KU to honor high school seniors from four north-central Kansas counties Feb. 9

LAWRENCE — Students from 10 Kansas high schools will be honored Monday, Feb. 9, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 33 seniors from high schools in Cloud, Jewell, Mitchell and Republic counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program at Belleville Country Club, 2208 Country Club Drive, Belleville.

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. Honorees are listed below.

During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardcover and CD versions, presented by Jennifer Sanner, senior vice president for communications at the KU Alumni Association.

David Johnston, director of marketing and Internet services for the alumni association, 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 $12 each.

Community volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as local contacts for the event. Marilyn Haase of Belleville is site coordinator and county coordinator for Mitchell County. Michele Heidrick of Beloit is county coordinator for Cloud County, and Cathy Dauner of Mankato is county coordinator for Jewell County.

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

Area students to be honored include Beloit High School: Anne Collingwood, Danielle Garcia, Jessica Hake, Kylie Miller, Taylor Miller, Jacee Simmons, Mariah Wendell and Ann Winkel; Glasco High School: Lisa Kindel; Jewell High School: Kirsten Hermreck; Rock Hills High School: Brian Broeckelman and Tanner Peroutek; St. John’s Catholic School: Shelby Broeckelman and Claire Thiessen and Tipton Catholic High School: Alexis Marshall.
By JOHN MILBURN
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA (AP) — State higher education officials signed an agreement Tuesday to work together to earn National Cancer Institute designation for the University of Kansas Cancer Center.

The agreement, signed by Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway and Kansas State University President Jon Wefald, states that researchers and administrators at the two campuses will work closely on the state's development of the Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The National Cancer Institute designation would mean additional clinical trials on new drugs and treatment and cancer research for Kansas. The deadline for the application for designation is 2011.

"This opportunity can provide our state with new financial resources for research that can save, extend and enhance the lives of Kansans diagnosed with cancer," Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, in whose office the agreement was signed.

Wefald and Hemenway, who both plan to retire at the end of the academic year, said faculty and scientists already share their work on cancer research in Lawrence and Manhattan.

Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson said there were 60 National Cancer Institute sites across the United States but none in Kansas, meaning that only people with the financial means often have the ability to access certain treatments.

Over the past three years, the two universities were part of a public-private consortium that pursued a federal contract to conduct research on deadly animal and zoonological diseases.

The Department of Homeland Security announced this month that a site near Kansas State had been selected for a new National Bio and Agro-defense Facility to replace an aging facility at Plum Island, N.Y.

That facility, which could be worth as much as $650 million based on DHS estimates for construction, is expected to be operating by 2015. It will bring some 300 to 500 scientists and researchers to Kansas, with a total economic impact on the animal health industry in the region in the billions of dollars over the next several decades.

JUDICIAL CUTS: The Kansas judicial branch wants to offset proposed budget cuts by raising docket fees and is asking the Legislature to end a ban on such fees.

The request is a reaction to a 3.4 percent across-the-board cut that a Senate committee has suggested to plug a deficit in the current state budget. The proposal would mean a nearly a $4 million cut for the courts.

Unlike other areas of state government, about 98 percent of the judicial budget is for salaries.

The Senate Judiciary Committee plans a Feb. 5 hearing on legislation to eliminate the fee ban.

Committee Chairman Tim Owens said he thinks it's a good idea. He said the alternative would be furloughing court employees throughout the state which would create a backlog in cases.
World-renowned FHSU artist to exhibit ‘hot glass’ in gallery

FHSU

HAYS, Kan. – A graduate of Fort Hays State University, who has captured worldwide attention with his glass-blowing artistry, will exhibit nearly three dozen pieces of his works on the Hays campus beginning at the end of January.

“Brejcha Retrospective: A Life of Hot Glass” will open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 31 in the gallery next to Eagle Communications Hall at the Robbins Center, home of the FHSU Foundation and the Alumni Association. The artist, Vernon Brejcha (pronounced BRECK ah), will attend the opening session.

The regular hours for the exhibit will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays from Feb. 2 through 27. The Robbins Center is located at the Highway 169 Bypass entrance to the university near Gross Memorial Coliseum. There is ample parking, and the exhibit is open to the public.

