

OUTLOOK

GREAT BEND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JANUARY 2021
VOLUME 100 NO. 1

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1921



YEARS 2021

business journal

Board of Directors Set, Executive Officers Elected

2021

With the changing of the calendar year comes a change in leadership and new set of goals for the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. — Continued on Page 2



Pete Wesner,
2020 Board Chair



Jerry Renk,
1st Vice Chair



Shelly Peacock,
2nd Vice Chair



AJ Chrest,
Past Chair



Austin Coyan,
Treasurer



Glenna Achatz



Rich Baskerville



Rob Bauer



Sue Cooper



Scott Dewerff



Logan Garrett



Randy Goering



Ana Hayson



Jay Luerman



Quenla McGilber



Leslie Mingenback



Jesse Mock



Teresa Powelson



Regan Reif



Douglas Reiser



Todd Vanskike

EX-OFFICIO:

Lindsey Krom-Craven
Great Bend City Council
Christina Hayes
Great Bend CVB

Sara Hayden
Great Bend Economic
Development, Inc.

Jennifer Scharltz
Barton County Commission
Dr. Carl Heilman
Barton Community College

Khris Thexton
USD 428
Tory Arnberger
Kansas State Legislature



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While the main areas of focus for the Chamber remain Advocacy for Business, Marketing & Promotion, Investment in the Future & Member Services, new initiatives or goals seem to emerge based on the leadership of the executive committee to tackle issues or enhance the Chamber's role in the community. The Chamber embarks on each New Year with optimism and excitement for what new programs or services might emerge for their members.

The 2021 Executive Committee will be made up of Pete Wesner (CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions) as Chairperson, Jerry Renk (American State Bank) as 1st Vice Chair, Shelly Peacock (TCI Answering Service) as 2nd Vice Chair, AJ Chrest (Aflac) as Immediate Past Chairman, and Austin Coyan (Adams Brown) as Treasurer.

In addition, the Chamber welcomes five new members to its diverse board, representing a wide range of industries and backgrounds. Beginning three-year terms are Sue Cooper (Barton County / Central Kansas Partnership), Randy Goering (Eagle Radio), Ana Hayson (Rana Luna Boutique), Leslie Mingenback (Miss Pretty Pickles / MyTown), Regan Reif (Wheatland Electric). Representing the Chamber Ambassadors in 2021 is Rich Baskerville (First Kansas Bank), and representing Barton County Young Professionals is Jay Luerman (First Kansas Bank).

Continuing their service on the board is Glenna Achatz (Coldwell Banker Sell Real Estate), Rob Bauer (Bauer, Pike,

Continued from Page 1

Bauer, Wary & Carroll LLC), Scott Dewerff (KanEquip), Logan Garrett (G-B Tire, Inc.), Quenla McGilber (JOYfulHouse Inc.), Jesse Mock (The University of Kansas Health Systems), Teresa Powelson (Golden Belt Community Foundation) Douglas Reiser (Central Kansas Surveying & Mapping, Inc.), and Todd VanSkiel (Golden Belt Bicycle Company).

Ex-Officio board members are Khris Thexton (Great Bend Public Schools), Jennifer Schartz (Barton County Commission), Dr. Carl Heilman (Barton Community College), Christina Hayes (Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau), Tory Arnberger (Kansas Legislature), Lindsey Krom-Craven (Great Bend City Council), and Sara Hayden (Great Bend Economic Development, Inc.).

Volunteers who have finished their terms on the board of directors include Todd Armatys (Edward Jones), Julie Kramp (The Center for Counseling), Jon Prescott (Sunflower Diversified Services), Sonya Rein (Ambassadors & Edward Jones), Nick Klug (BCYP & Corrosion DC, Inc), Lacey Schofield (Best Western Angus Inn), Julie Spray (The Fieldhouse), and Rick Taylor (Nex-Tech).

The Chamber looks forward to recognizing the service and dedication of their retiring board members at the 99th Annual Chamber Banquet scheduled for Saturday, February 20th.

See the complete listing of Chamber Board and Staff on our website: www.greatbend.org.

