



Great Bend
CHAMBER of COMMERCE
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Outlook Business Journal

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REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT EVENT CONTINUES GROWTH THROUGH COLLABORATION

JobFest 2014 will be Great Bend's eighth annual concerted job fair effort as employers gather to provide information about jobs available at their businesses. This year's event is set from 3-6 p.m. Thursday, May 1st, at the Best Western Angus Inn Courtyard, 2920 10th Street in Great Bend.

"This event is organized by over a dozen committee members representing various organizations and companies in the seven county area served by Job Fest," says Chamber Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter, the 2014 Chair for the Job Fest Planning Committee. "We have fine tuned the format and offerings at the event over the last seven years and are confident that local businesses and jobseekers are benefiting from this collaborative effort."

This regional employment event is targeted for businesses and employees in Central Kansas, with efforts focused on the companies and communities located in and around Barton, Russell, Pawnee, Stafford, Rice, Rush, and Ellsworth Counties. Because Great Bend is centrally located in the service area, JobFest has been hosted here since its inception.

JobFest was originally held in Jack Kilby Square, but the outdoor format made it difficult for organizers to execute a professional feel. Inclement weather was also a major concern during springtime in Kansas. "We are so fortunate to have the support of the Best Western, who graciously hosts the job fair in their courtyard," Mawhirter says. "The venue is perfect for accommodating our 25 exhibitors while maintaining a professional atmosphere indoors."

Best Western isn't the only sponsor committed to the growing regional event. Numerous governing bodies and private companies have stepped up to underwrite the advertising and promotional expenses. These include the City of Great Bend, Barton County, the City of Larned, Pawnee County, the City of Ellsworth, Barton Community College, CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions, KANSASworks, and Dillons #51.

Jobseekers travel from all over Central Kansas to attend JobFest to network with the more than two dozen employers who exhibit during the three-hour fair. They also enjoy free refreshments and the chance to win a laptop computer.

"Our event is well-promoted and has grown every year. The crowd of 200-300 jobseekers who attend are eager to find employment in both entry-level and mid-level positions," Mawhirter says. "We work hard to facilitate this networking opportunity, but it's only as effective if the companies who need qualified workers participate as exhibitors."

Employers in the seven-county service area are encouraged to sign up for JobFest 2014 by the cut-off of April 25th. Priority is given to those who sign up by April 15th. Exhibit spaces cost just \$100 per employer and include one table and two chairs, along with access to electricity and wireless internet if needed. Space is limited to the first 25 exhibitors. To register, go to www.TinyURL.com/JobFest. —

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1125 Williams,
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Jan Peters, President/CEO
jpeters@greatbend.org
Rachel Mawhirter, Marketing Director
rmawhirter@greatbend.org
Andrea Bauer, Director of Sales & Member Services
abauer@greatbend.org
Roxanne Rich, Office/Business Manager
rrich@greatbend.org

**Tune in for ChamberConnect
Radio Show - April 3rd on KVGB**

Tune in to KVGB 1590 AM on the first Thursday of every month to hear Eagle Radio's Patrick Burnett discuss the latest Chamber happenings with Marketing Director Rachel Mawhirter. The April edition of ChamberConnect will air on Thursday, April 3rd at 11:35 a.m.

This month's show will be centered around the Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo, as well as a special seminar on April 29th on "Going Paperless." Members are welcome to submit topic ideas to Mawhirter at any time, rmawhirter@greatbend.org.



**Register Now for Lunch Seminar
on "Going Paperless" Apr. 29**

The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development would like to invite you to participate in our quarterly roundtable Luncheons that give employers and leaders in the business community an opportunity to keep up with trends and developments in the Human Resources & I.T. industries. These informative networking luncheons take place four times each year. The meetings are usually separate, but in April they will be combined for a special hybrid topic "Going Paperless."

Human Resources & I.T. professionals in the Great Bend and surrounding areas are invited to attend a luncheon meeting on Tuesday, April 29th at 11:30 a.m. in the meeting room at The Page, 2920 10th Street. The luncheon will feature a guided panel discussion and a brief demonstration on Going Paperless, featuring both HR and IT experts.

There will be a buffet-style lunch for \$15.00 per person, which includes a choice of tea or water and your gratuity. If you are planning to attend the spring quarter HR Roundtable luncheon, please register online at www.greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 28th.

**WELCOME to our
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Category: Individual

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2511 Morton Street
Great Bend, KS 67530
620-793-5568
Category: Construction

**AJ Chrest – Independent
Aflac Agent**
PO Box 1853
Great Bend, KS 67530
620-639-5283
Category: Insurance

Dukes Bar & Grill
Amy Ferguson
619 Main Street
Great Bend, KS 67530
620-792-2619
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Volunteers Needed

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

Open Late Thursday!

NEW this year is the extended show hours on Thursday evening, with gates open until 7 p.m. There's no reason to miss this exciting show!

