KU To Honor Local Students

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, in Anthony.

The Kansas Honor 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.

During the ceremony, 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. There will be a fee.

Community volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as local contacts for the event. Ron Giesen of Anthony will be site coordinator. Bob Slinkard of Medicine Lodge will be Barber County coordinator. Debra Meisenheimer of Kingman and Charles Holcomb of Cunningham will be Kingman County coordinators. Cindy Keller and Marcia Suiter, both of Pratt, will be Pratt County coordinators.

The Kansas Honor Program is made possible through KU Endowment and proceeds from the Jayhawk license plate program.

Honorees from this area include:
Attica High School: Kylee Hermann.
Chaparral High School: Cord Denton, Austin Hughes, Jennifer Kiser and Trevor Starks.

Once the children finish with the educational part of the event, they feast on the tasty food they learned about. What better way to capture a child's attention than to use his or her favorite food for an illustration? Students always enjoy this Ag Day Pizza Party celebration. Many express amazement at their newfound knowledge of agriculture.

They'll also have the opportunity to understand the essential role agriculture plays in maintaining our nation's economy and learn to appreciate the role this industry plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable food products for them and their families.

While the 4th graders probably won't remember exactly how many bushels of wheat, corn or livestock are produced on Kansas farms each year, they will take away something even more important - a new understanding of the foods they eat and the number one industry in Kansas - agriculture. For most, they take home the lesson that the foods they love to eat are produced on the farms across Kansas.
Navarro to have Alternative Spring Break

For some University of Kansas students, the March 16-20 spring break will be a chance to get away and goof off. For the 48 students going to Alternative Spring Breaks sites, it will mean giving back through volunteer efforts and perhaps altering their career paths after graduation.

KU students participating in Alternative Spring Breaks will work with agencies in Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah and Washington D.C. Students have volunteered at five of the seven sites before. Two new destinations will be the Autism Society of Colorado in Denver and the Philadelphia, Pa., locale for Teach for America.

KU's Alternative Breaks program selects service-learning trips that offer students a unique opportunity to make volunteer efforts part of their educational experiences. The program costs participants $275 (or $225 for site leaders) and covers their transportation, housing and meals. Students selected for the program are required to attend the Special Projects in the Community course to prepare for their trips. Participation in Alternative Spring Breaks counts as one unit for the University Honors Program, which requires students who want to graduate with honors to complete one or two honors units outside the classroom.

Alternative Breaks was established in 1995 at KU with a spring break trip to El Paso, Texas, and has expanded every year since. The program works in partnership with KU's Center for Community Outreach, a student-run and student-funded organization that operates 15 volunteer programs and functions as a coordinating group for KU students interested in volunteer projects. The center's projects, along with other student volunteer activities, have helped earn KU its third consecutive mention on the 2009 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

Sonya Navarro daughter of Katy and Rick Pickering will be a site leader for the Senior National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, D.C.

Participants will work at homeless shelters and will prepare and serve meals at various kitchens. They may also help with other projects. Participants are required to take part in an urban plunge, a real-life immersion program involving living on the streets for 48 hours.

More information about the National Coalition for the Homeless can be found at their Website, www.nationalhomeless.org.
Rooks Co. ranked 50th in nation for number of government employees

A recent study conducted by University of Kansas Professor Art Hall, considered township, city, and county government payrolls (excluding school districts). Professor Hall noted, "Twenty-one Kansas Counties rank in the top 100 of all United States counties in full-time equivalent local government employees on a per capita basis."

Senator Chris Steineger (6th District, Wyandotte County) requested the study to present as evidence for SB 198, which proposes a commission to study the unification of 105 Kansas counties into 13 larger, stronger counties. Said Steineger, "As we are staring down a $1 billion deficit and have begun to cut aid to county governments, Kansas must find new ways to ensure that we are not shifting the tax burden to counties, cities and townships."

The 21 Kansas counties in the top 100 in the nation include: Morton, ranked 3rd; Logan, 7; Trego, 10; Gove, 12; Graham, 16; Sheridan, 19; Lane, 20; Meade, 21; Kearny, 25; Wichita, 26; Stevens, 32; Stanton, 33; Coffey, 38; Comanche, 40; Barber, 41; Jewell, 48; Rooks, 50; Rush, 52; Lincoln, 62; Sherman, 76; and Clay, 92.
WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Sam Brownback last week voted against the FY2009 omnibus appropriations bill, which passed the Senate by voice vote. The bill now heads to the President's desk to be signed into law.