Pilot Club of Great Bend joins the Kansas Leadership Center to Inspire Kansans to 'Beat the Virus'

Pilot Club of Great Bend joins the Kansas Leadership Center (KLC), in the 'Kansas Beats the Virus' initiative to slow the spread of COVID-19. Especially now that vaccines are on the horizon for delivery to all individuals in our communities by Spring, the Pilot Club of Great Bend will partner with the Kansas Leadership Center (KLC) to promote local activities to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 until the vaccine is readily available and Kansans can be safe from this devastating virus. www.kansasleadershipcenter.org.

Pilot Club, a local civic organization, is proposing a strategy to inspire local solutions to keep Kansans healthy, keep schools and businesses open, help keep our health services from being overwhelmed, and protect Kansas' economy amidst the pandemic.

We hope to mobilize leaders in our community—pastors, coaches, neighborhood leaders, business owners, community

officials, PTO members, volunteers, educators, civic organizations, and everyday Kansans. Empowering these people can help them stop the spread for themselves.

Our communities in the county have differing strengths, challenges, and needs, Pilot club wants those closest to the problem, the leaders and everyday people, to find the right solutions to keep their families safe and communities healthy.

Great Bend Pilots action plan to slow the spread of the virus is to raise awareness, provide information, and ask people within the community to wear a mask in public, social distance, and wash their hands frequently. There is no single solution that will stop the virus, but if this action plan gets more people to follow these basic steps, we'll have fewer cases; our schools and businesses can stay open; and we will help alleviate the strain on our health care system.



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Golden Belt Gives 2020 campaigns raise over \$249,000 for area non-profits



Golden Belt Community Foundation just completed its seventh Giving Tuesday campaign, wrapping up and announcing the results during a Virtual Great Bend Chamber of Commerce Coffee Thursday morning.

Giving Tuesday started as a day for anyone, anywhere to give, and it has grown into the biggest giving movement in the world. Giving Tuesday harnesses the generosity of millions of people around the world to support the causes they believe in and the communities in which they live. Celebrated on the Tuesday following U.S. Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday inspires millions of people across the globe to show up and give back to causes and issues that matter to them.

Giving Tuesday Now, a special campaign held in May, addressed immediate needs caused by the pandemic and raised over \$56,000. During the regular Giving Tuesday Campaign, held November 1 to December 1, over 1,000 gifts were made to support 93 local charitable organizations and endowment funds raising a total of \$183,345.25.

"This year marked GBCF's 7th year to be a Giving Tuesday partner," stated Mackenzie Mitchell, Development and Communications Coordinator, "and again this year we invited all charitable organizations in Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford counties to participate."

Tustin further explained that there were 7 new organizations participating, and that each organization chose whether to get any gifts received as a grant back to their organization – or to use the gifts to build their endowment fund at GBCF. Over half of the organizations will be receiving the gifts as grants to be put

to immediate use supporting a wide variety of missions and causes.

In addition, \$10,000 in matching funds and \$1,500 in giving incentives and drawings were awarded.

The 2020 Top Ten Giving Tuesday organizations and funds raised are:

- 1) Kansas Oil and Gas Museum Foundation \$19,420.00
- 2) Barton County Emergency Aid Endowment \$17,550.00
- 3) Almost Home, Inc. \$8,545.00
- 4) Forever Rush County Endowment \$8,530.00
- 5) Community Food Bank of Barton County \$8,095.00
- 6) Prairie Godmother Fund \$7,705.00
- 7) Locust Grove Village Endowment \$5,745.00
- 8) Central Kansas Dream Center, Inc \$5,535.00
- 9) United Way of Central Kansas \$5,450.00
- 10) Golden Belt Humane Society \$5,543.82

"GBCF's Giving Tuesday campaign as well as our Giving Tuesday Now campaign is only possible because of everyone who supported a cause they care about," said Tustin, "thank you for your support, participation, and spreading the word about Giving Tuesday."

The "All In" award and a \$100 grant was given to Hope Lutheran in Rush Center, which had 100% of its board of directors donate on Giving Tuesday.

Year two for the Most Generous City award, which was calculated with gift totals by zip code per capita. Great Bend received the 2020 Most Generous City award, and the foundation will make a grant of \$1,000 to an organization or project in that community.

In 2021 Giving Tuesday will be celebrated on November 30th.