Event Highlights:

Wednesday, April 9th

Show Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All Day – Horse Training Demo's ft. Scott Daily from RFD TV

10:30 a.m. – Opening Ceremonies (Expo III)

11 a.m. – Cooper Kannglesser (PRCA & CBR Champion Bull Rider) Autographs at American Hat Company Booth

12 p.m. – Beer Garden Opens (Expo III)

12 p.m. – K-State Research Presentation by Lucas Haag

1 p.m. – Sprayer Demo's (Expo III)

Thursday, April 10th

Show Hours: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

All Day – Horse Training Demo's ft. Scott Daily from RFD TV

12 p.m. – Beer Garden Opens (Expo III)

12 p.m. – K-State Research Pres. by Daniel O'Brien

1 p.m. – Sprayer Demo's (Expo III)

2 p.m. – Cattle Handling Demo's ft. Tom Noffsinger DVM (Infield)

4 p.m. – Genex Chuteside A.I. Demo's (Infield)

Friday, April 11th

Show Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All Day – Horse Training Demo's ft. Scott Daily from RFD TV

11 a.m. – Sprayer Demo's (Expo III)

12 p.m. – Beer Garden Opens (Expo III)

12 p.m. – Trent Loos Presentation (Expo III)

2 p.m. – Genex Chuteside A.I. Demo's (Infield)

www.greatbendfarmandranchexpo.net

About the Attractions:

Horse Training Demonstrations

Scott Daily (as seen on RFD TV) has been around horses most of his life. His love for horses and desire to train them began in 4-H while he was growing up in Inola, Oklahoma. Scott started training horses about 15 years ago. After many years of working with challenging colts and horses, Scott has developed and perfected his own techniques. Scott believes in building trust between horse and rider.

Low Stress Cattle Handling Demonstrations

Dr. Tom Noffsinger (DVM) will demonstrate applications of Low Stress Handling Concepts as a dimension of management that enables caregivers to have positive effects on cattle health and performance. Our goal will be to encourage caregivers to understand more about cattle in order to apply handling concepts during calving, new cattle acclimation, processing, pen riding and sick cattle management.

Genex Cattle Service Demonstrations

Genex Cooperative, Inc. will demonstrate chute-side service using portable breeding barns. Chute-side service is a convenient and cost effective tool for large operations to improve their genetics and profitability through artificial insemination (A.I.). Chute-side service includes synchronization and technician insemination, providing ranchers with access to the industry's most sought after genetics.

Loos Tales feat. Storyteller Trent Loos

Saddle up and ride with Trent Loos as he talks about his ventures cross-country and around the globe to share the amazing stories of people who bring good things to the world we live in. Through his stories you will meet producers, entrepreneurs, future leaders, dedicated Americans serving our great country and the people who just quietly make a difference.

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American Ag Credit Breaks Ground for New Facility in Great Bend

American AgCredit announced in February that they had purchased a commercial property located at 10th and Patton, in Great Bend, Kansas. On March 6th, numerous representatives of the growing enterprise visited the building site to host a groundbreaking for what will become the company's new regional office.

Founded in 1916, American AgCredit is part of the nationwide Farm Credit System, and is the nation's 6th largest Farm Credit cooperative. American AgCredit specializes in providing financial services to agricultural and rural customers throughout Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, California, Nevada, and New Mexico – as well as to capital markets customers in 30 states. Financial services provided by American AgCredit include production and mortgage financing, equipment and vehicle leasing, crop and life insurance, lines of credit, and the Young, Beginning and Small farmer program. In addition, the Association provides interest-free loans for qualifying 4-H and FFA AgYouth programs, as well as college scholarships to young people interested in agriculture.

"We are extremely excited about the new facility in Great Bend, which will better serve our customers in Central Kansas," says Roger Bastow, Chief Administrative Officer. "Construction will begin in April, with a targeted completion date for the fall of 2014."

The new Great Bend facility will be approximately 6,300 square feet, and will include offices and conference rooms to support the company's lending, crop insurance and appraisal businesses in Central Kansas. In addition, the facility will include an 800 square foot conference room that can be made available to customers and agricultural groups needing a convenient place to meet and conduct business. Total initial employment is anticipated at 10, with the facility housing lending, appraisal and crop insurance staff.

For more information about American AgCredit's financial services, visit www.agloan.com.



Young Professionals Spotlight

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

During the month of March, Barton County Young Professionals members had two opportunities to network. NEW this year is a Personal Development Series designed to help YP members grow as individuals. The first topic in this luncheon series was "Planning for the Future" with an emphasis on retirement planning and saving for college education (529 savings plans). The meeting on March 11th was facilitated by local investment professionals John & Leslie Francis with Francis Financial Services. Future topics will include Setting up a Wills & Estate, Importance of Life Insurance, Getting the Most out of Employee Benefit Programs, and more. Later that week, members were invited to bring their families to Up N Rollin Skate Center for a Roller Skating Party.

This month, Young Professionals will gather for the largest event of the year, the annual Casino Night on Saturday, April 5th. This year's festivities include dinner, casino games, a photo booth, and lots of prize drawings. Presenting sponsor is Adams Brown Beran & Ball, Chtd. YP Members can purchase tickets for \$25 per person, but seating is limited to the first 200 who respond. Tickets are available by emailing bartonyyp@gmail.com.

A few members of the Young Professionals Steering Committee will attend the State YP Summit on Thursday, April 3rd where people from all over the state of Kansas gather for personal and professional development and networking opportunities. More will be reported on that in next month's spotlight.

