

# Crossing Awareness Day is May 7

Kansas Operation Lifesaver, in coordination with other OL programs across the nation, will celebrate International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD), on May 7 with a variety of events to illustrate the importance of safe behavior at grade crossings and around train tracks. Statistics show that nationally vehicle-train collisions and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings were lower across the U.S. in 2012, crossing-related fatalities were flat and rail trespass deaths and injuries rose. This year, 45 countries worldwide are holding events in observance of ILCAD.

Kansas joins more than 20 other states in holding activities in conjunction with ILCAD. A full list of events is available at [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org). Representatives from Kansas OL attended a signing in Topeka with Governor Sam Brownback on April 19, proclaiming the week of May 5-11 as Kansas Operation Lifesaver Days, with May 6 as Rail Safety Day.

Safety partners within the rail industry, government agencies and law enforcement will also

join in the awareness week. BNSF and the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office will hold an Officer on the Train event, where law enforcement officers will have the opportunity to observe motorist behavior from the cab of a locomotive at crossings in Wichita, issuing citations for violations such as driving around gates.

Activities are not limited to grade crossings, as Kansas Operation Lifesaver Executive Director Julie La Combe explains: "We want to make sure that all Kansans are aware of how dangerous it is when people place themselves in harm's way by trespassing on railroad property - and not just at crossings."

La Combe added, "Despite the continued drop in rail grade collisions, fatalities in Kansas remain unchanged over the past 20 years due to the rise in trespassing."

In the coming weeks and throughout summer, Kansas Operation Lifesaver will be making a focused effort to raise awareness of trespassing dangers. School districts will receive notices asking for yearbook pro-

grams to reject senior portraits taken on railroad property, and television PSA's will air highlighting safety considerations on railroad rights-of-way.

**About Operation Lifesaver**  
Kansas Operation Lifesaver's mission is to end collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights of way. A national network of volunteers provides free presentations on rail safety. For more safety tips or to request a free safety presentation, visit [www.ksoli.org](http://www.ksoli.org).

**About International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD)**

International Level Crossing Awareness Day began in 2009 in Europe to call attention to the need for public education on railway safety issues as a way to save lives. On May 7, an international news conference will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, with experts from different countries and sectors, including road, rail, specialists in human factors and education. Learn more at [www.ilcad.org/ILCAD-2013](http://www.ilcad.org/ILCAD-2013).

# Patriotic melody



Logan Elementary students, kindergarten through sixth grade, held a vocal concert on Tuesday, April 23, before a large crowd of family and friends. The students closed out their performance with "The Star Spangled Banner."

-Photo courtesy Shannon Kats

# Teaching entrepreneurship at an early age

By Ron Wilson  
Huck Boyd Institute

Planting seeds. That's what gardeners do in the spring. Today in Kansas Profile, we'll learn about a community which has a SEED Center - not for gardeners, but for young entrepreneurs. In another of our series on the community of Stafford, Kan., we'll learn that this SEED Center is an acronym for an innovative entrepreneurial learning center and laboratory for youth, conducted by the Stafford school district.

Dr. Mary Jo Taylor is superintendent of USD 349, the school district in Stafford. Dr. Taylor is a native of the rural community of Syracuse, population 1,822 people. Now, that's rural. Mary Jo was a banker and personnel manager before going into education. She was principal at Stafford High School before becoming district superintendent in 2001.

Rural schools have many challenges. As part of her doctoral research at Wichita State, Mary Jo did lots of interviews with school and community stakeholders.

"My biggest hope came from when I talked to the high school-age students, because they're at an age when they're thinking about what comes next," Mary Jo said. "I asked if they would consider moving back to a community like Stafford after post-secondary education, and they were willing," she said. "But they said they needed a job to come back to."

Such jobs are not easy to find in rural, agricultural communities. So what can rural communities do? The answer is, they need to grow their own.

That idea led to the creation of a charter school for entrepreneurship in Stafford. It was called the Stafford Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center, or SEED Center

for short. The Kansas Department of Education approved the SEED Center charter school application in 2005, but at that time the state had no funds to support it.

Did the community give up in the face of no state funding? No. In the best tradition of rural Kansas, the citizens of the school and community rolled up their sleeves and came together to make it happen. A local citizen donated a downtown building. Members of the Methodist church were getting new carpet in their basement, so the old carpet was donated to the facility. Desks and chairs were borrowed and the SEED Center was born.

