WHS engineering students compete at KU

Three Winfield High School engineering students competed at the 21st Annual University of Kansas School of Engineering Pumpkin Chunkin’ Contest on Oct. 28.

Adam Beeman, Cooper Bruhn and Thomas Nguyen built a trebuchet (a catapult) at the high school as part of their Principles of Engineering course. The students then traveled to Lawrence to compete in three areas; longest distance, best accuracy at their choice and best accuracy at the college’s choice.

The students had to launch a toy pumpkin as far as possible. The accuracy competition consisted of launching the pumpkin into a bucket at set distances.

Twenty-seven schools and more than 200 students competing for first place medals in each category. The WHS team competed well but did not advance to the final round. Future competitions include the National Design Challenge with the Aerospace Engineering class, a regional construction competition with Digital Electronics and Aerospace Engineering class and a rocketry challenge with the Aerospace Engineering class.

WHS students Thomas Nguyen, standing, Adam Beeman, in cap, and Cooper Bruhn set up their trebuchet at KU for the Pumpkin Chunkin’ contest. (Special to the Courier)
District, teacher salary impasse moves into new phase

**BY MELISSA HOBBS  THE ANDERSON COUNTY REVIEW**

GARNETT - After filing for impasse earlier this year in salary and contract negotiations, the North Anderson County Teachers Association (NACTA) and USD 365 board members met last Thursday night for a two-hour long fact finding session to try to settle their differences.

Charles Krider, a University of Kansas professor and experienced hearing officer who also heard both sides of the Crest fact finding during last year's negotiations at USD 479, was selected by Steve Lopes, director of the 6 Rivers UniServe KNEA who is helping NACTA and attorney Steve Doering who is representing USD 365 Board of Education, to listen to both parties arguments last week.

District Superintendent Don Blome said this is the first time he has ever gone through fact finding procedures as a superintendent, but he thought the hearing last week went fairly well stating that the basic issues on the table revolve around salary and the compensation package.

Lopes agreed with Blome stating that NACTA has asked for a $1,000 raise on their base salary and are arguing for a change in their insurance package. The board has only offered a $300 increase on the base salary.

“Right now they have an exceptionally high premium that requires 100 percent participation,” said Lopes. “That premium just went up $75 per month.”

During fact finding procedures both sides present testimonies.

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**DISPUTE moves to fact-finding phase...**

FROM PAGE 1

backing their proposals and a budget analysis is usually part of the process. Lopes said as is typical with most school boards, board members denying having the funds to support the salary increase NACTA is requesting.

USD 479 at Colony took nearly one year to complete negotiations during the 2007-2008 school year, but according to Lopes the environment surrounding USD 365 negotiations are no where near as toxic as in the Crest district.

“The previous superintendent put off negotiations until after June and that delay really complicated things,” said Lopes. “This is more of an issue with neglect and not so much of an issue with hurt feelings and lack of respect like we saw last year at Crest.”

After the fact finding hearing was completed, Krider said he would try to have his reported recommendations available to the parties before Thanksgiving vaca-

tion. Board members and NACTA are required to meet within a set time period after the recommendations are received to attempt negotiations one more time at which point the board can make the decision to deny the hearing officers recommendations and pass a unilateral contract.

“There are a lot of problems we’re going to have to solve,” said Lopes. “But we have a very good board and motivated teachers that just want to get this behind them.”

According to Lopes, this is the first time USD 365 has ever went as far as fact finding during negotiations and impasse has only been filed on rare occasions and very rarely in recent years. Lopes said the board has been trained twice in the use of interest based bargaining but has failed to continue on that path. Crest successfully used IBB to ratify their 2008-2009 contracts within a matter of weeks into the negotiation process.
Former president faces hecklers in Lawrence

He defends son’s oversight of current war in Iraq

John Hanna
AP Political Writer

LAWRENCE (AP) — Former President George H.W. Bush faced a few hecklers Sunday at the University of Kansas as he reminisced about his career and reflected on the economic and international issues dominating the end of his son’s presidency.

The elder Bush said it’s too early to know how history will judge his son’s two terms. He defended his son’s recent oversight of the current war in Iraq after discussing the decision in the first Gulf War not to attempt to topple Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

The former Republican president also dismissed the idea, advanced by many Democrats, that deregulation of the nation’s financial markets led to the economic meltdown this fall. He argued for continued U.S. involvement with China, saying that nation does not want to dominate its neighbors.

The crowd of about 2,000 people was mostly friendly, but security officers escorted a half-dozen hecklers from the auditorium while Bush answered questions from Bill Lacy, director of the Dole Institute of Politics, and submitted by e-mail. The hecklers appeared to be critics of the current president, and none was arrested.

