Kansas PRIDE Newsletter
Winter 2010

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Kansas PRIDE Turns 40

The Kansas PRIDE program is celebrating its 40th year. Since 1970, PRIDE has provided recognition and support for Kansans wanting to organize for community betterment.

To celebrate, we are collecting stories and photos of community success. We would like stories and photos (digital if possible) to use in a PowerPoint and a narrated digital story like the one found on the PRIDE Web site www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu.

Please write a letter or drop us an e-mail to let us know about the great things you have accomplished over the years. Soon there will be a form on the Web site that you can use.

PRIDE will be celebrating the work and history of PRIDE communities and moving toward a new system of recognition.

In response to the feedback and priorities voiced by PRIDE communities in the 2009 focus groups, the PRIDE staff is designing changes to its program delivery to take effect in 2011.

One important change will be that our PRIDE enrollment year will follow a calendar year. All currently enrolled communities will not need to enroll again until late fall of 2010. There will be no enrollment or award applications to complete this spring.

At this year’s PRIDE Day, we will celebrate the past 40 years and plan for the next 40 years. The date and location of PRIDE Day 2010 will be announced soon. This year there will be no Community of Excellence, STAR projects, or Youth awards. Instead we will use the 40th year of PRIDE to recognize all PRIDE communities and sponsors for the work accomplished during the past 40 years as well as formally announce our support and recognition plans for PRIDE communities.

— Dan Kahl, Extension PRIDE Program Coordinator

2009 PRIDE Program at a Glance

70 active communities
invested 171,036 hours and leveraged $723,606 to accomplish 1,183 projects with 592 collaborative partner organizations to build better communities.

The economic impact of volunteer time is significant. In the 2009 calendar year, community volunteers invested and reported 171,036 hours of citizen involvement through Kansas PRIDE.

The Independent Sector national value for volunteer hours for Kansas for 2007 was $17.16 per hour. At this rate, PRIDE investment in volunteer time to Kansas is valued at more than $2,934,977.

These numbers were taken directly from the PRIDE quarterly reports. We want to give credit to everyone that provides resources of time and or money to the PRIDE program so please make sure we have the numbers from your community.

— Dan Kahl, Extension PRIDE Program Coordinator
Sharing the impact of your local PRIDE program is the goal of upcoming training sessions. At these sessions, you will gain the skills needed to highlight the importance of the PRIDE work in your community.

We encourage each community to send a delegation to participate in one of the following trainings, which will be presented by Trudy Rice and/or Jeanne Stinson from the Kansas PRIDE program.

March 29 Lenora Lenora Library
April 5 Perry Perry American Legion Building
April 12 Larned Assembly of God Church
April 15* Humboldt Humboldt Library
April 19 Park City Park City PRIDE Building

*Note this is a change of date.

All trainings will be from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Buildings will be open at 5:30 p.m. with drinks and snacks available. The meeting will start promptly at 6 p.m.

When PRIDE embraces the role of “connector of people with purpose” your local PRIDE group will realize that everyone around your community is a part of PRIDE, and the human resources to address community needs will become available.

Keeping the focus on the broader community and connecting people with opportunities to serve is essential to sustaining PRIDE in your community.

(This approach is consistent with the concept of “Asset Based Community Development.” More information on this approach can be gained through ‘Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets’ by Kretzmann & McKnight (1993).)

— Dan Kahl, Extension PRIDE Program Coordinator

### Connect, Connect, Connect

A community’s PRIDE organization often becomes the local “go to” group to get things done. This is fantastic, but it can be troublesome if the same group of people try to respond to all the needs of the community.

The most effective PRIDE groups think of themselves as “connectors” first, and as “doers” second.

After listening to the needs and wants of a community (through a survey, poll, or public meeting) many short- and long-term projects will be identified. A wise PRIDE group begins by asking the question, “Who would be interested in this, or who would be good at this?” and follows up with a phone call and invitation for involvement.

By operating as the community catalyst, a PRIDE group can initiate and support collaborative efforts in the community. In this role, PRIDE also can recognize volunteers who have been active in building the community.
Rainbow Communications, an Internet, phone, and digital cable TV provider, knows what it is like to be committed to a small community. Headquartered in Everest, Kansas, population 350, Rainbow Communications started in 1952 as an independent telecommunications cooperative to provide dial tone in five rural exchanges, Everest being its largest exchange. Much has changed in the telecommunications business and for Rainbow itself, but one thing remains constant, and that is Rainbow’s commitment to their small north-eastern Kansas communities.

In 2005, Rainbow had 15 employees and a vision: provide the type of leading-edge technological advancements to their rural community members, much like the large telecommunications companies do in metropolitan areas. It was time to grow, but it was also important to not grow so much that the customer experience is lost.

