Summer ‘Mini College’

The University of Kansas is accepting registrations for its first-ever “Mini College,” a weeklong learning retreat this summer. The $175 registration fee includes courses, most meals, extra-curricular activities, and a graduation banquet. For an additional $25, educators may be able to receive 2 CEUs.

Mini College is set for June 1-4 at KU’s Lawrence campus and is open to any interested adult. Participants may commute or stay in a hotel or stay college dorm. They may enroll in up to nine classes chosen from almost 30 offerings, including Use It or Lose It: Can You Slow Down Aging?; KU at the Energy Frontier: Our Role in the Large Hadron Collider; Religion and Basketball: Naismith’s Game; and Balancing the Federal Budget: Could You Do Better?

Participants may also enroll in one of four tracks that offer an opportunity to develop deep knowledge of a topic. Options are Independent Film: Outsiders’ Voices; Meet the Authors: English Faculty Book Club; Ecology and Evolution of a Changing Planet; and The Art of Collecting: Curators Share How Museum Pieces Are Chosen.

Act quickly! Registration is open until April 1 for $175; late registrations will be accepted until May 1 for $200. Call 785-864-1767 or visit www.minicollege.ku.edu.

Source: University of Kansas, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Fall 2008 honor roll named by KU

The University of Kansas has named the following Derby students to the fall 2008 honor roll: Collin Thomas Ayer, son of Brady Ayer and Catherine Ayer, freshman liberal arts major; Eric M. Beahan, son of Amy Beahan, senior fine arts major; Sarah Elizabeth Christians, daughter of Joyce and John Christians, sophomore liberal arts major.

Kathryn Marie Durrenberger, daughter of Paul and Vicki Durrenberger, senior liberal arts major; Charles Thomas Gerlach, son of Thomas and Diane Gerlach, pharmacy professional major; Megan Nicole Gerwick, daughter of Frank and Deborah Gerwick, senior liberal arts major.

Victoria Lilian Grandsoul, daughter of Maurice and Herta Grandsoul, sophomore liberal arts major; David Hale Heckathorn, son of Nancy and Kelly Powers, junior liberal arts major; Melissa Lynne Hill, daughter of Michele and Ed Hill, freshman fine arts major.

Aaron Scott King, son of John and Jean King, senior engineering major; Amanda Adele Lewis, daughter of Kevin Link, daughter of Bradley and Joan Link, senior fine arts major; Gena Lenn Milburn, daughter of Gene and Joan Milburn, pharmacy professional major.

Janae Eileen Modlin, daughter of Janell Dyck, senior education major; Kelsey Marie Moffat, daughter of Larry and Jeanne Moffat, senior allied health major; Kathleen Lynn Mosack, senior business major; Natasha L. Parman, daughter of Craig and Dena Parman, senior education major.

Alysha Marie Phillips, daughter of Patrick Phillips, senior business major; Trace Ryan Rodgers, son of Glenda Rodgers, senior business major; Joseph Allen Schremmer, son of Richard and Janice Schremmer, senior liberal arts major; Kevan W. Stout, son of Wayne and Debbie Stout, sophomore liberal arts major.

Danielle Dee Stuhlsatz, daughter of Davina and Robert Stuhlsatz, freshman liberal arts major; Jennifer Lynne Torline, daughter of Lori and John Torline, senior journalism/liberal arts major; Margaret Ann Tran, daughter of Chinh and Lan Tran, junior.

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Cameron Reid Walker, son of Alan and Susan Walker, sophomore business major; Benjamin Matthew Westerman, son of James and Sandra Westerman, senior business major; Sophia Kaska, daughter of Tek and Sarah Kaska, senior liberal arts major; Aaron Matthew Anda, son of Michael and Tina Anda, junior liberal arts major.

Stanislav Nikolaich Sinitsyn, son of Elena Elliott, freshman liberal arts major; Emylisa Jo Warrick, daughter of Joseph Warrick and Elisa Chee-Warrick, junior liberal arts major; John Christopher Weeks, son of Mark and Fayon Weeks, senior architectural engineering major.

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**Don’t let green beer lead to an orange jumpsuit this St. Patrick’s Day**

TOPEKA – Drunk driving in Kansas means jail time, so people who get carried away with green beer just might find themselves wearing an orange jumpsuit the morning after. That’s why KDOT is urging the public to help keep the streets safe this St. Patrick’s Day by drinking responsibly and designating a sober driver before heading to the local parade or pub.