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Bush, the nation’s 41st chief executive, came to the university to receive the 2008 Leadership Prize from the Dole Institute of Politics. He praised Bob Dole, the former Senate majority leader and 1996 Republican presidential nominee, and had kind words for other prominent figures — even President Nixon, forced to resign in 1974 because of the Watergate scandal.

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“I can’t hear, unfortunately,” the 84-year-old former president said. “I’m deaf and old.”

He was interrupted a third time when he said Obama faces huge problems. A man in the audience shouted, “Whose problems are they? Who made them?” Bush didn’t answer as the man left.

In discussing his son’s presidency, Bush said he made an effort not to give his son advice. But he said his son surrounded himself with good people and added that the current Iraq war wasn’t an issue in this year’s election because the troop surge his son imposed worked.

“People that are very critical of our policy in Iraq, if you ask them a simple question, would you want to bring back Saddam Hussein, ‘Oh no, we don’t want to do that,’” he said. “I think it’s a little early to talk about how history will judge this president.”

As for the turmoil in the financial markets, he attributed them to a “cyclical downturn” affecting the global economy. He said problems are facing nations that are “almost socialist” and others that are conservative.

“I don’t think that the question of regulation is what’s causing the problems we’re facing today,” he said. “It’s global. Look around the rest of the world.”

As for China, Bush said it is a more open society, with no communists in its government. He recalled that as the head of the U.S. liaison office there in the 1970s, he remembers
China's leaders quoting sayings from Communist leader Mao and talking about "the dictatorship of the proletariat and all that nonsense."

"I don't believe there's a communist left in the bureaucracy in China," he said. "I don't think they're seeking control over their neighbors as they were back in the post-Vietnam War days."
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Hoch braves Antarctic chill to gauge ice thickness

LAWRENCE — It will be freezing and desolate. But the West Antarctic ice sheet holds scientific mysteries that University of Kansas graduate student Anthony Hoch hopes to solve.

Monday, Nov. 10, the New Zealand native jetted to McMurdo Station on Antarctica where he will double check equipment and undergo survival training. Next, he will fly to the West Antarctic Ice Sheet Base before setting out on a five-day trek across the bitter landscape — to be followed by a month of living inside a tent.

Hoch’s mission is to determine the precise depth of the ice sheet, because that ice could contribute one day to a boost in ocean levels worldwide.

“I’ll be operating a ground-penetrating radar in order to look at ice thickness and to see what’s at the bottom of the ice — and anything else we can see,” Hoch said. “A lot of people say they know exactly how much ice is down there, but until you actually measure it, we don’t know for sure. As far as sea level rise goes — until you know how much ice there is, you don’t know how much water there could be.”

While Hoch is completing his doctoral degree in geophysics, he works as a data analyst with the Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets, a Science and Technology Center established by the National Science Foundation to measure and predict the response of sea level to changes in the ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica. CREsIS is headquartered at KU.

Hoch said he is focused simply on compiling useful, reliable information.

“I don’t really look at if the ice is melting or not,” said Hoch. “My research is dedicated to thickness.”

See Hoch, Page 6

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Neosho Valley

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as corrected. Donna Nickel gave the treasurer’s report. President Rose Yoho reported eight club members attended “Fall Days.”

Jean Parmely reported on the council meeting. Iva Bowen brought the desert. Denise Yoho volunteered to help Parmely with attending council meetings, if necessary, especially Fall Days in October.

There was no unfinished business or new business.

Eva Jean gave the lesson entitled “Everyone to the Table-Family Meals Serve Us Well.”

Sitting down together as a family to meals shows the quality of family relationships. There are a lot of benefits from families sitting down together. Mainly the security it gives the children, their emotional and social support.

Points to Ponder was given by Denise — “Seven Days to a Better You” and “Seven Ways to Save Money.”

Each individual field site where I work. Internationally, there are a large number of groups that work together to gather this data. Then, they put all the data together to determine if overall the ice is melting or not. But I just collect the data. I don’t form the opinions that are released.”

To measure the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, the KU student will operate an Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar, which provides a detailed picture of ice thickness and ice bed topography. The device includes a large computer that stays inside a tracked vehicle, with cables leading to antennas arrayed on a large sled.

Hoch will also deploy technology known as a “seismic streamer.”

“The seismic streamer is a concept where we take seismic cables and geophones connect them all in line, so you spend less time moving the geophones between different shot points,” Hoch said. “What is conventionally done now is that each geophone is individually buried into the snow. The streamer takes an idea borrowed from marine seismic surveys, where you should be able to just drag the sensors along and acquire data more quickly.”

Hoch cautions that when operating sensitive equipment at bone-chilling temperatures, sometimes things go awry.

“Machinery breaks down,” Hoch said. “Sometimes, we can fix it in the field. But Antarctica is not a very friendly environment for putting electronics back together. So we take spare parts and we’re well-trained on how to fix equipment in the field — but things do break.”

