooms, HVAC system, new carpet, curtains, sound system and lights.

Over the last seven decades, Crest Theater has served as a staple of entertainment in central Kansas as a multi-purpose venue. It has hosted various plays, movies, seminars, dances, lectures and concerts throughout its tenure and has retained its historical integrity throughout the last 75 years, being listed on the National Register of Historical Places in February 2005.

The Great Bend Community Theater hosts three comedies each season and will kick off the 2025-26 term with the performance of "Savannah Sipping Society" from Oct. 23-26. In 2026, "Happy Birthday Dear Grandpa" will take to the stage from Feb. 26-March 1 before wrapping up the season with the production of "Just Desserts" from April 23-26.

Season tickets are \$30 per person and can be purchased at the box office by mailing an order form to PO Box 361 Great Bend, KS, 67530. To receive an order form, please email gbct.crest@gmail.com with contact information. For any additional questions, please email or call 620-792-4228.

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The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Thursday, September 18th for First Christian Church, 5230 Broadway Avenue in Great Bend, Kansas.

The celebration followed the Chamber Coffee and highlighted the exciting updates to the church's contemporary worship service, The Refuge. Guests gathered to see the newly renovated worship space and hear how the church continues to create an atmosphere that welcomes people from all walks of life to experience community and faith in a refreshed way.

Pastor Josh Lue shared that the updates to The Refuge reflect the church's mission to provide



a meaningful, modern worship experience where people can connect, grow, and serve together. He emphasized that the refreshed space represents a renewed commitment to offering a place where individuals can come as they are and encounter authentic community and faith in action.

The morning was filled with warm fellowship, coffee, and conversation as Chamber Members and community guests toured the updated space. The event marked not only a physical renovation but also a renewed energy within the congregation to serve the Great Bend community in impactful ways.

For more information, visit firstchristianchurchgb.com.



The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Community Basketball Court on Monday, September 22, at 1:00 PM, across from Eisenhower School at Lakin and Garfield.

Developed by the Great Bend Recreation Commission Foundation, the project transformed a longtime community dream into reality. The new court serves as more than just a place to play—it's a safe, welcoming space for kids, athletes, and neighbors to connect. In addition to the new court, the park also received adjustable side goals on the existing court, improvements to the baseball and softball fields, and an upgraded sand volleyball pit, enhancing accessibility and enjoyment for everyone

The project was made possible through years of dedication and community support. Special recognition was given to the Morning and Noon Basketball members, who have long supported local basketball, as well as USD 428 and the Kiwanis for their contributions.

"We're deeply grateful to everyone who believed in this project," said Chris Umphres, Great Bend Rec Director. "This court belongs to the whole community, and we were thrilled to celebrate its opening together."

The Great Bend Recreation Commission Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, continues its mission to provide recreational, cultural, and educational programs that enrich life and strengthen the community. For more information or to support the project's final phase, visit www.greatbendrec.com or call 620-793-3755.

RBBOOTTINGS

The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce held a Ribbon Cutting at Great Bend Floral on Thursday, October 2, 2025.

Formerly known as Yours Truly Gift & Flower Shoppe, Great Bend Floral LLC continues the long-standing tradition of helping families and friends celebrate life's special moments—now with new ownership and a renewed focus on exceptional service and creativity.

Great Bend Floral LLC proudly serves the Great Bend area with handcrafted floral arrangements, custom designs, plants, and gift baskets for every occasion. Whether it's a birthday, anniversary, wedding, or sympathy



tribute, their dedicated team ensures each creation is made with care, passion, and attention to detail. The shop also carries a unique selection of candles, gourmet treats, baby items, and home décor—making it a go-to destination for thoughtful gifts and beautiful touches for any home.

Great Bend Floral is known for its personal service and same-day delivery throughout the Great Bend area, as well as nationwide delivery through its trusted florist network. Each bouquet is carefully arranged and delivered by hand, quaranteeing freshness and quality every time.

Great Bend Floral LLC is located at 2017 Lakin Avenue, Great Bend, Kansas. Business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM; Saturday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM; closed Sunday. For more information or to order online, visit www.greatbendflowers.com.



The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Sunflower Estates, a revitalized Mobile Home and RV Community at 5501 9th Street in Great Bend, on October 9, 2025.

