

# KU researcher studies how population shifts

A researcher at the University of Kansas has made a vital study of how U.S. population shifts are shrinking local tax bases and economies in Kansas and across the Great Plains.

Art Hall, executive director of the university's Center for Applied Economics at the School of Business, said he uncovered key themes to population shifts in the Midwest by looking at annual data collected by the Internal Revenue Service on county-to-county migration.

Hall found that the Great Plains are depopulating in a continuation of a century-long trend, making regions of Kansas vulnerable to a dangerous loss of citizenry.

"Once you fall below a critical mass of people, unless there is a resource like oil or natural gas, it's hard to sustain crucial businesses," Hall said. "Agriculture is simply not going to do it any more. It's a very painful process. Towns are dying."

Hall cautioned that Kansas would face hurdles in solving the underlying shift in population away from the region.

"The Great Plains is undergoing a transition," Hall said. "In the Great Plains in general, Denver has been a major spot for migration. In the Kansas case, what you have is essentially people migrating east. Most of the Kansas migration is toward Kansas City or towards northeast Kansas. But for Kansas in general, most counties are seeing net outmigration. It's all coming east. And the state itself has seen a net outmigration. But it's very much a revolving door. In any given year, about 33,000 taxpayers are migrating in and a little more than that are mi-

grating out. So it's an extremely dynamic place."

Hall's research showed that St. Louis, Phoenix, Dallas and Los Angeles are the largest sources of new people moving into the state of Kansas. Those same cities, with the exception of Los Angeles, are the cities most likely to be destinations for people who leave Kansas.

Hall said that many Kansas communities face stark policy choices in terms of what kinds of employers they are willing to accommodate.

"Every community wants to be a healthy, nice place to live with good jobs. But you can't overcome the dynamism of places — and policy as a tool can only go so far. Everyone is chasing the same people to move and the same businesses to create jobs. Having a much more balanced approach to defining good government services, to defining reasonable tax rates, to not being biased against the types of business that come to your community, is one of the best perspectives in terms of trying to nurture community growth."

The KU researcher suggested that consolidation of municipal entities and the services of Kansas' 105 counties could work to combat outflows of people from rural areas.

"There is a perennial discussion about whether Kansas has too many counties and should consolidate them," said Hall. "It's kind of a 'third-rail' type of issue. But it's not really an either-or question. Communities need the freedom to partner with other communities. Right now, there is actually a law saying you

need permission from Topeka to do this. If folks started thinking about tearing down that structure so that they could create their own innovative solutions to their own local problems, that will take some of the pressure off."

There are counties and cities in Kansas that defy the statewide trend of population declines. For example, Hall said his research showed that Hays is an exception to the rule of dwindling tax bases.

"In the northwest, Hays is really the only game in town," said Hall. "People are coming to Hays and creating a critical mass that's actually supporting that influx. People go to Hays and say 'well there's not much there.' But in reality, Hays is actually growing quite healthily."

Nationwide, Hall said, 14 percent of U.S. citizens move every year, a number of people equivalent to the population of Florida. The old and young are particularly nomadic, with reasons behind moves ranging from climate to employment to local tax rates.

"Once you get families there's a lot more stability," said Hall. "That stability generates a disinclination to move, but they're willing to commute longer distances. But even then, there's a lot of dynamism around metro areas even if they're not moving across the country. In the big picture, it's the first time in U.S. history that the general migration pattern is eastern rather than westward."

The full report, "The County-to-County Migration of Taxpayers and their Incomes, 1995-2006" is available online at [www.business.ku.edu/\\_FileLibrary/cae/KSTaxpayerMigration.pdf](http://www.business.ku.edu/_FileLibrary/cae/KSTaxpayerMigration.pdf).



Paul and Jeneen Lueschen were congratulated by Kim Wicker, office manager of Mortensen Computer Services, for having a winning Christmas On Us ticket. Mrs. Lueschen's ticket was drawn early this week. She received it at Mortensen's.

