

## JEWELL COUNTY FOCUSED ON INITIATIVE FOR GROWTH

A group of dedicated individuals in Jewell County have been focused on an initiative called Growing Jewell County through Entrepreneurship and Youth Attraction. The project is now in its fourth year and the results are encouraging.

A steering committee, which is made up of four local community leaders, leads the effort. They are supported by a group of entrepreneurship and youth champions.

"We are growing Jewell County by expanding and transitioning businesses and engaging and preparing our youth for growing Jewell County in the future," Keith Roe, local coordinator, says.

The project is working to stabilize the population and slow decades of depopulation — and there are hints that may be occurring. According to Roe, the K-12 school population has stabilized and the overall percent of graduates returning has increased.

"If youth are going to be attracted back to their home they need employment and we believe some may need to be entrepreneurs," Roe says. "The underlying premise, which we believe strongly, is that the odds of attracting someone back home are greater than trying to attract someone who is not familiar with the area."

The community has partnered with Leon Atwell to serve as a facili-

tator, adviser, and community coach. Atwell is co-founder of Advancing Rural Prosperity, Inc. ([advancingruralprosperity.org](http://advancingruralprosperity.org)).

The first phase of the Growing Jewell County initiative was to employ "business coaching" to identify, engage and support area entrepreneurs. This has led to the creation of a portfolio of key businesses that have been targeted for coaching support. According to Roe, the targeted businesses account for nearly 90 total jobs in the county and over six jobs have been added this year.

The second phase of the Growing Jewell County initiative has been implementing a youth engagement and entrepreneurship strategy.

A youth community assessment and a mini retreat of champions in April 2012 led to the development of an Entrepreneurial Fair — or e-ship fair — hosted at Rock Hills High School in April 2013. In its first year, 17 business plans were presented. The first-place award went to a student who has a business repairing old tractors. Of the other top awards,



These students presented the winning business plans at the first Entrepreneurial Fair last April at Rock Hills High School, Mankato.

Courtesy/Photo

two went to students who presented computer-related business plans and the other was for a gourmet food product.

Prize money for the e-ship fair was raised from the community and resulted in \$2,000 in cash and a \$500 scholarship from NCK Technical College being awarded. A second e-ship fair will be April 11 and will include a People's Choice Award. Roe says the school has been an important partner.

"We provide the place, cheerleading and educational support for students to develop a business plan and present their ideas," Nadine Smith, Rock Hills USD 107 Superintendent of Schools, says. "We want our kids

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Leadership : NCRPC Executive Board

**Chair:**

Tim Vandall, City of Ellsworth

**Vice Chair:**

Frank Rytch, Republic Co.

**Secretary/Treasurer:**

Brian Ellert, Mitchell Co.

**Executive Board Members:**

Jon Blanchard, City of Salina  
Karen Brumbaugh, Ottawa Co.  
Craig Chamberlin, Dickinson Co.  
Tom Claussen, Mitchell Co.  
Johnita Crawford, Cloud Co.  
Dwight Frost, Jewell Co.

Heather Hartman, Mitchell Co. Comm. Dev.  
Gerald Huehl, Lincoln Co.  
Gary Ouellette, Washington Co.  
Kermit Rush, Ellsworth Co.  
Hannah Stambaugh, Saline Co.  
Sonya Stohs, Marshall Co.  
David Thurlow, Clay Co.

## Board Leadership Series Offered Across State

K-State Research and Extension professionals will be providing interactive training for community-based boards — elected, appointed or recognized by local units of government— to learn how to be effective and efficient with their responsibilities.

Four sessions will be conducted through a “high tech/high touch” approach



for interactive participation at K-State Research and Extension offices across the state. Topics covered in the four sessions will include the following:

*February 19:* Roles and

Responsibilities of Board

Members/Effective Meetings

*February 20:* Fundraising and

Fiscal Responsibilities/Legal and Ethical Issues

*February 26:* Understanding Fellow Board Members/Conflict Management

*February 27:* Strategic Planning

The 11 host sites include Ellsworth, Salina and Junction City among others. Each local program is limited to 25 participants. The cost is \$40 per board member for all four sessions.

Each registration buys a seat, which may be rotated among participants. The deadline to register is February 7. For more information or to register, visit [www.ksre.ksu.edu/boardseries](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/boardseries).