Formerly known as Finer Mobile Home Park, the property is under new ownership committed to restoring pride and community spirit through major upgrades, improved management, and flexible living options for both residents and travelers.

Sunflower Estates offers rent-to-own, purchase, and RV stay options in a clean, family-friendly setting focused on safety and community pride.

The community currently serves over 50 mobile home and RV residents, with more homes and spaces becoming available as renovations continue. Managed locally by a two-person team and supported by regional partners, the ownership group brings over a decade of experience managing similar communities in seven states.

"Our mission is to make Sunflower Estates one of Great Bend's most desirable housing communities," said Leo Young, Manager. "We want every resident and traveler to feel welcome, respected, and proud to live here."

For more information, contact 813-666-5857 (Main Office) or 609-200-6668 (Leasing/Sales), or email sunflowerestates@rastrats.com.

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Great Bend Public Schools - USD 428 is pleased to announce The Kansas Speech Communication Association (KSCA) has named Kim Heath, longtime speech, debate, and forensics coach at Great Bend High School, as its Secondary Educator of the Year. The award was presented during the KSCA's annual conference in Wichita.

A Hoisington native and educator for over 20 years, Heath teaches speech, debate, and forensics at GBHS. Her passion began in high school under mentor Randy Willis and continued through Kansas State University, where she competed on the 1991 national championship debate team.

Heath previously taught at Scott Community and Abilene High Schools before joining GBHS in 2004. After several years teaching English, she returned to coaching in 2018 when Barbara Watson retired, allowing her to coach her own children through national-level competitions.

Known for her inclusive approach, Heath says she loves helping students "find their voices and share their story with confidence." Superintendent Khris Thexton praised her as an exceptional educator dedicated to student growth. Heath is married to Dan Heath, a retired GBHS teacher; fittingly, the couple first met at a KSCA conference 30 years ago.

The University of Kansas Health System in Great Bend welcomes Amir Naderi, MD, a board-certified internal medicine specialist who is also a hospitalist. A hospitalist is a physician who specializes in caring for patients while they are being treated in the hospital.

Dr. Naderi grew up in a mid-size community, which is part of what drew him to Great Bend. The other part of what drew him is the opportunity to be part of an academic medical system while practicing in a rural hospital. "I am excited to be treating patients in a rural setting where there is great need and necessity for the best care," he said. "The University of Kansas Health System fulfills the needs of our patients in whatever setting they are seen."

Cardiology patients, especially those experiencing heart failure and arrhythmias, are a special interest of Dr. Naderi. He has experience in treating complex patients in high-acuity long-term acute care hospitals. In addition, he has significant experience working with and supervising medical students and residents. Outside of work, Dr. Naderi stays busy with his 1-year-old daughter and enjoys playing the piano and quitar.

Dr. Naderi has bachelor's and master's degrees in biology. He earned his Doctor of Medicine degree at Saba University School of Medicine on Saba, Netherlands Antilles.





Bank of the Plains is pleased to announce Jay Luerman has accepted the role of Vice President, Regional Manager and Commercial and Aq Loan Officer.

Tina Call, President of Bank of the Plains shared "The Board of Directors and the entire team at Bank of the Plains are very excited to welcome Jay to the bank. Jay has a strong background in serving customers' banking needs across the state and in our communities. His ambition, dedication, and heart for community service perfectly align with our values, and we're delighted to have him as a leader on our team!"

A 2016 graduate of Fort Hays State University with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business and a minor in Finance, Jay furthered his banking education by completing the Graduate School of Banking in Boulder, Colorado, in July 2025. Alongside his wife, Joanna, he proudly raises their three children in Great Bend. With nearly ten years of banking experience in Great Bend, Jay has repeatedly demonstrated his commitment as a community leader. Jay serves on numerous boards, including the Barton Community College Foundation, Barton County Young Professionals, USD 428 Site Council, Barton County Kids Ag Day, Golden Belt Bankers Association, Kiwanis Club of Great Bend, Barton Community College Ag Advisory Board, and the Grace Community Church Finance Team.

Great Bend Public Schools – USD 428 is pleased to announce the addition of Shelby Zuniga as the district's new Accountant. A Great Bend native and proud graduate of Great Bend High School, Zuniga brings a wealth of financial expertise and leadership experience to her new role.

