



Kansas PRIDE Newsletter

Summer 2008

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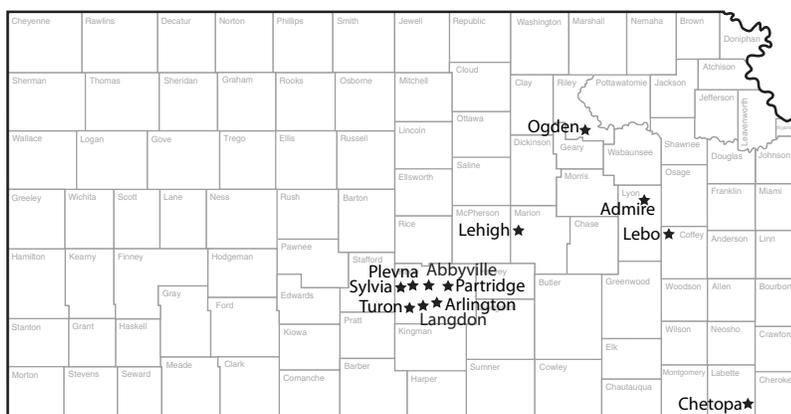
Welcome To PRIDE

Twelve new communities joined the ranks of Kansas PRIDE this program year. Some of the following communities have been working with PRIDE over the last few months, but this is the first year that they are eligible for awards.

Reno County communities that are joining forces under the title Fairfield Area Partners include: Abbyville, Arlington, Langdon, Partridge, Plevna, Sylvia, and

Turon. Other communities that have joined PRIDE this year include Admire, Chetopa, Lebo, Lehigh, and Ogden.

These communities are starting strong as they dive into community improvement. Each will be following the community improvement process that includes: assessment, project identification, public engagement, implementation, and celebration.



PRIDE Day Scheduled for October 11

On October 11, Kansas PRIDE will host its annual PRIDE Day event at the Sedgwick County Extension Office in Wichita.

Under the theme “Better Working Together” community improvement volunteers will gather from around the state to participate in this annual event. The day will be filled with activities that promote leadership in community development activities. Events include seminars, round table discussions, group sharing, panel discussions, luncheon speaker, awards, and other activities. A session for youth will focus on skills for working more effectively in community project leadership.

Don’t miss this event! Bring the family, youth active in your community, and anyone interested in community development and leadership.

PRIDE Day provides an important opportunity for volunteers to meet to share ideas, learn of new programs, and resources, and to be recognized for their investment in their community. It is the ideal time to meet with other PRIDE communities and discuss and learn from each other.

A block of rooms have been reserved at Hawthorn Suites, 2405 N. Ridge Road, Wichita, KS (316) 729-5700. This motel is close to the Sedgwick County Extension Office.

The Kansas PRIDE Newsletter is published quarterly by PRIDE staff: 101 Umberger Hall Kansas State University Manhattan, Kansas

Seeing Argonia Through the Eyes of a Student

Shortly after school started in the fall, two Argonia PRIDE members met with the fourth grade teacher to ask her if some of her students would be interested in taking pictures of the town showing things they liked and things they didn't like about their community. The teacher agreed if the parents would be willing to take the students around town, as she didn't have the time. All arrangements were put in place, and the project was off and running.

Since the disposable cameras, which the students were using, had approximately 27 pictures, it was decided two students would share a camera — each taking about 12 pictures. After all cameras were

used, they were turned in to the teacher. A member of PRIDE picked them up, had them developed, and mounted them on boards for the community to see.

These were on display during the holiday season. The community took great interest in them. As a result people started cleaning things up. Clean-up days were scheduled in May. Several farm trucks and dumpsters were filled with trash. This was a joint project with the city council, city workers, and PRIDE, who did all the publicity with articles in the newspaper and fliers around town.

Ideas from this project are continuing to be used. It definitely helped the Argonia community.

~ Elizabeth Hemberger/Argonia PRIDE Chairperson



Pothole spotted by a fourth-grade photographer.



A welcome sign for the Argonia River Park.



