

# OUTLOOK BUSINESS JOURNAL

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## MOVING THE NEEDLE



Let this be a story of hope and perseverance. Resilience. Let this be the story of what can be done in one year amid an economic crisis...

Of what can be accomplished in our very own communities while a pandemic, social unrest, a civil rights movement, riots, fires, and elections wreak havoc across the nation.

Let this be our story.

In one year's time significant progress was made towards creating the community that the residents said they wanted and the community at the center of this vision statement:

In 20 years, we are...

*A diverse community of welcoming, engaged people leading Great Bend to shine as a regional economic, educational, and cultural center offering an energetic and inclusive experience built on a unique community spirit.*

Here's our pick for the Top 10 advancements made in 2020.

### 1. COMMUNITY INTERVENTION TASKFORCE.

- "Developing a Community Response: Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) in Barton County" launches to address issues with those

suffering from mental health needs and jailed for minor offenses, creating overcrowding, instead of being routed to a mental health treatment system.

**2. HEIZER PARK.** As part of not only the Great Bend, Better than Great strategies, our parks landed on the City of Great Bend's strategic plan as well, with a focus on Heizer Park.

- Survey conducted by the City of Great Bend and Great Bend Recreation Commission.
  - 420 responses, 70.57% indicating the number one improvement to be made at Heizer Park is the addition of restrooms.
- Additional funding by the Harms' Trust allowed for improvements beginning with the addition of a new handicapped-accessible swing in the playground and new soccer goals.

### 3. STATE AND NATIONAL SPEAKERS TO INSPIRE AND SERVE AS A RESOURCE.

- Notable opportunities provided included Kansas Department of Commerce Secretary David Toland, US Senator Jerry Moran, Congressman Roger Marshall, Women in Business Summit speakers, and Aligned Leader Master Series with national executive coach Chad Carden.
- Kansas Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary of Business Development, Bill Murphy. Organized by Great Bend Economic Development (GBED) President, Sara Hayden, Murphy toured just a sampling of Great

Bend's successful businesses and areas of growth and expansion. The connection will aid in Great Bend being top-of-mind for Murphy and his team when opportunities cross their desks as they attract developers and site-selectors to our beautiful state.

### 4. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

While Covid forced the cancellation of some events, several others stood strong:

- Summer Street Stroll Farmers Market, 3rd Thursday food trucks, Art & Wine Walk, Live Outdoor Theatrical play, outdoor movies, various car shows, several community cruise nights, rallies, and people walking or meeting for lunch in Jack Kilby Square on a regular basis.
- New downtown businesses include DryLake Brewing, Hernandez Bakery and Ruby's Boutique.
- Downtown Window Decorating Contest with 37 businesses participating, furthering a goal of becoming a "Christmas City."

### 5. ACCESS TO TELEHEALTH.

- \$781,127 U.S.D.A. Rural Development grant awarded to Barton County. to provide telemedicine software and equipment bolstering health care access in central Kansas, including Barton, Ellsworth, Rice and Stafford counties.
- This grant enables Barton County to establish telehealth programs that connect vulnerable populations to vital services that address public health needs and substance use disorder treatment.

**6. BROADBAND ACCESS AND EXPANSION** supporting industry, remote work, connectivity and increased talent pool and acquisition.

- Nex-Tech expanded fiber technology in Barton County to residential areas, starting with Bissell's Point, followed by Twin Lakes with

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**GBBETTER.COM**

continued on page 4



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## Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Fundraising Campaign Raises Over \$22,000

Hundreds of children in Barton and Pawnee counties will benefit from one book per month being mailed to their homes between birth and age five as the result of a National Book Month fundraiser.

United Way of Central Kansas (UWCK) partnered with Barton County Young Professionals (BCYP) to host a fundraiser in October for the local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) program. The fundraising campaign totaled \$22,259 in donations. Nearly 550 local children benefit from these books already with no charge to the participating families. The average cost to send monthly DPIL books to a local child for one year is \$30.

"We are so grateful for the overwhelming generosity to keep Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books in the hands of Central Kansas kiddos," commented Gaila Demel, Executive Director of UWCK regarding the project. "Partnering with BCYP was a great fit because they see the impact of what books can do for their children, nieces, and nephews. They share in the enjoyment of discovering the stories and lessons from each book. Our work in childhood literacy stems from our mission of helping improve early language and math development, regardless of demographic or socioeconomic factors, and we thank BCYP for their efforts."

Harper Camperland, First Kansas Bank, The University of Kansas Health System Great Bend Campus, Fuller Industries LLC, and Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., established a pool of funds to match the first 250+ children sponsored by a \$30 donation. "The support of these businesses and their commitment to childhood literacy is incredibly impactful. We wholeheartedly thank each of these businesses for their contributions," commented Regan Reif, co-organizer of the fundraiser.

