

NCRPC NEWS

A publication of the North Central Regional Planning Commission

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www.ncrpc.org

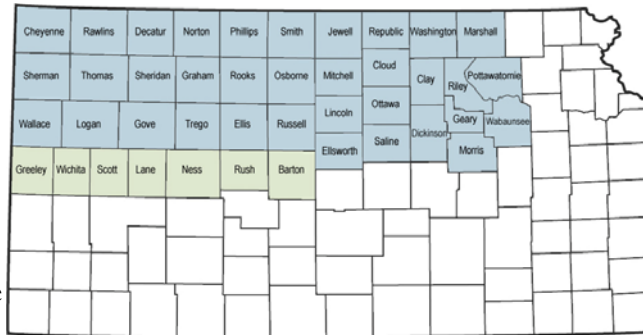
Weatherization Program Expands Area

The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation recently announced the selection of NCRPC as the new Weatherization Assistance Program service provider for seven additional counties—expanding the NCRPC weatherization service area from 35 to 42 counties.

The newest counties include Barton, Greeley, Lane, Ness, Rush, Scott and Wichita. The change was effective July 11, 2017.

Kansas Housing Resources Corporation solicited requests for proposals for a 25-county area in southwest Kansas in early summer. NCRPC collaborated with South Central Kansas Economic Development District (SCKEDD) to submit a joint proposal in which SCKEDD would provide service to 18 counties in the southwest and NCRPC would provide service to the 7 counties directly adjacent to its current weatherization service area.

“The state blessed the proposal in July and we are officially assisting clients in the new southwest 7 counties right along with the other 35 counties NCRPC serves,” Executive Director Doug McKinney says. “NCRPC has skilled staff and solid contractors providing high quality service in a reasonable manner given the fiscal challenges and the vast territory we cover.”



North Central Regional Planning Commission is now the Weatherization Assistance Program service provider for 42 counties. The newest seven counties are highlighted in green.

Amanda Peterson, NCRPC Weatherization Director, says the additional counties will allow greater program outreach.

“This expansion will enable us to serve a larger area of people in need of our services,” Peterson says.

The NCRPC began its Weatherization Assistance Program in 1979 with eight counties. The program has grown, but continues its purpose of increasing the energy efficiency of qualified residential housing. Funding for this program is provided by the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).

Eligibility for the Weatherization Program is based solely on income. All work is done at no cost to the individual resident. If an application is approved, a pre-inspection is done to determine the amount of work necessary to weatherize the home.

For more information or an application, visit www.ncrpc.org/services/housing/weatherization.

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ABOUT US

Our Mission

Advancing rural Kansas through comprehensive planning and development services.

Our Vision

By 2024, communities in rural Kansas will favor choices that embrace innovation, increase prosperity and demonstrate resilience.

Contact Us

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Director Reflects on Local Food Progress, Disaster Recovery

Imagine ripe red tomatoes harvested from your patio or garden or from a local farmers market then sliced and paired with locally grown bacon and backyard greens and served on Kansas wheat buns. That is summertime flavor-filled food I hope continues to be available in this region. In time, the new NCK Food Council hopes to help increase the availability of local food for our home tables, institutions and in our eateries.

The council is a passionate group of public and private stakeholders working collaboratively to advocate for enhanced quality of life for all residents through sustainable access to regionally produced food options, economic opportunity, and educational recourses. For more information, visit www.ncrpc.org/nckfoodcouncil or follow the council's activities on Facebook.

As summer winds down and areas of our nation have been hit hard with

VIEWPOINT



Doug McKinney has been NCRPC Executive Director since 2008.

natural disasters, Kansans as usual are rising above the tide to assist those in need. In the past we assisted many recover after Katrina and Rita in the Gulf Coast and then after Hurricane Sandy visited the Mid-Atlantic states.

The recent Hurricane Irma in Florida and Hurricane Harvey and subsequent flooding in Texas saw Kansas officially act to aid disaster recovery efforts. The Kansas Department of Agriculture has a webpage for Hurricane Harvey Disaster Recovery Resources to provide options for those who want to help the agricultural community

who have been affected by the disaster at www.agriculture.ks.gov/hurricanerecovery.

The United Methodist Council on Relief, American Red Cross, Samaritan's Purse, Salvation Army, and many others have been there in force since the disaster was forecast so they could safely help as soon as they were needed. Volunteers from this region and trained disaster responders throughout Kansas are helping with the early recovery process. It will be a while for some. It was two years after Hurricane Rita for several hundred homes in eastern Texas and southwestern Louisiana to realize full occupancy status again. Assistance voids remain just like it still does for wildfire victims in southern and central Kansas. My hat goes off to those assisting with recovery efforts on site and those who are giving in other ways—both now and into the near future. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 28, 2017

Thursday, October 26, 2017
NCRPC Executive Board Meetings
Beloit Office, 2 p.m.

Friday, November 10, 2017

NCRPC Office closed for Veteran's Day observance

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

Rural Voices Youth Contest Deadline

Remaining FY 2018 CDBG

Funding Deadlines

Water and Sewer: Sept. 29, 2017

Community Facilities: Nov. 1, 2017

Commercial Rehabilitation:

Open from Jan. 1-Dec. 2, 2017

Economic Development:

Open from Jan 1-Dec. 10, 2017

More on the web »

Events: www.ncrpc.org/news/events

Funding sources and deadlines:

www.ncrpc.org/funding

Weatherization Program Helps Lower Bills

Improvements to a Junction City home made through the Weatherization Assistance Program have made a big difference for one homeowner.