—Telegram photo by Erica Bradley

## Another instant winner

By ERICA BRADLEY  
[erabradley@nwkansas.com](mailto:erabradley@nwkansas.com)  
Jeneen Lueschen received a winning Christmas On Us ticket at Mortensen Computer Services when she had her computer repaired last week. She was not

sure what she would use the \$50 scrip money for, but Christmas is quickly approaching.

The money can be used at any of the participating sponsors; including Ag Valley Co-Op and station, Kellie's Alltel, Nex-Tech,

Sander Furniture and Gifts, Sander Ashley Store, Mainstreet IGA, Mortensen Computer Services, Destination Kitchen, Stitch Up A Storm and Engel's Sales.

The big drawing will be held Dec. 17.

## Cured, organic meat not exactly alike

Ready-to-eat, organic processed pork products look similar to conventionally cured meats. The organic versions have become popular among consumers as processors work to meet the demand. Although the natural and organic processed meat products are manufactured to simulate traditionally cured meat products as closely as possible, they're not exactly alike.

One key difference is that the traditionally cured pork products contain nitrate and nitrite. Nitrite is a chemical preservative that's effective in inhibiting the growth of certain foodborne pathogens. Under government regulations, the organic products are not permitted to contain preservatives such as nitrate or nitrite. Instead, the organics may contain vegetable products that are considered natural ingredients and that contain high concentrations of nitrate, which is acceptable because it is from a natural source. The vegetable-based nitrate makes the organic pork product look and taste like it was traditionally cured.

The problem is that the organic products, lacking the directly-added nitrite, don't have the same level of built-in protection against pathogens such as *Clostridium perfringens*, *Clostridium botulinum* and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

"Consumers can't tell the difference, except that they're labeled natural and organic," said Joseph Sebranek, an Iowa State University food science professor who is researching the case for the Food Safety Consortium.

"From the standpoint of consumers, if they have a natural organic hot dog, it looks the same. The issue is if consumers expect that product to be identical in terms of handling requirements and refrigeration, and if they happen to do some temperature abuse, there is going to be more potential for problems to develop."

Sebranek said his research team's analysis has determined that naturally occurring nitrate is not present in the organic products at as high a concentration as the nitrite preservative is in traditionally cured products. The level of concentrations isn't the only factor that affects the product's ability to fight off pathogens. The researchers are reviewing what other formulations in the products could have an effect.

The research has found that there is a way to use natural ingredients to fight the potential of pathogenic contamination in organic products to make up for

what nitrite isn't present to do. Natural vinegar, lactate and lemon powder have recently become commercially available for use as natural preservatives in foods. Sebranek's group tested their effectiveness against the pathogens and found them to be effective against *L. monocytogenes* and *C. perfringens*, although not to the extent that nitrite is effective in traditionally cured products.

More remains to be explored. Sebranek's research group is studying other natural antimicrobial ingredients to determine their effectiveness against pathogens in organic processed meat products.

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## Sheriff's Log

### December 3

2:30 p.m. Male subject arrived at the S.O. to speak with Sheriff Thomson.

2:48 p.m. Above subject left the S.O.

### December 4

10:01 a.m. Subject arrived at S.O. to see Sheriff Thomson

10:05 a.m. Subject left S.O. after speaking with Sheriff Thomson

2:26 p.m. Subject arrived at S.O. to speak with Deputy Bohl

2:44 p.m. Subject left S.O.

3:40 p.m. Subject arrived at S.O. to speak with Sheriff Thomson

3:52 p.m. Subject arrived at S.O. to speak with Sheriff Thomson

### December 5

9:08 a.m. Received a call reference to a red car off the side of the road on Highway 283 just north of Road G with flashers on.

9:54 a.m. Received a call from subject reference to someone hunting on land without permission 14 miles south of Norton on Highway 283 and then 1/2-3/4 mile east on north side of the highway.

9:56 a.m. Paged Deputy Land reference to above two calls.

11:24 a.m. Received call from anonymous caller reference three girls on a golf cart weaving into traffic in New Almelo.

11:26 a.m. Advised Deputy Land

1:49 p.m. Deputy Land advised he is out with a Transient on Highway 36 just west of DOC.