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

Want to Join?

Anyone who works in Barton County between the ages of 21 and 40 is welcome to join the growing group at any time. For more information or to join, email us at bartonyyp@gmail.com. And be sure to join the group on Facebook!



Want to Host a Young Professionals Event?

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

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Expires April 30, 2014

Highlighted Events in March

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

- 3... Chamber Coffee: Nex-Tech, 3705 10th Street, 9:30 a.m.
- 3... Chamber Ambassador Luncheon, 1125 Williams, 12 p.m.
- 3... Golden Belt Community Concert feat. The Diamonds, 7:30 p.m.
- 4-6... Ace Hardware Grand Opening Weekend
- 4... Ace Hardware Ribbon Cutting, 4903 10th Street, 10 a.m.
- 4... Young Professionals Casino Night, Knights of Columbus, 723 Main, 6 p.m.
- 7... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 7... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 9-11... Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo
- 10... United States Air Force Academy Concert Band, BCC Auditorium, 245 NE 30 Rd, 7:30 p.m.
- 13... Young Professionals Easter Eggstravaganza, Home of Bob Hiss, 1-4 p.m.
- 14... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 15... Submission Deadline for May Issue of Chamber Newsletter, 5 p.m.
- 17... Chamber Coffee: Great Bend Public Library, 1409 Williams, 9:30 a.m.
- 18... Chamber Office Closed for Good Friday
- 19... Benefit 5k for Royal Family Kids Camp, Brit Spaugh Park, 7 a.m.
- 19... Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt, Veterans Memorial Park, 9 a.m.
- 19... GIANT Easter Egg Hunt, First Assembly of God, 601 Patton, 1 p.m.
- 21... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 21... Great Bend City Council Meeting, 1209 Williams, 7:30 p.m.
- 22... Flyer Insert Deadline for May Issue of Chamber Newsletter, 5 p.m.
- 24... Chamber Coffee: Aaron's Sales & Lease, 4905 10th Street, 9:30 a.m.
- 26... Wild Goose Chase 5k/3k Fun Run, Cheyenne Bottoms, 7:30 a.m.
- 27... Earth Day Celebration, Great Bend Brit Spaugh Zoo, 12-4 p.m.
- 28... Barton County Commission Meeting, 1400 Main Room 106, 9 a.m.
- 29... Seminar on "Going Paperless," The Page, 2920 10th Street, 11:30 a.m.

SAVE THE DATE - Sign Up Your Team for 9th Annual Chamber Golf Tournament May 30th

The Ninth Annual Gary Gore Golf Tournament will be held Friday, May 30th at The Club at StoneRidge with a 1 p.m. start slated. Cost to enter the tournament is \$100 per player or \$400 per four-person team, which includes a patio party sponsored by CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions and a beverage cart sponsored by Benefit Management Inc. Prizes and raffle drawings give participants lots of chances to win, even if you're not the most seasoned golfer. NEW this year – spouses and guests will be invited to purchase tickets to the Patio Party following the tournament. This gives Chamber members another opportunity to network outside the office! For more information or to register your team, look for the insert in this month's newsletter packet or visit www.greatbend.org/ChamberEvents.aspx.



Ace Hardware Holds Grand Opening Apr. 4-6

The new Ace Hardware store, located at 4903 W. 10th Street in Great Bend, will host a Grand Opening from Friday, April 4th through Sunday, April 6th during normal business hours. The huge weekend-long celebration will serve two purposes. First, Ace Hardware is celebrating its 90th anniversary so they will have a 90-cent sale and will give away a \$90 gift card to every 90th customer who stops by the store that weekend. Second, the local store wants to invite the public to stop in, meet the staff, and sign up for daily giveaways. Customers can also enjoy great buys with many items over 50% off! Free popcorn and food samples will be given away, and there will be carnival games for the kids. Store hours are Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 620-793-3718.



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First Kansas Bank Acquires New Branches in Great Bend & Hays

First Kansas Bank announced today that it has entered into an agreement to assume the deposits and acquire certain assets of Bank of America branches in Great Bend and Hays.



The acquisition, which is subject to approval from banking regulators and customary closing conditions, is expected to be completed this summer. First Kansas Bank does not anticipate job losses as a result of this purchase.

"We are very excited to welcome these new customers to our existing banking family. These new locations demonstrate our commitment to the Golden Belt area as we enter our 113th year of service," says Paul Snapp, President and CEO of First Kansas Bank. "We are committed to a high level of personal service and community focused banking. We believe our new customers will enjoy the convenience of our five locations and seven ATMs."

First Kansas Bank was founded in 1900 and has grown to \$115 million in total assets with a capital account of over \$8 million. It operates full service banking locations in Great Bend, Hoisington and Claflin. First Kansas Bank offers loan and deposit services to consumers, commercial businesses and agricultural producers. Bauer Financial Services, the bank rating agency, has given First Kansas Bank its highest 5 Star rating for financial safety and soundness. They are part of a group of banks owned by the Sutherland Family.

