

NCRPC NEWS

North Central Regional Planning Commission
Serving Kansans Since 1972

August/September 2010
www.ncrpc.org

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Upcoming Events

Thursday, Sept. 30, 2 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 28, 2 p.m.

Executive Board Meetings

Tuesday, Oct. 26

NCRPC Banquet

First Christian Church

Concordia, KS

More details to be announced

NORTH CENTRAL KANSAS “BUY FRESH” GUIDE PROMOTES LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

Fresh food and agricultural products from family farms are available all across North Central Kansas. The Buy Fresh North Central Kansas Local Food Guide is one initiative that exists to promote the local food economy.

The source of inspiration for the Buy Fresh Guide was Clare Kuhn, Republic County Economic Development Director in 2008. Kuhn, along with Deb Ohlde, NCRPC Assistant Director, and Mari Detrixhe, Clyde Economic Development Director, met to explore the idea and funding options.

“The Buy Fresh Local Food Guide was designed to help rural producers market themselves throughout North Central Kansas, and in time, to our urban neighbors in Manhattan, Salina, and Lincoln,” Detrixhe says.

The guide and the website serves as a marketing function for participating growers by offering listings of locally sourced foods, farmers markets and agritourism opportunities. Producers pay a fee to be listed and benefit from the regional distribution of the guide.

Originally the guide was intended to serve the four counties of Republic, Cloud, Clay and Washington. In 2010



Marshall County was added to support the North Central Kansas Specialty Crop Project’s five-county area, which included Marshall. The Specialty Crop project was launched from the Washington County Farm Bureau office. Twilya L’Ecuyer serves as the North Central Kansas Specialty Crop Project Program Administrator. The project is administered by an advisory council made up of growers from each county with fiscal oversight being provided by Washington County Farm Bureau.

L’Ecuyer says the overall intent is to grow the local food economy and encourage buying local.

“There is a tremendous amount of high quality food of all types produced in North Central Kansas,” L’Ecuyer says. “If only 10% of our food budget were to become locally sourced we would create additional revenue of nearly \$7 million annually. Buying local in all forms is a powerful economic force we should all more conscientiously embrace.”

During its short existence, response to the Buy Fresh Local Food Guide has been positive.

“The majority of the businesses in the guide renew their listing each year and we continue to pick up new listings,” Detrixhe says.

Trish Remley of Grassland Gardens Nursery and Flower Farm located near Miltonvale says her experience with having her business listed in the Buy Fresh Guide has been beneficial.

“Buying local in all forms is a powerful economic force we should all more conscientiously embrace.”

~Twilya L’Ecuyer, NCK
Specialty Crop Project
Program Administrator

“I am able to reap the benefit personally by being able to locate and purchase fresh food in North Central Kansas,” Remley says. “Business wise it’s been great to have an additional avenue of marketing.”

This project is funded, in part, by Clyde Economic Development, Kansas Crossroads RC&D, North Central Kansas Rural Development Council, NCRPC, Republic County Economic Development, and the North Central Kansas Farm Bureau Specialty Crop Project.



NONPROFIT HELPS FUND THERMAL IMAGERS

Fire Departments that do not have thermal imagers and do not have the funds available to purchase them may find assistance through the nonprofit organization 500 For Life. Thermal imagers have the potential to save lives and help minimize property loss as well.

500 For Life partners with Fireman's Fund Insurance Company's Heritage Program and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) to qualify and prioritize fire departments in need of these thermal imagers based on criteria including, but not limited to, the number of fires fought each year and the amount of funding available from other sources.

Periodically a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be available to Fire Departments in the United States. To ensure that your department receives a RFP, complete the online form at www.500forlife.org/howtoapply.html.

Grant awards are made by the NFFF and Fireman's Fund or by 500 For Life.

FROM THE DIRECTOR: YOUTH GAIN SELF-CONFIDENCE FROM SUMMER ACTIVITIES

It is hard to believe that summer is already nearing a close. Weeks ago were camps associated with Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, churches, sports or other activities. But, the memories can linger and inspire youth for months and even years.