5:28 p.m. Received call from subject needing to speak with someone about a party tonight just outside the Norton city limits, put through to Deputy Land.

### December 6

12:30 p.m. Received call from subject regarding a Gold Buick Regal in the ditch approximately 1/2 mile west of E9 on Highway 36, RP advised no injuries and they have someone en route to get vehicle out.

12:33 p.m. Advised Deputy Land of above

1:39 p.m. Received 911 call from subject reference to vehicle slid into ditch near Highway 36 & Highway 383 Junction just past the curve towards Almena.

1:41 p.m. Advised Deputy Land of above.

3:26 p.m. Received 911 call from subject reference to vehicle slid into ditch about 1/2-1 mile north on Highway 383 at

the Highway 36 junction, no injuries.

3:29 p.m. Advised Deputy Land reference above.

### December 7

9:05 a.m. Received a request for traffic control at 1400 hours today while cattle are moved across Highway 383 1 mile east of Calvert.

9:07 a.m. Advised Deputy Bohl of above.

9:38 a.m. Received a call from subject advising of a gun that is missing or stolen.

9:39 a.m. Advised Deputy Bohl of above and he spoke with R.P. on phone.

9:41 a.m. Two female subjects arrived at S.O. needing to speak with a Deputy.

9:46 a.m. Above two female subjects left S.O. after speaking with Sheriff Thomson

9:53 a.m. Received a call from subject requesting traffic control while removing a vehicle from ditch at Highways 36 & 383 junction.

9:54 a.m. Advised Under Sheriff Wenzl of above.

11:03 a.m. Subject arrived at S.O. for a VIN inspection.

11:03 a.m. Advised Under Sheriff of above

11:54 Received a call from subject advising will be moving cattle across Highway 36, 13 miles east of Norton and subject does not need traffic control at this time.

11:54 a.m. Received a call of a VIN inspection needed on a bus at Site C, 5 to 6 miles north of Almena on Road E9, east side.

12:18 p.m. Subject arrived at Sheriff's Office, requesting traffic control on Highway 383 just east of Highway 36 & 383 junction while getting a vehicle out of ditch at 1330 hours.

1:14 p.m. Advised Under Sheriff Wenzl of traffic control requested by above.

1:41 p.m. Received a report of a white cow walking on shoulder at E13 on Highway 36

2:09 p.m. Received a report of a cow out walking on north shoulder on Highway 36 by E13.

2:17 p.m. Received another report on same cow.

2:17 p.m. Advised Under Sheriff Wenzl and requested he check.

2:26 p.m. Received another call from last R.P. to cow out on Highway 36 and subject advised it was walking up a driveway now.

2:28 p.m. Advised Under Sheriff Wenzl of above.

2:28 p.m. Advised Under Sheriff Wenzl that subject will be en route to get vehicle out of ditch at the east Highway 36 and 383 junction in 30 minutes.

3:09 p.m. Received a report of a black cow out at mm 186.5 on Highway 283 on the west side.

3:24 p.m. Advised Deputy Bohl of above

### December 8

4:17 p.m. Received a 911 call from subject reference of a semi tractor is off the Highway by Calvert at the mine and the trailer is blocking traffic in the West-bound lane. He advised they need traffic control.

5:49 p.m. Received a 911 call from a male subject reference to a semi blocking the road in front of the sale barn, he slid, he is loaded with cattle, they are trying to get ahold of the sale barn person.

5:52 p.m. Advised Deputy Annon in reference to above.

### December 9

7:31 a.m. Subject called to report his truck got stuck and damaged on the Almena Cemetery Road he has a truck en route to get it, information only.

9:18 a.m. Received call from subject requesting a ride to Whispering Pines.

9:19 a.m. Advised Sheriff Thomson of above.

1:08 p.m. Received call from subject requesting a welfare check at Road L.

1:17 p.m. Paged Sheriff Thomson regarding above.

1:17 p.m. Advised Deputy Bohl of above.

3:02 p.m. Received call from subject reference to a one-vehicle, non-injury accident near Mills.

3:04 p.m. Advised Deputy Bohl of above.

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