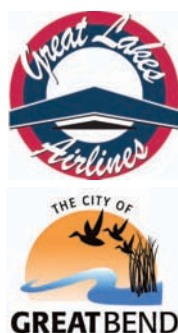
The Sutherland family owns banks in Hoisington, Salina, Emporia, and Parsons with branches in Great Bend, Claflin, Ellsworth, McPherson, Abilene, Chanute, Erie, Independence, and Oswego, Kansas. As a group they are acquiring ten Bank of America branches in Great Bend, Hays, Lindsborg, McPherson, Caney, Coffeyville, Independence, Hutchinson, Salina and Emporia, which will increase their total assets to approximately \$1.1 billion. For more information, visit www.firstksbank.com.

Great Lakes Airlines Discontinues Flight Service to Great Bend Municipal Airport

Great Lakes Airlines notified the City of Great Bend last month that all air service at Great Bend Airport would be terminated as of March 31, 2014. Effective April 1, Great Bend will be without airline service until the next Essential Air Service order takes effect, in May of this year. Great Lakes will, however, continue its flights from Hays to Denver. Both Hays and Great Bend have experienced substantial decreases in scheduled flights over the last several months.

"We will be in a transition period with a new type of service from SeaPort Airlines, and we are excited about working to get more reliable air service to our area," says Martin Miller, Airport Manager. "SeaPort will provide twice daily service to Wichita, and once daily service to Kansas City through Salina."

For more information contact Martin Miller, Great Bend Municipal Airport at 620-793-4168.



Great Bend Coffee Company Holds Ribbon Cutting for New Restaurant Expansion

Paul & Barb Wagner moved to Great Bend, Kansas from the state of New Mexico in 2007 to pursue the American dream of owning their own business. Little did they know that their Seattle-style coffee shop and restaurant would become so popular that they'd have to expand within a few years.

The Great Bend Coffee Company first opened their doors in January of 2009 with just 1800 square feet of the former Masonic Lodge at 2015 Lakin Avenue being utilized. After several months of remodeling, the couple was excited to unveil a new addition last month during a Chamber Ribbon Cutting ceremony. The restaurant and coffee shop now utilizes 4,200 square feet of the historical building.

"We are expanding more than just our physical size," says owner Paul Wagner. "We also plan to expand our hours and our menu in the near future."

The recent addition provides the necessary space for seating of up to 99 people, ADA restrooms for men and women, as well as a stage for live music performances. The owners hope to accommodate more private parties and special events, in addition to the corporate catering services they already offer.

"Our goal is to start offering a weeknight menu and personal table service as soon as we are staffed to handle it," Wagner says. "This community has been more than welcoming, and we want to respond to the demand as best we can."

Current hours are Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Great Bend Coffee Company is also open on Friday and Saturday evenings from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. for gourmet diners. The dinner menu is about 90% Italian, with everything made from scratch. They also offer a full bar with beers, mixed drinks, and spirits with about 50 different wines in stock.

To see a complete menu, visit their "Menu" photo albums on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/greatbendcoffee or call 620-603-6465 for more information or to place an order.



Great Bend to Host KSHSAA State Tournament

The Great Bend Recreation Commission and the City of Great Bend were pleased to announce last month that the 2014 2A-1A State Baseball and Softball State Tournaments will be played at the Great Bend Sports Complex in May of this year. Expected to draw approximately 16 teams, this tournament has previously been held in Emporia since 2006.

The tournaments will be held Thursday, May 29th and Friday, May 30th at the Great Bend Sports Complex, 41 McKinley in Great Bend. This tournament is just one of many events scheduled for this season. For a complete list, visit www.greatbendrec.net or www.greatbendks.net.

Adams Brown Beran & Ball, Chtd. Promotes Three Great Bend Employees

The certified public accounting firm of Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball (ABBB) is proud to announce the promotion of Brett Behrends, CPA, Danielle Hollingshead, CPA and Nicole Zink, CPA.

Brett Behrends, a graduate of Great Bend High School, is the brother of Adam and Cody Behrends and the son of Stan and Marcy Behrends. Brett joined ABBB as an intern for the Hays office in 2009, transitioned to a full-time staff accountant in 2010, and relocated to Great Bend in 2013. He was recently promoted to Senior Staff Accountant. Behrends received his Bachelor of Business Administration degrees in Accounting in 2009 and Financial Planning in 2010 from Fort Hays State University. Behrends is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Kansas Society of Certified Public Accountants (KSCPA). Behrends, and wife, Kinzie reside in Great Bend, Kansas. Behrends enjoys weight lifting, hunting and golfing.

Hollingshead, the daughter of Tracey and Kelly Hoffman and a graduate of Claflin High School, joined ABBB in 2009 and was recently promoted to Audit manager. As Audit Manager, Hollingshead manages and supervises audit engagements and other attestation services. Hollingshead received a dual Bachelor's degree from Fort Hays State University in Business Administration in Accounting and in Finance in 2009. She is a member of the AICPA, the KSCPA and the Central Kansas Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. Hollingshead, husband Dereck, and daughter Haylee reside in Claflin, Kansas.

Zink, a graduate of Claflin High School, is the daughter of Joseph and Lora Zink. Zink joined ABBB in 2012 and was recently promoted to Senior Staff Accountant. Zink is also a graduate of Kansas State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Business Administration degree in December of 2008 and her Master of Accountancy in 2010. She is a member of the AICPA, KSCPA and the Central Kansas Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. Zink currently resides in Claflin, Kansas.

Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball, Chartered provides a wide range of traditional and non-traditional CPA and consulting services to clients throughout Kansas, including agriculture organizations, construction companies, feed yards, financial institutions, governmental and not-for-profit organizations, manufacturers, medical practices, oil and gas companies, professional service firms, real estate companies and small businesses. Founded in 1945, today the firm maintains 13 office locations throughout the state. For more information about Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball, please visit www.abbb.com.



Rosewood Celebrity Tomatoes Now Available

Rosewood Greenhouse tomatoes are back! Celebrity Tomatoes, tasting as sweet and fresh as those picked from your summer garden, are now available. The tomatoes, grown with all-natural methods in Rosewood's greenhouse, can be purchased at the Rosewood Furniture Gallery in downtown Great Bend. Other Rosewood products are sold at Rosewood Wine Cellar, 1901 Lakin. For more details, call 620-793-5888.

CPI Qualified Plan Consultants Rebranded as CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions

CUNA Mutual Group announced last month the rebranding and newly targeted focus for its affiliate, CPI Qualified Plan Consultants, Inc. (CPI) which it acquired in 2009. CPI is now known as CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions. Widely known since 1972 in the intermediary market as a retirement plan record-keeper located in Great Bend, Kan., CPI's new name helps to realign its overall purpose as a company focused on retirement outcomes for Middle Americans, according to Paul Chong, senior vice president of Retirement Plan Services for CUNA Mutual Group.

While the organization has a new name and new look, the rebranding goes much further, he added. "A brand is much more than a name or logo, and today we are redefining CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions by creating a new focus on participant outcomes, emphasizing the retirement aspirations of hard-working Americans nationwide and reinforcing the value of our expertise," Chong said.

The company's parent, CUNA Mutual Group, will continue to serve the financial needs of credit unions and their members, including the provision of qualified and non-qualified retirement plans for credit union employees, which it has done for more than 50 years. CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions will build on the rich heritage and reputation of its parent. Just as CUNA Mutual Group's focus has been on serving average Americans through credit unions, CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions will focus on the small-plan market with assets ranging from \$500,000 to \$7 million.

The transformation of CPI into CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions showcases CUNA Mutual Group's expanding commitment to growing its retirement plan services business nationwide. The small plan market offers tremendous growth opportunities in the next three to five years.

CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions designs simple and practical retirement programs that help hard-working Americans save for the future. For more than fifty years, they have been a leading provider of qualified and nonqualified retirement solutions that delivers service excellence and customer-focused, best-in-class products. With nearly \$17 billion assets under administration and over 6,900 retirement plans in place, CUNA is helping more than 330,000 hard-working Americans save for the future. More information is available at www.cunamutualrs.com.



Heartland Farm Offers Spring Retreats

Take the time to enjoy the spring season by booking a weekend retreat at Heartland Farm. In honor of Mother's day, receive \$5 off a therapeutic massage gift card from May 4th through 11th. Choose from Swedish, cranial sacral, reflexology, and hot stones! Spiritual companioning, experimental art, and educational tours are also available. Heartland Farm is now listed as the #1 attraction for Great Bend on TripAdvisor.com.

Each month, Heartland Farm hosts a workshop, program, or event. For information on upcoming programs and events, or about Heartland Farm, visit www.heartlandfarm-ks.org.

It's in our Nature to Inspire!

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



We need to know about community events. Before they happen! The Great Bend CVB maintains a calendar of events on our web site and we regularly update Great Bend events on the state's tourism web site. We also submit listings and news releases to regional and national publications and web sites on a regular basis. You can help us promote Great Bend and its events.

Why Is A Current Calendar of Events Important? The events and attractions our community offers are often a starting point for visitors who are passing through, attending a reunion, or working nearby. They also encourage people who are coming to Great Bend for birding or hunting or as part of a group tour to stay longer and make plans to explore our community by attending a festival or even a soup supper. Events make Great Bend more attractive and "stickier" for visitors. The longer visitors stay and the more they do when they are here, the more they contribute to our economy. And that's a good thing.

Plan Ahead (Please). Before the first of each year, we try to fill our calendar and plan event promotions based on the events we know about or can find out about. We continue to work on a master calendar each month throughout the year. Groups, clubs, organizations and attractions can help us the most by scheduling ahead as far as possible and then sharing that schedule with us immediately. Many magazines require that we submit calendar listings three months in advance. Right now we are providing information and promoting events scheduled for June and July. Visitors also typically look several months ahead when planning a visit. If, for the most part, we received complete event schedules from everyone for an entire year we would be able to do a much better job of marketing Great Bend and improving the success of all types of special events.

If you're not sure if your organization should be submitting schedules to the CVB, call us. You would be surprised at the things visitors are interested in attending or participating in. They like everything from ice cream socials to book sales. They look for workshops, crafting, home & garden tours, farmer's markets, local food, antique sales, art demonstrations, concerts and much more. Plan ahead as far as you can. Submit events to us as soon and as often as you can. We'll take it from there!

