

# Groundwater conservation program has Feb. 8 deadline

Western Kansas landowners who irrigate in designated priority areas have until Feb. 8 to complete their application for a voluntary, incentive-based program to conserve groundwater.

Selected applicants will receive up-front annual payments of \$100 an irrigated acre for three years in exchange for foregoing irrigation pumping for four years. Crops or forages may be produced and harvested. At the end of the four-year contract period, irrigation may be resumed.

The program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, places the emphasis on Quick Response Areas identified by the Western Kansas Groundwater Management Districts and the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources. It's funded through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program Groundwater and Surface Water Conservation.

"We have had a great response in Groundwater Management District No. 1 the past two years," says David Brenn, Executive Director of Western Kansas GMD

No. 1 in Scott City. "We were able to conserve a significant amount of water. Interest this year may not be as great given higher commodity prices and the short deadline." The GMD No. 1 Board's Quick Response Area is within a two-mile radius of public water supply wells.

In 2006 and 2007, overall applications in Kansas exceeded the money available for the program. Farmers with water conservation concerns who applied then are encouraged to apply again. Each Quick Response Area has an equal share of the money and applications are judged within an area, not between areas. Should one Quick Response Area not use its full allocation, the money may be redistributed.

The Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5 added the Pawnee Valley in Pawnee County to the Rattlesnake and Middle Arkansas River corridors in its Quick Response Area.

In Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3, the emphasis is on the districts' High Priority Areas identified in

its Ogallala aquifer management plan. This is a broader coverage area compared to 2007.

Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4's areas this year are in Sherman, Thomas and Sheridan counties. The counties are in a staggered, two-year rotation.

Areas selected by the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources reflect the state's interest in the Republican River Compact that governs proportionate use of Republican River water in Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas; water supplies in Webster and Cedar Bluff lakes; and the expansion of the Intensive Groundwater Use Control Area in the Pawnee Valley in Hodgeman County.

Additional information on the 2008 Quick Response Area program, including a self-assessment worksheet that must be completed by February 8, 2008, is available at your local NRCS office or may be found on the agency's Web site, [www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/2008](http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/2008).

## Superintendent honors school counselors

Feb. 4 through Feb. 8 is National School Counseling Week. Greg Mann, superintendent of Norton schools, cited school counselors for being actively

engaged in helping students examine their abilities, strengths, interests and talents. He signed an official proclamation recognizing the dedication and commitment

of the school district's counselors — Shane Miller at the high school and Melissa McClain, at Eisenhower Elementary and Norton Junior High.

# Native sons, daughters hold annual banquet

By DICK BOYD

A crowd of over 500 people packed into the Sunflower Ballroom of the Maner Conference Center in Topeka on Saturday, Jan. 25 for the 90th annual banquet of the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas which honored three distinguished Kansans as well as the "great state" of Kansas, which was nearing its 147th birthday.

The spotlight was on Jim Richardson, Lindsborg, nationally renowned photojournalist, named "Kansas of the Year"; Dr. Marc Asher, Kansas City, noted physician and inventor, named "Distinguished Kansan of the Year" and John Carlin, Manhattan, the 40th Governor of Kansas, recipient of a "Citation for Distinguished Statesmanship".

The purpose of the Native Sons and Daughters organization is to assist in preserving Kansas history, show loyalty to Kansas traditions, join in honoring our pioneer ancestors and have a part in instilling the ideals of patriotism in youth.

The Native Sons of Kansas was organized in 1901 and the Native Daughters in 1915. The Native Sons and Daughters have met jointly since 1918.

The non-partisan organization is for all Kansans. Any native-born Kansan is eligible and persons who have adopted Kansas as their native state are welcomed as associate members. Lifetime membership is just \$10 and is available through the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas, P.O. Box 546, Topeka, KS 66601-0546.

This year's honorees have one thing in common. All grew up on Kansas family farms.

Richardson was raised on a farm near Belleville. He began his photographic career as a youngster by using his father's second-hand box camera to photograph the world of the farmstead and developed negatives in the family kitchen. From those early beginnings, he became an accomplished photographer for the National Geographic Society.

In April, 2007, the National Geographic's nine million subscribers enjoyed Richardson's color spread of photos he took of the Kansas Flint Hills. This issue of the National Geographic was a sell-out. The photos are now traveling through 2009 in a 32-piece exhibit.

Richardson has traveled worldwide for the society taking photos of everything from the tops of active volcanoes to below ancient swamps and has developed special expertise in the people of his family's native Cornwall in England as well as the people of Cuba, Kansas.

In May, 2004, National Geo-

graphic shared with its readers a retrospective of his 30 years of documentary photography in Cuba. A large delegation of friends from Cuba was present at the banquet.

Also in 2004, Richardson was selected a "Legend Behind the Lens" by Nikon in recognition of his achievements in both color and black and white photography.

Richardson's work in rural Kansas has toured worldwide as an award-winning audio-visual production. He is also the author of a book, "High School USA", a three-year photographic examination of adolescence at Rossville, KS High School.