“The opportunity to exhibit an internationally known artist of the stature of Vernon Brejcha in our gallery is wonderful, and we look forward to having other great exhibits in the future,” said Tim Chapman, president and CEO of the FHSU Foundation.

Brejcha has described his artistic career, ironically, as both unexpected and inevitable. “It’s hard to believe 40 years of blowing glass has gone by for a Kansas farm boy whose only introduction to art was comic books,” he said. “I also spent time as a potter, teacher and, finally, a professor. I’ve told people that although born on a 1937 John Deere, I was also born an artist. It seems there was never a choice for me. My earliest memories are of drawing on the kitchen floor, or in the dust of the farmyard. I’ve tried all media from paint to metal, but once I dipped a blowpipe into molten glass 40 years ago, it seduced me. It’s the most demanding material there is. It is magic.”

Brejcha said that after four decades he still loved the challenge of creating art from glass. “Guess I’m a visual storyteller,” he said. “My art objects are about life, passion and the wonders of nature. Nature on the Kansas prairie has been the most inspiring. The extreme prairie weather, Kansas limestone posts, wheat fields, our Native American past, the origins of life and vast open spaces inspire me. After all, where I came from fast food was a jack rabbit.”

Brejcha lives in Lawrence, where he was named professor emeritus at the University of Kansas in 2003 after teaching design there from 1976 to 2002. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Fort Hays State University in 1964 and 1967, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1972. Before teaching at KU, he was an art teacher at Circle High School in Towanda, an art instructor at Edgewood College in Madison, Wis., and an assistant professor of art at Tusculum College in Tennessee.
Black historian will speak Thursday at Lyons Library

Historian Angela Bates will present “Blacks in the West,” profiling her family’s story in Nicodemus, Kansas at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Lyons Public Library. The free program is open to the public and a great learning opportunity for school children.

Bates, of Bogue, Kansas, will deliver a riveting account of what life was like in the old West.

Some highlights:
- The migration of the African American from the south into the west after the Civil War.
- The history of black settlements in Kansas, particularly Nicodemus as a National Park.
- The history of the Buffalo Soldiers and the African American laundry at the forts.
- Black men and women of the West, including cowboys, outlaws, Stage Coach Drivers.

Bates is a descendant of the settlers who in 1877, established the historic all African American town of Nicodemus, Kansas. Angela was reared in Pasadena, Calif., after her parents moved there in the 1950s.

After graduating from high school, Angela moved to Kansas where she received a bachelor’s degree in education from Emporia State University in 1975. She married and moved to Washington, D.C. where she held a top-secret clearance, and worked in the research and development field, developing and analyzing educational and training programs for the military.

In 1979, Angela opened A.J. Design Associates, an interior design firm that she operated until she moved to Denver, Colo., in 1984, where she worked as an interior designer.

In 1989, she organized the Nicodemus Historical Society and its first president.

In 1990, she moved to Nicodemus where she has since dedicated her efforts to preserve and interpret the history of Nicodemus. She is responsible for Nicodemus becoming a National Historic Site (National Park Service), and has received many awards and accolades for her efforts.

In 2005, she received a Life Time Achievement Award for her efforts at Nicodemus. In the early 1990 she established the Nicodemus Historical Society Museum at Nicodemus.

She also established one of the country’s most extensive African American single historic photographic collections. The collection is held at the University of Kansas – Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library.

She operates her own tour company providing educational and personal tours at historic Nicodemus. Bates is a professional speaker and travels the country speaking to audiences about Nicodemus and the history of the African American in the West. She also provides organizations and schools with a program on diversity, speaking specifically on the cultural differences of the African American.

Bates also provides public performances depicting African American women in the West, particularly “Stage Coach Mary Fields.”

When she is not traveling the country, she works as the executive director of the Nicodemus Historical Society, writes curriculum, sells real estate and substitute teaches.


She is a mother of an adult son who resides in the area.
Parsons hospital being considered for closure

Local senator urges residents not to become too concerned

Parsons Sun Staff and Wire Reports

TOPEKA — Sen. Dwayne Umbarger urged locals not to become overly concerned with the announcement of Gov. Kathleen Sebelius forming a commission Thursday to study possible closings of state hospitals, schools for the deaf and blind and other institutions.

