



MARCH 2019 • VOLUME 98 NO. 3

# OUTLOOK BUSINESS JOURNAL

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## 2018 Award Winners Recognized During Chamber & E.D. Annual Meeting & Banquet

### Keller Real Estate & Insurance Wins Business of the Year for Commitment

For their commitment to the people of Central Kansas, Keller Real Estate & Insurance was named the 2018 Business of the Year. Keller Agency was founded by Norman C. Keller in January of 1968. With a background in farming, automotive sales, insurance sales, and real estate sales, he set out on his own after completing a Dale Carnegie course in speaking and human relations. - [Cont. on Page 2](#)

### Barry Bowers Receives Citizen of the Year Award for Volunteerism

For unwavering volunteerism and selfless service to the Great Bend community, Barry Bowers earned the 2018 Citizen of the Year award. Bowers was a 1979 graduate of Great Bend High School and 1981 graduate of Barton Community College. That was also the year that he married his high school sweetheart, Monica. - [Cont. on Page 3](#)

### Rachel Mawhirter Named NextGen Leader of the Year

For passionately creating a meaningful impact as a rising leader in our community, Rachel Mawhirter was presented with the 2018 NextGen Leader of the Year award. As a lifelong resident of Great Bend, Rachel Mawhirter has a love for her hometown that is unmatched. - [Cont. on Page 4](#)

### Legacy Award Goes to GBRC

Children and families are the cornerstone of any growing community, and no organization has worked harder at improving Great Bend's quality of life than the Great Bend Recreation Commission. It is for that reason that they were awarded with the 2018 Legacy Award. - [Cont. on Page 10](#)



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## Keller Agency Wins Business of the Year (cont.)

Because he and his wife, Karen, had three preschool aged children to support, success was the only option. After 12 years of steady growth, Keller purchased the building at 1101 Williams where they still operate today. The building was remodeled and the operation was moved into the facility in January of 1981. It was the same year that Keller Real Estate & Insurance Agency was also incorporated. "That was a big year, not only because of our company's milestones, but also because of the huge flood Great Bend experienced that June," says Kevin Keller, one of Norman's sons and a current broker for the agency. "The office building was flooded, but this was minor compared to the impact it had on our community, and the sales in our real estate and insurance divisions."



Kevin and his brother, Jeff, have been involved with the business for most of their lives. When the flood happened in 1981, they helped Norman clean up the mud and the mess in their office and their rental property. Kevin and Jeff also worked on the firm, painted rental houses, mowed yards, repaired signs, and did whatever else Norman needed them to do. Karen also brought home leads from friends that needed to buy or sell a house, and the couple's daughter, Kim, worked Saturdays at the office through high school.

In 1986, Kevin officially entered the business after graduating from Fort Hays State University. Jeff joined in 1988 after graduating from Fort Hays State University and working at Marmie Motors for a year. After working alongside their father for several years, the brothers became stockholders and eventually assumed a leadership role in 1999 when Norman passed away from cancer at the age of 62. Several employees who have since retired, including Marsha Kelly and Renee Johnson, helped ease the transition.

In 2003, the agency merged with Keenan Real Estate, increasing the size of the real estate sales team by 5 realtors. Both the real estate and insurance divisions have continued to grow over the years, with today's team at 13 realtors and 9 experienced staff members, six of them holding insurance licenses. The full-service independent agency represents more than ten insurance companies, helping clients quote multiple types of policies and coverage options. "We are honored to have served several generations of the same families, and only time will tell if any of the third generation of Kellers will take over some day," Kevin says. "Several of our kids have worked in the office and helped with maintaining properties. It's a business that we are proud of, but we are most proud of our people and the thousands of clients we have helped over the years."

### Business of the Year Criteria

"Business of the Year" is an annual award presented by the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce to showcase companies that demonstrate excellence in customer service, growth, and response in positive ways to adversity. Businesses must also show community involvement and demonstrate innovative business practices by improving products, services and programs.

## Join Us for Final Legislative Coffee Mar. 9

The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development invites you to attend the final Legislative Coffee of the season, happening Saturday, March 9th in the Spray-Holt Family Board Room inside the Chamber office, 1125 Williams Street. These events are designed to give local constituents the chance to network directly with their elected officials, and this meeting will include both State and Federal legislators.

Special guest Dr. Roger Marshall will be attending that morning to provide an update and discuss the issues happening in the federal government, starting at 9:30 a.m. Afterward, the State legislators will provide remarks and answer questions starting at 10 a.m. The event will conclude by 11 a.m.

