

# Community benefits from new wind-generating farm

By Ron Wilson

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The wind of Kansas. It's a fact of life in our state. The wind simply tends to blow a lot in the center of the country. So how does rural Kansas make that wind an asset? A community in western Kansas is harnessing that wind in a way that is

beneficial to everyone. Hold on to your hat, it's today's Kansas Profile.

Ken Domer is the mayor of Spearville. Ken, who works at the First National Bank of Spearville, told me the story.

One day in 2002, Ken was working late when he got a call from the news office across the street. They said, "We've got somebody here who wants to talk about wind farms. Can you talk to him?" The visitor to Spearville was a representative of

a company called EnXCo, which is a developer and builder of wind farms. Ken said he'd be glad to visit, but he knew somebody else who would be even better to talk with.

Ken called Kermit Froetschner, a landowner and customer of his bank.

They visited with the EnXCo representative and things started to click.

Kermit had been interested in wind farms for some time, ever

since the windmill farm had been installed at Montezuma, Kansas. Kermit had been pointing out to utility companies that Spearville had a substation, transmission lines, and level ground - all key components of wind farm locations. But when the investment tax credits for wind farm investments ran out, interest faded. Those tax credits were reinstituted a couple years later, however, and interest started growing again in 2004.

Kansas City Power and Light was working with EnXCo and was considering several sites for a wind farm. In December 2005 came the announcement: Spearville had been selected as the location for this new 100 megawatt wind farm.

By October 2006, the wind farm was up and operating. The project will include 67 windmill towers, each generating about 1.5 megawatts of power, spread over 5,000 acres. These wind turbines are a far cry from your grandfather's windmill. They consist of a giant column and a three-bladed fan mounted at the top. When measured to the tip

of a fully extended blade, each structure is 389 feet tall.

I spotted these structures recently while driving to Dodge City, and they are a sight to see. More importantly, this wind farm will be able to generate enough electricity for 33,000 homes.

This seems to be a win-win situation. Consumers benefit from a clean, constantly renewable source of energy. The landowners benefit from the additional income they receive at virtually no expense. The company benefits from diversifying its supply sources, and the environment benefits because oil or coal are not being consumed in the process.

Wind farms have been a significant concern in the scenic Flint Hills, but the director of the Audubon Society in Kansas has been quoted as praising the Spearville project. He points out that the Spearville location does not interfere with key wildlife habitats.

The Kansas City Power and Light CEO has been quoted as saying, "Spearville is an ideal location for

this facility because it offers strong wind resources, meets our environmental guidelines, and has the support of landowners and the community."

Ken Domer says, "I think it's just a wonderful thing to happen to Spearville."

Kermit Froetschner says, "It took a lot of work but it's a good thing." When asked if there is any downside, he said, "Well, sometimes I catch myself trying to count the revolutions and I run off the road."

I'm excited to find a new energy source in rural Kansas, near Spearville, population 817 people. Now, that's rural.

The wind of Kansas. It's a fact of life in our state, but I'm pleased to find this community is harnessing that wind in such a beneficial way. We commend Ken Domer, Kermit Froetschner, and all those involved with the Spearville wind farm for making a difference with this project. So how do we find a solution for our nation's energy needs? Part of the answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind.

## Artist faced success and tragedy

From "ART," page 4

Rembrandt all of her wealth, but she included a clause in her will, stating that if he remarried, the funds would transfer to Titus. He painted his beloved wife in loving memory and he became depressed and seemed to withdraw from society, preferring privacy.

Saskia's maid stayed on to care for Titus and in 1649 Rembrandt painted "Hendrikje Stoffels in Bed," so it is presumed that he took her as his mistress at that time, but he never married her because he didn't want to give up Saskia's riches to Titus, who was only eight at the time.

In 1654 Hendrikje and Rembrandt had a baby girl who Rembrandt acknowledged as his.

When Rembrandt was 50, he was hopelessly in debt and in 1656 the Orphan's Chamber of Amsterdam, transferred the house and grounds to Titus to protect the child's future. The following July, Rembrandt was declared bankrupt and his furniture and other belongings were sold. Miraculously, \$35,000 was salvaged for Titus.

Hendrikje and Titus then formed a partnership in order to sell Rembrandt's paintings without the funds going to creditors. Through all this Rembrandt began to create masterpieces such as, "The Man on Horseback," that sold to the National Gallery of London in 1959 for \$400,000.

Between 1660 to 1669, Rembrandt was weak and at times ill. His

weakness is apparent in his painting, "St. Matthew and the Angel," in which the angel is none other than Titus. Then in 1661 came another masterpiece, "The Syndics of the Draper's Guild." It depicts the staelmeesters, who were examiners and controllers of cloth. This painting is thought to be his last tribute before his death.