Additional groups

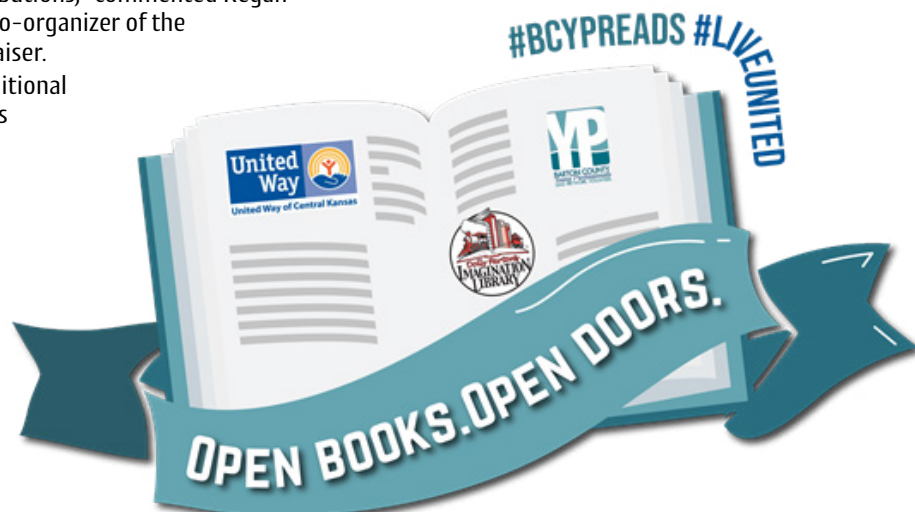
that supported this campaign through a Golden Belt Community Foundation Giving Together Grant were donor advised funds from First Kansas Bank, the Patricia A. Schmidt Donor Advised Fund, the Don and Catherine Brening Donor Advised Fund, and the Chris and Vicki Batchman Donor Advised Endowment Fund. And lastly, a donation from the Dorothy M. Morrison Foundation was received that matched the \$8,000 received from local businesses.

"Thank you to all of the donors for recognizing the importance of literacy in the development of our children. Over time, improving the literacy rate of our children will increase the high school graduation rate and thus increase the employability of our future generations" added Mark Mingenback, co-organizer of this fundraiser.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that gifts free books to children from birth to age five in participating communities within the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Republic of Ireland.

Over 25,000 free books have been delivered to children in Barton and Pawnee counties since the DPIL program was launched locally in 2012. Families can sign children ages 0-5 up to receive DPIL books by visiting their local library.

To support this early literacy program, you can mail a check made out to United Way of Central Kansas with "DPIL" in the memo line (1125 Williams Street Great Bend, KS 67530). If you have questions or if your business or organization would like to donate, please contact United Way of Central Kansas at (620) 792-2403 or [unitedwaycentralks@hotmail.com](mailto:unitedwaycentralks@hotmail.com).





## Dave Button named one of the ten semi-finalist in the Ag Innovation Challenge

Barton County Farm Bureau member, Dave Button, has been named one of ten semi-finalists in The American Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge.

This competition provides an opportunity for individuals to showcase ideas and business innovations in agriculture. This is the seventh year of the Challenge, which was the first national business competition focused exclusively on rural entrepreneurs launching food and agriculture businesses.

Dave Button, a hard-working



Dave Button

entrepreneur, is being recognized for being committed to providing solutions for some of the biggest challenges facing agriculture.

Dave, a local Barton County Farmer, has developed a two-part, hydraulic-powered weed control system known as the Row Shaver. "The goal of this system is to reduce the production of herbicide-resistant weed seeds," said Button.

The 10 semi-finalists will compete at the AFBF Convention in January.

The Farm Bureau Entrepreneur of the year will win \$50,000.

## Visual/Mind/Behavior Training, LLC helping the community one child at a time

Did you know that vision is more than being able to see 20/20? Vision is the eyes, brain & body working together to process information. Also, the ability to see is not an action of the eyes alone. When both sides of the brain, the body and both ears and eyes are NOT working together, one can struggle with various physical activities, neurological functioning and learning difficulties.

More than 25% of children are diagnosed with a learning disability. The diagnosis given sometimes is actually a hidden vision imbalance that affects their ability to learn with the inability to track, focus and have visual coordination. More and more children have the inability to use both eyes together. One may have 20/20 vision but not have the

visual skills to track, focus and/or good hand/eye coordination. These disabilities one may have or struggle with are not detected by the 20/20 vision screening.

Visual/Mind/Behavior Training, LLC provides one-on-one training to retrain the mind, eyes & body to connect & work together more efficiently. The training exercises at VMB redevelops, builds & strengthens neurological connections to develop better integration between our eyes, brain & body to enable them to work together.