These events are open to the public. The 2019 Legislative Coffees are sponsored by Hutchinson Regional Medical Center. Coffee and refreshments are provided.



## Barry Bowers Receives Citizen of the Year Award (cont.)

For several years, he helped manage Bell Rentals, an equipment rental company before setting out on his own as an entrepreneur offering Perma-Glaze resurfacing for tubs and showers all over Central Kansas. But it wasn't until 2000 that Bowers fulfilled his dream of becoming an accountant when he graduated Cum Laude from Sterling College. He earned his CPA designation shortly afterward in 2001.

Barry worked independently for other CPA firms for several years before forming a partnership called Holste & Bowers in 2008 with local accountant David Holste. The two built a successful client base before forming a new partnership called Spectrum CPA Partners in 2016 along with David Zink and Cynthia Lockwood. Together their firm employs ten people and offers a continually expanding list of accounting and bookkeeping services to companies all over the state of Kansas.



While Barry's professional career has been quite accomplished, it's his personal achievements and volunteer service that set him apart from the crowd. Bowers started learning about leadership as a Boy Scout, and was the very first Eagle Scout from troop 184, a troop that he continues to support. He even served as Scout Master for two years, and helped on the Kansas Executive Council as well.

"Barry has volunteered with more organizations than I can count, and I'm not sure if anyone could put the whole list together because he is so humble about it," says longtime friend David Thill. "He's not doing it for the attention or for personal gain. He really cares about others and does what he can to help. He is the best representation of humility and servant leadership."

Over the years, Bowers has served in a variety of public capacities including being elected to the Great Bend City Council, serving on the Barton Community College Foundation Board, volunteering as a Chamber Ambassador, and he's always been an active part of his church in many capacities. Other past volunteer roles include serving on the Habitat for Humanity board as a director and also as president, United Way board of directors and campaign co-chairs, and as a Grand Marshall for the Home for the Holidays Christmas parade. And those are just the he no longer wears.

Currently, Barry is volunteering his time and his talents for more than a dozen local organizations, some focused on social issues and poverty while others are focused on business and preserving local history. These organizations include:

- Ellinwood Foundation - Current Treasurer
- 100+ People Who Care - Board Member
- Almost Home, Inc. - Board Member & Treasurer
- Central Kansas Development, Inc. - Board Member & President
- Barton County Historical Society - Board Member & Treasurer
- Central Kansas Dream Center - Board Member & Treasurer
- Grace Community Church - Elder, Board Member, Finance Committee
- Great Bend Foundation - Board Member, Secretary & Treasurer
- Kiwanis Club - Member & Past President
- Gideon's - Board Member & President
- Healing Hearts Ranch - Board Member
- Child Abuse Prevention Education (CAPE) - Board Member

Barry is also an active member of the Golden Belt Woodcarver's club, and has won numerous ribbons for his craftsmanship creating character carvings by hand. Bowers is a certified Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University instructor, volunteering his time to teach numerous classes over the last ten years to help people manage their finances and get out of debt. "There could not be someone more deserving than Barry for this award," Thill concluded. "If you look around at the good things that have happened for local organizations over the years, chances are that Barry Bowers had a hand in their progress at one time or another. He is the cream of the crop."

### Citizen of the Year Criteria

The "Citizen of the Year" award is presented by the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development to recognize an individual for their volunteer service. The winner must be creating a meaningful impact as a role model for others, and be seen as a leader who has helped pave the way in their workplace and in the community.

## Outlook Business Journal

A monthly publication of the

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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.

## Mawhirter Claims the NextGen Leader of the Year Award

After high school, Mawhirter worked for the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development in marketing, communication, and events. While working there, she completed her degree in Organizational Leadership at Fort Hays State University and began using what she was learning to improve the processes at the Chamber, as well as on numerous boards and committees as a volunteer.

During her time at the Chamber, she also helped with the revitalization of the Barton County Young Professionals program. Utilizing her passion for growing Great Bend, she then moved on to work as the Physician Recruiter and Marketing Director for the hospital in town. During this same time, her marketing savvy brought her numerous projects for other companies and inspired Mawhirter to launch her own marketing and design firm called Marketing Maven in the fall of 2016.

Nels Lindberg, owner of Animal Medical Center, had this to say about Mawhirter: "We began working with Rachel on marketing objectives when she was doing this as a side hustle. And it didn't take long to realize she had the "mojo," the traits and behaviors of what it takes to get is done and be very successful. We like to surround ourselves and collaborate with rock stars, people willing to work longer, harder and smarter than all others, people that are willing to sacrifice and grind until the job gets done. Rachel exemplifies these things. She is willing to go above and beyond to get the job done, take criticism and have hard conversations and respond well. Her level of service is spectacular and her desire to make change, impact lives, help businesses look good, and to help grow business, non-profits and charities is evident by outcomes and results. We are super proud of her, her family, her people and her business!"