Sebelius’ executive order creating the Facilities Closure and Realignment Commission called for draft recommendations by Dec. 1. She said that if she approves of its proposals, she will enact them next year by new executive orders.

“In these unprecedented economic times, we must examine all state operations to determine if savings can be realized by suspending, merging or streamlining programs,” Sebelius said in a statement.

The governor’s order names the hospitals for the developmentally disabled in Parsons and Topeka; the state School for the Deaf in Olathe; the School for the Blind in Kansas City, Kan.; the juvenile corrections center in Beloit; and the Rainbow Mental Health Facility in Kansas City, Kan.

Umbarger said this is not the first time such committees have been formed and discussions have taken place regarding closure of state hospitals.

“I don’t want people to be alarmed,” Umbarger said. “It is natural to put all of the facilities on the table to consider and see which facilities close would cause the least amount of harm.”

It has always been brought to light that the Parsons State Hospital & Training Center is unique in its operations, who it serves and that it serves them well,” Umbarger said, also pointing out the hospitals comprehensive ties with the University of Kansas on its campus, which have a national impact.

The greatest concern for many is the fact the state must close a deficit of up to $300 million in the current budget by June 30 and prevent a projected $1 billion shortfall between anticipated revenues and spending commitments for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

“Ultimately, Kansans will benefit if quality services can continue with a more efficient delivery system, and if we have the resources needed for critical safety net programs,” Sebelius said.

Senate Ways and Means Committee Jay Emery, a Lindsborg Republican, said it’s good for the executive branch to review programs to see whether savings can be realized.

But the commission can look at other institutions as well, said Sebelius spokesman Nicole Corcoran.

“This is just to start stimulating conversation,” Corcoran said.

Rochelle Chronister, who has served as secretary of social and rehabilitation services and in the Kansas House, was named by Sebelius to chair the commission.

Five of the panel’s voting members will be appointed by Sebelius and the other six by legislative leaders. Serving as nonvoting members will be the commissioners of education and juvenile justice and the secretaries of SRS, labor and administration.

Umbarger and Rep. Richard Proehl said they will be monitoring the commission closely, and Umbarger said he is going to try to secure a seat on the council.

Proehl said that in his opinion the PSH&TC has always done an outstanding job, and given excellent service, and he is sure that is what the committee’s findings will be.

However, he said he will be representing his constituents on this matter every chance he gets.

“After the corrections camp closing and BRAC closing the plant, this would be a tremendous blow to Parsons, the county and Southeast Kansas if they shut down the hospital,” Proehl said. “I have already been in contact with the Governor today, and I made my point on that.”
College notes

Kansas University conferred degrees on following Eudora students based on work completed during the fall semester:

Mark DeArmond, Bachelor of Science in mathematics; Debbie Elder, graduate Doctor of education; Stephanie Filardo, Bachelor of Science in education; Grant High, Bachelor of General Studies in political science; Shelby Stice, Bachelor of General Studies in applied behavioral science and sociology; and Christina Wood, Bachelor of Arts in French.

Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return for the traditional walk down the hill and into Memorial Stadium on Sunday, May 17, 2009.

Rockhurst University has announced that the following Eudora students made the dean’s list for the fall 2008 semester:

Guy Montgomery and Brian Talbert.

This honor recognizes students who have achieved a grade-point average of 3.5 or above.
Hard work pays off for Fort Scott teen

By Rayma Silvers
Herald-Tribune

Fort Scott High School senior Phillip Goodbody is reaching for the best this world can offer him, and he is not letting anything or anybody stop him.

Goodbody, who has overcome many hardships during his young life was recently rewarded for his tireless efforts when he was notified that he was chosen as the only Kansas recipient of a $20,000 college scholarship from the Horatio Alger Association. Goodbody is one of only 104 seniors nationally to receive college funds from the group.

The Horatio Alger Association is a non-profit organization that provides scholarship assistance to young people who have triumphed in the face of tribulation.