Zuniga is a 1998 graduate of GBHS and earned an Associate of Science degree from Barton Community College in 2000. She went on to complete a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from Fort Hays State University in 2002 and later earned her Master of Professional Accountancy from the University of Texas-Permian Basin in 2012. In 2016, she achieved her Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation.

Her professional career spans over 20 years of experience in government and nonprofit accounting. After returning to Great Bend in 2019, Zuniga joined Sunflower Diversified Services, Inc. as Chief Financial Officer. In 2021, she was appointed Interim Executive Director and was later named Executive Director.

John Popp, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, welcomed Zuniga to the district team. "Shelby's expertise in accounting and proven leadership in both government and nonprofit settings make her an excellent fit for USD 428," Popp said. "Her commitment to accuracy, transparency, and service will benefit our schools, staff, and community."

Outside of work, Zuniga and her husband, Juan, enjoy an active family life with their twin daughters, Isabella and Sophia, who attend Little Panthers Preschool. The family is involved in First Christian Church, enjoys working on their old cars, spending time outdoors, and cheering for the Kansas City Chiefs.



Cornerstone Automotive & Tire is proud to welcome Jason Linsner as Assistant Shop Manager. Jason joined in April 2025, bringing years of industry experience to support daily operations—a key step under new local ownership following Darin Hertel's transition from Shop Manager to Owner earlier this year.

A Great Bend native, Jason began in the automotive field as a teen, later earning an Associate's degree in Automotive Technology from Barton Community College in 2009—where he studied alongside Hertel. After years in the industry, he returned to the independent shop setting for its hands-on, customer-focused environment.

In his role, Jason handles work orders, assists technicians, checks in vehicles, orders parts, and helps customers—keeping the shop efficient and responsive. Hertel praised his "strong work ethic, deep experience, and customer-first mindset."

Jason enjoys complex diagnostics and older vehicles, aligning with Cornerstone's goal of being a one-stop shop for all automotive needs. Outside of work, he spends time with his wife, Desiree, and their children, Jaydon and Raelynrose, and enjoys fishing and restoring vintage vehicles.





The University of Kansas Health System in Great Bend welcomes Jessica Pries, MD, a board-certified general surgeon, to the care team at Great Bend Campus.

Dr. Pries grew up in central Kansas and she is glad to be back in the area and serving patients here. She was part of the Scholars in Rural Health program at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, where she earned a bachelor's degree in cell biology. As a student who successfully completed the Scholars in Rural Health program, Dr. Pries was assured entrance to the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

"It is a real privilege to serve patients in the area where I grew up," she said. "I enjoy offering patients a solution to their problem so they can get back to their daily life as guickly as possible."

Dr. Pries has advanced training in minimally invasive surgery techniques as well as a special interest in hernia repairs and treating gallbladder disease. When not working, she enjoys traveling. She lives in the area with her husband and their animals.

Dr. Pries earned her medical degree at the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Wichita. She completed her general surgery residency at Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans and a bariatric surgery fellowship at University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Pries, call 620-793-7520.

Clara Barton Medical Center is pleased to welcome Dr. Jenna Sloan, OB/GYN, to its Surgical Clinic, expanding services to include gynecology care in Hoisington.

A board-certified OB/GYN with nearly a decade of experience, Dr. Sloan offers clinic visits, in-office procedures, and surgical care. Originally from Grainfield/Hoxie, Kansas, she earned her degree from Kansas State University, attended KU School of Medicine, and completed her residency at Baylor Scott & White in Texas.

She provides a wide range of services, including well-woman exams, Pap smears, contraceptive counseling, and minimally invasive surgeries, with special interests in endometriosis, menopause, pelvic pain, and infertility.

Dr. Sloan lives on a central Kansas farm with her husband and three children. In her free time, she enjoys running, gravel biking, traveling, and K-State sports.

She begins seeing patients October 24. To schedule, call 620-653-4191.

Eldridge Fencing & Western Kansas Fence Supply is honored to recognize Jay Schwartzkopf for his outstanding dedication and service. Jay celebrated his 15-year work anniversary as the Metal Fab Shop Forman on August 30th. Jay brings a wealth of knowledge

and innovation to the company that is unmatched. His hard work and commitment embody what

has made Eldridge Fencing a trusted name in the

fencing industry throughout the midwest.