Not only is Mawhirter seen as business leader in the community, her desire to make Great Bend a better place for everyone, drives her to give back in a huge way. She is one of the founding members of the Prairie Godmother Funds, an endowment that provides grants to fund emergency needs for women in Barton County. Mawhirter was also instrumental in launching 100+ People Who Care group in Barton County, as well as a group called The Tribe for female entrepreneurs. She continues to volunteer her time for both organizations. She is also currently serving on the Board of Directors for ElderCare Inc and Central Kansas Development Inc, as well as volunteering on the BCYP Community Impact Team.

In the past, she has served on the Steering Committees for MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers), Barton County Young Professionals, and in advisory capacities such as the Great Bend High School Journalism Site Council and Barton Community College Business Advisory Board. For several years, she volunteered on the Board of Directors for Habitat for Humanity, including leading the organization as Board President. Through her company, she also donates much of her time to help local non-profits with their fundraising and marketing projects.

Rachel and her husband Justin, also own a construction company known as Just in Time Remodeling. The couple lives in Great Bend with their two sons – Jace (7) and Emmett (4). They are active, involved members of First Assembly of God Church and enjoy spending time with family and friends.



## Thank You for Your Service, Representative Lewis

In 2016 Greg Lewis was elected to represent the 113th district in the Kansas House of Representatives. He resigned from this position effective February 22 due to a glioblastoma, a cancerous brain tumor that grows exponentially. Greg Lewis has always been a true gentleman during his years of service and a proud advocate for the rural way of life and the issues facing small communities. As a fourth-generation cattle rancher, he understands the challenges and opportunities for this area and he worked tirelessly for the citizens of this district.

Greg – thank you for your kind heart, your hard work, your dedication to our state and your immeasurable fortitude in working for the people of the 113th district. All the very best to you and your family during this difficult time. Please know that we stand behind you and thank you for all you have done.



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**MARCH 16TH**

GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER  
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## HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS IN MARCH

- 1... Adult's Night Out Movie, Great Bend Public Library, 1409 Williams St @7pm
- 2... Sunflower Diversified Services Charity Gala, Great Bend Events Center, 3111 10th St @5:30pm
- 2... Home Beer Brewing 101, Heartland Farm, 1049 CR 390, Pawnee Rock @4pm
- 3... Caregivers Count Support Group, First Christian Church, 5230 Broadway Ave @2pm
- 5... Movies with a Message: The Greatest Showman, Dominican Sisters of Peace, 3600 Broadway Ave @6:15pm
- 7... **Chamber Coffee: Great Bend Coffee, 2015 Lakin Ave, Program @9:30am**
- 7... **Chamber Connect on KVGB 1590AM or 97.7FM @11:30am**
- 7... Kiwanis 59th Annual Pancake Feed, Barton County Fairgrounds, Expo I @ 4-7pm
- 9... **Legislative Coffee, Chamber Board Room, 1125 Williams St @9:30am**
- 9... Battle of the Barns, Barton County Fairgrounds @12pm
- 9... Lenten Retreat, Heartland Center for Spirituality, 9am - 3pm
- 10... Auditions for "Daddy's Girl", Great Bend Community Theater, 1905 Lakin Ave @2pm
- 10... Installation of Pastor Michael Munz at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 21st & Polk @3:30pm
- 11... Auditions for "Daddy's Girl", Great Bend Community Theater, 1905 Lakin Ave @7pm
- 13... Western KS Human Resource Management Association Meeting, Robbins Center, One Tiger Place, Hays @11:15am
- 14... **Ribbon Cutting: Almost Home Celebrates 5 years, 1419 Van Buren St @9am**
- 14... **Chamber Coffee: That Hipster Place / BBE Signs & Designs, 2100 10th St, Program @9:30am**
- 16... Spring Pop-Up Market, Dilly & Doc, 1119 Main St @ 10-4
- 16... **BCYP Casino Night, Barton County Fairground, Expo I @6pm**
- 16... Home and Garden Show, Great Bend Events Center, 3111 10th St @9am
- 16... Home Beer Brewing 101, Heartland Farm, 1049 CR 390, Pawnee Rock @6pm
- 19... Central KS Partnership Meeting, Barton County Health Department, 1300 Kansas Ave #B @11am
- 20... Education and Employment Expo, Barton's Case New Holland Shop @1pm
- 21... **Chamber Coffee & Ribbon Cutting: Circles of Central Kansas, 2123 Forest Ave @9:00am**
- 21... Presbyterian Church Irish Stew, 2400 Washington St. @4:30pm
- 22... Red Shoes and Bunco Too, Great Bend Events Center, 3111 10th St @6:30pm
- 23... Lab Fair, University of Kansas Health Systems Great Bend Campus, 514 Cleveland (Use Imaging / Lab Entrance), 6-9am
- 23... KANS for Kids 25th Anniversary Extravaganza, Great Bend Event Center, 3111 10th St @5:30pm
- 23... Children's Theater Tour production of Wizard of Oz, Great Bend Public Library @10:30am
- 28... **Chamber Coffee: Kansas Children's Service League, 3520 Lakin Ave, Program @9:30am**