For more information on Visual/Mind/Behavior Training, LLC contact: Julie Stuhlsatz, cbt, 2015 Forest, Suite 100, Great Bend, KS, vmbtraining@gmail.com, or call: 620-639-2696

## Network Kansas, GBED & Chamber partner for YEC

Welcome to Barton County's first ever Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge! In partnership with Network Kansas, Great Bend Economic Development and Great Bend Chamber of Commerce are thrilled to offer this event to all Barton County high school students in grades 9-12. In this competition students will have the opportunity to compete as an individual, or in groups up to 4. They will be asked to imagine and create a business



that they think will enhance their city! With the help of local business mentors and teachers, they will be asked to create a business plan, tradeshow presentation and a 4 minute speech telling the community and judges about their business.

Know a creative and entrepreneurship-minded high school student? Please pass along the opportunity! Go to [www.greatbend.org/youth-entrep](http://www.greatbend.org/youth-entrep) for more information.

### Outlook Business Journal

A monthly publication of the

**GREAT BEND**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1125 Williams,  
Great Bend, KS 67530  
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By recycling with us, you benefit your community, the environment, and you help create jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities.

You will receive a tax deduction receipt when you drop off unwanted electronics.

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The Mission of Rosewood ecycle is to provide work-related training and employment opportunities to adults with developmental disabilities.

## GB Better continued from page 1

more construction to come.

- b. Nearly \$800,000 in SPARK funding awarded to Nex-Tech with a portion allocated to expand fiber to underserved farms and rural businesses south of Great Bend, including the Barton County Historical Society with a projected 40 businesses in the County to receive access.

## 7. DIVERSITY &amp; INCLUSION.

- a. Purposeful efforts by many, including the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce (GBCC), to bridge the gap between Great Bend's diverse business community including diverse additions to Barton County Young Professionals (BCYP), Ambassadors Club, and GBCC Board of Directors.
- b. Barton County appointed GBCC to facilitate County SPARK micro-grants to for-profit businesses with a preference given to racial minority owned businesses. Volunteers mobilized with translated grant applications to hand deliver to nearly 20 Hispanic owned businesses where introductions, conversations, and relationships started.
- c. Dialogue with more volunteers stepped forward and two new Hispanic owned businesses joined GBCC. Others wishing to get involved or help create diverse and inclusive opportunities are invited to do so.

## 8. BUILDING ON THE LEGACY OF JACK KILBY, NOBEL PRIZE WINNER, TO CREATE A COMMUNITY BUSINESS CULTURE AROUND TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

- a. GBCC celebrated Manufacturing Day again in 2020 showcasing modern manufacturing careers and exciting the next generation about opportunities to create the future.
- b. GBCC and GBED announced the first annual Barton County Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC), taking place in 2021. The challenge is open to all Barton County high school students. YEC gives Kansas students hands-on experience thinking entrepreneurially while connecting them to local resources and mentors.

## 9. EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY ON ISSUES PERTAINING TO POVERTY.

- a. Organizations like Rise Up Central Kansas, Barton County Resolve Poverty, and Central Kansas Partnerships have played integral roles this year in connecting resources to those seeking it while educating the community at the same time. Classes like "Getting Ahead in Just Getting by World" bring people together to change lives and legacies.
- b. United Way of Central Kansas (UWCK) partnered with BCYP raised \$22,259 for the local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program. Nearly 550 local children benefit from these books already with no charge to the participating families.

## 10. CONNECTING EMPLOYERS WITH QUALIFIED WORKERS AND INCREASING THE LOCAL WORKFORCE CAPACITY.

- a. Partnerships between KANSASWORKS/ Kansas WorkforceONE, GBED, and GBCC is providing awareness and education reaching our businesses with the intent to deliver a qualified workforce through matching services, supporting businesses, and growing economies.
- b. Expansion of Central Kansas Jobs website powered by GBCC, to include resources for both the job seeker and employer through KANSASWORKS and Kansas WorkforceONE.
- c. Barton Community College economic development workgroup formed with a focus on workforce needs and training required.
- d. GBED convening local organizations integral in workforce development to look for gaps or areas of improvement.

The year 2020 has offered one devastating blow after another, but it has also offered the human race a chance to create and innovate and it's been happening throughout 2020.

The headlines in 2020 have divided this country like never before, breaking families and friendships. The story shared here paints a vastly different picture. In Great Bend and surrounding area, people came together over a common purpose; in alignment with a vision that was created by those living and working here to make Great Bend, Better than Great. Let this be the story we tell.

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TIME SLOTS ARE FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE.

PHOTOS ARE EMAILED THE FOLLOWING DAY.