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A Day with the Stations of the Crib: A Journey of **Hope from Advent to Christmas**

The Heartland Center for Spirituality invites you to a unique day of reflection and spiritual renewal - A Day with the Stations of the Crib: A Journey of Hope from Advent to Christmas. Saturday. December 6th. 2025, 1-5pm at the Heartland Center for Spirituality, 3600 Broadway, Great Bend, KS.

Inspired by the familiar Stations of the

Cross, this retreat will quide participants through the significant moments leading up to the birth of Christ, offering a profound and hopeful perspective on the Advent season. Each "station" will provide an opportunity for prayer, contemplation, and connection with the divine promise of hope and renewal.

Throughout the afternoon, participants will meditate on the anticipation, preparation, and joy that characterize this sacred time, drawing closer to the heart of the Christmas story. Whether you seek a deeper understanding of Advent or simply wish to enrich your spiritual journey, this experience promises to be both meaningful and uplifting.

Closing Celebration and Supper

Following the retreat, all are warmly invited to join in Supper and a Christmas Concert, marking the closing event of the Heartland Center's 40th Anniversary Celebration. It's a beautiful way to conclude a day centered on hope, reflection, and joy as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Registration

- · Retreat Fee: \$40
- Age 60 and Older: \$30
- Zoom Option: \$30
- Supper on Saturday:
- Participants may also make an optional donation in support of the Heartland Center's mission.
- Deadline: November 24, 2025

To register, please visit heartlandspirituality.org/advent-retreat or contact Ann Axman at ann.axman@ heartlandspirituality.org or 620-792-1232.

Join us as we journey through the Stations of the Crib—a reflection on hope, love, and the mystery of the Incarnation and celebrate the season of Advent in community and faith.

Rosewood AKTION Club Conducting Annual Coloring Book and Crayon Drive for Community Children



The Rosewood Miracle Workers AKTION Club has kicked off its 11th Annual Coloring Book and Crayon Drive, running through November 30. At the end of the month, donated items will be distributed to local charities that serve children.

"This is one of our club's longest-running and most beloved projects," said sponsor Frankie Pelster. "Our members take great pride in helping area children, and we're so grateful for the community's continued support."

Donations of coloring books, crayons, or monetary gifts can be dropped off at Rosewood Furniture Gallery (1607 Main St.) or Rosewood Bargain Barn (1215 Main St.) in downtown Great Bend.

Now in its seventh year, a friendly competition continues between Rosewood AKTION Club members and Rosewood Services employees to see who can collect the most items. While the Day Services team has won several times, AKTION Club has claimed victory for the past three years. "The competition is fun, but the real reward is bringing smiles to children's faces," Pelster added. "This drive truly is a labor of love."

For more information, contact Pelster at 620-792-2536 or employmentspecialist@ RosewoodServices.com.

Family Crisis Center, with Juvenile Services support, applies for human-trafficking grant

If a federal grant proposal is successful, the Family Crisis Center (FCC) in Great Bend will hire a liaison dedicated to human trafficking, upgrade training materials for schools and significantly expand community-wide education.

The FCC, with the support of Juvenile Services (JS), submitted the three-year, \$325,000 proposal to the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women.

"Many people might not consider central Kansas a hotspot for human trafficking," said Kylee Graves, FCC executive director. "But our location in the center of the country makes it the ideal target – especially because several interstates and highways intersect.

"This presents a distinct danger to humantrafficking victims who can be quietly and quickly moved to another location. These realities in our rural area create an environment conducive to trafficking for sex and/or labor."

Adding to challenges faced by victims and law enforcement, "many residents are not aware of these dangers," Graves added. "This makes it even easier for traffickers to infiltrate our area undetected.

"Smaller towns have an inherent sense of security and cannot imagine such horrific crimes occurring in their communities."

The most effective way to stop human trafficking is to prevent it, which is why the two local entities collaborated to secure funding for a liaison, and targeted education and training programs, Graves noted.

"Our goal is to raise awareness so community members, law enforcement and other first responders can recognize early signs of trafficking and intervene before it is too late," she commented.

The grant's primary target areas are Barton, Pawnee and Pratt counties, with plans to explore options for expanding in central Kansas.

Victim information



Most victims are vound people who tend to be vulnerable socially and financially.