### 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](http://greatbend.org/events/calendar) for a full list of events happening throughout the month!

## Almost Home, Inc. Celebrates 5 Years with Ribbon Cutting Mar. 14

Since opening to the first residents on March 17, 2014, Almost Home has become known for the low caregiver-to-resident ratio, made-to-order breakfast, homemade meals and personalized resident centered care.

As the only non-profit, faith-based, residential care option in the region, this 6-bedroom, 4-bath personal residence provides a unique neighborhood setting with all the comforts of HOMEplus unmatched quality care. Helping loved one's live well and age well in Great Bend.

We invite you to experience the difference firsthand - Join us for a Ribbon Cutting to celebrate on Thursday, March 14 at 9 a.m. at the residence at 1919 Van Buren in Great Bend.

Having an aging loved one doesn't mean your life can go on hold. In addition to full-time residential care, Almost Home provides Adult Day Care and Respite Service, to help fill in the gaps from an hour a week to an overnight stay to cover a weekend away or family vacation; letting you enjoy some much-needed rest knowing that your loved one is in great hands.

All services require prior notice required for scheduling. If you have questions or would like to schedule a personal tour of the residence, please call Leilani Schenkel at 620-617-1634 or email [admin@almosthomeinc.org](mailto:admin@almosthomeinc.org).







# Kansas Transload Services

## Where Road Meets Rail & Possibility Abounds

Less than two years after the ribbon was cut, Kansas Transload Services (KTS) anticipates “we will break down the door” with new opportunities in 2019 and beyond, said Mark Bartezko, operations manager.

KTS was started by Sherwood Construction, Co, Inc. in 2016 to operate the Great Bend Transload Facility at 8920 8th Street, near the Great Bend Airport. The site was selected in 2015 as one of 2 transload facilities in the State of Kansas in partnership with The Kansas Department of Transportation, Watco Companies – K & O Railroad, The City of Great Bend, The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development and Fuller Industries. Construction began in 2016 with the ribbon cutting taking place the following year

“Sherwood Construction opened for business in 1934 in Wichita. Unloading railcars, now known as “Transloading”, was one of their first endeavors. Sherwood Construction survived this long for a reason.” Bartezko said. “They truly do live by the principles of service, dependability, quality, honesty, and integrity, and specialize in customer satisfaction and the development of long-term relationships. This is the same company that constructed the flood control levee that keeps Great Bend safe from catastrophic flooding like happened in 1981.”

### Other notable Sherwood Companies include:

- Sherwood Construction Co., Inc.
- Greenhill Concrete
- Greenhill Materials
- Wildcat Construction Co., Inc.
- Wildcat Underground Services Division
- Wildcat Concrete Services, Inc.
- Wildcat Golf, Inc.
- Oklahoma Construction Materials
- Midwest Environmental Services, Inc.
- Superior Environmental Compliance, Inc.
- Klaver Construction Company, Inc.
- Borton, LC
- Millennial Asphalt

KTS’s core function is “transloading” goods from truck to rail and rail to truck. They currently focus on bulk cement powder and top quality rock and aggregates railed in from the southeast part of Kansas “Feed yards, farms, drillers, contractors and even quarry owners use our rock because it holds up. That speaks highly of our materials. Some jobs require the absolute cheapest materials available, but on some jobs, the quality of our materials is worth the additional cost. Quality materials are the cornerstone of a quality product.”

“We are looking to be much more than a rock yard, however. The scope and possibilities of this facility would surprise some people,” Bartezko noted.

“The goal is to give the region access to the export and import markets that rural areas have long been logistically isolated from.”

The company is working with its partners and fellow investor in the facility, the K&O Railroad, to expand and diversify the commodities and products coming in and going out of KTS.