For questions about Golden Belt Community Foundation or Giving Tuesday, please contact the foundation at gbcf@goldenbeltcf.org or (620) 792-3000.

Outlook Business Journal

A monthly publication of the



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Jerry Renk, American State Bank

2nd Vice Chair
Shelly Peacock, TCI Answering Service

Immediate Past Chair
AJ Chrest, Aflac District Coordinator

Treasurer
Austin Coyan, Adams Brown

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Coldwell Banker Sell Real Estate

Rich Baskerville
Ambassador Club (First Kansas Bank)

Rob Bauer
Bauer, Pike, Bauer, Wary & Carroll, LLC

Sue Cooper
Barton County / Central Kansas Partnership

Scott Dewerff
KanEquip

Logan Garrett
G-B Tire, Inc.

Randy Goering
Eagle Radio

Ana Hayson
Rana Luna Boutique

Jay Luerman
BCYP (First Kansas Bank)

Teresa Powelson
Golden Belt Community Foundation

Quenla McGilber
JOYfulHouse Inc.

Leslie Mingenback
Miss Pretty Pickles / MyTown

Jesse Mock
The University of Kansas Health Systems

Regan Reif
Wheatland Electric

Douglas Reiser
Central Kansas Surveying & Mapping Inc.

Todd VanSlike
Golden Belt Bicycle Company

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Sara Hayden, Great Bend Economic Development, Inc.
Jennifer Scharzt, Barton County Commission
Dr. Carl Heilman, Barton Community College
Khris Thexton, USD 428
Tory Amberger, Kansas State Legislature

CHAMBER STAFF

Megan Barfield, President/CEO
Lee Ann June, Communications & Program Coordinator
Angie Hicks, Business Office Manager

Save the Date
99th Annual
Chamber Banquet
February 20, 2021

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

Ribbon Cuttings!

State Farm - Steve Lunsford Agent opens office in Great Bend



The Great Bend Chamber staff and Ambassadors welcomed Steve Lunsford to the business community and as a Chamber member. The group heard from Lunsford and his team at the State Farm Agency, 1018 Kansas Ave. "My team will work hard to protect the best interest of our clients. We want their coverages to fit their individual needs," said Lunsford. Lunsford's agency has one full time employee and one part time employee. The part time employee may be recognized by the community. Kathy Burt has passed her clients over to Lunsford's agency and stayed on part time. Those interested in a quote or more information are encouraged to reach out to his office. Find them online at www.lunsford4insurance.com, on Facebook: Steve Lunsford - State Farm Agent, or via email: steve@lunsford4insurance.com.

Perfectly Paisley Boutique joins the Chamber of Commerce, celebrates with Ribbon Cutting



The Great Bend Chamber staff and Ambassadors welcomed Perfectly Paisley Boutique to the business community and as a new Chamber member. The group heard from the owner, Charise Oelger. Charise shared a bit a history about the building and her business. This independent boutique has a broad selection of clothing, including women's clothing sizes up to 3X, children's clothing, and accessories. Those interested in shopping Perfectly Paisley are encouraged to check out Facebook, the Perfectly Paisley App (available on Android and Apple), via the website: www.perfectlypaisleyboutique.com, or at 1409 Main Street (check facebook for updated hours).

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HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS IN JANUARY

- 1...Chamber Office Closed for New Years Day
- 6...Aligned Leadership-Final Class from 9-11:30am
- 4...Chamber Chat: Chamber Focus, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 7...Virtual Chamber Coffee: Pawnee Valley Hospital Foundation, Program @9:30am
- 7...Chamber Ambassador Lunch Meeting @Noon
- 11...Chamber Chat, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 14...Virtual Chamber Coffee: Habitat for Humanity, Program @9:30am on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 18...Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 18...Chamber Chat, Hosted by Nex-Tech, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 19...Chamber Board Orientation @11am
- 20...Chamber Board Meeting @8am
- 21...Chamber Coffee: Central Kansas CASA @Straub's Powersports, 200 S Patton Rd in Great Bend. Program @9:30am on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 23...Battle in the Barn, Expo III
- 25...Chamber Chat, Virtually @2pm on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel
- 28...Virtual Chamber Coffee: Adams Brown, Program @9:30am on the Chamber's Facebook Page or You Tube Channel

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

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

STAY INFORMED AT GREATBEND.ORG

More Ribbon Cuttings!