Through these many learning activities, our youth gain self-confidence and teambuilding knowledge. A reported 56 million youngsters under 15 years of age participate in some sport. That tapers considerably for older youth. Youth today spend less time outdoors choosing instead to look at a computer screen, television set, playing video games or texting dozens of times an hour each day. I contend that involvement in organizations such as those listed above makes a huge difference in the lives of our youth.



Doug McKinney is the NCRPC Executive Director.

By the way, congratulations to Boy Scouts of America as it celebrates 100 years of teaching youngsters how to survive and be fruitful members of society.

I'd like to call attention to heroes of the summer including volunteer firemen and scout leaders Rex Lowe, Chester Peak and Dan Johnson. They recently braved a series of violent explosions in the town of Kirwin while acting to

protect neighbors and businesses there. Rex and Dan are on the mend from their injuries. Chester is fighting hard and receiving a lot of care and prayer support.

The NCRPC fiscal management of regional Homeland Security Councils proved valuable as stalwart emergency managers, first responders, law enforcers and others were able to utilize recent training techniques, vital equipment and essential communication devices. Thank you to all who respond to emergencies.

Let's encourage our youth and young adults to get involved with positive endeavors and be challenged to participate in communities. Include them in community decisions and seek their thoughts on what is important to make our small towns viable for future generations.

COMMUNITIES TO RECEIVE CDBG FUNDING

Several communities in North Central Kansas were recently notified they will receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The funds were part of a 2010 Special Round that the Kansas Department of Commerce announced in May.

The City of Barnes will receive \$302,000 to replace water lines, fire hydrants, valves and repair its water tower.

The City of Concordia will receive \$466,500 to replace and relocate a

sanitary sewer line along Broadway Street.

The City of Green will receive \$278,000 to replace its water distribution system.

The City of Holyrood will receive \$60,698 to demolish two dilapidated commercial buildings in the downtown area.

The City of Lincoln Center will receive \$500,000 to replace water distribution lines.

Ottawa County will receive \$138,000 to replace two existing bridges.

The City of Tescott will receive \$78,455 to purchase a brush fire truck for RFD #6.

The NCRPC assisted these communities with the application process and will be providing project administration.

To be awarded CDBG funds, local governments must meet at least one of three program objectives: benefit low- and moderate-income persons; prevent or eliminate slums and blight; or resolve an urgent need where local resources are not available.

REGION'S RESPONSE TO H1N1 DISCUSSED

Members of the North Central Kansas Public Health Initiative (NCKPHI) recently discussed the region's response to H1N1 during a Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD) Meeting June 16 in Wichita.

The mission of the NCKPHI is to develop a rural regional public health system to improve and protect the health of communities. The NCRPC began working with the NCKPHI in 2003.

Sherry Angell, NCKPHI Regional Coordinator, says years of working together

as a region helped overcome some of the challenges associated with H1N1.

"The two biggest challenges we had were the way that the State distributed the vaccines and the media," Angell says.

The State required a 100-dose minimum vaccine order and there was a formula based on the high-risk groups.



Members of the North Central Kansas Public Health Initiative (NCKPHI) participate in discussion at a June meeting in Wichita. (Courtesy Photo)

"We put orders together as a region," Angell says. "We did this on a weekly basis for several months. It was cumbersome but we got it done. We were proactive, which paid off."

YOUTH CONTEST AVAILABLE NOW

High school seniors again will have the opportunity to submit an original work to be considered for one of the three \$650 cash prizes available in the RuralVoices Youth Contest.

This marks the fifth year the NCRPC has sponsored the contest. The 2010-2011 contest theme is "Rural Kansas...Creating a Path to the Future Now."

RuralVoices is open to any senior in high school who lives in and/or is attending a public or private high school within the NCRPC service area. Students may enter a written essay, a short video or a series of photos.

Students must complete an online registration form and submit an entry electronically by November 15, 2010.

For more, visit www.eyeonkansas.org/ruralvoices/index.html.