After the program a business meeting was called to order by club president, Marlene Carpenter. Treasurer, Bev Kern, announced that she had the books that were donated to the club by Lillie Plummer, and, since club members have some of the same books, she was thinking about donating them to the library; however, she didn't want to donate them to the library if they were just going to sell them at a book sale. Members voted to have Kern visit with the librarian about the problem and report back at the next meeting.

Kern said she had not yet heard back from artist, Duane Taylor, who she had contacted about giving a workshop in Colby and that she was wondering where would be the best place to have the workshop if he did call back. It was voted that she see about renting activity room 2 and the kitchen in the community building.

Brown, chairman of the "June Art Jubilee," made a list of the suggested stores that the club would ask to participate. She will notify these downtown merchants by the end of January.

Carpenter discussed the workshop in Goodland on "Pricing

"Your Artwork" and the members voted not to participate. Carpenter reminded members about the oil painting class that was going to be offered at the college this semester on Wednesday nights. Some of the ladies were interested in taking this class.

The next meeting will be Feb. 13 with Carpenter giving the program and Ruth Hughes serving as hostess. The meetings are held in the Methodist Church and all artists are invited.

## Authorities build case in disappearance

ARKANSAS CITY (AP) — Authorities in this southeast Kansas town worked Wednesday to build a case against a county inmate who might be linked to the disappearance of a college student whose car was dredged from a nearby lake — and who allegedly stalked members of the woman's dance team.

"It is just scary. It could have happened to any one of us," said Ashley Cochran, a member of the Cowley College dance team who said she had been followed.

On Tuesday, authorities searching for Jodi Sanderholm, 19, found a female body and a car belonging to the dancer. Police were withholding confirmation of the body's identity pending results of an autopsy at a Wichita forensic center.

But a funeral home director in Arkansas City confirmed to The Wichita Eagle on Wednesday that the body was that of Sanderholm and that her family has completed funeral arrangements.

Brandon Welch, of Rindt-Erdman Funeral Home, told the newspaper the death certificate lists Tuesday as the day of Sanderholm's death "because that's the day she was found."

On Friday, the day Sanderholm disappeared, one woman told members of the Cowley College dance team she was being stalked by a man who worked at a Subway restaurant in Arkansas City, a town of about 11,600 people just north of the Oklahoma line and about 46 miles south of Wichita.

"Jodi was real concerned about that. He is just crazy," Cochran said.

But Sanderholm's concern was for the other women, and she expressed no fear at that time for her own safety, Cochran said.

Sanderholm was last seen at a Subway restaurant around 1 p.m. on Friday.

Rama Peroo, spokesman for Cowley College, said Wednesday that the school was not aware of the stalking allegations until hearing it on the news this week.

At the Ark City Dance studio, where Sanderholm worked and taught, owner Terri Schroeder said she wasn't taken any special precautions. "Not yet. We are still in regrouping," Schroeder said.

Cowley County District Attorney Christopher Smith said Wednesday no decision has been made yet as to what charges would be filed against

"a known suspect" who was being held on unrelated charges. Kansas Attorney General Paul Morrison's office has agreed to assist in the case.

Morrison spokeswoman Ashley Anstaett said Wednesday it could be days before charges are filed.

In a news release issued Wednesday morning, Arkansas City police said the department was following up on information "that another individual and/or individuals may have also been involved in" Sanderholm's disappearance. The statement did not elaborate, and police refused to comment further.

Sanderholm's car was found at the bottom of the Cowley State Fishing Lake, and a woman's body was found about eight miles away. Divers spent Tuesday searching at the 84-acre lake on U.S. 166 about 15 miles east of downtown Arkansas City.

Alexis Swartzell, a former girlfriend of the man the dancers said had been following them, filed a petition for an order of protection Monday in Cowley County District Court, saying he had been stalking her and her 5-year-old daughter since Jan. 1.

"I cannot go anywhere alone. He always finds me," she wrote in the petition.

She alleged that he would sit outside the homes of family members for hours and would frequently send her electronic text messages.

Brianna Branine, a member of the Cowley College dance team, said team members were hard-hit by news that a body was found.

Branine said other dancers had been stalked, but she wasn't one of them.

Nearly 200 people gathered Tuesday night outside the Ark City Dance studio for a prayer vigil.

"The hope that Jodi is safe has grown quite dim," said the Rev. Mark Boxman, pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Arkansas City.

Police said Sanderholm's family did not want to speak to the media.

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