**DEC. 8** **DEC. 10**

**SIGNUP GENIUS LINK:** [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MEMBER-APP-DAYS](https://tinyurl.com/member-app-days)



# HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS IN DECEMBER

- 1...Giving Tuesday 2020
- 1...Hometown Rewards Starts
- 2...Aligned Leadership Class #4 @9am
- 3...In-Person Chamber Coffee: Landmark National Bank, Event Center, 3800 10th St., Program @9:30am
- 3...Ribbon Cutting: Perfectly Paisley Boutique, 1409 Main St. @11:45am
- 3...Golden Belt Model Train Association's Display, 1315 Main St, from 5:30-7pm
- 6...Holiday Home Tours Presented by the Barton County Fair Friends & Association from 1-5pm
- 7...Chamber Chat, What's up Great Bend? Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 9...Business Finance Roundtable via Zoom @noon, Register at [greatbend.org](http://greatbend.org), \$15
- 10...Ribbon Cutting: Central Plains Computer Service, Inc., 608 Patton Rd. @10:30am
- 10...Virtual Chamber Coffee, Community Bank of the Midwest, Program @9:30am on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 10...Golden Belt Model Train Association's Display, 1315 Main St, from 5:30-7pm
- 13...Great Bend High School Vespers Concert, GBHS Auditorium, 2027 Morton St. @2pm
- 13...Youth Choir Concert, GBHS Auditorium, 2027 Morton St. @3:30pm
- 14...Member Service & Marketing Seminar, Great Bend Chamber of Commerce @4pm
- 14...Chamber Chat, GB Better Update, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 14...Lake Barton Golf Course-Board Meeting @4pm
- 14...Great Bend High School Vocal Christmas Concert, HS Auditorium, 2027 Morton St. @7pm
- 15...Central Kansas Partnership Meeting, Barton County Courthouse @11am
- 15...Great Bend High School Orchestra Concert, GBHS Auditorium, 2027 Morton St. @7pm
- 16...Aligned Leadership Class #5 @9am
- 16...Barton County Young Professionals: Mental Health Virtual Lunch & Learn @noon watch on the BCYP Facebook Page
- 17...Virtual Chamber Coffee: Golden Belt Community Foundation, Program @9:30am on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 17...Member Information Center Training, Great Bend Chamber of Commerce @4pm
- 17...Golden Belt Model Train Association's Display, 1315 Main St, from 5:30-7pm
- 20...Last Day for Santas Around the World & Santa Leaves for the North Pole
- 21-31...USD 428 No School, Winter Recess
- 21...Chamber Chat, Hosted by Nex-Tech Wireless, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 24...Chamber Office Closed-Christmas Eve
- 24...No Chamber Coffee
- 24...Last Day of the Christmas Craft Mall, Central Baptist Church, 3301 Lakin Ave. from 10am-3pm
- 25...Chamber Office Closed-Merry Christmas!
- 27...Golden Belt Model Train Association's Display, 1315 Main St, from 5:30-7pm
- 28...Chamber Chat: Year in Review, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 28...Holiday Pop Up Market, 119 Main St., from 10am-4pm
- 30...Last Day of Free Ice Skating
- 31...Chamber Office Closed
- 31...No Chamber Coffee
- 31...Last Day of Trail of Lights

## Recurring Events:

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

Barton County Commission Meetings, Every Monday, Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main St, Rm 106, 9am

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

STAY INFORMED AT [GREATBEND.ORG](http://GREATBEND.ORG)

## BCYP Update from the Steering Committee Chair, Haley Ruble

Barton County Young Professionals held their yearly strategic planning meeting to elect a new steering committee and set goals for the next year.



"It is our mission to Lead, Network and Volunteer," said Haley Ruble, BCYP Chair. "BCYP has done a fantastic job at adapting this year to all the different changes we have faced. Going into 2021, the board decided that we need to be a leader in taking these changes in stride."

Instead of continually having to make changes to adjust to regulations, Barton County Young Professionals will be planning events virtually or with the ability to socially distance into early 2021.

"BCYP would love to get everyone together in person with traditional mixers and the amazing events we usually do," Ruble said. "But in order for us to give the most value to our members and sponsors, it just makes sense to plan with social distancing in mind."

Barton County Young Professionals is accepting sponsors for 2021 events, including mixers, Casino Night and other events. If your business is interested in reaching the young professionals in our community, you can contact LeeAnn June at the Chamber to get signed up.

Connect with other young professionals in the Barton County area on their Facebook page.

Have a new young professional on staff? Let us know and we will connect them with BCYP.



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620-792-3541

## Anytime Fitness Corporate Memberships encourages healthy lifestyles in a 24/7 world

Jim Schnieder, owner of Anytime Fitness in Great Bend is excited to offer new Corporate memberships. These Corporate Memberships can be used as incentives for employers.

Corporate memberships can include special pricing for couples (the employee and the spouse). The corporate memberships also offer membership for a reduced price, no corporate fees, and no enrollment fees. To offer these corporate membership pricing, there is a 12-month contract. Employers who offer to subsidize their employee's



gym membership expenses can deduct those costs as ordinary and necessary business expenses in the

year in which it's paid. Employers have the option of paying all or half of the employee's monthly fee.

Exercise can help manage stress, decrease medical costs, improve employee morale and improve mental alertness and productivity.