Visit us online at www.VisitGreatBend.com, or at [Facebook.com/GreatBendKS](https://www.facebook.com/GreatBendKS) or [Twitter.com/GreatBendKS](https://twitter.com/GreatBendKS). Feel free to contact the Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau at anytime.

Email: cvb@visitgreatbend.com

Phone: 620-792-2750

VisitGreatBend.com (Facebook & Twitter too!)



Vinks Purchase Golden Belt Printing

Kenny and Terry Vink, co-owners of Office Products Inc., recently purchased a long-time Great Bend business. The Vink brothers are the new owners of Golden Belt Printing, 1125 U.S. 281 Bypass, which has been a Great Bend fixture for 33 years. "Golden Belt Printing has an excellent reputation in central Kansas and we will continue that legacy," Kenny said. "We are taking care of customers with the same quality service they expect and deserve."

The Vinks became interested in Golden Belt Printing when their long-time printer retired. Roy Myers, the previous owner, "has operated the business for years with quality employees and state-of-the-art equipment," Kenny said. "We want to build on what he started."

The best part about the transition, Terry noted, is that the employees are staying and a new one has been added. Those employees are Mike Niles, general manager; Tom Rose, pre-press specialist; Eric Franzen, finishing manager; Kathy Franzen, mailing clerk; and Bernice Wooding, bookkeeper. Dana Allison is filling the graphic artist position.

So far, a new Canon high-speed, large-production copier has been installed. In the near future, a large Canon Image press machine will be added.

"We want to assure customers that we will continue to meet their printing needs – whether it be letterhead, newsletters, brochures or business cards," Terry commented. "They can still walk into Golden Belt Printing II or contact us at OPI. Whatever is best for them."

General Manager Niles, a 22-year veteran of the company, said he and his colleagues are pleased the Vinks bought the business. For more information, contact the Vinks at 620-793-8479.



GBPL Becomes Hometown Partner Site

The Kansas Humanities Council recently announced that the Great Bend Public Library has been selected as a "Hometown Teams" partner site and will receive a grant of up to \$1,500 to tell their local story of sports and community. The Great Bend Public Library will join 17 museums, historical societies, libraries, and community organizations across the state in researching and documenting local sports stories as part of the Kansas Humanities Council's initiative. For more information about GBPL's Argonne Rebels Exhibit, call 620-792-2409.

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KWEC to Host Two Major Events in April

● KWEC Hosts Great Migration Rally April 13th

Fly over to the Kansas Wetlands Education Center's Great Migration Rally from 2 to 7 p.m., on April 13, for entertainment, prizes and food. This year's Rally features Falconer Nate Mathews and Isaiah, his golden eagle. Mathews, currently the only falconer in Kansas permitted to hunt with an eagle, will share the remarkable story of Isaiah's capture, training, loss and recovery.

Several area businesses, artists and organizations have donated great prizes for those who migrate the most successfully, and the first 100 visitors will receive a \$5 gift certificate to Waters True Value and a Migratory Bird Day poster.

Participants begin the afternoon at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center with activities, games and demonstrations. After choosing a card featuring a migratory bird worth points for prizes, participants set off on their migration, driving through Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve. At stops along the way, they receive situational cards, describing hazards or advantages encountered by "their" bird that subtract or add points. Those with the highest point totals have a chance to win several prizes, with separate prizes for adults and children.

Proceeds from the event go toward an outdoor play area. Tickets are \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for children ages 5-12 and free for children under age 5. Participants are asked to pre-register by calling the KWEC, 1-877-243-9268, or emailing lkpenner@fhsu.edu, by April 6. More information is available at wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu.

● Earth Day Celebration at Great Bend Zoo April 27th

The public is invited to celebrate Earth Day 2014 during a special event on Sunday, April 27th from 12-4 p.m. at the Great Bend Raptor Center & Brit Spagh Zoo, 2300 N. Main in Great Bend. The event is presented in partnership with the Grass Roots Environmental Advocacy Team (GREAT), the Kansas Wetlands Education Center, Heartland Farm, Dominican Sisters of Peace, and Sunflower Diversified Services. Last year, over 250 people attended and that number is expected to grow with increased

awareness. Earth Day features varied exhibits and demonstrations, giving the event the feel of an environmental fair. Offerings include solar cooking demonstrations, organic/heirloom gardening, worm composting, kite fly-in and contest, alternative energy vehicles, recycling exhibits, outdoor nature activities for kids, and much more. For more information, call Felix at 620-804-9680.



Nex-Tech to Host Tech Edge Conference Feat. Mitch Holthus

Nex-Tech, a leader in the information technology industry, will host a technology conference on June 12, 2014, called Tech Edge.

This one-day conference will be held in the Memorial Union on the campus of Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. The Tech Edge Conference will kick off with keynote speaker, Mitch Holthus, the voice of the Kansas City Chiefs!



National technology partners of Nex-Tech will be present to visit with attendees as well as display the latest in business technology. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to join breakout sessions where experts will discuss specific technologies in-depth. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will even be presenting on current cybercrimes that can affect businesses.

"By leveraging our technology partnerships, we are bringing some of the best technology providers from around the world to western Kansas," Steve Riat, Nex-Tech Sales Manager, said. "One thing we continually hear from our customers is that tightening budgets constrain travel, and they have been unable to obtain the training and knowledge they want."