Standing water attracted the attention of an Argonia student photographer.

Activities in Troy

The Troy PRIDE group has been working hard the last few months raising money to clear brush and rock from the local 4-H dam. This is only the start of their second year as an organized group. They chose to tackle an extremely big project. They hope to have the brush removed and rock laid by the 4th of July. On the 4th of July, the group is planning to host a fishing derby for the local children so they are hopeful to have the dam on the pond looking good and rocked so kids will be able to get closer to the water. The PRIDE group hopes to have a float in the 4th of July parade.

They hosted a town social event on May 10 and an auction. They had barbecue pork, baked beans, coleslaw, green beans, scalloped potatoes, and several great dessert items. There was also some local entertainment provided that sang for the group. Even with the weather not being cooperative there were still several in attendance and fun was had by all who

attended. Several local stores and people donated items for an auction to help raise money to beautify the 4-H pond. The group hopes to someday have picnic tables, grills, a shelter and dikes to fish from.

The PRIDE group has had several work days at the pond to clean up brush through the past few months. They have planted flowers at the local community building. They have had several fund raisers: selling candy, mini flashlights, breakfast feed, and town social. They purchased new Christmas lights for the town gazebo and gave gift certificates to the local elderly that come to the pioneer center for meals to the local grocery store to purchase \$5 of anything they might want or need. They sponsored a drawing contest for the kids to design a PRIDE T-shirt and one was awarded a savings bond for the winning design. The winning design was made into T-shirts for purchase.

~ Amy Masters/Troy PRIDE Acting Secretary

Haysville Trash Days

On June 7 and 14, Haysville PRIDE conducted their seventh annual Trash Days. The 2008 event had a smaller volume of trash than in previous years. Residents of Haysville must purchase a permit from the Community Library for \$10 to have their trash picked-up. Of the \$10, \$1 is donated to the Friends of the Library for their new library.

The Haysville PRIDE committee provides lunch and breakfast on both days for the volunteers. This year 50 volunteers and city employees each Saturday for the project. Haysville PRIDE also provides all volunteers with a bright green shirt denoting them as a volunteer. In 2008, we have picked-up more than 600 tons (1,200,000 pounds) of trash. This was a low year for us and in the 7 years we project we have removed more than 10,000,000 pounds of trash from Haysville.

2008 tonnage

- 100 tons of general trash to landfills
- 200 tons of construction and demolition material to be recycled
- 30 tons of metal to recycle
- 42 tons of wood chips, mulch
- 30 tons of trees waste, to be chipped for mulch

We will not pick-up hazardous waste, tires, or anything that has or has had refrigerant in it.

We do have the cooperation of the City of Haysville as the Public Works Department handles most of the last four categories and the city council agrees to pick up the fees at the transfer station. One of the local independent trash haulers provides four trucks and drivers to help pick-up the general trash.

The monies we generate form the Trash Days goes toward our year-round projects of Yard of the Month, Holiday House, and helps pay for additional Christmas decorations for the city.

~ Tom R. Gibson/Chairperson



Haysville Trash Days.



Loading a garbage truck.



PRIDE volunteers.



Chipping branches.

You're Invited

Alton

Looking for a fun filled evening? Come to the PRIDE sponsored Independence Celebration in Alton on Sunday, July 13. The rural fire district has a barbecue in the city park starting at 6 p.m. Donations are used for new equipment.

Then everyone runs, jogs, bikes, or leisurely strolls to the ball park where PRIDE and the United Methodist Church has homemade ice cream and pie ready to sell. Folks bring their lawn chairs, blankets, and bug spray for an evening of fellowship and fun. With patriotic music in the background, everyone enjoys watching all ages play ball. For the grand finale, there will be fireworks provided by the rural fire district. The city of Alton, PRIDE, and local residents furnish the fireworks. Come have a bang-up time in Alton.

Another invitation from Alton

Come to our annual Summer Jubilee on August 23. Our theme for the day is "United We Stand With Pride." The parade begins at 10:30 a.m. followed by a day full of activities.