Those interested can inquire about Corporate Memberships at Anytime Fitness in Great Bend, call 620-793-8700, find them on Facebook, or 3721 10th St.

## Local dance studio owner partners with Kansas Shrine Bowl to lead cheer camp

The Kansas Shrine Bowl has announced a partnership with Laura Klima-Fehr, owner of Danceography in Great Bend and DeSoto, to lead the KSB Cheer Camp.

Klima-Fehr says she attended KSB Cheer Camp when she was in high school and has volunteered for the last five years doing everything from ticket sales to help set up for the banquets. She explains that the cheer camp will be a four-day camp held June 23 – 26, 2021, in Hutchinson.

"Most high school campers will enroll online, and we will do everything from cheers, chants, learning a routine that they will perform at game day as well as doing an elite routine. They will learn all of that the first three days at the camp and the fourth day they will perform at the Shrine Bowl," explained Klima-Fehr.

New this year to the camp is the addition of tumbling skills along with cheers, chants, and learning routines that can be taken back and performed at their hometown sporting events.

Klima-Fehr says that many of them,



Laura Klima-Fehr

including cheerleading, are not often thought of as challenging or even a sport when it comes to extra-curricular activities.

"I think there is definitely a stigma for dancers, cheerleaders, and even activities like band that it's something that's not difficult and it's something that just anybody can do. Yes, anyone should try it, but it is more difficult than people realize.

When you are constantly moving and hitting these sharp moves, and then you're flipping your head over your feet, then going right back into yelling at the top of

your lungs, and then moving into a stunt for a solid 2:30 routine, it's hard stuff."

The KSB Cheer camp is for beginner to advanced and is open to all high school students and will have a

full staff to accommodate freshmen, JV, and varsity squads. Campers can register as a team or as an individual.

KSB Cheer Camp will be held at Hutchinson Community College at the newly renovated activity center. For more information or to register, go to [Kansashrinebowl.com/cheer](http://Kansashrinebowl.com/cheer).





## Barton-sponsored volunteer program director earns certification

The Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration recently announced the new Certified Volunteer Administrators (CVA) in the United States. Director of the Volunteers In Action of Central Kansas and AmeriCorps Seniors Programs Linn Hogg is now one of only 6 CVA's in the state of Kansas.

Hogg said she hopes to use the knowledge she gained to continue to enhance volunteer efforts and organizations in the area.

"I am very proud that I was able to attain this certification," she said. "Our organization

is strategically looking at how our area engages the volunteers. We now have the expertise, the technology and the network to help area non-profits build their capacity through better volunteer engagement."

The Certificate in Volunteer Administration (CVA) is an international professional credential to recognize practitioners in the field of volunteer engagement who meet specified standards as



**Linn Hogg**

measured through demonstrated professional and academic experience, a commitment to professional ethics, and a certification exam. Professional certification signals a commitment to excellence. It confirms that individuals have the knowledge and expertise needed to attract, onboard and support volunteers. Volunteers in Action of

Central Kansas is sponsored by Barton Community College and houses an AmeriCorps Seniors (RSVP) program. The organization currently manages more than 300 volunteers who are affiliated with area non-profit agencies, city and county offices as well as in-house programs such as Medical Transportation and Meals On Wheels.

For more information on how to volunteer, become a partner non-profit agency or for volunteer engagement coaching, please contact Hogg at [hogg1@bartonccc.edu](mailto:hogg1@bartonccc.edu) or (620) 792-1614.

## Giving Tree now on display at Great Bend ElderCare office

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**Alicia Bustamante** of the ElderCare staff decorates the Giving Tree at the non-profit agency's office

*Win*  
**SCIENCE DIET  
FOR A YEAR**

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## Promotions & New Hires:

### **MPIRE Realty Group is excited to announce the addition of Dianne Morse to their agency**

Dianne grew up in Larned, KS and graduated from Larned High School in 1968.

In 1982 Dianne obtained her real estate license and started her career with Carr Auction & Realty in Larned.

In 1995 she continued her career and became a broker. For 10 years she was a partner with Petrik Auction & Realty in La Crosse, KS.

After moving to Great Bend in 2005 she opened her own real estate office and ran it until 2010 and then transitioned to Coldwell Banker Sell Real Estate.

In November 2020 she joined the team at Mpire Realty Group.

"I have been in the real estate business



**Dianne Morse**

Andrews, Broker at MPIRE Realty Group.

Dianne is also an insurance agent licensed in fire & casualty, life & health.

Dianne has 2 grown children, a son and daughter, 7 grandsons and 3 great granddaughters.

for 38 years and I can't imagine doing anything else. There is a sense of pride and enjoyment to see a happy family in a new home that I helped them purchase. Also working with sellers is a joy on the day you can hand them their proceeds check and they can move on with their life plans."