CPCIS celebrates remodel with ribbon cutting



The Great Bend Chamber staff and Ambassador's Club celebrated the newly remodeled Central Plains Computer Service, Inc. with a ribbon cutting. CPCIS further celebrated with an open house and specials on computers, anti-virus, and tablets. The beautiful showroom has computers and accessories to purchase. Tiffany Schoendaler, office manager, spoke about the benefits of their 24/7 customer service. To get in touch with Central Plains Computer Service call (620) 793-5398, find them on Facebook, and online: www.cpcis.net.

Megan's Corner: 557 Members Strong

If you are reading this message, I want to applaud you for surviving the dumpster fire that was 2020. What started out as a year of hope and fresh ideas was quickly met with one challenge after another. Seriously – a pandemic? A country in divide? Riots? Fires? Hate? Murder hornets? I'll admit, my white flag was nearly raised.

While chaos erupted worldwide, our small staff of three and one volunteer came together fast, writing the pages of our own 2020 playbook. One thing guided our next steps. You. Our members deserved a Chamber willing to stand strong and lean into the fires ahead. YOU deserved a Chamber capable of continuing our mission: to promote and improve the business climate in the city of Great Bend through its services and partnerships that encourage growth and assist existing and new businesses in reaching their business goals.

This office has been working harder than ever the last 10 months for our members. Through conference calls and Zoom meetings with Kansas Secretary of Commerce David Toland, Governor Laura Kelly, US Senator Jerry Moran, US Congressman Roger Marshall, through learning new technologies and bringing new resources to the table, i.e., BartonStrong, SPARK micro-grants.

By mid-March, our first live online Chamber Coffee and new Chamber Chats were launched, streaming to Facebook and YouTube. I'll be honest, we were nervous of the outcome and response. We didn't need to be. YOU, our members, showed up for us and your fellow Chamber members. Week after week, hundreds of people are engaging with our hosts and guests online. 2020 ended with Episode 40 of our Chamber Chats. (Don't worry, we'll be back in 2021!)

When I review the last 12 months and what we've learned, which was a lot, I realized this: We are 557 members of fight, grit, determination, unity, ingenuity, and selflessness. Our members have stood strong, struggled greatly, and continued pushing forward.

Know this. Going into our 100th year, your Chamber is here, standing strong with you now and in the next 100 years. We are the first responders for your business. We are advocating for you at all levels of government. We are promoting you. We are creating and looking for opportunities for you and your staff. We are investing in the future of our business community.

Thank you for your membership. Thank you for your leadership and thank you for being a part of a resilient business community. May blessings rain down on you and yours in 2021.



Everything Under the Son

Two Decades Ministry on McKinley

Krista Ball and her husband, Mark, had been frequent customers at what was first called Christian Supply Center at 1519 Main.

Little did they know they would one day be serving their own clientele at what is now known as Everything Under the Son, 407 McKinley. The Christian bookstore and gift shop has grown over the years and continues to serve the community.

"We frequented the Christian Supply Center, in part, because we love Christian music and bought a lot of cassettes there," Krista said. "At the time, Mary Feist was the manager. Mary was always so cheery and helpful – a great asset to her customers." Then the Balls discovered the store was for sale. "It didn't take us long to decide to purchase it," Krista recalled. "It was such a blessing in our lives.

We didn't want to lose this vital ministry in our community."

The purchase was made in 1992.

The bookstore remained in its original downtown location for a while but eventually it moved a couple of blocks south.

"We felt the location across from the courthouse would be a better fit. It is a beautiful building."



Krista noted.

Items can be ordered online through Facebook.

She acknowledged that business has been a little slower during the pandemic "but we have the most wonderful and loyal customers."

The store's hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

Krista was referring to the building that currently houses American State Bank and the Watkins, Calcara law firm at 1321 Main.

After a few years at that second downtown location, the property at 407 McKinley became available.

"With this came many new dreams of making this a very, very special place for our customers and the community," Krista said. "The square footage is much bigger, which gave us the opportunity to greatly expand our merchandise and other offerings."

