

'God bless the fly-over states'

By Ron Wilson
Huck Boyd Institute

"Twenty Rural Counties to Call Home," the cover of the national magazine proclaims. Inside, the magazine describes desirable rural locations in 20 states, including one in the heart of Kansas, which is the subject of today's Kansas Profile.

American Cowboy magazine recently did a cover story called "Where to Live Now" about 20 rural counties from across the west. They were located in Florida and 19 states west of the Mississippi. The primary Kansas location on the list was Butler County, with Dodge City also recognized and Finney and Gray counties receiving honorable mention.

"We gathered names from several sources," said Philip Armour, editor of American Cowboy magazine. "Then we divided those up among several writers that we work with and they did the research. If there were a couple of places that were close, the tie-breaker question was: Is this a place we would like to live ourselves?"

Sample quotes from the published article include: "Here are 20 counties (and fun towns nearby) to call home - places with room for horses, cattle, and big dreams...Remote, with plenty of sky and grass, each is a fine destination well worth a visit - or relocation...Family values still thrive here, and the wide-open vistas and clean air are good for the soul."

For each of the 20 sites, the magazine lists county population, cattle population, median

income and home prices, total area, and average land price per acre, plus a general description.

About Butler County, the magazine said, in part: "The county is a vast expanse of rolling grassy hills cut through by river valleys...Farming and ranching have always been hugely important to the area, but the oil industry emerged as the major economic driver for the county...Today, Butler County has a diverse economy including oil workers, ranchers, farmers, machinists, metal workers, and other types of manufacturers. With convenient access to the thriving city of Wichita just minutes down the highway, Butler County is a wide-open Western dream come true with a modern touch."

Butler County is Kansas' largest county in square miles. As the magazine noted, it is a rural county with close proximity to Wichita. Western Butler County is affected by the urban sprawl of Wichita while the eastern part of the county is rolling rural grasslands. (This happens to be the exact opposite of the general demographic pattern of Kansas, which has the larger population to the east and the rural area to the west.)

El Dorado is the county seat of Butler County. Andover, next to Wichita, has experienced rapid growth. Butler County also has several smaller rural communities, such as Potwin, population 449; Elbing, population 208; Latham, population 164; and Cassoday, population 128 people. Now, that's rural.

"Farming and ranching is

still a main contributor to the economy," said David Alfaro, Butler County economic development director. "Being close to a metro area provides access to manufacturing jobs yet still allows families time to be home together and share the many family values that are instilled in us from our birth."

"Having lived in Butler County for over 25 years, I am still in awe when I drive through the beautiful Flint Hills during spring," said Becky Wolfe, director of the Leadership Butler County program. "Our rural communities have found ways to stay alive and still offer the generosity and friendliness to neighbors and strangers alike," she said. "Butler County honestly has the best of both worlds... from the urban feel of the west side of the county to the rural, majestic feel of the north and east part of the county."

How exciting to read a cover story celebrating rural America and proclaiming that Butler County epitomizes these rural values. As the magazine stated: "God bless the fly-over states! Rural America has never been more attractive."

It's time to close this edition of the magazine, whose cover story highlights these great rural places in which to live now. We commend all the citizens of Butler County for making a difference by caring for and enhancing their quality of life. The many desirable rural attributes of Butler County mean that they have a lot to cover.

Spring Band Concert



The Norton Junior High Spring Band Concert took place last Thursday at the Norton Junior High Gymnasium. Director Don Mordecai led the small band of eighteen students as they played a variety of pieces ranging from Salute to Louis Armstrong to The Pink Panther.

-Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

STUDENT NEWS

The Northern Valley Forensics students wrapped up the season this past weekend. During the season, students that medal in different events can qualify to participate in the State Festival or State Champs depending on the number of students entered in the event. Those qualifying this season were: Makayla Smith, Eli Lowry, Camden Cox, Ame Baird, Macy Kasson, and Alex Tharman.

On Friday, May 3, Emily Lowry (sponsor), Michelle Tharman (judge), the above listed students and I set off for Salina. After checking into the hotel, the students went to the mall for a short spell. Supper that night was at Chili's. The kids did an awesome job representing our

school by using manners and good behavior.

That evening we had a practice session in the lobby of the hotel before turning in for the night. Bright and early the next morning, we arose to prepare for the day. Those attending the State Festival departed at 7:10 a.m. for Kansas Wesleyan University. The students attending Festival had scheduled times that they were to perform. The students had one time to impress the judges with their script. Those attending Festival and their placings were: Makayla and Eli (Improvised Duet Acting) II rating, Makayla (Poetry) II rating, and Camden (Prose) I rating. After they were done, they joined the rest of the team

at Champs.

The Champs students left at 6:45 a.m. The first round began at 8 a.m. There are three preliminary rounds like a regular season tournament. Then they take the top 12 performers in each event (24 for the duets) and those compete in the semifinal round. After this round, they select the top six and perform in the final round. Those attending Champs and their placings were: Macy (Humorous Solo Acting), Macy and Ame (Improvised Duet Acting) 3rd place, Alex (Original Oration) 3rd place.