## NCKCN Connects Veterans Across the World

North Central Kansas Community Network (NCKCN), the regional Internet Service Provider created in 1995 by the NCRPC, connects veterans all over the world by providing free service for recreational servers.

Todd Tuttle, IT Systems Administrator for NCKCN, met some veterans many years ago while playing a game called Falcon 4. That game has evolved to a free open source game called Falcon BMS and is maintained and updated by volunteer coders. NCKCN became involved when the veteran groups struggled to find enough money to have commercial hosting if they wanted a large number of people to play together.

[@nckcn.com](http://@nckcn.com)™

Three servers are currently used with plans to add one more in the near future. Tuttle says there are usually 10 to 20 players on at any time and there is almost never a time when some are not on. The entire operation is open source.

“They are essentially a virtual worldwide non-profit organization that helps vets keep in touch and enjoy each others companionship,” Tuttle says. “That lines up perfectly with NCKCN’s mission and objectives. We plan to continue offering this as long as we can. It’s our way of supporting veterans worldwide.”

*(Continued from page 1)*

to know that this is a great place to live and work as an adult.”

The project has leveraged local funding with support from the North Central Kansas Rural Development Initiative administered by the NCRPC and the Federal Home Loan Bank.

The initial framework for the project was based on the HomeTown Competitive-ness (HTC)

“...the odds of attracting someone back home are greater than trying to attract someone who is not familiar with the area.”

~ Keith Roe, Local Coordinator for Growing Jewell County through Entrepreneurship and Youth Attraction

“What this group has been able to establish in four years is a really good foundation for the future,”

Model, a community development strategy that focuses on:

- Developing Local Leadership
- Increasing Community Philanthropy

- Energizing Entrepreneurs
- Engaging Youth

Atwell says what is unique about the Growing Jewell County initiative is that local leaders have been very committed to making strategic changes and are engaged and energized in the process.

Atwell says. “It is a long-term process, but they’ve certainly made progress trying to change their trend lines. I’m quite honored to be a part of it.”

## looking ahead : Meetings, Deadlines, and More

**Thursday, January 30, 2014**

Executive Board Meeting  
Beloit Main Office, 2 p.m.

**Thursday, February 27, 2014**

Executive Board Meeting  
Beloit Main Office, 2 p.m.

**CDBG Project Preparation**

Is your community considering a housing project? Now is the time to start the Housing Assessment Tool (HAT). Also, communities interested in other CDBG projects need to start the survey process. Contact the NCRPC office for additional information.



**Contact Us:**

**North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC)**

109 N. Mill Street • PO Box 565  
Beloit, KS 67420 • 785-738-2218  
[www.ncrpc.org](http://www.ncrpc.org)

Send newsletter suggestions to  
[lthielen@nckcn.com](mailto:lthielen@nckcn.com).

## Employers Seek Features Rural Areas Can Provide

Website Connects Job Seekers, Employers

Creative rural development is making an impact in rural communities in the Heartland. An expanding business, which the North Central Regional Planning Commission and its partners have been involved with, recently shared some insight on what it is seeking in rural America.

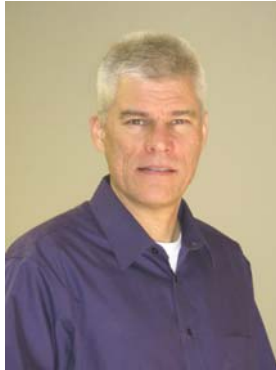
Yes, local and state incentives are enticing. More important are the interactions and relationships with area workforce development centers, continuing education supporters and other vital sources for labor resources.

Technical schools and colleges instructing young persons on the basics of being a reliable employee as well as being a skilled worker are very useful. The value of a community that embraces young adults by providing opportunities for them to explore, listening to their ideas and allowing them to become involved was another important theme that was expressed.

Young adults wish to have meaning both in and outside of their work. The yet unnamed enterprise is looking at Kansas as it has a few

cities with sharpened features and diverse opportunities in which it can grow and prosper.

Beyond comments from the anonymous employer are standard thoughts that a rural place must cultivate positive attitudes among its residents so each reflects hope and progressiveness versus weaknesses and distress.



Doug McKinney is NCRPC Executive Director.