"Recipients have exhibited integrity, academic promise, and perseverance in overcoming personal adversity," printed information about the association said.

Growing up in a home without proper role models, Goodbody was required to obtain employment at the age of 14. Since that time, Goodbody said he has not been unemployed for longer than 24 hours at a time. For much of his high school career, he has juggled a full-time job and a full school schedule. Goodbody, who was inducted into the gifted program during his second grade year, said his goal is to go to college and possibly obtain employment as either a mechanical or architectural engineer.

"I realize I need school so I can get a job where I'll be more secure and stable. That requires me getting a good education," Goodbody said.

Because Goodbody constantly had to face a great
amount of turmoil at home, for a short period of time he wandered down the wrong path. However, after a brief run in with the law, he decided he needed to make a drastic change in his lifestyle.

With the help of Fort Scott High School gifted education teacher Diana Endicott, Goodbody began making many positive changes which have allowed him to excel and rise above the adversities he faces on a day-to-day basis.

“I didn’t ask for my life to be like that, but I realized I can change it,” Goodbody said. “My goal is not to be rich. I just want to be stable.”

Goodbody attributes some of his progress to the caring nature of Endicott.

See GOODBODY, Page 3A

Fort Scott High School senior Phillip Goodbody works diligently on his school work, Thursday, a practice that — combined with his ability to overcome great adversities in his life — has made him the recent recipient of a $20,000 scholarship from the Horatio Alger Association.
Goodbody

Student credits caring mentors with part of his success.

From Page 1A

"Mrs. Endicott is a little more caring than other teachers," Goodbody said. "She will pull whatever strings she can to make me successful. If it weren't for being in her class, I would be a high school slug."

According to Endicott, she was only able to provide the assistance Goodbody needed because of his willingness to be helped.

"It was the fact that he wanted to work," Endicott said. "Phillip wanted to learn."

In order to help Goodbody receive the $20,000 scholarship, Endicott submitted a letter of recommendation on his behalf.

"Phillip is a deserving student of this prestigious award," Endicott's letter said. "He has worked very hard in school earning a strong grade point average and maintaining almost full-time employment. He is an impressive young man with promise for a bright future. He has great potential and is willing to put out the extra effort needed to be successful. Phillip is not satisfied with getting by and completing his assignments; he wants to learn from them and strive to be the best he can be. Over the past four years, I've watched Phillip grow into a mature and responsible young man who can and will be successful."

Goodbody said he plans to attend college at the University of Kansas, which will increase the amount of money he receives from the scholarship, because KU will match the $20,000 if he chooses to attend school there.

Even without being awarded the scholarship, Goodbody said he would find a way to attend college as he wants to be a good example to his younger brother. In addition, Goodbody said when he earns his college degree, he will be the first person in his immediate family to have graduated college.

Fort Scott High School principal Bob Beckham said he has a great amount of confidence in Goodbody's abilities to be successful in the future.

"He is a fine young man and a hard working young man," Beckham said. "He's going to be very successful in whatever he sets his mind to."

It's not just academic success that Goodbody has achieved, for he has also triumphed at each of the places he has worked.

In fact, at the age of 16, Goodbody said he was asked to be the manager of the restaurant he was working at. Goodbody, however, denied this request, stating he was not ready for the extra work it would require him to do. For the last three months, Goodbody has been employed with Valu Merchandisers where he has excelled in his job duties, according to his supervisor Kevin Taliaferro.

"He's laid back and pleasant," Taliaferro said. "He always has a good attitude. He's willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. He's a very dependable kid."

Goodbody said he will do whatever he has to do in order to gain the necessary skills to obtain a good paying job in the future.

"There have been so many obstacles in my life that I would not want my (future) kids to experience," Goodbody said. "They (obstacles) have made me who I am, but I wouldn't wish it upon anyone else."

Goodbody, who has applied for about seven different scholarships, said he expects to hear favorable results from some of the other scholarship opportunities as well.
Lawrence Man Documents Resin Bee In Kansas

By EILEEN RODDY

Lawrence Journal-World

LAWRENCE (AP) — Most people avoid bees like the plague. They certainly don't welcome them at summer gatherings.