This was in the year 2000 when the name was changed to Everything Under the Son "to give it a fresh and exciting new start." It now employs seven people.

"All of us love our customers. We love offering hope and encouragement to the community," Krista said. "We have the most loving, caring staff in the world. It is very common for me to walk into the store and see one of our employees praying and ministering to a customer. This blesses my heart every single time.

"Our employees are simply the best," she continued. "They have hearts of gold and we love them so much. And we have very special customers from all over."

The inventory at Everything Under the Son includes a variety of unique gifts, clothing, books, jewelry, Bibles, music and greeting cards. "We also have great children's books and gifts,"



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Promotions & New Hires:

Harris takes on new position at Sunflower Diversified

In each position Cody Harris has held at Sunflower Diversified Services, his goal has been to help people with special needs reach new levels of independence.

He will continue to do so in his new role as director of planned giving and community supports.

"Knowing that I am doing something to help people grow and enhance their skills is the best part of working at Sunflower – no matter what the title," Harris said. "There is nothing like it."

"I believe this new position is one that will help me grow into the leader I want to be on behalf of the people Sunflower serves," he added. "I also am looking forward to more networking to ensure the community is aware of our many programs and services."

In his new position, Harris is responsible for planning fundraising events and engaging with local and area media. He also will continue with his community-employment duties.

During his more than seven years at Sunflower, Harris has been an employment-skills instructor and a community-employment specialist. He was promoted to community-employment manager last year.

Harris also has served as a substitute General Public Transportation driver.

In addition, Harris continues in his role as the statewide coordinator for Disability Mentoring Day, an annual event designed to educate people with special needs about employment-related physical and mental skills. The goal is finding and keeping a community job in areas such as retail, food service or custodial work.

Before accepting his first job at Sunflower, Harris worked for seven years at JBW Services at Hays, which entailed working for an individual with a disability. He also worked at Rock Springs 4-H Camp and was employed at several jobs during college at Fort Hays State University.

Harris grew up in Deerfield in southwest

Kansas; he graduated from Deerfield High School.

Harris is replacing Connie Oetken who recently retired from Sunflower.

"I am truly grateful for the insight Connie has given me in recent weeks about all the things she has been doing for our clients – which is a lot,"

Harris commented. "She has been so kind and it is obvious she has set a high standard for me to live up to."

"I appreciate all she has done for the people we serve and helping to make this a smooth transition. She is only a phone call away if I need advice, which is a comfort to me as I take on this new position."

Oetken noted that "Cody's enthusiasm and desire to succeed will make him a strong leader. I know he will make a

positive impact on Sunflower in the years to come."

Jon Prescott, Sunflower chief executive officer, noted staff and clients "will miss Connie immensely but we understand her decision to retire. Believe me, Connie has earned it after giving Sunflower 15 years of her life, working diligently to help us fund day-to-day operations. She is a tough act to follow."

Nevertheless, "Cody will do all he can to fill Connie's shoes and build on her many successes," Prescott said. "Cody is a great choice for this position. During his tenure at Sunflower, he has always stepped up as a leader."

In addition to his expertise in employment and vocational training, he is a Great Bend Chamber of Commerce ambassador "because he wants to represent the people we serve and give back to the community," Prescott said. "I am so excited to watch Cody continue his career growth as he takes on his new responsibilities."

Sunflower, a non-profit agency, serves infants, toddlers and adults with delays and disabilities in Barton, Pawnee, Rice, Rush and Stafford counties. It is in its 54th year.



Cody Harris

Congratulations!

Promotions & New Hires:

Plains State Bank announces Christy Kuhn as Executive Vice President

The Plains State Bank is pleased to announce that Christy Kuhn has been named Executive Vice President Chief Operating Officer.

As COO, Christy will oversee the day to day administrative and operational functions of the bank and coordinate the implementation of strategic plans involving administrative and operational activities.

"In making the decision to elect Christy as Chief Operating Officer, the board of directors looked at her proven skills supporting the strategic plan, membership on key banking committees, advanced banking academics, leadership and involvement in executive management that has been vital to our growing bank," stated Gene



Christy Kuhn

Dikeman, President and CEO.