“Celebrating St. Patrick’s Day can be a lot of fun, but it can also take a serious and tragic turn,” said Deb Miller, Kansas Secretary of Transportation. “That’s why KDOT and state and local law enforcement treat drunk driving so seriously, with appropriate penalties – most notably jail time and fines.”

Nationally, statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration show that over the past five years, 851 people lost their lives in motor vehicle crashes during the St. Patrick’s Day holiday. Of those fatalities, 327 were killed in crashes that involved a drunk driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher.

In Kansas, drunk driving crashes spiked in 2006 to the highest level seen in a decade, accounting for 4.9 percent of all crashes. That came after three consecutive years of steady declines. Drunk driving crashes dipped slightly in 2007, the last year for which statistics are available.

While accounting for 4.7 percent of all crashes in 2007, drunk driving was a factor in 8.5 percent of all injury crashes and 28.8 percent of all fatalities. Drunk driving crashes claimed 118 lives in Kansas in 2007 and 1,150 lives in the decade 1997-2007.

In addition to jail – and the possibility of injuring or killing yourself and others – drunk driving also means an arrest record, hefty fines, legal costs and a license suspension.

For a safe St. Patrick’s celebration, KDOT recommends the following:

Plan a safe way home before your celebrations begin.

If you plan to get a ride home with someone else, designate a sober driver before any drinking begins.

If you’re impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation so you are sure to get home safely.

Use a Safe Ride program; simply call the program in your area:

- Pittsburg State University – 620-719-0135
- Washburn University – 785-267-3777
- Wichita State University – 316-681-7433
- Ft. Hays State University – 785-621-2580
- Emporia State University – 620-343-8310
- Kansas State University – 785-539-0480
- University of Kansas – 785-864-7233

If you know someone who is about to drive or ride their motorcycle while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to safely get to where they are going.

For more information, please visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.
PDA donations needed

Dear Editor,

Is your business planning on replacing your handheld technology in the next year or two? Would you consider donating your used PDA, smartphone or GPS device to a Kansan with disabilities or chronic health issues who needs the help that comes from organizational software and way finding devices but cannot afford the technology.

Your regional Assistive Technology for Kansas (ATK) Access Site is operated by the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center in Oakley. Our equipment reuse program offers a unique opportunity for a business planning to replace handheld electronics such as PDAs (personal digital assistants), GPS (global positioning system) devices and smartphones by donating these unneeded devices to benefit Kansans with disabilities. Donated devices in good useable condition can be reconditioned and passed on at no cost to a Kansan who needs it. Additionally, a charitable donation tax benefit is available.

Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) is the Kansas statewide Assistive Technology (AT) Program and provides assistive technology services such as demonstration, evaluation, device loan and training to help people retrain for work or to go to work, to help students be more successful and to help people to be more independent in their community. With 6 locations across Kansas, ATK is focused on increasing access to assistive technology. The program is guided by individuals with disabilities, family members and state agency representatives and is coordinated by staff at the Kansas University Center on Disabilities at Parsons.

I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about the benefits your donated handheld technology holds for people with disabilities. For more information, please call me at 785-672-3125 or 1-800-KAN DO IT.

Sincerely,

Karin Rasmussen
Lead Assistive Technology Specialist
Western Assistive Technology Access Site
The Assistive Technology Department of
Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center
703 West Second
Oakley, KS 67748
KU to honor top seniors in area

LAWRENCE — Students from nine Kansas high schools will be honored Wednesday, April 1, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 36 seniors from high schools in Barber, Harper, Kingman and Pratt counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program at Chaparral High School, 467 N. State Road 14, Anthony.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 100,000 students. Scholars rank in the top 10 percent of their high school senior classes and are selected regardless of curricula, majors, occupational plans or higher-education goals.

Each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardback and CD versions, presented by Stefani Gerson, coordinator of student programs for the KU Alumni Association. Jonathan Earle, associate director of the Dole Institute of Politics, will speak to the students and their parents and guests.

Honored students will be guests of the alumni association and KU Endowment; parents and area alumni are welcome to attend at a cost of $11 each.

The Kansas Honors Program is made possible through KU Endowment and proceeds from the Jayhawk license plate program. Cindy Keller and Marcia Suiter are Pratt County coordinators.