He and his wife, Kathy, returned to Kansas in 1997 and live and work in Lindsborg, where they own Small World: A Gallery of Arts and Ideas.

During Richardson's acceptance speech, full color photos from his Flint Hills project were shown on two large screens in the ballroom.

"Kansans must start believing in ourselves. We're challenged. We have something special in Kansas. We need to reflect on who we are," he said.

Referring to the natural beauty of the Kansas countryside, he commented, "We have places here every bit as beautiful as other places if shown in the right way."

"We are on our way to being wonderful. Thanks to all the Kansans who came before us."

"You realize that Dorothy of Wizard of Oz fame couldn't wait to get back to Kansas!"

After the banquet, Richardson commented, "The annual meeting of the Native Sons and Daughters clearly revolves around building community. Perhaps there is no greater mission for all of us right now - to create meeting grounds on which everyone who loves Kansas may rally."

Dr. Marc Asher was born in Stafford County and grew up on the family farm near St. John. He is retired from active practice in which he became a world-renowned pediatric orthopedic surgeon. He established clinics in Colby, Garden City, Hays, Hutchinson, Parsons, Salina and Topeka. Most of these clinics are still maintained by Dr. Asher's successors.

Dr. Asher continues to work and teach at The University of Kansas School of Medicine. He has received many honors and has authored or co-authored over 90 peer-reviewed papers, 65 non-peer-reviewed papers and videos, 25 book chapters and one book.

A number of the families who have received life-saving care from Dr. Asher were present at the banquet to help honor him for his lifetime of orthopedic service.

Asher said the career accomplishment he valued most was "being an academic orthopedic surgeon".

"This award is tremendous," he said. "I'm so proud to be a Kansan."

John Carlin grew up on the family dairy farm near Salina. The state's youngest 20th-century governor, he was the first person to win a second four-year term as Kansas governor.

In perhaps his greatest achievement as Governor, Carlin led an exploratory Trade Mission to China in August, 1979. Thanks to this visionary expedition, Kansas now exports over \$200 million worth of products to China each year.

In 1995, he was appointed the eighth Archivist of the United States and administrator of the National Archives and Records Administration, an agency that is essential in our democracy for protecting citizens' rights. He took a moribund agency and essentially transformed it into a modern one through reorganization. At the close of his term in 2004, he received an award from the Society of American Archivists, some of whom criticized his appointment in 1995.

Carlin said he is happy to be back in Kansas again and is pleased about receiving the citation. "It's significant because of the organization and its history and at my age (67), they're recognizing my career."



Trent Richmond, owner of Bridges Group Insurance, found just the right place to hang the firm's latest award. Bridges was recently recognized as a "Top Performing Agency". — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

## Local insurance company gives 'top performance'

Bridges Group Insurance, Inc., Norton, was recently selected as one of six insurance firms across the country to be recognized as a "Top Performing Agency" in the *Best Practices Study*, a report from the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America and Reagan Consulting, an Atlanta-based management consulting firm.

The agency received a plaque at recognition ceremonies held Jan. 18 in Atlanta, Ga.

Bridges was singled out for its

operational excellence, financial results and overall management achievement in its respective revenue-size category.

Trent Richmond, president of Bridges' said, "Receiving this award not only represents the people in our office, but the insured we represent." Mr. Richmond has owned the agency since 1998. He said there are over 30,000 independent insurance agencies in the United States.

When asked why his agency was successful, Mr. Richmond

said, "We have a motto in our office: faith first, family second and the agency third. That's what works for us."

This is the fourth year Bridges has won the award, but the first year it was the top in its revenue category.

Other Bridges locations are in Oberlin and Winona.

Employees in the Norton office are, Trish Fischer, Renee Spresser, Richard Meyers, Jeremie Krehbiel, Kayla Weigel, Paula Strayer and Dave Donovan.

tion also received awards. Competition was held in: painting, drawing, color photography, black and white photography, pastel, digital imaging and mixed media.

Governor Sebelius' husband, Gary, a native of Norton, was this year's treasurer of the Native Sons. Dick Boyd of Norton was the immediate past president of the Native Sons.

Other officers of the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas in 2007 were Edward R. Moses, Topeka and Sue Peterson, Manhattan, co-presidents; Steven Bitner, Pittsburg and Darlene Elwood, Topeka, co-vice-presidents; John Fager, Topeka and Mary Lou Reese, Wichita, co-secretaries; Carol Nazar, Andover, co-treasurer with

Gary Sebelius.

Officers advance each year. The new co-treasurers are Don Landoll, Marysville and Nancy Cole, Topeka.

June Windscheffel, Topeka, is executive director and John Pinegar, Topeka, is assistant executive director.

The banquet concluded with those present singing the Kansas song, "Home On The Range", written by Dr. Brewster Higley, Smith Center.

Polly Bales, longtime Logan resident who has moved to Lawrence, played piano music for the banquet for the 41st year. Polly was president of the Native Daughters in 1966 and received a "Distinguished Service" Citation at last year's banquet.

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