Christy has several years of banking experience with many of those years being in senior level positions. Christy graduated from the Graduate School of Banking at Colorado Executive Development Institute for Community Bankers in 2017.

Christy, her husband Eric, and family are longtime residents of Great Bend and are active in the community.

The Plains State Bank is a Kansas owned community bank with \$250 million in total assets serving Kansas with locations in Plains, Lakin, Great Bend, Hutchinson and Salina. To learn more about The Plains State Bank and the services provided please visit www.plainsstatebank.com.

Kristi Oetken joins MPire Realty team

Kristi (Achatz) Oetken was born and raised in Great Bend. She, her husband John, and their daughter Laci, live and work on their family farm and are owners of Oetken Body Shop.

Kristi has previous experience in the insurance industry and is currently enjoying the opportunity to focus on her clients at Glow Boutique and Tan. Kristi thinks of her clients as family and is excited to help them achieve their dreams, whether that is purchasing a home or an investment property. Kristi has a passion for customer service and carries the values of hard work, integrity, and outstanding client service into everything she does. You can count on her to keep the process fluid, understandable, and as low-stress as possible. Kristi



Kristi Oetken

is very excited to join the team of professionals at MPIRE Realty Group and is looking forward to bringing her previous client service expertise from over twenty-five years of working in the insurance industry.

"We are super excited to have Kristi join our MPIRE family, her local knowledge and community relationships will be a big asset to our growing company," says Aaron Andrews, MPIRE Realty Broker. Kristi believes in the MPIRE Realty mission; of being

focused on providing everyone with the best results and service in the industry, and that at MPIRE Realty we listen carefully to understand your real estate goals and then work hard to create solutions that make sense to you.

Experienced technician joins OPI's service department

The new service technician at Office Products Inc. (OPI) brings more than three decades of experience to his new position.

Tony Hines is based at OPI's Hays location but also serves customers at the Great Bend store. He has been in the office equipment-service business since 1988.

"Actually, my service territory is anywhere OPI has a customer," Hines commented. "This family-owned business has four locations in central and northwest Kansas and we are here to serve customers in this broad area."

Hines provides service and support on most types of office equipment, including printers, copiers and faxes. He serves customers at an OPI location, or at a private business or residence, depending on the circumstances.

The new service tech said he wants to work for OPI because of its "great reputation with customers in particular and the industry in general. Also, I immediately enjoyed becoming acquainted with the co-owners, Kenny and Terry Vink. It is great to work for a long-time family business.

"And the staff here is top-notch," he continued. "They are very knowledgeable and genuinely enjoy working with their customers. Everyone here is focused on satisfying clients' needs for office equipment and supplies."

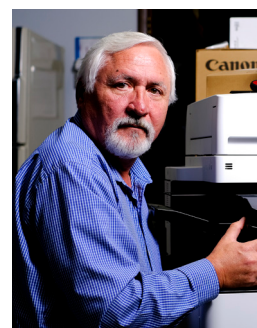
Hines' academic background is in electronics and networking. A native of Denver, he was raised in Norton. He now lives in Hays.

Willie Spires, OPI service manager, said he and his colleagues are fortunate to have Hines on staff.

"Tony comes with vast experience in the world of office-machine repair," Spires said. "He has training on many different makes and models of office equipment to meet customers' needs. Our customers will soon learn they can count on Tony just as they rely on our other service technicians, as well as our colleagues in other OPI departments.

"Tony is a great addition to our service department and we are extremely excited to have him here."

OPI is located at 1204 Main in Great Bend; 516 Broadway in Larned; 724 N. Main in Russell; and 1307 Vine in Hays.



Tony Hines

Congratulations!



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GREAT BEND

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEATURED AMBASSADOR

Shawn Powelson
Landmark
National Bank



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

A pretty lady and a job brought me here. My wife (the pretty lady), our big beautiful family and proximity to extended family keeps me here.

Where do you work and what do you do there?

I work at Landmark National Bank here in Great Bend. I just took the position at the beginning of December so I don't know what I do there yet... Kidding! I am in commercial lending. I consider my job to be getting to know business clients and helping them grow their business and solve any needs they may have with the products and/or services the bank has. Additionally, I help Landmark stay engaged in the community by being a part of awesome groups like the Chamber Ambassadors!