In 2017 KTS had a meeting with the Kansas Department of Agriculture and various organizations, which showed promise. This was the first step in finding out how to help local entities that want to ship by rail, possibly using shipping containers.

When motorists travel down the road leading to the airport, the wind-turbine part of the business is obvious. But the reach of the Great Bend Transload Facility goes far beyond storing and transporting these huge components. One new opportunity that arose is Watco’s Pawnee County laydown site, which is a wind-turbine-component expansion of what started at the Great Bend transload facility.

KTS has three to four employees on site, while Watco has about a dozen others. Three of these jobs are in management, while the remainder are field hands and equipment operators. “We created jobs for people with oilfield and ag skills and enhanced those skills,” Bartezko said. “We also use local truckers to transport materials to projects within a 200-mile radius, which helps a variety of businesses and industry.”

But it’s not just business and industry that can reap KTS benefits. “For instance,” Bartezko explained, “we sell all of our rock and aggregate products to the public, and we can load any truck bed that is bigger than 12 feet.”

“Railroad tracks cost a lot of money The tracks coming into the industrial park were unusable prior to the development of this project. With the KDOT funding, they were rehabilitated and three new tracks were put in. We took something that wasn’t usable and made it into a transload facility.” Bartezko said. K&O owns the tracks and is a subsidiary of Watco Companies of Pittsburg.

“K&O and the City looked into site development early on,” Bartezko said. “But funding had to come first.” The Kansas Department of Transportation played an instrumental financial role in getting the facility up and running. It provided \$3 million of the \$8 project. The rest came from private industry. The operations manager appreciates the cooperation of the many entities that have contributed and will continue to contribute to success at the Great Bend Transload Facility.





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## Annual Farm & Ranch Expo Approaches Apr. 10-12

Great Bend has a rich history in the agricultural trade show business. But since 2012, that reputation has been improved and expanded with the Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo. The 7th Annual event is coming up April 10-12, 2019 at the Great Bend Expo Complex, where hundreds of exhibitors from 27 states, Canada and Australia spread out over 80 acres at the Great Bend Expo Complex located 2.5 miles west of Great Bend's City limits. Show hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday.

Daily entertainment, demonstrations, giveaways, and concessions draw thousands of producers, ranchers, and agriculture professionals from all over the Midwest for this world class exposition. If you are interested in volunteering or in purchasing an exhibit space, contact the show office at 866-685-0989, cell 785-332-6506, or visit [www.greatbendfarmandranchexpo.net](http://www.greatbendfarmandranchexpo.net). The Great Bend Farm & Ranch Expo provides a significant boost to our local economy. The Chamber would like to encourage local businesses to participate in the show and prepare to welcome visitors from across our region!

## BCC Education & Employment Expo Set for March 20

Anyone looking to get a start after high school or switch careers should consider attending the Education and Employment Expo hosted by Barton Community College from 1-7 p.m. March 20. The event is targeted towards individuals who are unemployed, underemployed or looking for a career change. The featured programs are Welding, Agriculture, Automotive, Natural Gas, Scale Technician and CDL. Each will have a booth to promote educational opportunities. Barton's program-specific advisory board members, community businesses and support services are invited to have a booth. Commitments have been secured for the Educational Opportunity Center, Hammel Scale, Golden Belt Feeders, Gaviion Grain, Red Barn, City of Great Bend and Skillet Trucking. "It is our hope that individuals attending will be interested in completing a program at Barton to obtain employment at a company in attendance and the companies in attendance will develop an understanding for how Barton can benefit their businesses," said Mary Foley, Executive Director of Workforce Training and Economic Development. The event is free and open to the public. To reserve a free booth space for your business, contact Instructor Maggie Tracy at (620) 786-1120.

## Tribune Sweeps Press Association Newspaper Awards

It was a sweepstakes sweep for the Great Bend Tribune. At the 2019 Kansas Press Association Awards of Excellence luncheon in February, the newspaper earned the sweepstakes award for both editorial and advertising. The honors were the culminating event of the annual three-day KPA convention at Topeka's Capitol Plaza Hotel. "These awards mean a great deal to us, being recognized by our peers for what we do here," said Tribune Publisher Mary Hoisington. "They are an affirmation of the quality work we do here and the dedication of our hard-working journalists, account representatives, designers and artists."

But, it means more than that, she said. "The honors are a representation of our community," Hoisington said. "We are committed to being a community newspaper. Our strength comes from our partnerships with those we serve."

Points are given to a newspaper for each first, second and third place award received, and the newspapers with the highest cumulative points in their division are declared the winners. There are separate awards for news and writing, and for advertising.