"We are very pleased to have Dianne join our group. She brings great experience and leadership to our growing company", Aaron

### **Housing Opportunities, Inc. announces new Executive Director**

With the recent retirement of Vicky Dayton, serving 25+ years as Executive Director at Housing Opportunities, Inc., the Board of Directors is pleased to announce Callie Miller has accepted the position.

Callie was born and raised in La Crosse, KS, where she learned early on the importance of a strong work ethic and pursuing goals to enrich her family and her own sense of well-being. Her business influence growing up was her father who owns and operates Miller Trucking, LTD.

Moving to Great Bend in 2008 to attend Barton Community College, Callie graduated with an Associates in Business and worked at CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions while finishing her bachelor's degree in Accounting. In 2014, she accepted the position of Bookkeeper at HOI. Last year, Callie completed her Master's in Personal Financial Planning from Kansas State University.

Rooted in Great Bend that she now considers "home", Callie is proud of her two daughters, Trinity 10 and Trystan 3 years of age. "They are amazing young ladies <already> and strong willed. I want them to know it is important to follow their dreams and I hope to teach them that anything is possible if you set your goal and work for it." Callie states. Her favorite quote is, "She believed she could, so she did".

Miller says, "I found a passion for the work that HOI does and the housing we provide, not only for seniors, but for all of the families



**Callie Miller**

that we serve. Seeing the tenants that are beyond thankful for such a nice place to live that they can afford is heartwarming and makes everything we do worthwhile. Creating those relationships with our tenants is also an amazing gift that this job presents to us. I'm so blessed for this opportunity to lead the team here at HOI and look forward to completing projects that will benefit the communities we serve."

"Callie has displayed a tremendous amount of energy and excitement for this position", says Travis Thompson, HOI Board President, "she brings a vast amount of skill and knowledge already on the financial and accounting aspect which is key to applying for the projects and continuing through the completions." Miller's first day in her new role as Executive Director was November 16th.

Since 1996, Housing Opportunities, Inc. has been providing safe, quality, affordable housing offering single-family homes and duplex-style apartment units across Barton, Pawnee, Rice, and Scott Counties in Kansas. The residences are designed for those 55 and older with low-to moderate incomes. Every appliance is included and is maintained by the HOI staff. Housing Opportunities, Inc. also works with local lenders that help subsidize the funding gaps. HOI is a 501(c)3 non-profit and accepts private donations. For more information call 620-792-3299.



## Promotions & New Hires:

### Conner Joins First Kansas Bank as Loan Officer

Christy Conner has joined First Kansas Bank as a Loan Officer according to Paul Snapp, President of the Bank. In announcing the hire, Snapp commented that, "Christy has the values and banking experience to help First Kansas Bank deliver high quality service to our consumer and home loan customers. She is a Great Bend native and brings an enthusiastic spirit, common sense and a strong work ethic to our customers. We are excited to have Christy join our Bank Team."



**Christy Conner**

Christy is the daughter of Bill and Marti Conner also of Great Bend. She was born and raised on her family's farm west of Great Bend. Christy graduated from Great Bend High School in 2012 and was active in FFA and 4H. She began her career as a retail banker in 2016. She enjoys getting to know her customers and is looking forward to helping them with their banking needs.

First Kansas Bank has offices in Hoisington, Claflin, Great Bend and Hays.

### Soupiset Promoted to Director of Nursing at Clara Barton Hospital

Clara Barton Hospital is pleased to announce that Paulette Soupiset has been promoted to the position of Director of Nursing as the current Chief Nursing Officer, Jane Schepmann, retires.

Soupiset has been a nurse since 2005 and has been an employee with Clara Barton Hospital for nearly 12 years.

Soupiset attended Kansas State University where she completed a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology in 1997 and her Bachelor of Science in Foods and Nutrition in 1999. After graduating, she lived in Colorado and Texas for several years but never truly felt at home.

Soupiset grew up in Larned, Kansas, where most of her family still resides, and couldn't wait for the opportunity to move back to central Kansas. After moving back, she decided to pursue an additional degree and graduated with her Associates of Applied Science in Nursing in 2005 and has since gained experience in a variety of nursing roles including a traveling nurse, ER nurse, and staff nurse.

Since joining the Clara Barton family in 2009, Soupiset has been a medical-surgical nurse - providing care to patients preparing for/recovering from surgery, a nurse in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) - where she's cared for post-op patients as they regain consciousness after receiving anesthesia, and an Emergency Room nurse. In 2018, Soupiset changed her role to a PRN nurse, meaning she only worked as needed,

allowing her to take a full-time position as the school nurse in the USD 428 School District.

"While it was an incredibly hard decision to leave a position that I loved, I've been with Clara Barton almost 12 years, so it felt like coming home. I have worked in multiple nursing roles here at Clara Barton and I look forward to the new challenges of being the team leader for an incredible group of nurses and CNAs. I'm extremely blessed to be part of such an amazing organization, and I appreciate the opportunity I've been given to assist in the positive growth of Clara Barton Hospital", said Soupiset.