One year later, Rainbow Communications previously a partner, bought full rights of the area’s cable TV company and invested substantially in the cable network in the neighboring towns of Hiawatha, Highland, Horton, Sabetha, Seneca, Troy, and Wathena. The upgraded cable network not only allowed Rainbow to provide a package of digital phone, Internet, and cable TV in those communities, but it also gave Rainbow the opportunity to hire several more employees and field three more office locations.

With the tag line, Big enough to deliver. Small enough to care, Rainbow’s mission remains the same. Grown from 15 employees to more than 60 employees, Rainbow continues to invest in their communities through economic development, chamber sponsorships, and donations exceeding $10,000 annually.

Commitment to the customer experience is just as important. Rainbow has added several customer service representatives, so customers can talk to a person with little or no wait, a free extended-hour technical support center for Internet customers, and plans to teach free basic computer classes this fall.

Along with the geographic expansion and customer growth, technological developments have kept Rainbow extremely busy. By becoming its own ISP, Rainbow was able to purchase and control a substantial amount of bandwidth, which in turn allowed customers to subscribe plans with speeds as fast as 10 mb download and 3 mb upload. Much is made about the download speed, but the 3 mb upload speed has been extremely helpful for community businesses, which need the extra boost for multi-media transactions.

Another technological development is the Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) project. Rainbow Communications is currently building a fiber optic network, which replaces the original copper lines in its cooperative exchanges. Once complete, members will enjoy the most advanced delivery system a telecommunications company can deploy. The fiber optic system, with virtually unlimited bandwidth, will not only increase the value of homes, but also could lure larger businesses to the area.

While Rainbow Communications continues to look to the future for new technologies, it is sure to keep itself grounded on main street in their small communities. Because the goal is not to make the most profit, but instead to provide friends and neighbors a local presence with quality service at a reasonable price.

— Jackie Petersen, Marketing Manager for Rainbow Communications
**Dollars for Communities**

Kansas PRIDE communities have been busy assessing their community needs, creating a vision, planning projects, gaining resources, and celebrating. The following PRIDE communities have received grants to help them accomplish some of their goals. Congratulations to these communities. If your community has received grants to help fund your work, we would love to hear about it.

**Sunflower Foundation Healthy Behaviors and Prevention Walking Trails grant:**
*Overbrook PRIDE, Inc., Overbrook* — $20,855 to complete a 1,380-foot-long, 6-foot-wide concrete section of the Overbrook City Trail (includes trail lighting, distance signage and treescaping)

**Small Communities Improvement Program (SCIP) grants from the Kansas Department of Commerce:**
*Rossville PRIDE* has been awarded $75,000 for its planned community playground. This will enhance their park improvement plans that have included a rain garden and sand volleyball court.

The Small Communities Improvement Program sets aside $500,000 each year for communities that are undertaking improvement projects through sweat equity and volunteerism. The program assists communities with populations of 5,000 or fewer that are not eligible for other Department of Commerce assistance and might not have the capacity to provide matching funds. The maximum award for a single project is $125,000.

Self-help requires communities to determine which parts of the project they can complete on their own. The community acts as the general contractor, organizing local labor and equipment, and coordinating work that needs to be done by a subcontractor. The SCIP provides direction, technical assistance, guidance, and the support to make planned projects happen. Self-help and volunteerism must result in savings of at least 40 percent of the project’s market price.

Examples of eligible projects include arts, entertainment, theaters, historic preservation projects that affect the quality of life in the community, parks, playground equipment, city-sponsored farmers markets, walking trails, and public rest rooms. Communities must verify the affect the project will have on the quality of life for the residents. For more information contact Chris Harris at charris@kansascommerce.com.

**Community Development Block Grants:** The Kansas Department of Commerce, Rural Development division has announced their most recent awards. The following awards went to Kansas communities with PRIDE organizations: *Fort Scott* $400,000 for housing rehabilitation; *Courtland* $159,142 for a fire station; *Larned* $400,000 for electrical system improvements; *McFarland* $283,106 for a flood-control dam; and *Overbrook* $365,172 for streets.

Community Development Block Grants allow the Department of Commerce to distribute federal funds to Kansas cities and counties wanting to improve their community. To receive funds, a project must meet at least one of the following federally mandated criteria:

- The project benefits low- and moderate-income individuals
- The project removes or prevents slum or blight conditions
- The project eliminates an urgent need created by a disaster when local funds are unavailable

For more information contact Chris Harris at charris@kansascommerce.com

**K-State Research and Extension Get It-Do It! Grants:** The following six Kansas PRIDE communities and the local K-State Research and Extension unit have each been awarded $3,000 from K-State Research and Extension. These grants are for local initiatives to identify opportunities and improvements for increased physical activity and youth-led health promotion in small communities.