Living on a limited income following a family death made it difficult for this elderly homeowner to keep up with necessary home repairs. Having lived in the home for more than 45 years, the resident's primary concern when applying for the Weatherization Assistance Program was the home's furnace.

Ultimately the application for assistance was approved and improvements were made to the home. In addition to a new high efficiency furnace, the home also received insulation and air sealing measures. Previously the attics had



Utility bills for this Junction City home were drastically reduced after energy efficiency improvements were made last spring through the Weatherization Assistance Program.

only 3 1/2" to 6" of insulation and no sidewall insulation.

The project was completed in March 2016. Since that time, the homeowner has been amazed at the difference these improvements have made. The house is no longer drafty, utility bills have been cut in half, and there is now a credit on the homeowner's level-payment system. ■

Executive Board Welcomes Barber

Ellen Barber, Marshall County Partnership 4 Growth Executive Director, recently joined the NCRPC Executive Board of Directors.

Marshall County Partnership 4 Growth is a public-private partnership through which Barber promotes economic

development through business retention, attraction and expansion; an active job site for workforce improvement; development of adequate housing; and pursuing growth of the county's quality of



Ellen Barber

Courtesy/Photo

life. Barber previously managed a vitamin catalog company and worked as an educator. She has a degree in Speech Education and a master's degree in Platform Arts. During her teaching career, she worked with young people on a wide variety of speech skills from debate to acting. Barber served as director for the Kansas NCFCA High School Speech Forensics Group.

In addition to her work, she also is Vice Chair of the newly formed North Central Kansas Food Council and serves in leadership positions in her local church.

Ellen enjoys playing tennis with her husband, Joel, and loves to read and research. They have three grown children. ■

Rural Voices Youth Contest Announced

High school seniors in North Central Kansas are invited to compete for cash awards by submitting a written essay or short video in the 2017-2018 Rural Voices Youth Contest. This year's contest theme is "Rural Kansas...If I Were in Charge."

The top entry in each category will be recognized with a cash award of \$850. The NCRPC sponsors the contest to engage the youth of North Central Kansas in thoughtful reflection on rural Kansas and to promote discussion among citizens based on their insights. More than \$19,000 has been awarded to high school seniors from around the region since launching the contest in 2006. Past recipients include 26 students representing 15 different schools from across the region.

The winning entries will be published on the NCRPC website.

North Central Regional Planning Commission's

Rural Voices YOUTH CONTEST

Any senior in high school who lives in or attends a school in the 12-county NCRPC service area is eligible to enter the contest — including the counties of Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Marshall, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic, Saline and Washington. A team option is available for the video category.

"Each year the Executive Board looks forward to selecting a contest theme and hearing the perspectives of youth from around our region," Doug McKinney, NCRPC Executive Director, says.

The contest deadline is November 15, 2017. Additional information and registration details are available at www.ncrpc.org/ruralvoices. ■

Justice Assistance Grant Accepting Applications

Applications are being accepted for the 2018 Federal Edward J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). The program provides assistance to units of state and local government, tribes, and nonprofit, community, and faith-based organizations in support of a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime based on state and local needs and conditions. The program is administered by the Kansas Criminal Justice Coordinating Council with the Kansas Governor's Grants Program serving as the point of contact. The deadline to apply is October 2. For more information, visit [grants.ks.gov/opportunities/edward-j-byrne-memorial-justice-assistance-grant-\(jag\)](http://grants.ks.gov/opportunities/edward-j-byrne-memorial-justice-assistance-grant-(jag)). ■

Grow Communities Gives Farmers Chance to Donate

Enrollment is open for the America's Farmers Grow Communities program sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. The program offers eligible farmers the opportunity to enroll for a chance to win a \$2,500 donation that they can direct to a local eligible nonprofit organization of their choice.

The application period ends November 1. Most counties in the NCRPC primary service area are eligible—with the exception of Ellsworth County. For complete program rules or to enroll for a chance to win, visit www.americasfarmers.com/grow-communities. ■



North Central
Regional Planning Commission

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Long-Time Beloit Restaurant Under New Ownership

The Banner Restaurant has a long history in Beloit. First established in 1953 as the Corral Drive-In by Ed and Joyce Hartman, it later became the Banner Restaurant. Beloit native Jan Schmitz recently returned to his hometown and decided to purchase the Banner Restaurant and continue the tradition in the community.

Schmitz and his girlfriend, Angie Bolt, officially took over the business in June. The restaurant was closed for a short time for painting, cleaning and organizing before reopening its doors to the public on June 16.

Jan previously lived in Oklahoma and retired as vice president of an auto body supply business after more than 25 years of service. Angie has more than 10 years experience in the restaurant industry. Both enjoy



cooking and baking—and even offered their pies and cinnamon rolls for sale before moving to Beloit.

The Banner Restaurant is open daily from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., although Schmitz said they would eventually like to extend hours to remain open in the evenings. The menu remains mostly the same for now, but daily specials are available and feature items not on the menu. A full salad bar and Sunday breakfast buffet have also been added. The restaurant still offers a drive thru option as well.

The business has 10 employees, including Schmitz and Bolt. Five of these positions are full time.



The Banner Restaurant, located at 720 N. Bell Street in Beloit, is under new ownership.

This project was made possible with funding from First National Bank of Beloit, the Four Rivers NCKBDF Loan Program, and investment by the owner.

For more information about the financing programs used, contact NCRPC Business Finance Director Debra Peters at 785-738-2218 or by email at dpeters@nckcn.com, or visit www.ncrpc.org/services/business/businessfinancing. ■