INNOVATION AROUND THE REGION

While the town may be small, the people of Clyde have a history of rolling up their sleeves and working together to accomplish projects.

In 2006 there was a vacant lot in the downtown that was full of sand and weeds.

Johnita Crawford, member of the Clyde Beautification Committee, says that was the starting point for a large project.

"We asked the city council if we could make a park out of it," Crawford says. "Little did we know that this would be the beginning of a beautiful park and a facelift for the whole business district."

The group raised more than \$20,000 and



Volunteers worked every Wednesday during summer 2006 to complete a park in Clyde. The current project underway is for streetlights.

volunteers worked a day each week that summer to complete the project.

With that success behind them, the Beautification Committee has continued to spearhead community improvement projects. The latest is an effort to raise funds to replace light poles in the downtown area.

Submit your good ideas for accomplishing a project or solving a problem—large or small—past or present. E-mail lthielen@nckcn.com.

MEET THE BOARD



Tim Vandall

Tim Vandall became the Ellsworth City Administrator in March 2009 and was appointed to the NCRPC Board.

A native of South Dakota, Tim graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science and a Master of Public Administration from the University of South Dakota.

His previous work experience includes serving as an intern with the City of Flandreau, South Dakota, and serving as a graduate research assistant at the University of South Dakota.

Tim is active locally with the Kiwanis organization, First Presbyterian Church, and the City of Ellsworth Celebrations Committee. In addition, he is a member of International City/County Management Association (ICMA), American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM).

Tim enjoys golfing, camping, attending sporting events, music, and spending time with his fiancé, Allison.

BELLEVILLE TITLE COMPANY HAS NEW OWNERSHIP

Chapman-Hyland Abstract Co., Inc., has a long history of providing a necessary service for Republic County.

Amanda and Randy Wise recently purchased the stock of the business from long-time owner Eloise Ray. Ray will retire, but plans to provide one year of training to help ease the transition.

Eloise first began working in the business in October 1979 when she started managing what was then called Hyland Abstract Company. She later bought into the business with attorney Pat Hyland and formed the corporation known as Chapman-Hyland Abstract Co, Inc. in March 1983. She became sole owner in June 1983.

The business currently operates out of a leased building located at 1332 19th Street in Belleville.

Amanda will operate the business on a full-time basis. She received a

bachelor's degree from Kansas State University and has worked in a variety of management and supervisory positions for the past eight years.

The ownership change became official August 5.

Amanda says there already have been rewards associated with her new business venture.

"One of the biggest rewards thus far is the fact that I get up every morning knowing that I'm going to work for myself," Amanda says. "I'm not punching a time clock and helping others live their dreams," Amanda says.

Challenges are also to be expected, Amanda acknowledges.

"I know there will be challenges along the way, but I have a great support system with Eloise and the underwriters at First American Title Insurance Company just a phone call away," Amanda says. "With each transaction I do there is bound to be something I haven't seen before."



Amanda Wise (left) recently purchased Chapman-Hyland Abstract Co., Inc. from long-time owner Eloise Ray (right).

Jim Koch, President of Peoples Exchange Bank, says the business transfer was necessary.

"The continuation of this business is important to Republic County," Koch says.

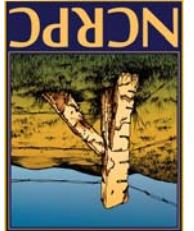
One of the more interesting aspects about Amanda's new venture has been researching titles and seeing how far back a family has owned land.

"There are some families that have a history of owning the same land back into the early 1900s," Amanda says.

This project was made possible with funding from the Peoples Exchange Bank of Belleville, Four Rivers NCK Business Development Fund, and investment by the owners. Completion of this project resulting in the business transfer retains one full-time position.

For more information about the financing program used, contact Debra Peters, NCRPC Business Finance Director at 785-738-2218 or by email at dpeters@nckcn.com.

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North Central Regional Planning Commission
 109 N. Mill, P.O. Box 565, Beloit, KS 67420
 Phone: 785-738-2218
 Fax: 785-738-2185
www.ncrpc.org