Honorees include:

Cunningham High School: Brian Stackhouse and Jessica Watkins

Medicine Lodge High School: Natalie Archuleta, Elaine Eck, Kevin Kirkbride, Danielle Morford, Seth Oldham, Kaitlyn Traftfas

Pratt High School: Darnell Bortz, Marina Dobbs, Jake Garrett, Caleb Gillig, Paul Harris, Cody Hullman, Bryce Krehbiel, Christopher Nicholson, Zachary Pixler and Nathan Southard

Skyline High School: Katie Becker and Heather Domsch
A new approach to cancer research

Sarah Green  
Kansas Health Institute

Searching for new drugs to treat or prevent cancer is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Just one of every 10,000 compounds manufactured in laboratories winds up on pharmacy shelves, said Scott Weir, director of the University of Kansas’ Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation.

Drug development is costly and time consuming. Once a new compound is discovered, it then can take up to $1.2 billion and 15 years for it to reach the marketplace.

KU researchers are using a strategy to find and improve drugs, particularly those for cancer, that is more often found in a pharmaceutical company than in academia.

The university has hired and plans to recruit well-known researchers in pharmaceutical and medicinal chemistry, among others. And it also has hired people such as Weir who have spent much of their career in industry and have experience managing projects and taking drugs through the research process into the market.

The research and development is a key component of the University of Kansas Cancer Center’s application to obtain National Cancer Institute designation, and one that cancer center’s leaders say will set them apart from other applicants.

“Very few universities and less than a handful of cancer centers that have received the NCI designation have the ability to bring drugs from the test tube to patients,” Weir said.

Building on History

The university had a head start since it already had the various types of laboratories needed to take a drug from discovery to the pharmacy:

• “Discovery” labs for identifying potentially successful drugs;

• “Delivery” labs for finding ways to introduce drugs into the body so they work efficiently; and

• “Development” labs for moving drugs into forms where they can be tested in clinical trials.

“Most of this was already here” when the cancer center began looking at its capability to gain NCI designation, Weir said. “It was a matter of lining things up, focusing on the big picture to advance projects and align assets to advance the cancer center’s effort.”

Weir said the Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation usually has about 72 projects in various stages of development. About half of those are cancer-related.

One is Nanotax, a reformulated version of a popular breast cancer drug that university scientists believe will have fewer side effects than the one now used. It was the first drug developed by scientists here that has entered the clinical trials necessary before federal Food and Drug Administration approval.

A second promising drug, details of which are confidential, is about two years from clinical testing and 6-8 years from reaching market.

Weir said the researchers’ emphasis is less on potential “silver bullets” capable of treating common conditions and more on niche drugs to treat patients with relatively rare forms of cancer, affecting perhaps a few hundred thousand.

National Cancer Institute designation would help KU researchers by opening a new
“pipeline” for drug testing that is only available to institutions in the NCI network, Weir said.

A New Model

The institute Weir oversees was created last year with an $8.1 million grant from the Kauffman Foundation and a matching grant from the University of Kansas Endowment Association. The institute is the umbrella organization for the University’s drug discovery, delivery and development efforts.

That type of partnership with philanthropic institutions marks a shift in the way pharmaceutical research at the university has been funded.

Traditionally, the majority of KU’s drug research has been funded by federal sources such as the National Institutes of Health and the NCI, Weir said, but federal funding has become less reliable.

The university continues to seek such funding and has the goal of attracting $10 million in federal research dollars before it applies for NCI designation in September 2011.

But increasing collaboration between industry, philanthropy, federal and state sources will be key to building and sustaining the research efforts to fight and cure cancer, Weir said.

KU’s approach is impressive, said Louis DeGennaro, chief science officer for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

“I have visited other drug development units at other institutions and they pale by comparison,” he said. “Many other places are playing lip service to drug development.

“They’ve often made it one additional responsibility of a faculty member. KU has an excellent model - they have brought experts in drug development into the university setting. The program is being run to the same standards as you see in pharmacy companies.”
Karlie Brown listed on KU athletics honor roll

LAWRENCE — The University of Kansas honored 392 student athletes named to the Athletics Director’s Honor Roll for 2008 during halftime of the KU-Iowa State men’s basketball game Feb. 18 at Allen Fieldhouse.

Among those honored was Karlie Brown, Clyde, daughter of Kenton and Linda Brown, for rowing. Karlie is a sophomore and a graduate of Clifton-Clyde High School.

