2006 PRIDE Day Conference

“PRIDE, Setting the Pace for Community Improvement” was the theme of the 36th annual PRIDE Day conference and recognition event in Great Bend on September 30, 2006.

Representatives from more than two dozen communities across Kansas participated in the day-long event. Participants learned more about community improvement by attending workshops on topics including community assessments, preparing for the unexpected, going beyond the limits to begin regional collaborations, and healthy communities-healthy ecosystems.

Youth attended a workshop entitled “Team Building for a Better Tomorrow” presented by Janet Siebert, Great Bend Chamber of Commerce.

Community sharing through round table discussions and displays was available to learn about Kansas PRIDE communities. Jim Richardson, a National Geographic Society photographer, was the keynote speaker. His presentation “Community: Reflections from a Wide Spot in the Road” was an excellent conclusion of the day, receiving high ratings on the evaluations. The noon luncheon was a time for recognizing the outstanding efforts in community development and youth participation.

PRIDE Day Awards
Community of Excellence

Fourteen Kansas communities received the 2006 “Community of Excellence” award during the Kansas PRIDE Day. The Community of Excellence Award is awarded to communities that are following a community improvement process that is inclusive, planned, and proven successful. The following communities made outstanding progress in meeting the needs of their communities and following a successful process of community improvement through Kansas PRIDE.

Almena  Alton  Beattie
Burns  Cunningham  Greeley
Grinnell  Highland  Lakin
Melvern  Mount Hope  Olsburg
Potwin  Valley Community

Don’t forget to check out our Web site www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu
STAR

The STAR Award goes to communities that planned and completed outstanding community projects. Projects are evaluated on quality planning, level of community involvement, and impact the project has on the quality of life. The following community projects received a STAR Award.

*Alton — “Fun for ALL-ALL for Fun”*
*Beattie — Public Restroom*
*Glasco — Free University*
*Grinnell — Toddler Swing Project*
*Lakin — Covered Picnic Area*
*Lenora — Veteran Database*
*Olsburg — Community Swimming Pool*
*Potwin — Potwin Arts and Community Education*
*Stockton — Neighborhood Park*

Youth Recognition Awards

Kansas PRIDE, through the support of Westar Energy, recognized youth for community service and leadership awards

Youth Leadership Award Winners

The Kansas PRIDE program recognized seven outstanding youth for providing leadership in their communities.

**Jenna Jessup, Almena** — Jenna serves as the president of the junior class, student council, and her 4-H club. Jenna has rolled up her sleeves for a community cleanup, organized a homecoming parade, drafted the bylaws for the Almena Junior PRIDE Program, baked and distributed cookies for shut ins, as well as helping with PRIDE fund raisers.

**Eric Simmons, Highland** — Members of Highland PRIDE voted unanimously to nominate Eric for this award. He is a supportive, dependable, and willing worker helping to enhance the PRIDE program. Eric offers fresh perspectives in a respectful, intelligent manner that has earned him the trust of the community. Eric states that he likes to volunteer because he enjoys working with people of differing ages.

**Melissa Lisenbee, Lansing** — Melissa is a self-starter with a flawless academic record. She has researched, arbitrated, and taken the lead for the Venture Crew in their establishment of community service projects. In Melissa’s words: “For community service to be truly effective, competent and creative leadership is essential. Organization and motivation are a leader’s most important jobs and are the keys to having a successful club or community service project”

**Honorable Mention, Sharayah Stitt, Argonia** — Sharayah has been active in Argonia High School activities including KAY Club where she is known for doing a number of activities for the betterment of the school and the Community.

**Honorable Mention Haley Amaya, Greeley** — Haley recognized early signs of diabetes in a child she was tending and alerted the child’s parents, who followed up with medical treatment that confirmed the suspected illness of their child.

**Honorable Mention Bethany Ellis, Lucas** — Bethany is active in a variety of community activities that spill over into the community — examples of her service include leading the local Scholar’s Bowl and staffing a concession stand at a community theater.