"I’m disappointed Congress passed another bloated spending bill," said Brownback. "While my home state of Kansas will see important projects funded in this bill, including roads, hospital upgrades, aviation technology, and critical research at our universities, Congress must practice more responsible spending. If we could spend our way to prosperity, we’d already be there. I strongly support a balanced budget and reforming our earmark and appropriations process, but until we get there I will continue to fight for worthwhile Kansas projects under the current system."

Brownback secured nearly $100 million for Kansas, and worked to secure the following projects in the omnibus bill:

**Agriculture**
- Karnal Bunt Research, USDA ARS facility, Manhattan: $508,000
- Great Plains Sorghum Initiative, Kansas State University, Manhattan: $515,000
- National Ag Biosecurity Center, Kansas State University, Manhattan: $259,000
- Wheat Genetic and Genomic Research, Kansas State University, Manhattan: $240,000
- Pre-harvest Food Safety and Security, Kansas State University, Manhattan: $142,000
- Water Conservation research in Western Kansas, Kansas State University, Manhattan: $69,000
- Kansas Polymer Research at Pittsburg State, Pittsburg: $1,284,000
- Financial Services and General Government
  - Kansas Hometown Prosperity Alliance (rural development), Kansas Farm Bureau: $300,000
  - Kansas Small Business Biobased Polymer Initiative, Kansas Bioscience Authority: $539,363
  - Equipment for Pharmaceutical small Business Development at the University of Kansas: $427,500
  - Medical Faculty Small Business Development at the University of Kansas Hospital: $950,000
  - Technical Education and Training for the Aviation Industry/National Center for Aviation Training, Wichita: $475,000
  - International Trade Compliance in Agri-Business, Kansas World Trade Center: $214,225
  - Commerce-Justice-Science
    - National Center for Advanced Materials Performance at Wichita State University's National Center for Aviation Research: $250,000
    - Wyandotte Co/KCK, Victim Services Unit: $200,000
    - Kansas Attorney General's Office, Meth Prevention: $1,000,000
    - Southern KS Multi-Jurisdictional SWAT: $1,675,000
    - Beginning of site selection for a new federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas: $11,000,000

**Energy and Water**
- The Institute for Energy, Environment, and Sustainability, Johnson County Community College: $713,625
- KU Biofuels Certification Lab: $989,560
- Wilson Lake (Hays): $1,670,000 ($400,000 is available for a water reallocation study)
- Hillsdale Lake: $709,000
- Turkey Creek Basin Construction: $9,570,000
- Missouri River Degradation Study: $84,000
- El Dorado Lake: $619,000
- Wichita-Equis Beds: $1,500,000
- Cheney Lake: $372,000
- Marion Lake: $1,396,000
- Fall River Lake: $1,192,000
- Topeka (water development): $191,000
- Clinton Lake (Lawrence): $1,895,000
- Cross Creek, Rossville, KS (Army Corps priority flood control project)
- Perry Lake: $2,335,000
- John Redmond Dam and Reservoir: $1,668,000
- Melvern Lake: $1,959,000
- Pomona Lake: $1,828,000
- Kansas River Basin Technical Assistance: $400,000
- Kansas Investigations Program: $67,000
- Manhattan (water development): $96,000
- Concordia, KS (Army Corps priority flood control project)
- Eureka Creek, Manhattan, KS (Army Corps priority flood control project)
- Milford Lake: $1,980,000
- Brush Creek Basin: $262,000
- Council Grove Lake: $1,233,000
- Tuttle Creek Lake Dam Construction: $22,776,000

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Brownback
Continued from page one

- Tuttle Creek Lake: $1,982,000
- Kanopolis Lake: $1,316,000
- Elk City Lake: $681,000
- Toronto Lake: $496,000
- Grand (Neosho) River Basin: $57,000
- Pearson-Skubitz Big Hill Lake: $973,000

Interior
- Manhattan, sewer mainline: $185,000
- Salina, water and sewer line extension: $250,000
- Topeka, water and sewer infrastructure: $500,000
- Augusta, water supply infrastructure: $185,000
- Lindsborg, wastewater treatment upgrades: $500,000
- Wyandotte/Kansas City, Kansas Unified Government, drinking water infrastructure replacement: $500,000