There will be a jam session, bingo, music in the park, vendors, and an antique tractor pull at 12:30. The Community Room will be honoring our married couples with a "Chapel of Love" display. We have a benefit auction at 5 p.m., barbecue at 6 p.m. (\$5) and the Bull City Opry will entertain everyone at 7:30 p.m. on the tennis court. This is a must see event! We have something for all ages. This is PRIDE sponsored with the whole community support. See you August 23.

~ Wilda Carswell/Chairperson

An invitation from Axtell

Axtell is planning their Axtell Harvest Festival and Bar B Q contest for August 9. It is an all-day affair.

A 5 K run starts early in the morning and the dance is late at night with car show, tractor pull contest, kids' peddle tractor pull contest, parade, homemade ice cream, bicycle races, and craft show in between, to mention just a few of the things happening.

Our contact person for this event is Roy Buessing at 1083 29th RD, Axtell, KS 66403 or e-mail at pabs@bluevalley.net

~ Karen Trail/Axtell PRIDE

NEWS YOU CAN USE

HEHC Program Accepting Nominations

The Healthy Ecosystems-Healthy Communities (HEHC) program has been a great success. It recently received funding to work with six more communities in Kansas watersheds. Two PRIDE communities, Rossville and Melvern, have nearly completed outstanding projects that will not only benefit their local water quality but also add beauty to an existing park, and has create new recreational and educational resources for their citizens.

The HEHC program helps citizens understand and value local natural resources that shaped their community's past and will determine its future. The program helps communities:

1. Establish new partners within their local watershed
2. Explore new agency resources and "link-up" to their expertise and assistance.
3. Expand their water quality projects for additional community benefits, such as educator and youth involvement programs, new cultural events, and access to new recreational resources.

The HEHC work provides a *process* each community can use again to engage their local citizens in important issues and decisions, in a way that is consistent with your community's values and visions for the future. Visit the program's Web site (www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu/healthyecosystems/communities/welcome.htm) for additional details about what each community accomplished participating in the HEHC program and with their water quality grants.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has provided funding for PRIDE to work with six communities located in Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) project areas. A map of PRIDE communities in each of these WRAPS project areas can be found on the PRIDE or HEHC program Web sites. If your community is interested in the HEHC program, please contact Sherry Davis, the HEHC program coordinator at (785) 313-5283.

~ Sherry Davis/Project Coordinator HEHC

Rural Grocery Store Summit

Rural Kansas grocery store owners met at the Kansas Sampler Foundation in Inman this June to discuss issues related to their grocery store operations.

Before the meeting, rural grocers from around the state had been surveyed regarding store services and products. Also, rural customers in five targeted areas of the state were surveyed about their grocery shopping preferences and habits.

The Rural Grocery Summit provided an opportunity to share and discuss survey results, challenges to the industry, and ways to improve the sustainability of rural grocery stores.

One of the top five most significant challenges identified by rural grocers in the survey was a lack of community support. Listed as one of the top five greatest challenges, "lack of community support" is an important issue for rural stores.

An important suggestion that arose in the forum was the idea of asking a volunteer community improvement group (like PRIDE) to help sustain the community economy by encouraging "buy local" campaigns. This could

Why Supporting Your Local Grocery is Important

- Having access to fresh, healthy foods can improve personal health.
- Working to sustain existing business is an important step in community economic sustainability and growth.
- Supporting local business maintains an important tax base for the community.
- Having a local food store is an important community asset for youth, elderly, and families that have travel restrictions.



David Procter, director of the Center for Engagement and Community Development, listens to a comment from a participant of the Rural Grocery Summit.

be a general community-wide effort for all stores in the community, or it could be grocery store specific. Grinnell, Florence, Potwin, and Olsburg PRIDE are working with their local grocery by surveying customers about ways to improve shopping and service.

Another way to help store owners reduce salary and workforce costs may include volunteering to stock shelves or deliver groceries.

Having a grocery store is a key asset for a community.

Local PRIDE organizations can take action support their local grocery in a number of ways. Sample surveys and other ideas relating to rural grocery can be found at www.ruralgrocery.org.