**Honorable Mention Brent Fritzemeier, Stafford** — Brent is active in school and 4-H activities and is the center for the football team. His success on the playing field has positioned him to serve as a role model for younger boys in the community, and that is a responsibility he has taken to heart. For example, he participates in a school sponsored PALS (Peer Adolescent Leaders of Stafford) program to tutor two young boys.

Youth Community Service Award

The Youth Community Service Award gives an opportunity for young people to be recognized for volunteer service in their PRIDE community. The award is presented to youth who have significantly contributed to the efforts of the local community. The Kansas PRIDE program recognized 10 outstanding youth for their outstanding investment in their local community.

**Kendra Gumm, Glasco** — Kendra has volunteered more than 100 hours in community service to children who are in need of encouragement,
supervision, or instruction by sharing her enthusiasm, skills and compassion. Kendra’s future goals have been tempered by her community service work with youngsters – she is planning to pursue a career in social work.

**Erick Goetz, Grinnell** — Erick has helped with several community projects and activities as well as church and school events. One of the main projects the city of Grinnell is working on is a new fire station. Erick has donated his time to help with concrete work, interior walls, and installation of doors. In addition, he has helped to remove old trees from the park and many other PRIDE projects. This young man is not afraid of hard work and has made a huge contribution to Grinnell.

**Lacy Pool, Lucas** — Lacy is active in the Lucas community with her many volunteer services. She works with Lucas PRIDE, SADD, Scholar’s Bowl, performances with the Community Theater and the Adam’s Apple Festival. She encourages others to become involved with the community so that they can live in a town with PRIDE.

**Janna Wendelburg, Stafford** — Janna has been contributing to the Stafford community for several years. Her involvement with the Leisure Homestead Nursing Home has been exemplary. She also works with the younger students as a Peer Leader and has volunteered as a tutor and at the Cornerstone Day Care Center.

**Jacob Morgan, Stockton** — Jacob was able to put his welding and metal fabrication skills to use to design and construct a sign for the new neighborhood park. Jacob’s sign is over a sidewalk that leads to the gazebo. Jacob freely gave up his spare time to work on this long-lasting community project.

**Honorable Mention Colton Lowry, Almena** — Colton is a perennial volunteer at PRIDE pancake suppers. He also is active in 4-H. Colton willingness to accept responsibility as well as his help on community activities is very commendable.

**Honorable Mention Nikole Orth, Bushton** — Nikole attended and helped with every event that the PRIDE committee has been involved with. One of those projects is the work to improve the local park. The park is now a place that will be enjoyed by children of all ages.

**Honorable Mention Megan Smith, Lansing** — Megan has contributed more than 200 volunteer hours at the local hospital and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity projects. Megan serves as a positive role model for younger children.

**Honorable Mention Katie Reece, Melvern** — Katie is president of the PRIDE youth group, led a city cleanup and raised funds for community Valentine and Thanksgiving dinners. Katie demonstrates community pride to its fullest — ready to please, eager to learn and willing to serve her community.

**Honorable Mention Emily Reichenberger, Mt Hope** — Emily is active in the Tree Kids Tree Board, teaches embroidery and has organized a highway cleanup. Emily is a great help to Mt. Hope PRIDE, always looking to see if there is just one more project that she can work with PRIDE members to complete.

### 2006 PRIDE Partner Award Winner

The Kansas PRIDE program has an annual award to recognize a K-State Research and Extension representative who has shown outstanding support of the PRIDE community development program. The PRIDE Partner Award gives the local PRIDE program an opportunity to recognize the K-State Research and Extension Staff. The 2006 Kansas PRIDE Award winner is Glenn Newdigger, Stafford County Extension Agent. Stafford PRIDE states that Glenn has been there to advise and participate in PRIDE meetings, provide research to help diagnose plants (plants that PRIDE members were caring for) that were dying due to poisoning in the area, and help with the soup supper, serving and cleaning up, but most of all making it a fun event. Glenn spent time at the local parent/teacher night meeting collecting Community Improvement Surveys. He represents PRIDE on the mayor’s “Vision Committee,” which is assisting in setting a vision for the Stafford community and unifying the people. He is our advisor when problems arise and guides us through community projects. Glenn is a true extension professional and his assistance has made Stafford PRIDE stronger.