"Perpetrators perceive youth as easier targets because their limited education and scarce financial resources make it difficult to recognize the dangers," Graves said. "In addition, each new generation uses

technology to a greater degree, which leads to an increasing number of cybercrimes.

"Furthermore, victims with unaddressed mental-health issues and/or those who abuse substances are more likely to be targets of human trafficking. It is imperative that we educate young people, as well as the adults in their lives, to recognize signs of trafficking."

Graves also noted that while statistics are "staggering," the problem is undoubtedly much worse because human-trafficking cases are under-reported.

"For these reasons, and others, it is crucial that our communities offer training and resources aimed at preventing human trafficking among young people and breaking the dangerous cycle before it begins," she emphasized.

Juvenile Services (JS)

The work on this grant proposal isn't the first time the FCC has collaborated with JS and its executive director, Marissa Woodmansee.

"Marissa brought human trafficking to my attention when I served as a family-support worker in USD 428 for 15 years," Graves recalled. "In recent years, I have come to realize this is an even bigger problem than I originally thought.

"The JS team screens young people and refers them to us whenever appropriate. This has been an invaluable collaboration."

Woodmansee noted that because of the overlap between JS and FCC services, she didn't hesitate to throw her support behind the grant proposal.

"This partnership with the FCC is important for a number of reasons, especially because of this overlap with our programs," Woodmansee said. "For example, our Intake and Assessment Program, which often entails forensic interviews, can determine if we need to find a safe placement for a young person.

"This placement would happen at least until the court decides if further action is required. Then, as a young person moves through our intervention and supervision programs, we can work with the FCC for a continuum of care regarding healthy relationships and advocacy in navigating the judicial system, with complementary services for parents and guardians. As funding gets tighter, working together is always beneficial."

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December 4th BARTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 85 US Hwy 281

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ANIMALS	Golden Belt Humane Society	Great Bend Zoological Society	Pawnee County Humane Society, Inc. Endowment
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Kansas Wetlands Education Center - FHSU

awnee County Youth Initiative Foundation Rush County Historical Society Endowment

Pawnee County 4-H Council

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,	Arts & Culture Endowment
"	Barton Arts Movement (BAM)
"	Golden Belt Community Concert Assoc. Endowme
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	Kansas Barbed Wire Collectors Assoc.
"	Santa Fe Trail Center - Ft. Larned Hist. Society

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HEALTH
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Macksville Grace Church Prince of Peace Catholic Church (Great Bend)

Macksville Christian Church Food Bank

Grace Lutheran Church (Larned) Heartland Center for Spirituality
Lasting Life Ministries, Inc.
Live Like Jesus Today Ministries

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Great Bend Alive	Contar for Counseling	Center for Counseling & Consultation Endowment
Great Bend Bat Cats Baseball Club, Inc.	Center for courseining	a Collisation Endownient
Great Bend Commission on Aging	Central Kansas Partnership	ersnip
Great Bend Chamber of Commerce Foundation	Clara Barton Hospital Foundation, Inc.	Foundation, Inc.
Great Bend Recreation Commission Foundation	CPRF Mobility Endowment	ment
Great Bend Trail Alliance, Inc.	ElderCare, Inc.	
Golden Belt Community Improvement Endowment	Ellinwood Hospital Foundation	undation
Heartland Farm - Dominican Sisters of Peace	Kansas University Association Endowment	sociation Endowment
Hoisington Historical Society	Locust Grove Village Endowment	Endowment
Hudson Community Improvement Endowment	Meals on Wheels of Barton County	arton County
Jo's Jingle Basket	Pawnee County EMS Endowment	Endowment
Kans For Kids Fighting Cancer Foundation Endowment	Pawnee County Health Department	h Department
Kansas Oil and Gas Museum Foundation	Pawnee Valley Comm	Pawnee Valley Community Hospital Foundation
LaCrosse Playground Fund	Rush County EMS	
Larned Collection Center for Orphan Grain Train	Rush County Memoris	Rush County Memorial Hospital Foundation
Larned State Hospital Association	Stafford County Health Care Foundation	h Care Foundation
Leadership Golden Belt Endowment	Manual County Heal	Date of date of the state of th
League of Women Voters in Great Bend	Stallord County Health Department	n Department
McCracken Historical Museum. Inc.	Sunflower Diversified Services, Inc.	Services, Inc.

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	s	_Housing Opportunities, Inc.
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