- **Melvern** — Improve Melvern Railroad Park for expanded physical activity opportunities, and engage youth in partnerships to promote physical activity and healthful opportunities.
- **Mt. Hope** — Promote physical activity places and opportunities through social marketing and engage youth in meaningful physical activity and healthful opportunities.
NEWS YOU CAN USE

- **Stafford** — Improve the STARS program (after school and summer activities) and engage youth in meaningful partnerships to promote physical activity and healthful opportunities.

- **Grinnell** — Equip the Grinnell park with workout stations, provide expanded physical activity opportunities and engage youth in meaningful partnerships to promote physical activity and healthful opportunities.

- **Glasco** — Expanded partnership with Learn and Serve programs, conduct Glasco park/community improvements to expand physical activity, and engage youth in partnerships to promote physical activity and healthful opportunities.

NOTE: New funding resources available through the Kansas Humanities Council can be found at www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu/PRIDE/prideresources.

— Trudy Rice, Kansas PRIDE Program Extension Associate

PRIDE COMMUNITY NEWS

**Portis**
Portis PRIDE members and community volunteers worked together to construct and complete a basketball court in the city park. Since the completion of the basketball court and goals, local children, teens, and adults have been using the court daily. It is also used for playing games such as hopscotch and four-square. It has filled a vital need for the community as it provides a healthy avenue for outdoor recreation and socialization. The 3rd Annual Portis-Harlan Community Picnic used the court for a basketball free throw game and bottle ring toss game in September. The basketball court has become a great asset to the community of Portis.

**Council Grove**
The Council Grove PRIDE committee’s vision is to make downtown Main Street attractive to not only local residents but also for tourists to enjoy as they stroll downtown, visit local historical points, and shop in Main Street stores. This fall, new banners were purchased and mums were planted in all of the planters on Main Street. With the purchase of a “mean green watering machine,” all the flowers on Main Street will be happy for many years. Community volunteers and other service organizations assisted the PRIDE committee with this project through volunteer hours and monetary donations so that the community’s vision for Main Street could become a reality.

Council Grove’s final phase of Historical District nomination is being made possible with outside funding and local foundations including a grant from the Kansas Historical Society. The PRIDE committee has advertised and hired a preservation consultant and hosted a public meeting for community input in cooperation with Morris County Historical Society.

**Bushton**
This year, Bushton continued the popular movies in the park on Friday nights in the summer. Pop, cotton candy, and popcorn were sold to about 50 people of all ages who attended each week. This is also the quarter also celebrated the Bushton Back-to-School Bash, with kid’s games and a 3-on-3 basketball tournament. That evening, new teachers were introduced and sports teams honored at the Back-to-School Community Picnic. This year’s picnic in the park featured entertainment by the Sunflower Stompers Clogging Team on the new stage. The free fried chicken dinner was enjoyed by all.

The end of September is an annual fund-raising event. The inflatable bouncer and slide were setup at the Lyons Fair on the Square to entertain the community’s children.

Work began on the new Welcome to Bushton project. A volunteer will bake cookies and take a basket of goodies to all new people who move to town. Committee members will call on local and area businesses to provide items for the welcome baskets.

On the Bushton Park project, a scheduled work day was cancelled due to inclement weather. The plan is to schedule a day to do final touches in the spring. Work on the Santa’s Bazaar began in December. This was busy quarter for Bushton PRIDE.

One of the points of Bushton’s mission statement is to “plan and implement community events.” The movies and Back-to-School Bash target this goal. The Welcome to Bushton project is also an extension of this goal. The movies in the park meet another goal of their mission statement: to “improve parks and create more recreational opportunities.” Bushton PRIDE believes the more they touch the lives of local citizens and provide ways to work and play together, the more successful they are.
Community Spotlight-Twice is Nice

The community of Kinsley, Kansas took it upon themselves to solve a local problem at the local level. The PRIDE committee used the community development process to assess the community, set goals, develop a plan, execute the plan, evaluate, and celebrate.

The community had empty storefronts and a need for dollars to improve the community. The goal was to get businesses to locate in the empty buildings on main street. Their plan was to open a thrift store, in one of the empty storefronts. This was followed by renovating some additional space in the building to rent to small businesses — generating additional income. However, the most impressive outcome turned out to be the dollars generated by the donations and sales at the new business — Twice is Nice. These dollars are used to finance local improvement efforts throughout the community including renovating the Train Park and purchasing holiday decorations for the main street just to name a few.

As a way to raise funds, Kinsley PRIDE opened the Twice is Nice thrift store in July of 1992. Open five days a week, the money from the store is put back into the community with the direction of the PRIDE committee. Thirty-five volunteers staff the thrift store. With a county-wide population of 3,000, volunteers are amazed at the never-ending flow of donations. Excess clothing is donated to charities in the area, nationwide, and abroad.