Whatever the outcome, Hoch said he is appreciative for the research opportunity in Antarctica that he has earned through his job at CREsIS and studies at KU.

“When I first came here, I really didn’t know which department I was going to be in,” he said. “Geology was something that I always liked, so I picked it up as a study at KU. Originally I only intended on completing my bachelor’s degree. But the fact that I’m here doing Ph.D. work really amazes me. It’s good work.”

Continued from Page 3
Homeschooling

"Eleven percent." That is the percentage of Kansas school-age students who have been taught outside the public school setting. The former Kansas Education Commissioner was always ready to point out that percentage has held consistent for many years.

The actual state of home schooling is rarely understood in any depth. But a doctoral dissertation on "Homeschooling in Kansas" by Patricia Ann Lee-Bishop in Teaching and Leadership at the University of Kansas describes our recent situation.

Kansas is one of 31 states that require home schools to register as private schools. This is the most freedom allotted to homeschools. Some states demand that a curriculum be taught, and some require that homeschooled students pass standard state assessments. Kansas merely keeps tabs on who is being homeschooled, for truancy reasons, and pretty much leaves them free to manage on their own.

The Kansas Department of Education registers schools, not students. Most of the 9,700 nonaccredited private Kansas schools are home schools serving a few children in their own homes. In Kansas, non-accredited schools are not required to hire licensed teachers. Nor are they required to administer state assessments. And they receive no special assistance from the state department of education on curriculum or assessment.

In an 1983 ruling, "...the Kansas Supreme Court stated that home schooling is technically illegal in Kansas because it does not meet compulsory education requirements." However, Lee-Bishop points out that both local courts and state officials recognize parents can operate a private school in their home. Kansas practice expects home school teachers to be competent instructors and class time to be substantially equivalent to that in public schools.

Nationally, nearly three-fourths of home school students are of an age to be in grades 1-5. Most homeschooled students re-enter the public schools by ninth grade. Many parents believe that they can deliver their child's education at the elementary level, but find it difficult to teach the higher secondary level math, science and other specialized classes.

The constant "11 percent" figure is for all Kansas students who are not attending public schools. Many people have the impression that homeschooling is on the rise. That can be true. Many, but not all, home school families have a conservative church affiliation. This tends to draw students away from private religious schools more than from public schools. Nationwide, the percent of children going to private and parochial schools has fallen slightly as homeschools have slightly grown—and the 11 percent level remains roughly the same.

Moderate and liberal folks sometimes claim that homeschooled children are shortchanged academically and socially. However, many homeschools "network," share resources and expertise, and use modern media to share improved curricular materials. Graduates of homeschooling perform well and occasionally excel in university work.

But some home school parents are not religiously motivated. They have gifted children and they homeschool because they find public schools do not challenge their student enough.

The popular contention is funding. The "Establishment Clause" clearly prevents public schools from delivering religious education. We all pay state taxes, the majority of which goes to support public schooling. But a parent who wishes to send their child to a private school or home school, must pay for it themselves. Despite NCLB, education is a state's right. Experiments are continuously being made in various states to use taxes to underwrite non-public education.

Many worry that if public funding is drained away for highly motivated students in private and home schools, public schools will be left with lesser motivated students and less funding. And under the tyranny of No Child Left Behind, there has been even more motivation for some parents to abandon public schooling.

Nevertheless, regardless of which side of the argument you are on, the level of students avoiding public schooling remains...11 percent.

‘Day After’ makers to reunite

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — Members of the cast and crew of a highly watched 1983 TV movie about a nuclear attack on the U.S. are reuniting in Lawrence this week.

The group plans to meet Thursday as part of a 25-year anniversary screening and reunion of ABC’s “The Day After.” The TV movie, filmed mostly in the Lawrence area, broke records with nearly 100 million viewers on Nov. 20, 1983.

The movie showed Lawrence enduring fallout from the blasts of nuclear missiles that struck neighboring Kansas City. It captured the fear that blanketed the nation due to the escalating nuclear arms race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

“We tend to think that with the ending of the Cold War, the nuclear danger has receded; if anything, it has grown worse, with atomic weapons no longer under control of stable governments,” said “The Day After” director, Nicholas Meyer.

Scheduled to appear are Meyer, producer Robert Papazian, actor Jeff East, local casting director Jack Wright and David Longhurst, who was mayor of Lawrence in 1983.

The reunion was inspired by Kyle Harvey, a researcher at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, who specializes in politics and film of the 1980s.

“Something that kept cropping up in my research was this ever-present perception amongst the public that there was an imminent threat of nuclear war,” Harvey said.

Earlier this year, Harvey started kicking around the idea of organizing an anniversary screening as part of his doctorate project.