The Rural Grocery Summit was hosted by the KSU Center for Engagement and Community Development (CECD); The Kansas Sampler Foundation; The KSU Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development; the PRIDE Program, and was supported by grant funding from USDA Rural

Development.

~ Dan Kahl/Extension PRIDE Coordinator

Recognizing PRIDE Partner

The Kansas PRIDE program is seeking your nomination of a county or district K-State Research and Extension Agent for the 2008 PRIDE Partner Award. The PRIDE Partner Award recognizes an agent that has provided exceptional support to the PRIDE Program through their work with communities, or support of the work of the PRIDE program at the state level (other than PRIDE staff.)

If you have an agent who shows leadership or service to your PRIDE community work, please take a moment and complete a nomination form that indicates why you would like to nominate the K-State Research and Extension representative for the 2008

PRIDE Partner Award. Include how long they have been involved and provide specific examples of their involvement. The award application is due in the K-State Research and Extension PRIDE office by August 31.

The form is available by going into the PRIDE Web site at www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu and clicking on forms. The nominations can be mailed to the office or returned via e-mail to jmenon@ksu.edu. The selected candidate will be recognized at the Annual K-State Research and Extension meeting and PRIDE Day in October. Questions? Please call or e-mail the PRIDE office.

USDA Rural Development Storm Shelter Funding

USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks announced recently that the agency will offer funding this year for the state's Rural Storm Shelter Program. This program provides low interest loans and/or grants to help finance storm shelters for low income homeowners living in eligible areas of Kansas.

"Severe weather can strike unexpectedly, often with serious personal consequences. As Kansans were again reminded last year, violent storms and the unfortunate loss of life underscores the need for improved home safety measures. The installation of an approved storm shelter offers important added safety and security when severe weather strikes. USDA's Rural Storm Shelter Program provides eligible homeowners an excellent opportunity to protect themselves and their families," commented Banks.

USDA Rural Development's Rural Storm Shelter Program can assist homeowners with other necessary improvements or repairs. Many households across Kansas have benefited with this USDA assistance. Funds have been provided for energy efficiency improvements such as installing insulation, replacing windows, or replacing heating systems; along with roof repair or replacement; siding replacement; and providing sanitary water and waste disposal systems.

Eligible program applicants must meet income guidelines for the county of residence, the home must be owned and occupied by the applicant, and the property must be located in a rural area or a

community of less than 20,000 people. Assistance is provided at a 1 percent fixed interest rate or by a grant. The maximum loan is \$20,000 with a repayment term not to exceed 20 years. Grants may be available for applicants 62 years of age or older who do not have repayment ability for a loan. Grants are sometimes combined with loans to increase the amount available for repairs.

Banks encourages homeowners interested in the agency's Rural Storm Shelter Program to contact their local USDA Rural Development office, or they may call the state headquarters at (785) 271-2720. Applications will be accepted until funding is exhausted.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in home ownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered more than \$1.2 billion to Kansans covering all agency programs, supporting more than \$6 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State. For additional information regarding all USDA Rural Development programs, contact the Agency at 785-271-2700 or visit the Agency's Kansas Web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

ASK THE EXPERTS – Conducting a Community Assessment

A community assessment gives a clear picture of what is going on in your community. It shows what resources and strengths your community possesses and what issues should be addressed. An assessment provides the starting line for project goal setting and later measures the success of your efforts.

If you want to hear more about community assessments and the different forms that are available, join our teleconference Monday, September 8 at 2 p.m. from the convenience of your home or office.

The experts will include:

- Kansas Department of Commerce Staff discussing the Kansas Assessment Tool.
- Ron Wilson, Director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development discussing the First Impression program.

- Dan Kahl, Kansas PRIDE Program Coordinator, discussing assessments and survey tools.

Each expert will explain available assessments and the remainder of the time will be spent answering your questions. The call will be toll free, and you can participate by dialing (877) 278-8686 and using the participant PIN 715212.

This is the beginning of a new PRIDE year and it may be the ideal time to update your community survey as you plan for new goals for the 2008-09 PRIDE program year. If you have any questions, please e-mail choch@ksu.edu or call (785) 532-5840.