In all, the Tribune garnered 63 awards for both editorial and advertising, 39 for news and 24 for ads. They were about evenly divided between first, second and third placings.

"We want to thank all of those who have supported us this past year, and in the 142 years we've called this area home," Hoisington said. For an entire list of the awards, visit the Great Bend Tribune online at [gbtribune.com](http://gbtribune.com).



## GREAT BEND FARM & RANCH EXPO

### 8TH ANNUAL



April 10-12, 2019

[www.greatbendfarmandranchexpo.net](http://www.greatbendfarmandranchexpo.net)

April 10th 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

April 11th 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

April 12th 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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space today!**



## Best-One Tire & Service Welcomed to Great Bend

Best-One Tire and Service celebrated the opening of its new location at 904 Washington St in Great Bend with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on January 30. Members of the local Chamber of Commerce were on hand for the dedication.

Formerly Becker Tire Retail-Great Bend, Best-One Tire and Service recently purchased the operation and plan to offer unrivaled customer service as well as the best prices on new tires. Jesse Defenbaugh remains the manager of the new Best One Tire and Service in Great Bend, so customers can expect the same great service along with lower prices and a larger selection.



## Bridge to a Healthy Kansas - Medicaid Expansion

Kenny Wilk, Vice-President of Governmental and Community affairs recently addressed the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development regarding Medicaid Expansion and The Bridge to a Healthy Kansas. According to information provided by Wilk, The Bridge to a Healthy Kansas is a unique Kansas solution that makes health care coverage affordable for approximately 150,000 hard-working low-income Kansans. If the state supports The Bridge to a Healthy Kansas, there are increased state Medicaid costs, but those costs are offset by a new state revenue and reductions in other health care spending. Federal matching funds for expanding health care coverage in Kansas will pay the majority of the costs. The state portion is significantly less than what Kansas pays for current KanCare recipients and is well beyond budget-neutral. The Chamber/ED Board of Directors issued a letter of support to The University of Kansas Health System for this program.

## BCYP Members Gather for Casino Night Mar. 16

Barton County Young Professionals members are invited to the 6th Annual Casino Night on Saturday, March 16th at 6 p.m. in the Expo I building, (2 miles West of Great Bend). Casino Night is proudly sponsored by Cornerstone Automotive and Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball, Chtd. Suggested attire for the evening is "snappy casual!"

Following dinner, attendees will be invited to enjoy exciting casino games, social networking, and prize drawings at the end of the night. Only 200 tickets will be sold, so reserve yours early! Tickets are \$25 per person for general admission dinner tickets, or companies can reserve corporate sponsored tables with program recognition for \$300 (table of eight). Corporate tables will receive VIP treatment and extra perks! Purchase your tickets or reserve a table in the Facebook event on the Barton County Young Professionals page!



## Jan Peters Selected as Leadership Kansas Chair

Leadership Kansas is a statewide program that was designed to enhance and motivate future leaders from various Kansas communities. It is one of the oldest and most prestigious statewide leadership programs in the country. Each year, close to 600 people are nominated to apply for the program. After a thorough and thoughtful application and selection process, 40 individuals are selected to participate in the class.

Leadership Kansas is dedicated to ensuring geographic, racial, occupational, and gender diversity so that each class truly represents the state. Once selected, the class orientation emphasizes leadership skills and development.

Class members meet with recognized experts from a vast array of fields and professions to engage in educational and informational training sessions in six different Kansas communities.

Discussion topics are diverse and may include: business, education, agriculture, public policy, societal health and development, economics, and government — all of which contribute to the personal and professional development of each class member.

Jan, a member of the 2009 Leadership Class and former Chairperson of the Orientation sessions, was selected to serve as the State Program Chair for the 2019 Class. In this role, she will coordinate all details of the program with the six community leaders and the Leadership Kansas staff to ensure a successful program for the 40 Kansas leaders. Class members gain enhanced communication skills, creativity, exposure to future business trends, and the ability to expand their thought processes by their exposure in this program.





# EXPLORE GREAT BEND REC



Great Bend  
Recreation Commission  
1214 Stone Street  
620.793.3755

Great Bend  
Activity Center  
2715 18th Street  
620.793.3755

facebook.com/greatbendrec



## Great Bend Rec Commission Earns Legacy Award (cont.)

When the State of Kansas legislature formed recreation commissions all over the state over 70 years ago, Great Bend's residents appreciated the sentiment that rural Kansans deserved a quality recreation system. On April 6, 1948 the Great Bend Recreation Commission was officially organized and hired their first director a year later. Carl Soden, a military veteran, came to Great Bend after teaching and coaching in Caney, Kansas. According to Soden, "during these formative years, there were no recreation facilities in Great Bend. There were four grade schools - only one with a gym and one softball and baseball field."