Labor-Health and Human Services-Education
- Mid-American Nazarene University for distance education in Western KS: $150,000
- Coffeyville CC for the Native American Center and Scholarship Program: $428,000
- Sedgwick County Government to establish a Dentistry Residency Program: $476,000
- Cleveland Chiropractic College to establish a Master's of Science degree in health promotion with certification in health education: $190,000
- Shawnee Mission Medical Center for medical imaging equipment: $381,000
- Swope Health to fully integrate an Electronic Medical Records system: $238,000
- KU Hospital for facilities and equipment: $381,000
- Coffeyville Regional Medical Center for equipment for the Cancer Treatment Center: $333,000
- Good Samaritan Clinic, Wichita, for construction, renovation, equipment: $143,000
- TLC for Children and Families to provide a safety-net for high risk youth in Johnson County: $190,000

Transportation-Housing and Urban Development
- Intersection Improvements, US-54, Seward County (truck entrance lane at ethanol plant near Liberal): $1,520,000
- US-69, Bourbon, Crawford, and Cherokee Counties: $950,000
- I-70 Viaduct Realignment, Topeka: $950,000
- I-235 and Kellogg Rd. Interchange Improvements, Wichita: $950,000
- Metcalf Avenue Transit Corridor Study, Overland Park: $655,000
- State Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project, Kansas City: $1,500,000
- 159th St. and US-69 Interchange Improvements, Overland Park: $950,000
- K-7 Corridor Study, Olathe: $712,500
- Redesign and construction of I-235 and Kellogg, Wichita: $950,000
- Community Housing of Wyandotte County, St. Peter's Waterway Neighborhood Redevelopment: $855,000
- Advanced Materials Performance, National Institute of Aviation Research, Wichita State University: $2,375,000
- Runway Safety Research, Kansas State University: $712,500
- Language supporting the Center of Excellence for Research in Research in the Intermodal Transport Environment, Kansas State University.
Education in sciences, math could aid triangle, group agrees

BY ASHLEE KIENER
AKIENER@THEWORLDCO.INFO

Math, engineering, technology and science could be the answer for Johnson County’s future.

Residents of Johnson County came together Friday for a community discussion about M.E.T.S. education and the Johnson County Education Research Triangle.

The discussion, at the Kansas University’s Edwards Campus, was sponsored by Johnson County Community College, Kansas State Olathe Innovation Campus, Blue Valley School District, Olathe School District, Shawnee Mission School District, Johnson County Library, Workforce Development Advisory Board, Kansas University Edwards Campus, NICE: National Institute for Construction Excellence.

Discussion surrounded how the tax-funded Research Triangle could benefit Johnson County workforce development and how to better prepare students for careers in the 21st Century.

In November, residents of Johnson County approved a 0.125 percent tax increase to establish the triangle. The tax increase is expected to pump $15 million a year to triangle partners, Kansas University Medical Center, Kansas University Edwards Campus and Kansas State University-Olathe.

A brief video showed those in attendance why M.E.T.S. education is so important. Eight of 10 new jobs will be in health care or life sciences in the future.

The video also explained three approaches that could increase M.E.T.S. learning in elementary, middle and high schools. The three approaches, which included great teachers, accountability and 21st century learning, set the stage for group discussions to follow.

The great teachers approach described teachers with deep knowledge of their subject as the key to students mastering math, engineering, technology and science. The approach called for raising the salaries of teachers in those subjects, placing the most experienced and capable teachers in tough schools and creating better ways for teachers to communicate with parents.

The accountability approach described demanding more of teachers, students and schools through a strong and smart system of accountability. The approach called for measuring student progress through tests and assessments, creating incentives for better performance and encouraged families to expect high student achievement in M.E.T.S.

The 21st Century approach described creating an innovative, up-to-date curriculum for M.E.T.S. The approach called for a curriculum that excited students, created project-based opportunities and developed partnerships with businesses and colleges.

The second part of the discussion centered on how to use the research triangle to better serve the Johnson County workforce.

Members of the group agreed that igniting a curiosity for sciences in a child early would greatly benefit the Johnson County area in respect to the Research Triangle.

Curtis Cain, associate superintendent of educational services in the Shawnee Mission School District, said the fact that the county is proactively looking to prepare students and community for changes that are going to occur in the immediate future speaks to the thinking of the community.

“Districts will find ways to work in their own context. The entire county will benefit from the proactive approach,” he said. “We are going to look forward to the feedback and this is just the beginning stage for use. We are going to be very thoughtful and mindful of the feedback.”

County:
Johnson

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Steinenger calls for more government consolidation

by Mary Rupert

Are people in Wyandotte and Johnson counties different? State Sen. Chris Steinenger, D-6th Dist., doesn't think so. He's floating a new bill calling for a study of these two counties, and all other counties across the state, to consolidate.