![Glenn Newdigger, Stafford County Agricultural Agent, receives the PRIDE Partner Award from Dan Kahl and Fred Cholick.](image)

2006 PRIDE Partner Award Winner
Kansas Gas Service is the largest natural gas distribution company in Kansas, providing clean, reliable natural gas to more than 642,000 customers in 342 communities.

**Kansas Gas Service Facts**
- Became part of ONEOK, Inc. in 1997
- Has a workforce with more than 1,000 employees
- Operates 19,073 miles of pipeline

Kansas Gas Service is a division of Tulsa-based ONEOK, Inc., a diversified energy company. ONEOK is the general partner and owns 45.7 percent of ONEOK Partners, L.P., one of the largest publicly traded limited partnerships, which is a leader in the gathering, processing, storage and transportation of natural gas in the United States and owns one of the nation’s premier natural gas liquids systems, connecting much of the natural gas and natural gas liquids supply in the mid-continent with key market centers. ONEOK is among the largest natural gas distributors in the United States, serving more than 2 million customers in Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas. Its energy services operation focuses primarily on marketing natural gas and related services throughout the United States. ONEOK is a Fortune 500 company.

**Making a Difference in the Communities We Serve**

The management and employees of Kansas Gas Service feel a strong sense of duty toward good corporate citizenship. Along with the ONEOK Foundation, Kansas Gas Service invests charitable contributions in programs that enhance quality of life and economic well-being in the communities we serve. In addition to this financial support, Kansas Gas Service employees provide invaluable volunteer support to countless charitable organizations and events through Volunteers with Energy. Company executives and employees also serve on boards and committees for hundreds of non-profit agencies.

Kansas Gas Service collaborates with The Salvation Army in the Gift of Warmth program, which offers assistance to income-eligible customers in paying their winter heating bills, and works closely with other social service agencies to help those in need.

Kansas Gas Service has been a proud sponsor of the PRIDE community development program since 1997, with employees represented on the Executive Board and various committees. It’s all part of our ongoing commitment to make our communities better places to live.

**Robl joins the Kansas PRIDE Staff**

The Department of Commerce has temporarily assigned J.R. Robl to work with K-State Research and Extension in program management and in serving PRIDE communities. Dan Kahl, Connie Hoch, Jeanne Stinson, and Robl will be reassessing the program and the way services are provided, with a final goal of sustaining and increasing community capacity in each local PRIDE program.

J.R. will be working with the following communities: Axtell, Beattie, Bird City, Florence, Fort Scott, Glasco, Haven, Hutchinson, Lucas, Olsburg, Overbrook, Paxico, Potwin, and Towanda. Representatives of these communities may contact J.R. at (785) 296-3485 or reach him by email at jrobl@kansascommerce.com.

J.R. currently oversees Commerce’s tax credit programs. Tax credits help raise funds for community centers, libraries, museums, parks, theatres, shelters, nursing homes, hospitals, and other social services. “I have been a part of numerous projects throughout the state that have changed the train of thought for communities struggling to maintain their image, heritage, and way of life,” said Robl. In addition to working with local communities, J.R. will also be serving on the Cleaning Up Kansas steering committee.
PRIDE to Clean-Up Across Kansas

Keep your eyes and ears open for more information on Kansas PRIDE communities working together to Clean-Up Kansas. Spring seems like that ideal time for communities to hold a community clean-up. A clean, attractive community is not only a more pleasant place to live, but also one that people want to call home. Many PRIDE communities currently hold a spring clean-up, but just think the difference that can be made when all PRIDE communities across the state work together to Clean-Up Kansas. A steering committee will be meeting to make plans and set a date. Check your January PRIDE newsletter for more information.