The very limited staff in the beginning got by with very little, using vacant lots with snow fence around them as ball fields. Swimming lessons were operated from a lighted pool with three diving boards. The first annual report from 1949 listed 749 participants engaged in various activities such as basketball, bowling, swimming lessons, art classes, softball and baseball, and adult volleyball - all programs still being offered to this day. But there were also a few that today's residents may not be as familiar with, such as a marbles tournament, a snow sled derby, and community wide parties held at the KVGB radio station for Easter, Halloween, and Christmas.

Now in 2018, the Great Bend Recreation Commission enrolled more than 6,969 residents enrolled in recreation programs plus another 645 non-residents for a total of 7,614 people participating throughout the year. When you count all the individual programs they participated in such as fitness, sports, after school programming, art, cooking, adaptive learning, adult programs, etc the total number for individual enrollments climbs over 159,000. The Rec also employs 9 full time staff members as well as 180 seasonal and part time positions.

Throughout the last 70+ years serving the Great Bend community, there were several important milestones that built toward the legacy being celebrated today. In 1969, the Recreation Center was built and shortly afterward a master plan for Veterans Memorial Park was developed in the mid 1970s. "The visioning that was taking place back then has set a legacy in motion that future directors have continued to build upon, each bringing their own strengths to the table," says Diann Henderson, the Rec's Executive Director for over 30 years. "Carl Soden and Paul Keller, my predecessors, each earned a spot in the Kansas Recreation & Parks Association (KRPA) Hall of Fame, and Great Bend has a really good reputation for excellence in our industry."

Henderson herself has earned several impressive accolades, including the KRPA Distinguished Professional Award, received the Blue Cross Blue Shield Chip Award, KRPA Special Service Award, KRPA Award for Excellence in Recreation Programming, and is a member of NRPA. Under Henderson's leadership, she and the rest of her team have continued pursuing healthier living and activities for everyone, with several noteworthy accomplishments in recent years that were all future-focused. One example is the partnership between the McKinna Ann Hope Foundation in bringing the first totally inclusive destination playground known as "My BackYard Playground" located at the Great Bend Activity Center.

"The Rec garners these partnerships for the pursuit of active lifestyles with non-profit organizations, private businesses, the City of Great Bend and USD #428 school district in assuring recreation opportunities and modern recreation facilities are available for public recreation interests," Henderson says.

### Other recreation facility and program highlights over the past several years include:

- Great Bend Sports Complex
- Redesign of the Great Bend Disc Golf Course
- Great Bend Fit Trail
- The Music Park at Veterans Lake
- Wetlands Aquatic Park
- Great Bend Activity Center
- Additional T-Ball Field at Westfall Park
- Two Practice Fields at Lincoln School
- Remodeling the Recreation Center
- Cavanaugh Wellness Center
- Great Bend Mural Project
- Imagination Playground
- Summer Youth Theatre Program
- Special Events such as the Kite Festival and Oozefest Volleyball Tournament



- Story Continued on Page 11

## 3 Reasons to Hire The HR Pro



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## Great Bend Rec Commission Earns Legacy Award (cont.)

And that doesn't begin to list the countless youth, high school, and collegiate baseball and softball tournaments our community has hosted because of the Recreation Commission's leadership in recruiting and hosting teams from all over the Midwest. Nor does it list the long and growing list of afterschool programs, summer camps, swimming lessons, senior programs, and many other activities being facilitated by the Rec every year.

In 2018, the Rec also launched a new, mobile friendly website offering online registration and a newly designed logo that emulates the "R" for the Rec as well as the bend in the Arkansas River that is so iconic to Great Bend's geography.

The Great Bend Recreation Commission's legacy has evolved over 70 years, bringing Great Bend together in pursuit of healthier living and activities for everyone. Today, the Recreation Commission vision statement notes: "We will champion community and personal growth through lifelong recreation experiences." This statement is reflected in the quality of life experiences and benefits the Recreation Commission promotes as an active community through its programs for all ages and abilities, tournaments, community events, and creating and recreating play spaces within public facilities and parks.

"These recreation services are not only a quality of life issue, they are also significant economic generators with local spending, visitor spending, in promoting healthy and active lifestyles which attracts new businesses which creates a vibrant community," Henderson says. "As to the next 70 years of legacy... the Recreation Commission will continue to energize Great Bend!"