The biggest benefactor of the thrift store is the community. In the years of operation, the Twice is Nice store has returned more than $200,000 in rent, taxes, and donations to Kinsley. The rent is paid to the Carnival Heritage Foundation, owner of the building.

Before opening Twice is Nice, PRIDE donated labor to clean and rebuild the first floor of the museum building to house four businesses. All businesses pay rent to the foundation.

Today, it remains a challenge to keep businesses in the building. However, the community has been creative in their approach and continues to strive to keep the extra space rented. The thrift store continues to operate, providing dollars for the community, opportunities to live greener, and a source of quality clothing and household goods at reasonable prices. This is an excellent example of a community following the “signs of the times” with a creative solution with benefits for everyone in the community.

Using the community capital framework, this project has addressed financial capital by increasing dollars available to the community, built capital by renovation of existing buildings, natural capital by providing an opportunity to recycle, cultural capital by supporting the Carnival Heritage Foundation, human capital by providing quality clothing to increase self esteem, and social capital by providing a place to gather and volunteer with persons of shared interest.

— Trudy Rice, Kansas PRIDE Program Extension Associate
Clyde joins Kansas PRIDE

“Behind every new initiative are a few good people and some dreams” said Mari Detrixhe, the development director for the Clyde Community Development Resource Committee (CCDRC). She credits Ray Makalous, a Vista volunteer with K-State Research and Extension, River Valley District, who approached the city of Clyde in July to discuss becoming a PRIDE community with Randy Wise, vice president of People’s Bank, who represented the CCDRC at an introductory PRIDE meeting in Belleville, conducted by Trudy Rice.

The CCDRC has been exploring organizations outside the community for their potential to provide support and networking opportunities and they chose the PRIDE program to help them achieve these goals. In addition, Clyde applied for participation in the Healthy Ecosystems-Healthy Communities (HEHC) program to start their PRIDE work using the community asset planning process the program offers.

The residents of Clyde are excited about being a new PRIDE community and have already begun important work in their first public meeting last November. The meeting was led by Randy Wise and facilitated by Sherry Davis, the HEHC program coordinator, and Jay Barnes, from Wichita.

Twenty-six citizens participated in discussions and exercises that identified:

- Clyde’s assets and natural resources and how those resources have contributed to their enjoyment and appreciation of the “Great Outdoors” in Clyde
- Community values that make Clyde a special place to live and raise a family, and
- “Visions for the future” for Clyde’s natural resources and community assets.

The first public meeting wrapped up with attendees signing up to participate in teams to assess Clyde’s natural, built, and historic/cultural resources — an important aspect of community planning is establishing a baseline of information about your community’s assets and resources. The information gathered in the assessments will be used in a public meeting to help Clyde identify goals and plans for the future of the community’s natural resources and to identify a water quality project for their $5,000 mini-grant from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which is awarded to communities in the HEHC program.

What’s next for this fast-moving, forward-thinking PRIDE community? On February 15, two presenters were invited to a public meeting in Clyde. Pat Riese, a wildlife biologist from the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), gave a presentation on local wildlife populations and Mark Janzen, a plant materials specialist from the Salina USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, spoke about native plant communities in the Clyde area. Both resource people shared information on their programs and services for communities and landowners to protect, preserve, or restore these two valuable community resources.

After the presentations, the public was invited to join Clyde’s assessment teams working to learn more about the community’s natural and built assets. All of the assessment volunteer teams will meet after the presentations to start their work on the assessments. Students are encouraged to participate in the HEHC program and assessments using a “photo-reporting” approach to document the status of the community’s built and cultural resources, and to identify and inventory the local wildlife, native plants, and water resources in the community.

In the first public meeting, citizens identified Clyde as a progressive community with a can-do attitude, and their first meetings are sure backing that up. Good luck Clyde and welcome to the PRIDE family of communities!

— Sherry Davis, HEHC Program Coordinator

New PRIDE Communities

PRIDE welcomes new member communities: Burdett, Clyde, Collyer, Ford, Grainfield, Humboldt, La Harpe, McFarland, Moran, Perry, and Rozel.
PRIDE Calendar

March 29  Benchmarking Your Success training, Lenora, Kansas

April 5   Benchmarking Your Success training, Perry, Kansas

April 12  Benchmarking Your Success training, Larned, Kansas

April 15  Benchmarking Your Success training, Humboldt, Kansas

April 15  3rd Quarter PRIDE reports due

April 19  Benchmarking Your Success training, Park City, Kansas

Newsletter by e-mail!

If PRIDE officers or members would like to receive the PRIDE Newsletter electronically, collect e-mail addresses at your next PRIDE Meeting and send then 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 or Chris Harris at (785) 296-3485; Dan Kahl or Trudy Rice at (785) 532-5840