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

I love to hike. I would live in the mountains if it were feasible and hike as often as I could get away with. I did my first fourteen a few years ago and would love to do more!

What energizes you and brings you excitement?

Energy and excitement normally abound as there is rarely a dull moment around our house. I love watching our 6 small humans compete in sports. Being engaged in my community and my job also gives me energy. I'm looking forward to gaining comfort and familiarity with both in the coming years and being a part of something great.

At what job, would you be terrible?

A mortician. Hard pass on mortality and funerals.

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

I've been an Ambassador since shortly after moving here, so about a year and half now. Being an Ambassador has definitely fast-tracked me to getting to know some great community leaders in my fellow ambassadors. Being a part of ribbon cuttings, chamber coffees and other events has helped me get to know lots of great local businesses as well.

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, or www.greatbend.org/ambassadors

Hospital Foundation project supports all Pawnee County students

The Pawnee Valley Community Hospital (PVCH) Foundation wanted to demonstrate its support for local young people and their families as they adapt to COVID-19 protocols and guidelines.

The result is more than 900 sensory kits being delivered to all students in Larned USD 495 and Pawnee Heights USD 496, explained Julie Bugner-Smith, Foundation director.

The kits include stress balls for those in high school; sensory bracelets for the middle school; and fidget strings for youngsters in elementary schools.

"A special thank-you goes to the PVCH Auxiliary," Bugner-Smith said. "These great volunteers donated sensory board games that were delivered to elementary classrooms."

"This much-appreciated Auxiliary gift comes from memorial funds in Ann Gatterman's name," Bugner-Smith noted. "What a wonderful way to honor Ann, who contributed so much to our community."

Gatterman had a passion for everything she did – whether it was volunteering for the Auxiliary, teaching, doing yard work, laughing with friends and, most of all, sharing time with her family, Bugner-Smith related.

Each sensory kit also contains a list of apps to download.

"These apps can help our local students deal with stress during this pandemic," Bugner-Smith explained. "They come recommended by school counselors."

"Students of all ages have had to adjust to an ever-changing environment in their communities, homes and schools," she added. "This service project is just a small token of acknowledgement that we care about each and every one of them."

Country Living of Larned also contributed funds for the project and Office Products Inc. donated the printing costs.

The Culture Committee at The University of Kansas Health System Pawnee Valley Campus played a big role in collecting items for the kits, Bugner-Smith noted.

Brooke Harting, committee member, said "I have a child in the Pawnee County school system. Like many other parents, I see the toll the uncertainty has taken on children. We want them all to know we are thinking of them and they are important to us."

"I am so grateful for the community we serve," she added. "We can always count on local residents' willingness to help their neighbors."

Harting added that she appreciates the efforts of Bugner-Smith and Kimi Bowman, another committee member.

Bowman said the entire committee got on board with this project "to support students during these difficult times. Julie Bugner-Smith took charge and brought all this together. Brooke Harting offered a lot of good ideas to make this happen."

Harting and Bowman emphasized that other committee members played equal parts in getting the job done.



Pawnee Valley Community Hospital (PVCH) Foundation representatives deliver sensory kits to Fort Larned Elementary School students. Adults in the background, from left to right, are: Julie Bugner-Smith, Foundation director; Laura Smith and Suzan Haynes, both Foundation trustees; and Kimi Bowman, Culture Committee member. Brooke Harting, another Culture Committee member, is not pictured.

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VIRTUAL

January 7, 2021

PAWNEE VALLEY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

Pawnee Valley Campus focuses on delivering quality patient care. They 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.

VIRTUAL

January 14, 2021

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity has been in Barton County since 2001. Our non-profit organization gives a hand up, not a hand out. Every donation received is used to build or remodel homes for our partner families, who then purchase the home through a zero-interest, 25-year mortgage.

IN-PERSON

January 21, 2021

CENTRAL KANSAS CASA

Straub's Powersports | 200 S Patton Rd

The mission of Central Kansas CASA, Inc. is to serve as an advocate for abused and neglected children by providing a pool of trained caring volunteers who speak for the best interest of a child until a safe, loving, and permanent home is found.

VIRTUAL

January 28, 2021

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VIRTUAL

February 4, 2021

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