Prize-A-Palooza will close down the day with more than \$15,000 in technology prizes given away to attendees. You may register to attend Tech Edge by logging on to nex-tech.com/techedge or by calling 877 625-7872 and asking for Trisha.

Barton Recognizes Service Milestones

Barton Community College recently honored nine employees for their years of service to the college. Awards were presented for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 30 years of service. Music Instructor Karole Erikson was recognized for 30 years of service to Barton. Coordinator of Enterprise Database Applications Amy Oelke and Graphic Designer Connie Wagner were honored for 20 years of service. Lead Care Provider at the Child Development Center Kelly Feist received an award for 15 years of service. Director of Instrumental Activities Steven Lueth and Campus Safety Officer Joseph Hathaway both began their careers at Barton 10 years ago. Five employees were noted for five years of service, including Director of the Medical Laboratory Technician Program Cheryl Lippert, Custodian Linda Standlee, Technical Support Specialist Richard Unrein, Custodial Supervisor Patty McFadden and Accounts Receivable Clerk Christy Schultz.

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Ambassador Profile - Cindy Parr

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



Where I Work

My husband owns Parr Sound and Lighting. I help him in many aspects of the business that provides production for concerts, including stage/roof units, audio and lighting for many venues and artists. In addition to concert production, Gary has also installed sound systems for many churches and schools in the area.

Educational Background

I grew up in Nebraska City, NE and attended college at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. I was involved in Public Safety there for ten years. When my two children graduated from high school, I earned my Real Estate License and became involved in the estate auction business with my family. In 2002, I met Gary at a concert and moved to Great Bend later that year.

My Family

Gary and I have been happily married since 2007 with a combined family of 7 children. Four of his children are married and have provided us with 8 grandchildren. The only "kids" left at home are the 4-legged ones, Rodie Bear and Mr. Whiskers.

As an Ambassador

I have been honored to be an ambassador since January of 2013. It is an amazing group of people from the business community that I appreciate and have enjoyed getting to know them better. I enjoy being a part of the many functions of the Chamber and also my contacts with other Chamber members in the community.

Hobbies & Interesting Facts

I enjoy playing the piano, reading, and being outside working in the yard and flower gardens. Love to travel, especially with our RV.

Johnson's Smokehouse BBQ Expands Menu

Johnsons Smokehouse BBQ & Catering is excited to announce that they will now be offering Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Prime Rib, Ribeye, and KC Strip Steaks on Friday and Saturday evenings from 5-8 p.m. The choice meats are hand cut to any size and cooked to order on genuine, wood-fired grills. Advanced reservations for steaks and hickory smoked ribs are recommended, but not required as supplies are limited.



Before your meal on any day of the week, you can now enjoy their new Smoked Chicken Wings, marinated in teriyaki, hot, or traditional and original flavors. And after the meal, try their newest dessert – a Fruity French Cheesecake with a variety of fruit, chocolate, and nutty toppings.

Johnson's Smokehouse BBQ is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Be sure to like their page on Facebook!

Sunflower Diversified Services Celebrates Fundraising Successes

Sunflower Diversified Services recently celebrated a major success after the conclusion of their 9th Annual Charity Gala event. The proceeds of over \$60,000 set new records for the organization's fundraiser, despite a snowstorm that kept some of the patrons away.



"We are so thankful to those who support this event. It means that our neighbors who need a helping hand will have more resources to pay for the services they need," says Connie Oetken, Director of Development for Sunflower Diversified Services. "Tax dollars cannot cover many medical and dental services or the cost of adaptive equipment that is important for independent living."

Also kicked off at the Gala last month was the 4th Annual "Invest in Kids Club" Campaign, which also has a \$60,000 goal. Sunflower's Executive Director Jim Johnson says, "Tax dollars simply cannot keep pace with our growing needs, and private contributions make it possible to ensure opportunities will always be available to the children we serve at the Early Education Center."

All Invest in Kids donations go directly to the EEC and Sunflower's Incredible Years Preschool. Sunflower serves infants, toddlers and adults in Barton, Pawnee, Rice, Rush and Stafford counties. For more information about Invest in Kids, contact Chairwoman Julie Spray by calling 620-793-5533.



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OPI Welcomes New Graphic Artist & Recognizes Networking Specialist

Office Products Inc. (OPI) would like to recognize two of its employees. The first is a new team member who recently came on as a graphic artist and understands that sometimes customers don't know exactly what they want and may need a little guidance. Phisut "Champ" Khiawsawat is more than happy to step in and share his ideas.

Khiawsawat uses his artistic experience and bachelor's degree in fine art/graphic design to help bring those ideas to a variety of products. Even though Khiawsawat has been at OPI only a short time, he already knows that if he has concerns, owners of the family business come through for him.

Khiawsawat is originally from Thailand and moved to central Kansas with family 10 years ago. He is a graduate of St. John High School and earned his bachelor's degree at Fort Hays State University in 2013.

The second employee being recognized is veteran employee James Weatherman, who recently earned the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Certification and Security Credentials in Dallas, Texas. Weatherman works in the service department at OPI, and is expanding his expertise to include networking and security.