In 2006, the school district did receive a state grant. In 2009, the center transitioned from a charter school to a career pathway under the career and technical education program.

What is the Stafford Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center? It is Stafford High School's educational facility for helping students learn entrepreneurship and marketing principles and put them into practice. The program has a complete curriculum including participation objectives and an assessment rubric. Students are expected to participate in economic development and community service through local organizations. A key tenet of this program is that students are to create and operate their own real-world businesses.

"This is not a simulation,"

Mary Jo said. With approval from the school and parents, the student will create an actual business project and utilize marketing principles to promote it. Thirty percent of the earnings go back to the school for overhead, but students can keep 70 percent.

"Students are more motivated to learn and use these principles effectively if they can keep the profit," Mary Jo said. She credits SEED Center instructor Natalie Clark for outstanding work on the project.

To date, students have created more than 50 businesses, such as laser engraving, garment printing, document printing, custom team apparel, photo editing and photography, digital conversion and movie creation, second-hand store, airbrushing, rhinestone and appliques, candles and lotions, accent and accessory items and more. Of course, not all of these businesses will continue, but the life skills which the students learn will go with them forever.

Planting seeds. Yes, that is for gardeners, but it is also an appropriate way to describe the work done by the Stafford Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center. We commend Dr. Mary Jo Taylor, Natalie Clark, and all those involved with the SEED Center for making a difference by teaching entrepreneurship at an early age. Ultimately, these seeds will take root and flourish in the lives of the students.

# HANSEN MUSEUM

The Dane G. Hansen Memorial Museum presents "American Legacy: Our National Parks," April 12 - June 16, 2013. In this exhibit, 38 members and guests of the Plein-Air Painters of America set up their easels in national sites across the country. The artists are among the country's most respected plein-air painters. The adjective plein-air refers to the philosophical belief that creating art on-location, challenging as it may be, is crucial to successfully documenting a visual and emotional point in time and place.

Each artist selected a favorite site to document. The more than 50 paintings depict sites from coast to coast, border to border, and from the earliest park designation to one of the most recent. The exhibition is a "field journal" experience that draws viewers into seasonal and daily experiences of color and light rendered in pigment on paper or canvas. In some instances, the field studies were used to create larger, studio paintings.

Our Artist of the Month for May is Theresa Eschliman from Indianola, Neb. She has a display of crocheted hats and crocheted insects. Perfect for kids

the instructor. Classes will be held June 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27 and July 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 23 and 25, at the Logan Municipal Swimming Pool from 7-8 p.m. For more information or to register by phone, call 785-689-4846.

Don't forget our June 1 and 2, Joy of Painting Class. The class starts at 9 a.m. and runs until 3 p.m. There will be an hour taken for lunch. Saturday, June 1, the painting will be "John Deere at Home" and Sunday, June 2, the painting will be "Moonlight Camp." If interested call 785-689-4846 or go to [www.hansenmuseum.org](http://www.hansenmuseum.org) and get the information.

For help with your advertising needs please give Dana a call at 877-3361 [dpaxton@nwkansas.com](mailto:dpaxton@nwkansas.com)



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**NCHS**  
**All School Class Reunion**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2013**  
REGISTRATION MEET AND GREET: 2:00 P.M.  
NORTON COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA  
SOCIAL HOUR: 6:30 P.M.; DINNER: 7:00 P.M.; LIVE BAND: 9:00 P.M.  
AT EAGLES LODGE  
DEADLINE: MAY 11, 2013  
Questions: Kris 785-871-1771 or 785-877-2899 Work

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# Repairs to close part of U.S. 283

On Tuesday, May 7 a section of U.S. 283 in WaKeeney will close while the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad makes repairs to the tracks.

From the U.S. 283/Business 40 junction to the intersection of 283 and Warren Street, U.S. 283 will be closed for one day.

Any oversized loads will need to find alternate routes.

All other local and through traffic will need to follow the posted signs for an alternate route.

Please pay attention to the signs and workers within a road construction zone. Slow down and "Give 'Em A Brake!"

For questions concerning this temporary closure, please contact Northwest Kansas Public Affairs Manager Kristen Brands at (785) 877-3315 or [kristenb@ksdot.org](mailto:kristenb@ksdot.org) in Norton.