Creating Healthy Communities

What is a “healthy community?” Many of the PRIDE communities have stated in their community vision that they wish to create a place where the environment, people, and economy are healthy and thriving. For many, this means a sound economy; clean water, air, soil, and physical setting; and a place where people have an opportunity to eat healthy foods, recreate, and live healthy lives.

Recent research through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Landscape and Human Health Laboratory\(^1\) shows that there are many positive side effects of creating and sustaining a green community, including results that indicate:

- Reduced symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in children.
- Greater effectiveness and less procrastination in dealing with major life issues.
- Reduced acts of domestic violence.
- Reduced occurrences of crime against people and property.
- Increased feelings of safety and community.

Many PRIDE communities have goals for community clean-up, tree planting, park improvement, or trail creation. The studies above only reinforce the importance of your work. They also show how investments in creating green spaces can also support healthy activities and behaviors for the people of your community. Remember the “Setting Cross-Community Goals” idea from the last PRIDE newsletter? Here is another example: What if you were to link the development of a community youth group, with a project for the creation (or upgrade) of a community trail? A current opportunity at K-State may provide just that opportunity.

K-State Research and Extension, along with Kansas 4-H and The Sunflower Foundation, are looking for youth groups, organizations, or adult/teen teams to help pilot TRAIL Mixx, which helps teens develop, promote, and use trails! 4-H members can use TRAIL Mixx for a self-determined project. Trail Mixx program kits include ideas and resources to promote fun, healthy activities, education, and recreation around trail development and use. For resources and information, contact Elaine Johannes (ejohanne@ksu.edu) or Joan Kahl (jkahl@ksu.edu) at K-State Research and Extension Family Studies. (785) 532-5773.

Combine this with a recent call for proposals from The Sunflower Foundation\(^2\) for projects that enhance healthy behaviors and physical activity (including the creation of walking trails), and you may have a great community improvement project!

For more information on these and other project ideas, visit the “PRIDE community resources” link on the Web site at: www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu/resources_for_pride_communities.htm

Dan Kahl, PRIDE Coordinator

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1 For copies of these and other studies, visit http://www.lhhl.uiuc.edu/index.htm or contact Frances E. Kuo (fekuo@uiuc.edu) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Landscape and Human Health Laboratory, 1103 S. Dorner Drive, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

2 Web site, www.sunflowerfoundation.org, or are available by calling the foundation at 866-232-3020 (toll free) or 785.232.3000 (local), or by e-mail request to info@sunflowerfoundation.org.
In January 2005, the Valley Community PRIDE was formed by merging two local organizations together. Dwindling membership of Gaylord PRIDE and the overlapping of projects with the Commercial Club made the decision to merge an easy one. Gaylord Commercial Club was founded in the 1930s and PRIDE in 1988. Many businesses closed after the loss of the local school in 1992 and it was determined a commercial club was no longer needed.

The Gaylord Fire Department is the only fire station within an 8-mile radius. It serves Harlan (Harlan township), Cedar (Harvey Township), Gaylord (Houston Township), and part of Dor and Banner townships. It is a sanctioned fire department with 12 volunteers from all townships. The fire department has earned an 8 rating in city service and a 9 rating in rural services. We wanted the communities of Harlan and Cedar, which are on either side of Gaylord, to join in our efforts to make the valley one unit.