Soupiset and her husband of 20 years, Kevyn, live in Great Bend, KS and have three children: Grace - a student at Fort Hays State University, Joey - a student at Kansas State University, and Eli - an 8th grader. Outside of work, she enjoys traveling, going to the lake, and working in her yard and garden.

"I am very pleased to announce the advancement of Paulette in our nursing department," said Jim Blackwell, Clara Barton Hospital President/CEO. "We have always been impressed with her solid work ethic accompanied by the same leadership qualities that we embrace here at Clara Barton Hospital. She has a solid rapport with our medical staff, and that will only continue to strengthen the delivery of quality patient care that the community has come to know and trust."



**Paulette Soupiset**

### Ben Ramsey Joins Plains State Bank

Plains State Bank announces the addition of Ben Ramsey to their Great Bend Branch located at 800 Coolidge Street in Great Bend. Ben will hold the title of Vice President Branch Manager and his primary lending focus will be in the areas of agriculture and commercial business relationships.

"We are excited to welcome Ben to the Plains State

Bank team," said Christy Kuhn, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. We are pleased about the business development qualities, experience, and background that Ben

brings to his new responsibilities. His leadership and commitment to the community will be a benefit to our organization and to Great Bend."

Ben, his wife Jenny, and two children, Eli and Ryan reside in Larned. Ben is looking forward to starting this new opportunity and continuing to provide quality products and services to customers in central Kansas.

The Plains State Bank was chartered in 1906. At The Plains State Bank, we are, "Financing Your Future" and our Employees, Officers and Directors are committed to our customers. Today the bank has expanded to the communities of Plains, Lakin, Great Bend, Hutchinson, and Salina, Kansas. For more information about Plains State Bank visit their website at [www.plainsstatebank.com](http://www.plainsstatebank.com).



**Ben Ramsey**

*Congratulations!*



**SANTA'S WORKSHOP EXPRESS**

GREAT BEND RECREATION COMMISSION EVENT



**EVENT DATE**

Santa's Workshop Express  
Drive-Thru Event  
GB Activity Center (2715 18th)  
December 5, 2020  
1:00-2:30 PM

**LETTERS FOR SANTA**

Bring your "Letters for Santa" with you! Santa & his helpers will be collecting the letters at the event to take back to the North Pole.





**North Pole Goodie Bags**

Santa and the Grinch will be handing out North Pole Goodie Bags (while supplies last) during this Drive-Thru event.

Great Bend Recreation Commission  
Activity Center  
2715 18th Street  
620-793-3755

# GREAT BEND

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# FEATURED AMBASSADOR

**Andrea Bauer**  
**Great Bend Public**  
**Schools - USD 428**



### ***What brought you to Great Bend? What keeps you here?***

My husband Rob and I are both natives of Great Bend, born and raised! We moved away for about ten years to attend college and start our careers. However, "home" was calling and Great Bend has been such a blessing as we started our family. We enjoy so many things about this community, our three boys are fortunate to grow up near grandparents, and the best friends and neighbors!

Brock (6), Wes (4), Mason (2)

### ***Where do you work and what do you do there?***

I work as the Public Information Director for Great Bend Public Schools – USD 428. I have the privilege of connecting our schools and classrooms with the community. My job is different everyday, but it boils down to storytelling – shining a light on the great things happening in our schools and the thoughtful, dedicated work of our teachers, staff, and students.

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

Growing up in Great Bend I was known as one of the "Brack twins." My twin sister might throw you for a loop when she shows up in Great Bend Coffee or one of my other favorite local spots. But on the phone – there's no way you could tell us apart!

### ***What energizes you and brings you excitement?***

I'm excited to see people investing in the future of our community! Serving on various boards/committees, watching entrepreneurs bring dreams to life, friends, and neighbors caring for one another – when we each use our gifts and talents, as a community, we are stronger!

### ***At what job, would you be terrible?***

I like to think of myself as a dreamer and a doer, but I know my creative and "right-brain personality" usually wins. I'll leave the booking, accounting, and detailed financial management to someone else!

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

This month marks the end of my first year as a Chamber Ambassador. As a previous employee of the Chamber, I know how hard this organization works for its members and the business community as a whole. I enjoy working alongside other passionate community members in our efforts to propel Great Bend forward.

**About Chamber Ambassadors:** The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce 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 and Hemp Expo, Gary Gore Memorial Golf Tournament and the Annual Banquet and Meeting.

To find out how you can become a member of the Ambassador Club, contact Lee Ann June at the Chamber office, 620-792-2401, [marketing@greatbend.org](mailto:marketing@greatbend.org), or [www.greatbend.org/ambassadors](http://www.greatbend.org/ambassadors)

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## Expanded expertise of care team provides community access to more care services locally

Three radiologic technologists at The University of Kansas Health System Pawnee Valley Campus recently achieved board certifications in additional modalities.