~ *Connie Hoch/Extension PRIDE Associate*

Blue Valley Tele-Communications

Blue Valley Tele-Communications is a rural cooperative telecommunications provider located in Home, Kansas. Providing state-of-the-art technology to its 4,000 subscribers is not something the company takes lightly. "We are committed to the growth and development of the communities we serve. Living in a rural community should not come at the cost of sufficient communications services," said General Manager, Dennis Doyle.

In 2006 the company decided to begin installation of fiber optic cable to the homes of its patrons. While fiber technology may be the wave of the future, installing it to even the most remote locations is not. "We are one of the first in the nation to deploy fiber actually to each and every home regardless of location. People living out here deserve the same opportunities those living in big cities do," Bob Baker, Plant Manager commented.

Blue Valley has placed a strong emphasis on the future of the communities it serves. Economic development has been an integral part of the company since the early 1990s when the Board of Directors elected to open a telemarketing center next door. The need was noticed for full-time jobs offering a competitive salary and benefits package so Blue Valley made it happen. Today, this venture is still going strong and employs approximately 60 people from the surrounding communities.

The company has also taken on recent growth of its own. The creation of new services such as IPTV, cable, wireless high-speed internet, computer repair, and networking has enabled Blue Valley to quadruple

in size over the past decade. In 2007 the company constructed a 14,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility with the public in mind. Included in the floor plans was a modest sized community conference room customers can use rent-free. "We exist because of the people we serve. It is important they know how vital they are to our success," said Doyle.

Blue Valley works hard to be active participants in community organizations and with community events. "The employees of Blue Valley are eager to help the communities in any way possible," said Jada Ackerman, Public Relations /Economic Development Director. "Last

year employees helped build playgrounds in some of the communities as well as donated many hours helping charitable causes. We all take great pride in our communities and enjoy helping out." With a generous donation policy in place as well as a forward-thinking board, this company works hard to stay community oriented.

In addition to being actively involved in the communities, the company has sponsored four Rural Economic Development Loans through the USDA Rural Development REDLG program. "These zero percent interest loans help small business owners get their feet off the ground. Without this assistance many owners would still be in the planning stages," said Ackerman. "All together, this program has added about 20 new jobs to the area." The company has a strong grasp of the challenges small rural businesses face and is committed to doing its part to protect these communities for future generations.

~ Jada Ackerman/PR-Economic Development Director



4th Quarter Report Due

Don't forget to send in your 4th quarter report by July 15. It is important to hear from each community as numbers are compiled to reflect the impact of the program accomplishments in the annual review. Each community's numbers contribute to the PRIDE story.

Sustaining PRIDE Progress

- Remember, a strong, sustainable PRIDE initiative:
- 1) bases projects on the goals of the community,
 - 2) includes and encourages full community involvement,
 - 3) sets clear goals, and work toward measurable success, and
 - 4) shares leadership opportunities.

To self-check how your PRIDE group is doing, visit www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu and use the "forms" link to find the *Sustaining Progress Checklist*.

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PRIDE Calendar

July 15	4 th Quarter Reports Due
July 18	Kansas PRIDE Inc. Board Meeting – Onaga
August 31	PRIDE Partner Nominations Due
September 8	Ask the Experts – Community Assessments
October 10	Kansas PRIDE Inc, Board Meeting, Wichita
October 11	PRIDE Day, Wichita

Just a reminder

If PRIDE officers or members would like to receive the PRIDE Newsletter electronically, collect e-mail addresses at your next PRIDE Meeting and send them via e-mail to jmenon@ksu.edu or by regular mail to:

Kansas PRIDE
Kansas State University
101 Umberger Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506



All educational programs and materials are available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability.

The Kansas Department of Commerce, K-State Research and Extension, and private-sector companies and associations partner together to make the PRIDE program successful.

For assistance contact the PRIDE staff: Jeanne Stinson at (785) 296-3485;
Dan Kahl or Connie Hoch at (785) 532-5840