While there may be large differences in average income or political affiliation of Wyandotte and Johnson counties, it's all a matter of perspective, according to Steinenger.

"Most human beings are about 95 percent the same," Steinenger noted. "Both (counties residents) are in the United States, all are Americans, all are Kansans, we share the same air, same water source, highway system.

"We have far more in common than we do apart," he said.

He said he realizes that his bill probably won't pass this session; its purpose is to start the discussion on the topic. He said consolidation would make government more efficient with tax dollars and unify governments to be more effective and successful.

Steinenger's name is currently being mentioned as a candidate for lieutenant governor if Kathleen Sebelius receives a health and human services cabinet appointment. Earlier this year his name was mentioned by political observers as a potential candidate for governor.

Citing a University of Kansas study by Professor Art Hill, Steinenger said consolidation of Kansas counties across the state could save as much as $700 million or $800 million. That proposal would narrow the number of Kansas counties from 105 to 13.

Steinenger said he is motivated by the possibility of a $1 billion deficit in the Kansas budget in the next fiscal year. There will be hundreds of millions in federal stimulus funds, but the state still needs to cut about $700 million, according to Steinenger. The state has begun to make budget cuts, and consolidation of counties and local governments would make sure that the tax burden is not shifted to the local level.

A Democrat with a Libertarian bent, Steinenger also had another bill in the Legislature; this one would downsize the Legislature itself, cutting representatives and senators by about 25 percent. His consolidation bill was supported by Americans for Prosperity and the Flint Hills Policy Institute.

"Our country is living beyond its means, and it has for 10 to 15 years," Steinenger said. "In order to survive for another 150 years, we Americans need to rethink and redesign how we provide government services, how we consume energy and even how much and what type of foods we eat."

While some counties might regard consolidation as a loss of identity, in many senses they've already lost it through depopulation and not being financially sustainable, he said. He cited Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas, as an example of successful consolidation.

"I think Wyandotte County is much better off for consolidation," Steinenger said. "Most importantly it's given us a new attitude and new confidence in ourselves that we can achieve."
Steineger calls for more government consolidation in Kansas

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Bryant's closes, era ends

By FOSS FARRAR
Staff Writer

Over the past several months, Zach Bryant knew his store was in trouble. Sales were down and inventory had to be trimmed. But that didn’t lessen the shock he felt Wednesday morning when his banker told him to lock the front doors of the Bryant Hardware Store.

The store has been a downtown fixture for generations. When it closed yesterday, that ended a long chapter in the city’s history.

Bryant Hardware’s assets and operations are now under the control of Union State Bank. The bank had loaned Bryant money to buy the bank a year and a half ago, but since then the store’s value has declined, a bank official said.

“It gives us no pleasure whatsoever to take control of the business,” bank chairman and CEO Bill Docking said today. “Banks almost always lose in that situation.”

The bank is seeking a new owner who will continue in the hardware business at the Bryant store site, Docking said.

“We are weighing options on what to do,” Docking said. “Our preference is to find a new buyer to operate the business.”

If that doesn’t happen, the bank may opt for an orderly liquidation of the store’s inventory or for an auction.

Docking said he is not aware of anyone who might be interested in buying the store, but the bank officials encourage potential owners to contact them.

The Bryant store’s future was in doubt a year and a half ago when Zach’s father, John Bryant, quit the retail hardware business and moved to California.

BRYANT'S
See page three
Bryants

from page one

The bank loaned Zach Bryant money to purchase the store, he said. But in recent months, Bryant’s sales have lagged and inventory has been reduced.

“I didn’t have income to support buying more inventory and wasn’t placing orders to refill some items,” he said. Bryant said he also had to reduce his workforce from seven to just three people — two of whom are part-time employees.

The store dates back to 1870, the year Ark City was formed. It has always been a hardware store at the same location. It still has the look and feel of a turn-of-the-century hardware store, and few such stores remain in the state.

“Hopefully they have found a buyer and Bryant Hardware will continue to be a hardware store and an asset to the community,” Bryant said.

But the Bryants’ ownership of the store has ceased. Zach, 28, said he has been involved with the store for 15 years, since he worked part time at age 13.

The store’s origins date from 1870, the year Arkansas City was founded. Since then, a hardware store has operated continuously at the Bryant Hardware site at 102 S. Summit St.

Zach Bryant represents the fourth generation of Bryants to own the store. Zach’s great-grandparents, Lou and Ester Mae Bryant, started in the business in 1926.

When his grandfather, Victor, returned home from World War II, he took over the store and operated it with his wife, Dorothy.