Engaging media of many types and persons of all ages through community forums, special events and various forms of communication can help. One must not neglect the value of multi-community alliances. In

many Kansas towns, residents trade one place as residence for another in which to work or shop. With challenging revenue aids and resource competition many places working together for regional benefit is more important than ever.

NCRPC is a vehicle for assisting your community and your region. Thank you for your efforts in the past 41 years and for your enthusiastic strides in 2014. We look forward to continuing to partner with you.

Employers and job seekers have a resource available to them with KANSASWORKS.com.



Employers can create an employer account at KANSASWORKS.com and enter job openings to find qualified and skilled candidates matching their job specifications. If the employer needs assistance with posting job openings, they can call (877) 509-6757 and ask Workforce Center staff for assistance with this process. Employers may also search resumes of job candidates by experience, keyword, and other search criteria once they have created an account on KANSASWORKS. Creating a KANSASWORKS job seeker account or employer account is free.

If employers are struggling to fill specific positions, they may contact Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Response Coordinators for further assistance. The Coordinators may be contacted by email at [drodenbaugh@kansasworks.com](mailto:drodenbaugh@kansasworks.com) or [plashell@kansasworks.com](mailto:plashell@kansasworks.com) or by phone at 785-224-6664 or 785-577-4610.

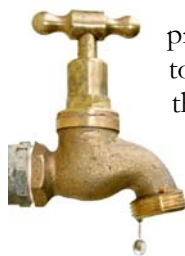
The [KANSASWORKS.com](http://KANSASWORKS.com) website is a part of the public workforce system and funded with federal dollars.

## Subsidy Program Helps Public Water Systems Complete GIS Mapping

Governing bodies of qualifying public water supply systems in Kansas may apply for funding assistance to map public water supply infrastructure.

The Public Water Supply System GIS Mapping Assistance Program, which is administered by the Kansas Water Office, is designed to promote modern mapping of systems in Kansas. Funded through the Clean Drinking Water Fee Fund, the program provides a subsidy to public water suppliers for assistance with

GIS mapping projects that meet the program parameters.



The program will provide a subsidy of up to \$4,000 or 50% of the cost of mapping the water supply infrastructure. The proposal must map at least 70% of the

water system. Applicants must have a State approved water conservation plan dated within 10 years of the application date. Applications that

meet all requirements will be approved and funded in the order they were received.

Mapping water supply infrastructure aids in more accurate responses to facility locate requests (such as Kansas One Call) and makes it easier to locate problems, complete repairs and schedule maintenance.

For more information or to access the application, visit the Kansas Water Office website at [www.kwo.org/projects\\_programs/Projects\\_Programs.htm](http://www.kwo.org/projects_programs/Projects_Programs.htm).





## North Central Regional Planning Commission

109 N. Mill, PO Box 565  
Beloit, KS 67420  
785.738.2218  
www.ncrpc.org

### business updates

The Schroeder family has been in the custom building and cabinetry business since the 1960s. Now brothers Brad and Dean have completed an expansion project that moved the business from Tipton to its new location in the Solomon Valley Industrial Park in Beloit.

Schroeder Building and Supply, LLC constructed a 5,000 square foot building in 2011 and purchased additional equipment in 2012. The new facility includes a showroom that features available cabinet and countertop styles. The showroom is targeted to be open in late Spring 2014.

The brothers say the move and expansion has improved business.

“We have some new equipment and a better setup that helps us to work more efficiently,” Dean says.

The business offers new residential construction, remodels, addi-

tions, custom cabinetry and some new commercial construction. They typically work within a radius of approximately 60 miles from Beloit.

“We sit down with customers and draw up computerized 3-D plans and then we build all of the cabinets in our shop,” Dean says. “Cabinetry and trim work is our specialty.”

The business has one full-time employee in addition to the owners.

The project was made possible with funding from the Guaranty State Bank & Trust Co., the NCK Business Development Fund, and investment by the owners.

For more information about the financing programs used contact Debra Peters, NCRPC Business Finance Director, at 785-738-2218 or [dpeters@nckcn.com](mailto:dpeters@nckcn.com). To contact the business, call 785-738-7032 or 785-534-2509.

## Building and Cabinetry Business Expands



Dean and Brad Schroeder are pictured in front of their new building in the Solomon Valley Industrial Park in Beloit.



A wide belt sander was a project purchase.