Student athletes who achieved a grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale during the spring or fall 2008 semester are eligible for the honor. During the spring semester, 247 qualified and in the fall, 283.

The Athletics Director’s Honor Roll recognizes students in intercollegiate baseball, men’s and women’s basketball, cross country, football, golf, rowing, softball, soccer, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and volleyball. Spirit Squad members also are included.
KU team research prairie-grass meadows in the county

By JUDY KINDER
Linn County News
redjay@hughes.net

MOUND CITY – Most Kansans seem to connect anything pertaining to research of the plants and animals that populate our great state to those ecologists and botanists who are affiliated with Kansas State University.

This is not always the case.

In fact, the Kansas Biological Survey unit for the University of Kansas and the state of Kansas was established in the late 19th century to gather information on the kinds, distribution and abundance of plants and animals across the state and compile, analyze, interpret and distribute this information.

For several summers, biologists and students have visited the countryside with maps and aerial photographs to search for the tallgrass prairies. Once those prairies were found, the group would contact the landowner and request permission to visit the prairie.

Teams of two people were then sent out to walk the property and make a list of all the plant species found. The information was not only recorded, but also provided to the landowner for their records.

Recently, members of this group participated in such studies involving prairie and forest research in Linn County and presented their findings in an informal gathering at Bunker Hill in Mound City.

In their report, they recorded that more than 100 species of plants were found on some prairies and noted that the group was quite impressed with the diversity from an ecological perspective.

Dr. Sid McKnight of Parker, who is actively involved in conservation issues throughout the state, worked together with the group for the presentation.

Over 40 members of the Linn County community were on hand to listen as the group presented their findings and to informally thank those landowners who allowed the KBS group to do their research on their properties.

Information was also presented to the audience regarding how to manage, restore and preserve native prairies.

Additionally, a booklet was presented to those attending focusing on those who have either recently purchased or inherited their land and those who have spent their lifetimes working and enjoying the prairies.

The KBS team included Kelly Kindscher, Plant Ecologist for the Kansas Natural Heritage Inventory, Jennifer Delisle, Information Manager for the Kansas Natural Heritage Inventory, Lynn Byczynski, Project Coordinator for the county inventory project, Quinn Long, Botanist and graduate student at KU and Hayley Kilroy, who will begin graduate school at KU (whose work in Linn County will also form one part of her research for her master’s thesis).

The program is working to identify remnant native prairies in the eastern part of the state.

The group has now moved on to Anderson County, as they continue their on-going research.

Note: for more information or to order a copy of the booklet, “Native Prairie Hay Meadows (a Landowner’s Management Guide)” contact: Kansas Natural Heritage Inventory Kansas Biological Survey Room 135 Higuchi Hall 2101 Constant Ave. Lawrence, Ks. 66047 Phone (785) 864-1529 or email: kindscher@ku.edu
KU awards, 7 recognizes marching band members

Members of the Marching Jayhawks band at the University of Kansas have been honored for their skills, leadership and service.

David Clemmer, director of athletic bands, announced the 2008 outstanding band members, along with scholarship winners and student leadership for the 2009 season, at a ceremony in January.

Those receiving special awards included Outstanding Woodwind Performer Jeremy Vitt of Hiawatha, a junior on tenor saxophone.

Student leaders for the 2009 season include drum majors, section leaders, assistant section leaders, drill instructors and Marching Jayhawks Advisory Committee members.

- Section leaders work during music rehearsal sessions, and drill instructors coordinate drill rehearsals.
- Roles for the advisory committee begin in the spring and include recruitment and helping with summer band camp activities.
KU’s boathouse

THE EMPORIA Gazette’s March 6 edition reported that Kansas University has just completed a $6 million dollar, 16,000-square-foot boathouse. According to the story, KU’s student body voted in 2005 for a student fee to fund the building.

And now, according to the March 9 Gazette, ESU students will vote next month for a fee increase to pay for a $18.5 million dollar renovation of the student union!

I am amazed!

I was under the impression that college educations were becoming so expensive that many students would require taxpayers assistance to help them pay for their education. And I continue to be amazed that $18.5 million dollars or even $6 million dollars could be raised from student fees alone.

I find it difficult to believe that a boathouse and student union renovation will add to the education of any student.

These are just a couple of examples of living way above our means. Americans are in for a shock when they realize we can no longer spend as though money grows on trees.

Barb Nichols
Emporia