Megan Orth is now registered in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), while Kylee Forell and Ivan Garcia are registered in computed tomography (CT).

"Being registered in a certain modality means they have met all educational criteria and hands-on training requirements in the specialty," said Shelly Stanton, Pawnee Valley Campus Imaging Director. "Becoming board registered demonstrates the technologists' commitment to advancing their skills and elevating their knowledge and abilities to the highest level."

"Megan, Kylee and Ivan are great assets to Pawnee County families because they are dedicated to improving their knowledge and skills to provide the best care for our patients," the director added. "We are proud of their accomplishments."

The American Registry



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
KANSAS HEALTH SYSTEM

of Radiologic Technologists administers the board registry. ARRT is the leading credentialing organization for medical imaging, Urban noted.

Everyone on the Pawnee Valley Campus imaging staff is an ARRT registered technologist prior to becoming registered in other modalities.

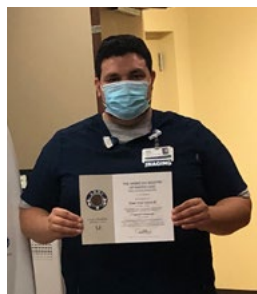
"It is remarkable all of the imaging staff members here are not only registered in radiology, but are additionally registered in one or more secondary modalities," said Melanie Urban, Pawnee Valley Campus Administrator. "Something you do not see at many critical access hospitals."

Certifications and continuing education are always a priority at Pawnee Valley Campus, Urban added.

"Imaging techniques and technology are constantly evolving," she explained. "We must stay up-to-date with that knowledge to provide professional, competent care to patients."



Kylee Forell



Ivan Garcia



Megan Orth

## Wondra celebrates 30 years of service

Some things may have changed over the past 30 years... but Steve Wondras' (L) commitment and dedication to Stueder Contractors and his customers has not! Steve, our Ecowater Sales Manager, recently celebrated 30 years of employment with Stueders. Terry Stueder (R), owner, stated "We are so fortunate to have an employee with so much knowledge and experience



on water treatment to offer our customers. We started Stueders 36



years ago and Steve has played a pivotal role in our success."

## GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**WELCOME**  
to Our **NEWEST**  
Chamber Members

### ANGELS AUTO SALES LLC

Miguel Mata-Gamez, Owner  
angelaautosales@live.com  
1301 10th St.  
Great Bend, KS 67530  
(620) 617-2978  
Find them on Facebook!  
**Auto Sales**

### PERFECTLY PAISLEY BOUTIQUE

Charise Oelger, Owner  
perfectlypaisleyboutique@gmail.com  
1409 Main St.  
Great Bend, KS 67530  
(620) 617-2535  
www.perfectlypaisleyboutique.com  
**Apparel - Youth\*, Retail**

## WANT TO JOIN THE CHAMBER?

If your company is interested in joining the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, fill out the online application on our website:

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

Membership is quick and easy to get started, and it is affordable, too!

For more information on your member benefits or questions, please contact the Chamber office.

Call 620-792-2401 or email [marketing@greatbend.org](mailto:marketing@greatbend.org)



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

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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, Pulmonology

### **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

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# **CHAMBER COFFEE SCHEDULE**

**Every Thursday | Program at 9:30 am**

Tune in on Facebook or YouTube for Virtual Coffees

## **IN-PERSON December 3, 2020** **LANDMARK NATIONAL BANK**

**Great Bend Events Center | 3800 10th Street in Great Bend**

Landmark National Bank's banking roots trace back to April 1885. We are recognized by Bauer Financial with their highest 5-Star rating for financial strength and stability. Landmark National Bank is a community bank dedicated to providing quality banking services. Landmark is the #1 Lender in Kansas for the Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program by USDA and the #1 SBA Lender in the State of Kansas. Our deposit solutions are tailored to fit the customized needs of each person or business; allowing flexibility and ease including online and mobile banking.

## **VIRTUAL December 10, 2020** **COMMUNITY BANK OF THE MIDWEST**

Community Bank extends a Holiday warm welcome to the Chamber Coffee on December 12th, providing entertainment and sweets in a festive atmosphere, to give back to the community for the many years of success.

## **VIRTUAL December 17, 2020** **GOLDEN BELT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Join Golden Belt Community Foundation as we give back over \$10,000 in matching funds and other grants to local charities. We will highlight the impact of this year's Giving Tuesday event, recognize top organizations and donors that made this event possible, and announce the Most Generous City for 2020.

## **December 24, 2020** **NO COFFEE - MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

## **December 31, 2020** **NO COFFEE - HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

## **VIRTUAL January 7, 2020** **UKHS - PAWNEE VALLEY CAMPUS**

At Pawnee Valley Campus, we focus on delivering quality patient care. We do this through a team of trained physicians, nurses and other professionals committed to putting patients first and working collaboratively to provide the best care possible.

