

Entrepreneurs band together for support

By Ron Wilson

Director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University
 "Go EAST, young man." Wait a minute, didn't that famous saying say, "Go west, young man?" Yes, in 1865 the editor of the New York Tribune, Horace Greeley, wrote "Go west, young man" in his newspaper, urging enterprising young men to migrate to the west. Today young people can still find entrepreneurial opportunities, but they don't have to go any further west than Kansas. In fact, today we'll learn about a group which is encouraging enterprising people in Kansas, and it happens to use EAST as its acronym. EAST stands for Entrepreneurs Achieving Success Together. Appropriately enough, it is based in eastern Kansas.

Keyta Kelly is, among several other things, a member of EAST - Entrepreneurs Achieving Success Together. EAST is a group of entrepreneurs and small business owners in Leavenworth County who have come together to network and support each other.

Keyta credits Gary Walker with the inspiration to create the EAST group back in 2010. Gary, a Kansas State graduate, is a financial services planner in Tonganoxie. As he observed entrepreneurs and small business owners in southern Leavenworth County, he conceived the idea of a business support network through which these businesspeople could help each other through mutual referrals.

Some people got together and created this organization which became

known as EAST: Entrepreneurs Achieving Success Together. Since I am always a sucker for a good acronym, I was intrigued with this group when I had the opportunity to learn about them. But more important than the name is the way this group has come together and grown in support of rural entrepreneurs.

Keyta Kelly is one of those small business owners and entrepreneurs. She and her husband have their own independent law firm in Tonganoxie.

Keyta and Gary Walker talked about this idea of bringing business owners together and decided to give it a try.

"If there's value in this, then people will embrace it," Keyta said. The group meets for breakfast every Friday morning to network and make business referrals to each other.

"It started as a simple referral group, but it has really blossomed," Keyta said. People did indeed embrace it. A recent meeting of the EAST group in which I participated had some 45 local entrepreneurs and business people attending.

The mission statement of EAST is "to bring a community together by nurturing and caring for our businesses while working toward a common goal of adding value to each other."

Keyta emphasizes several elements of that mission statement. The first is unity - having people work together. A second is community, and growing their hometown. Another is caring for their businesses, and the last is adding value through mutual support.

Now the EAST group represents

people who are sharing resources, knowledge and beliefs and supporting each other through encouragement, training and education. Notably, this is not part of some top-down, federal initiative. It is a group of local citizens who have voluntarily chosen to work together for mutual benefit.

These businesses are primarily based in southern Leavenworth County, which takes in several communities. That includes rural communities like Linwood, population 378 people. Now, that's rural.

Leavenworth County is also the site of the 2011 Kansas Sampler Festival, as we learned last week. In fact, the director of the 2010-11 Kansas Sampler Festival is none other than Keyta Kelly. She is excited about the festival and what it will offer in the county.

"There's no better entertainment value," Keyta said. "It's a one-stop shop where visitors can sample all there is to see, do, hear, taste, buy and learn in the state."

Go EAST, young man. No, that's not the same as Horace Greeley's historic admonition for enterprising young people to go west. But back in those days when ambitious young people came west, they came to places like Leavenworth County in Kansas. Now many Kansans can go east to find the Kansas Sampler Festival as well as the EAST group of local businesspeople. We salute Keyta Kelly, Gary Walker, and all those involved with the EAST group for making a difference by supporting Entrepreneurs Achieving Success Together. Go, EAST!

Scouts at work



Goodland Boy Scout Jonah McClung checked to see if diners at the Boy Scout Chili Feed on Saturday at the Goodland United Methodist Fellowship Hall needed any refills on soup or drinks.. They served vegetable soup, chili, cobbler and drinks. Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

matters of record

Real Estate

David Phillips and Lori Phillips convey and warrant to Daniel B. Shields, Lots 9, 10, 11 and 12, Block 24, Beahm's Addition to the City of Goodland.

Bryan C. Hatcher and Cinda A. Hatcher to Christopher L. Soehner and Leanna M. Soehner, a tract of land in SE/4 of Sec.14, T8S, R40W.

Lance Ihrig and Debra A. Ihrig quit claim to Lance Ihrig and

Debra A. Ihrig, trustees of the Lance and Debra Ihrig Revocable Trust dated March 17, 2011, all of Sec.2, T8S, R39W; NE/4 of Sec.12, T9S, R40W; SW/4 of Sec.3, E/2 of Sec.9, and all of Sec. 10, T10, R40W; N10' of Lot 11 and all of Lot 12, Block 31, Beahm's Addition to the City of Goodland.

Rodney A. Gartner and Rita M. Gartner to Heather Goodwin, the N40' of Lot 8 and S20' of Lot 9, Block 37, Academy Addition to the

City of Goodland.

Marshall C. Squires II and Connie Z. Squires convey and warrant to Marshall C. Squires II, Connie Z. Squires, and Shirley M. Watson, all of Lots 9 and 10, Subdivision of Block 75, Original Town of Goodland.

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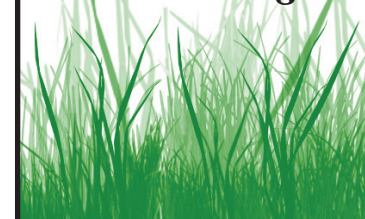
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GHS Cowboys of the Week

Based on positive academic performance, attendance improvement, positive attitude or random acts of kindness, the student nominees this week are: Brianna Salina and Berkley White



These students receive an Activity Period Pass. These students were randomly selected from all nominees and will receive a local food gift certificate, special parking, first in lunch line and recognized throughout the community!



Brianna Salina, Sophomore
 Nominated by: Mrs. Graybill
 Parents: Manuela Hernandez
 Activities: Volleyball



Berkley White, Freshman
 Nominated by: Mr. Raymer
 Parents: Brandon and Denise White
 Activities: Volleyball, basketball, softball, track, band, science olympiad

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We proudly support the school bond issue, please join us in voting yes on April 5th.

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TAKE CHARGE CHALLENGE GOODLAND EVENT

April 2, 2011

at the Wal-Mart Lawn and Garden
 Grand Opening between 1-3 p.m. MST

Stop by the Take Charge Challenge booth and learn how you can help our community win \$100,000 efficiency prize, by just making the switch! Sign up for a home energy audit.

Sign up now for a **free DIY Energy Audit Class** being offered to the public on Saturday, April 2, 2011 from 1-3 p.m., at the Wal-Mart Garden Center. This class will equip you with information to assess your home's energy efficiency and to make changes that can save you money and energy. The first 10 individuals to sign up will receive a \$25 voucher for energy efficient product from one of the local home center. For more information or to sign up early contact the City Office at 890-4500 or Matt Breininger at Millers Home Center 899-2386.

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