## Fuller Industries Celebrates Nationwide Growth

Fuller Industries was recently announced as a preferred supplier for Afflink, a nationwide sales and marketing organization for janitorial, sanitation, packing, safety, industrial and office supply solutions.



"Becoming a preferred supplier is an exciting step for Fuller Industries," Blake DeBord, Vice President of Sales said. "It provides us the opportunity to expand into markets that we haven't been able to serve until now."

Afflink represents more than 500 janitorial distributors across the United States and the janitorial needs of Performance Food Group (PFG).

Fuller Industries manufactures commercial cleaning products and custom brushes. It was founded in 1906 as the Fuller Brush Company. Fuller Industries is based out of Great Bend, Kansas. You can learn more about Fuller Commercial Products online at [www.fullercommercial.com](http://www.fullercommercial.com).

## ABBB Welcomes Kuehl, New Staff Accountant

The certified public accounting firm of Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball, Chartered (ABBB) is pleased to announce the addition of Jason Kuehl to their professional team as a staff accountant. "We welcome Jason to the ABBB team," said Brian Staats, CPA, CGMA, managing partner of ABBB. "We are excited about the skillset he brings to our team and the clients we serve."



Originally from Independence, Kansas, Kuehl is a 2018 graduate of Emporia State University, holding a Bachelor of Science in Business with a major in Accounting and a minor in Information Systems. He works in both the firm's tax and audit departments. When away from the office, he enjoys spending time with family, playing and watching soccer, and bike riding.

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](http://www.abbb.com).

## GREAT BEND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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**Accountants**

## BCC Foundation Now Accepting Sponsors & Shooters for Clay Shoot

The Barton Community College Foundation Sporting Clay Shoot has become a staple in the event schedule of avid sportsmen across Kansas and beyond, drawing shooters from Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri and Texas. The 10th annual shoot is set for Sunday, April 14 at Camp Aldrich.

The event provides funds for faculty mini-grants. The annual Clay Shoot has provided more than \$86,000 has been awarded to faculty to ensure they deliver the highest level of academic excellence possible for all Barton students.

Sponsorships and guest registrations are now being accepted. Sponsorship levels start at \$150, and individual registration is \$75 per person. Learn more and get signed up at [www.bartonccc.edu](http://www.bartonccc.edu), or contact Colleen Cape: 620-792-9306.





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## **CHAMBER COFFEE SCHEDULE** **Every Thursday | Doors Open at 9am | Program at 9:30am**

**March 7, 2019**

### **GREAT BEND COFFEE**

**2015 Lakin Avenue in Great Bend**

We want to thank everyone for their support for the past 4 years. In 2018 we started a full breakfast with eggs, pancakes, waffles and all the extras. Serving breakfast 7-10a.m., Mon-Fri and 8-10a.m. on Saturdays. We have 65 different sandwiches, salads, wraps, and pizzas with specials daily. We take reservations for Friday & Saturday evening dinners with a full menu including steaks, pasta, seafood, as well as other specials. AND, we Do Coffee!

**March 14, 2019**

### **THAT HIPSTER PLACE / BBE SIGNS & DESIGNS**

**2100 10th Street in Great Bend**

We believe that home is less about furnishings and more about the memories we create. We strive to bring those concepts hand in hand. At That Hipster Place, we not only offer unique boutique style home goods but coffee, community, and social events too.

**March 21, 2019**

### **CIRCLES OF CENTRAL KANSAS**

**First United Methodist Church | 2123 Forest Avenue in Great Bend**

The Circles program connects people in relationships across income lines and helps develop clear goals for education and stable income. Circles also focuses on supporting families to help themselves completely out of poverty. Circles of Central Kansas is a joint effort between the Barton County Health Department, 20th Judicial District Community Corrections, the Essdack program at the Barton County Academy, and Kansas Kids @ Gear Up.

**March 28, 2019**

### **KANSAS CHILDREN'S SERVICE LEAGUE**

**3520 Lakin Avenue in Great Bend**

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. KCSL is dedicated to providing services and advocacy efforts that focus on preventing child abuse, strengthening families and empowering parents and youth. KCSL is the Kansas chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America.

**April 4, 2019**

### **GREAT BEND PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**1409 Williams Street in Great Bend**

The Great Bend Public Library is a place that is dedicated to the service of its community. Through various free programs and activities for all ages the library becomes a key learning, social, and friendly space that welcomes all.



3307 10th Street • Great Bend, KS 67530

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is providing coffee for Chamber of Commerce coffees.