Ismael Hinojosa-Diaz, a University of Kansas entomology doctoral student, is different. While attending a barbecue at friend Charles Linken's house in June, he saw a bee nearly 1 inch long with a yellow thorax and black abdomen.

"I started screeching, 'Help me! Help me!' because I was so excited. I couldn't believe my eyes," he recalls.

This wasn't your common variety bumble or carpenter bee. It was a giant resin (megachile sculpturalis), thought to have originally arrived in North America via Chinese and Japanese cargo ships.

"The first recorded collection of the bee occurred at the campus of North Carolina State University in 1994," says Hinojosa-Diaz. "Since then, it's appeared all over eastern North America."

Until that summer day in Lawrence, the giant resin bee hadn't been identified authoritatively west of the Mississippi River. Three years earlier, in 2005, Hinojosa-Diaz and four colleagues published a study predicting the bee would make its way as far as the Great Plains.

"To be the one to find the subject of our predictions and prove those predictions right was amazing," he says.

After the bee's capture, he lost no time in producing the first scholarly report of its recorded presence in Kansas. It was published in July.

As a boy growing up in Santa Maria Rayon, about two hours west of Mexico City, Hinojosa-Diaz had no idea he would one day end up catching bees in Kansas. His mother died when he was 7 and, because his father had abandoned the family, he and his 17-year-old sister Yolanda went to live with their aunt.

"I wanted to be a scientist, but that was much too expensive," he says. "So when it was time for college, I decided to study biology."

He graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology from the National University of Mexico in 1997 and then worked in the government's treasury department, while attending night school to complete a master's degree in animal biology.

"As part of my studies, I did an elective course on bees and really liked it," he says. "From then on I became really involved in studying bees. Once you get into the bee world you soon learn that there's a person named Charles Michener who has been the source of knowledge in this field for more than 60 years."

He pauses and laughs.

"You also learn he's been a professor in the University of Kansas for a long-time, and has helped to create the most comprehensive and best bee collection in the world. It didn't take me long to realize that there's no better place in the world to do studies related to bee systematics and evolution than Kansas."

After graduating with his master's in 2001, he got a scholarship to attend the University of Kansas to study for a Ph.D. focused on bee systematics.

In spite of his coup with the giant resin bee, it's not the subject for his doctorate. He's focusing instead on the phylogenetic study of a genus of orchid bee. His work has already taken him to Spain, Costa Rica and Mexico.

"I'm an entomologist and systematist," he explains. "I try to make sense of the organization of living things according to their evolutionary ties. In doing that I have to deal with many specimens and make reviews so it's easy to find new species. I've described six. That's not much."
STAFF CHANGES: Gov. Kathleen Sebelius is losing another key aide.

Deputy chief of staff Jeremy Anderson is leaving after this week to become a vice president at Parris Communications Inc. in Kansas City, Mo.

Sebelius, who can't seek re-election in 2010, also will have a new spokeswoman next week when Beth Martino replaces Nicole Corcoran, who will become chief of staff at the University of Kansas Athletics Department.

Anderson became deputy chief of staff a few weeks ago, after serving as Sebelius' director of legislative and government affairs.

Sebelius promoted John Polzar, a legislative liaison, to the director's job.
More than 1,600 candidates qualified for degrees for the fall of 2008 semester at the University of Kansas including three from Cherokee County and one from Labette.

Allyn Michael Kaufmann, Baxter Springs will receive a Doctor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry PHD. The Baxter Springs High School graduate is the son of Mike and Carolyn Kaufmann.

Kitrina Marie Lacen, Baxter Springs, has earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology. The Columbus Unified High School graduate is the daughter of Garry and Susan Lacen.

Casey Young Meek, Baxter Springs, has earned a doctor of juris prudence degree. The Thomas Jefferson Independent Day School graduate is the son of Chris and Sherri Meek.

Autumn E. Shields, Oswego, has earned a Master of Arts degree in International Studies.

Graduate and undergraduate degrees are conferred in December based on work completed during the fall semester. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return for the traditional walk down the hill and into Memorial Stadium on Sunday, May 17.