What an outstanding day these young men and women had. Thank you for all of your support throughout the year. Until next year, stick to the script.

NORTON LIBRARY

"Dig Into Reading!" this summer at the Norton Public Library and discover the amazing world of underground creatures and reading. The 2013 Summer Reading Program is open to library patrons, preschool through adult, with special programs, prize drawings, story hours, and more. Everyone is invited to participate in the reading portion of the program, and to attend the special activities.

Programs at 10:30 a.m. are for young children, preschool through first grade. The 2 p.m. presentations are for children second through sixth grade.

Something new at the Library this summer is "Mother Goose Moments" for little ones, infants through two years of age. This will be held on Tuesday mornings each week from 10:30-11 a.m., beginning June 4.

Special programs are being presented by:

Randy Sauer on May 30 at 10:30 a.m.

Kevin Horner, ventriloquist, illusionist and reading promoter, on June 27 at 1:30 p.m. at the Rec. Center gym.

Leona Breeden from Smoky Hills Public Television on July 25 at 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The Milford Nature Center on Aug. 15 at 10:30 a.m. and many wonderful local presenters throughout the summer.

Fun Night for young adults, seventh through 12th grade, will begin Thursday, May 30, from 6:30-8 p.m. with pizza and board game night. All area youth are welcome to attend the fun evenings planned by the Youth Advisory Committee.

Summer Reading Program registration for all ages, babies through adults, begins on Thursday, May 23. For more information, call the Norton Public Library at 877-2481, or view the

library website at www.norton-publiclibrary.org. All programs are free of charge.

ENROLLMENT
Enrollment is the FIRST night of class

Outreach Classes in Norton
Contact Angela Melvin with Any Questions

NO.	COURSE	CR.	INSTRUCTOR	LOCATION	START	END	DAYS TAUGHT	START/END TIME
EN 176	English Comp I	3	B. Gay	Norton Campus	June 17	July 31	M, W	3:00p - 6:00p
EN 177	English Comp II	3	B. Gay	Norton Campus	June 17	July 31	M, W	6:00p - 9:00p
MA 178	College Algebra	3	T. Uehlin	NJHS-Rm 201	May 21	June 27	T, Th	6:30p - 9:30 p
SP 176	Public Speaking	3	B. Gay	Norton Campus	June 18	July 30	T, Th	3:00p - 6:00p
PH 103	Earth Science W/Lab	5	G. Rossi	NJHS-111	June 5	July 11	T, Th	6:00p - 9:00p
MA 205	Elements of Statistics	3	L. Bailey	NCHS-Rm 215	May 27	July 10	M, W	7:00p - 10:00p
CH 177	Chemistry W/Lab	5	J. Green	NCHS-Rm 208	June 12	July 19	M, W, F	8:00a - 12noon
PO 176	American Government	3	T. Fiscus	NJHS-114	June 3	July 11	M, W	6:00p - 9:00p
PS 176	Gen Psychology	3	Julie Leiker	EES	June 3	June 21	M, T, W, Th	6:00p - 9:00p

Farm agency encourages farmers and ranchers to sign-up for programs

The United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency Administrator Juan M. Garcia encourages farmers and ranchers to enroll for the 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program or the Average Crop Revenue Election Program before the deadline. Producers who wait until the last minute to sign up could face increased waiting time in FSA county offices.

"We understand that producers have gotten busy, but they can't forget to visit their county office and sign up for Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program or Average Crop Revenue Election Program," said Garcia. "Just as farmers and ranchers plan their spring plantings, producers should plan to schedule an appointment to visit their United States Department of Agriculture Service Center at the earliest possible time. It's best to complete the paperwork now rather than to stand in line the day before the deadline," advised Garcia.

The sign-up for both programs began Feb. 19, 2013. The deadline to sign up for Average Crop Revenue Election Program is June 3, 2013. The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Pro-

gram sign up period ends Aug. 2, 2013.

The 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program and Average Crop Revenue Election Program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program or Average Crop Revenue Election Program for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in Average Crop Revenue Election Program in 2012 may elect to enroll in Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program in 2013 or may re-enroll in Average Crop Revenue Election Program in 2013 (and vice versa).

For more information about the programs and loans administered by Farm Service Agency, visit any Farm Service Agency county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.



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Kansasland Realtors and Kansasland Realty and Auction to the business community

Larry Riggs is the Broker, Owner, and Listing Agent for Kansasland Realtors and Kansasland Realty and Auction, which is located at 206 E. Washington, Norton, Kansas. Phone Larry or Sandy Riggs, Salesperson at 785-874-4776 for your Residential, Commercial, Land, Private Treaty or Auction services. Kansasland Realtors has been serving the area for the past eight years and is always available.