John’s older brother, Alan, who died in 2006, took his place in the business in 1966, after he graduated from the University of Kansas. In the 1970s, John teamed up with his brother, and eventually they became partners.

Though the store’s future was in doubt when John Bryant quit, in the end it remained a Bryant store, thanks to a few local investors, a loan from the Union State Bank and the turning over of the building by the older generation of Bryants to the younger.

The store has been run by the Bryant family for 81 years. “We’ve had 20 to 25 Bryants working here over the years,” John Bryant said before he moved to California.

The store’s motto was “Yes, we have it,” indicating its wide inventory including items buyers could not find in other hardware stores. Its other strength was its customer service.

“We could provide customers service on the spot. If they came in they wanted immediate service and that’s the standard we lived up to,” Zach Bryant said.

He said he was sorry that the store couldn’t continue to provide that type of service in the end.

Bryant said his work plans for the future are uncertain but he plans to remain in Arkansas City. He is president of a new skateboard group that is trying to work with the city to get a skate park built.

“We regret the loss of a business that has been a part of downtown Arkansas City for so long,” said Mike Walker, of Union State Bank. “We respect Zach’s decision to shut the doors and we wish him the best going forward.”
AHS students earn medals at KU German language student congress

LAWRENCE -- Two students from Abilene High School won medals while participating in the Schuelerkongress, or student congress, held March 7 at the University of Kansas.


Some students earned medals in more than one event. Awards are listed by contest and level of proficiency. Levels 1 through 4 denote first, second, third and fourth-year of German study, and a Level E medal recognizes a fifth year of study or study abroad experience. For example, the Lyrik E medal rewards proficiency in fifth-year poetry recitation.

More than 125 medals were awarded during the annual event, which is sponsored by the Kansas Association of Teachers of German in cooperation with KU’s Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

Participating in the event were 260 junior high and high school students from 18 schools in Abilene, Emporia, Hays, Junction City, Lawrence, Lindsborg, Newton, Olathe, Overland Park, Stilwell, Topeka and Wichita.

Schuelerkongress promotes the study of German languages, literature and culture with oral proficiency exercises and contests in poetry recitation (lyrik), prose reading (prosa), spelling (rechtschreib) and cultural tests (kulturquiz) and poster making.

Junction City High School students won first in the poster-making contest; Olathe Northwest High School, second, and Olathe North, third.

A committee of high school teachers selects the poems and prose in advance to match students’ level of study, such as first-year or second-year German. Faculty and graduate teaching assistants from KU judged the contests.

William Keel, chair of Germanic languages and literatures at KU, said the event not only allows high school students to interact with university-level instructors but also supports the efforts of Kansas high school teachers to promote the study of foreign languages and cultures. The first Schuelerkongress was held in 1965 at KU, where it has become, with few exceptions, an annual event, Keel said.
Rossville law student earns spot in international moot court finals

A team from the University of Kansas School of Law will head to Taipei in May to compete in the international finals of the European Law Students’ Association Moot Court Competition.

Four students guaranteed their spot in the finals by advancing to the final round of the North American regional on March 12 in Washington, D.C. Christina Elmore, Ben Sharp, Carrie Bader and Beau Jackson — all third-year law students — represent the first KU team to make it to the world level of the seven-year-old competition.

Sharp is the son of Dave and Janice Sharp of Rossville. He graduated from Rossville High School and received his undergraduate degree from Kansas State University in Manhattan.

“This was a terrific student effort,” said Pam Keller, clinical associate professor and director of the law school’s moot court program. “The team wrote two lengthy briefs and practiced tirelessly for the oral rounds. Their hard work paid off, and the KU School of Law is proud of their success.”

Raj Bhala, the Raymond F. Rice Distinguished Professor of Law, coaches the team.

The ELSA Moot Court Competition is a simulated hearing in the World Trade Organization dispute settlement system. Competitor teams represent both parties to the case by presenting oral submissions in front of a panel, which consists of World Trade Organization law experts. The 2008-09 case deals with a hypothetical dispute over trade and regulatory measures aimed at addressing climate change.

KU joined teams from Duke University, the University of Ottawa in Canada and George Washington University in the semifinals. After defeating Ottawa to advance to the final round, KU lost a close match to Duke. The top two teams will move on to the international finals to square off against the winners of regional contests around the globe.

“It was an honor to represent KU and to compete against teams from some of the best law schools in North America,” Jackson said. “Our success is a testament to the world-class education we’ve received at KU, particularly the guidance of professors Raj Bhala and Pam Keller.”