Weatherman has been with OPI for seven years, and has many years experience with copiers, printers, wide-format machines, shredders, and more. OPI is located at 1204 Main in Great Bend, 516 Broadway in Larned, and 724 N. Main in Russell.

Beautiful Beginnings Bridal Boutique Supports Heartland Cancer Center

Beautiful Beginnings Bridal Boutique hosted a fundraiser late last year in partnership with Brighton, whose products include necklaces, earrings and other accessories, to raise money for the Heartland Cancer Center. The store donated 10 percent of all Brighton sales during October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The \$225 was recently delivered to HCC.

Jennifer Klepper, Beautiful Beginnings owner, said these partnerships with other organizations made the events successful. Beautiful Beginnings is located at 1523 Main Street in Great Bend, and specializes in bridal, formalwear, tuxedo and suit rental, and women's clothing and accessories for everyday wear. For more information, visit their Facebook page or call 620-793-9514.



St. Rose Recognizes Team Members for Employment Service Milestones

St. Rose Ambulatory & Surgery Center employees were recently recognized for their longevity at the facility's Annual Associate Awards reception.

Being recognized for five years of service were Jennifer Wood, Jared Smith, Susan deWeese, Sara Shaw, April Myers, Gloria Myers, Charise Oelger, Pamela Ackley, and Lori Lowe. At ten years of service were Karen Stewart and Daran Frevert. At 15 years of service were Verna Byerly, Elaine Schneider, Lori Hammeke, and Barbara Davenport. With 20 years of service, Bonita Jamieson and Debra Krier were recognized. Debra Panning was noted for 25 years of service, while Phil Kirmer and Catherine Huber celebrated 30 years in service. Marianne Krallman marked 35 years in service, and Dave Brabander had 40 years of service. Receiving the highest recognition was Joyce Beadles-Fry with 45 years of service to St. Rose Ambulatory & Surgery Center.

"We hope the community will congratulate all our valuable associates," said Mark Mingenback, director of marketing and business strategy. "Their loyalty is impressive and we appreciate their service to St. Rose and the community. They have our heartfelt gratitude and we ask God to bless them."

"Each person brings special talents to the job," Mingenback said. "They can take credit for being part of a professional team that delivers quality health care to central Kansans."

St. Rose is part of Centura Health, which connects individuals and families across western Kansas and Colorado with more than 6,000 physicians, 15 hospitals, seven senior-living communities, physician

St. Rose Ambulatory & Surgery Center



practices and clinics, and home-care and hospice services. For more information, visit www.stroseasc.org.

Teams Being Recruited for Bowl for Kids Sake

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Barton & Pawnee Counties will host their largest annual fundraiser and awareness event on Sunday, April 27th at the Walnut Bowl in Great Bend. Bowl for Kids Sake is a national event that happens all over the country and businesses and individuals are encouraged to get involved in two ways. First, individuals or companies can form 5-6 person teams to spend an hour enjoying free bowling, pizza, and soft drinks while raising needed funds for area children. Second, businesses can sponsor the event or donate prizes for the teams who participate.

For more information or to get involved, call 620-603-3888.

Upcoming Events from the Hoisington Chamber of Commerce



Sunday, April 27th - Antique Tractor Pull

(1959 and older stock models)
Registration from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Pull starts at 1:30 p.m.
Concessions available all day!
Admission is \$5, Kids 10 & Under Free

Long Drive Driving Range, South of the Tracks
and East of Roto-Mix in Hoisington
Proceeds benefit Hoisington Labor Day Clown Committee

Saturday, May 31st - 5th Annual Mud Run

1 p.m. at Long Drive Driving Range
Gate fee \$10, Kids 6-12 \$5, Kids 5 & Under Free
Concessions and Beer Garden Available
Proceeds benefit Hoisington Labor Day Clown Committee

Monday, June 2nd - Carson & Barnes Circus

Shows at 4:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Bicentennial Park in Hoisington

Keep up with Hoisington events and news at www.hoisingtonkansas.com!



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April 17, 2014

Great Bend Public Library • 1409 Williams

The Great Bend Public Library began in 1908 as the Free Library & Reading Room. Today, services extend beyond books to many other items, including DVDs and cake pans. From movie nights to game days, our programs are attended by all ages. April 13-19 is National Library Week and we are proud to celebrate with special events all week long. Check out greatbendpl.info for more details!

April 24, 2014

Aaron's Sales & Lease • 4904 W. 10th Street

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Employment – Barton County	January 13	January 14
Labor Force	16,244	16,960
Employment	15,551	16,320
Unemployment	693	640
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	3.8%
KS Unemployment Rate	6.2%	4.8%

City/County Local Sales Tax Distributions Report	January 13	January 14
Sales Tax for Barton County at 1.00%	\$424,650	\$439,529
Sales Tax for Great Bend at 0.75%	\$226,528	\$236,291

Building Permits	January 13	January 14
Commercial – GB	7	7
Residential - GB	16	15

Sources:

City of Great Bend, www.greatbendks.net
Kansas Department of Revenue, www.ksrevenue.org
Kansas Department of Labor, www.klic.dol.ks.gov