In 2001 PRIDE formed a group called Community (Cedar) Help (Harlan) Group (Gaylord) which benefited from a requested grant for class projects for the three small towns, Gaylord serving as the trade and meeting center. Harlan (population 8) is non-incorporated with only the Harlan Church as its mainstay. Cedar (population 12) is still incorporated with a post office, grain elevator, and the Christian Church. A large Country Music Festival is held annually on Memorial Day weekend. Gaylord (population 109) is incorporated with a post office; Farmers National Bank; Frieling Grain elevator; Dannenberg Fertilizer plant; Judy’s Beauty Shop; AMI/TAB-Funkenwek Mfg; NEX-Tech telephone building; City Library; Gaylord Parkview Manor; F.C.E. club; Solomon Valley Beavers 4-H club; Church of the Nazarene; Gaylord Community Church; and the Gaylord Community Center, a large building which accommodates about 200 people and is used for various meetings and gatherings.

Labor Day Watermelon Celebration is the biggest even that was sponsored by the former Gaylord Commercial Club and in 2006 by the newly formed Valley Community PRIDE. This year we celebrated 83 years of Watermelon Day. It begins on Sunday morning with church services in the City Park. Area churches participate in the service. In the evening, a gospel singing service is held. People from all over the valley and county attend, about 150 to 200. The next day the town is swarming with people, like bees to honey. Festivities include a large parade; craft show at the Community Center; and in the park, there is free watermelon, free entertainment all afternoon, firemen’s lunch stand, church bake sales, homemade ice cream and various vendors. The celebration concludes that evening with more free entertainment. Approximately 1,000 to 2,000 attend each year in the small town of 109 people. To put on an event of this grandeur takes many volunteers, many hours of their time and labor.

Our next big event is a money making project. On November 4th a Turkey Supper and Bingo will be held. This is an annual event that is held the beginning of pheasant season and is a attraction for out-of-town hunters. We served 160 people last year and had approximately 50 stay to play Bingo. $1,200 was raised from that supper.

This highlights only two of more that 25 projects that Valley PRIDE sponsors. Our communities work well together and made the merging of the two clubs into one very successful organization.

Submitted by Delpha Godsey, Valley Community PRIDE
Community Waste Removal Partnership

Have you ever thought about partnering with your local waste hauler to keep your community clean? That’s exactly what Rex Woods, a PRIDE member of Kinsley, Kansas, said happened in their community. Their community worked with their city waste operations unit to design a waste pick-up schedule that benefits their community and make the waste hauler’s job easier and more efficient. Kinsley now has a great waste hauling system that’s helped their community stay clean and beautiful — all year round — clearly a win-win situation for everyone!

This unique community partnership involves the community, the local PRIDE group, their city government trash operations department, and Cox Communications group. The city’s trash operations division worked with the community group to identify several types of waste streams that would benefit from a separate pick-up program. Cox Communications gave Kinsley their own local cable station for community, non-profit organizations to share information, such as the Friday special trash pick up schedules, and PRIDE or other local group events. In addition, the city also sends out a “special trash pick-up schedule” twice yearly, on a small business-card sized reminder for citizens to post on their refrigerators or bulletin boards.

Each Friday a different kind of waste is picked up by the city’s waste operations. Citizens must call City Hall before that Friday’s pickup begins to let them know they have one of these wastes put out for pick up. The following schedule is used to keep Kinsley clean and trash free:

1st Friday: Tree limbs; must be cut into 4 foot pieces and put into small piles

2nd Friday: Leaves and grass; must be in bags

3rd Friday: Demolition materials such as wood, shingles, dry wall, carpet, and other small building debris

4th Friday: Miscellaneous wastes such as metals, furniture, refrigerators (must have had Freon evacuated and recovered by a licensed professional to avoid release of ozone-depleting refrigerants to the atmosphere), and washer and dryers.

We’d like to congratulate the Kinsley community and local PRIDE group, their city operations, and Cox Communications for their successful partnership to keep their community clean and beautiful!

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Community Waste Removal Partnership

**Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.**
— Joel Barker
Important PRIDE Dates

December 6   PRIDE Inc Board Retreat
January 15   2nd quarter Report Due