Harvey said the theme of his project is to find out how the movie resonates in Lawrence.

When principal photography for “The Day After” began in 1982, a small army of cast and crew transformed sites such as downtown and the University of Kansas campus into scorched, devastated blast zones populated by wounded survivors.

Meyer said the film generated significant political fallout and has been credited as changing President Ronald Reagan’s mind about the “feasibility of a winnable nuclear war.”

Harvey will be conducting interviews with residents of Lawrence willing to speak about their experiences with making the film or reactions to watching it.
Former president faces hecklers in Kansas

BY JOHN HANNA
AP POLITICAL WRITER

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Cherokee County graduates received honors during KU game

LAWRENCE — On Saturday, Nov. 15, the University of Kansas honored recipients of its most prestigious scholarships during halftime of the KU vs Texas game in Memorial Stadium.

More than 680 undergraduates were recipients of one of six top scholarships offered at KU: National Merit, National Achievement, National Hispanic, Perfect Achievement, Summerfield and the Watkins-Berger.

Among those were Riverton High School graduate Kyle Mock, son of Steven and Connie Mock, Galena, Kan. He is a senior majoring in Biochemistry. Columbus High School graduate Jay Benedict, he is the son of John and Debbie Benedict, Scammon, Kan. Jay Benedict is a Junior majoring in Strategic Communications. Both gentlemen were Summerfield Scholars.

This year’s scholars represent the largest group since 1999 when KU Chancellor Robert Hemenway initiated Scholars Day on the Field. About 650 are Kansans or are Kansas high school graduates. They represent 58 Kansas counties and 19 other states and countries.

Hemenway invited the scholars and their parents to attend the Scholars Day on the Field recognition program. The students and their parents received complimentary tickets. In addition, the scholars and their parents met with the chancellor and other university officials during a pre-game buffet at the Kansas Union. The chancellor joined the scholars on the field at halftime.

“Taking our most outstanding student scholars out on the football field at halftime is one of my favorite events of the year. It allows KU to introduce our most talented students to a broad audience and it gives our top scholars an opportunity to be recognized for their accomplishments in a unique setting,” Hemenway said.

KU currently enrolls:
• 205 National Merits scholars
• 20 National Hispanic scholars
• 9 National Achievement scholars
• 4 Perfect Achievement scholars
• 220 Watkins-Berger scholars
• 228 Summerfield scholars.

Solon E. Summerfield scholarships for men and the Elizabeth M. Watkins-Emily Berger scholarships for women are awarded to top students graduating from Kansas high schools in recognition of outstanding academic achievements, community service and leadership. Summerfield scholarships are funded through an endowment established in 1929. Watkins-Berger scholarships were first established in 1943.
Local businesses discuss ‘thriving’ in current economy

BY BENTON SMITH
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With the U.S. economy in a tailspin recently, some local small business owners are wondering how they will be affected and what they can do to stay afloat.

Those were the kind of things discussed on Thursday at the Tonganoxie City Council chambers as the Tonganoxie Chamber of Commerce hosted a seminar that doubled as a roundtable discussion on the subject of “Thriving in a Challenging Economy.”

Will Katz, director of the Kansas University Small Business Development Center, spoke at the meeting, opening the discussion with an overview of, as he called it, the interesting time in which we live.

He highlighted this year’s economic lowlights, such as the $700 billion financial bailout and the fact that there have been 29 bank failures this year compared to two in 2007 and zero in 2005 and 2006. All of these things, Katz said, should be a sign of challenging times for small businesses — those that have less than 500 employees and a revenue of less than $100 million.

He offered three important factors small businesses should focus on: “practice cash flow management,” “never stop selling” and “understand change.”

Profits are important, Katz pointed out, and he suggested if people were having trouble making their monthly payments, they should initiate a dialogue with their banker to find possible solutions. When cash gets tight, he said, businesses must have a plan to keep their doors open.

Advertising alone, Katz said, won’t cut it these days. He stressed the importance of salesmanship and told business owners they need to find their “sustainable competitive advantage” and stick with it.

Just as important, Katz said, are both the presence of a business plan and the ability to adapt, which he said requires “hard work and smart work.”

Ultimately, Katz opined, the economy will get healthy.

“We live in an entrepreneurial nation,” he said.

After his presentation, Katz opened the floor for discussion. Local entrepreneurs first breached the topic of the Internet and how Web sites are proving to be better than an advertisement in the phone book.

Darlyn Hansen, owner of Amana Elan Bed and Breakfast, said the small hotel often attracts customers via the Internet, estimating 60 per-
Will Katz, director of the Kansas University Small Business Development Center, addresses local small business owners on Thursday at the Tonganoxie City Council chambers. Katz spoke at a roundtable discussion — sponsored by the Tonganoxie Chamber of Commerce — regarding the challenging economy.