

# Protect your private information

Thanks to the Internet, we can now share emails, photos and videos with friends and family members around the world instantly – even from our phones. But as easy and convenient as it is to share information online, it can be equally difficult to protect information from being shared with scammers and identity thieves.

June is Internet Safety Month, so now is a perfect time to review your online accounts and privacy settings to ensure your personal information is secure. Here are a few simple tips to keep you safe online:

- Use antivirus and spyware protection software, and update it regularly. Also, be sure to check for updates to your computer's operating system regularly, as these updates often contain security patches to address the latest threats from hackers.
- Protect your passwords. Make sure your passwords are strong – especially for email accounts and sites containing financial information, like online banking or shopping sites. Including a mix of upper- and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols can make your passwords much more difficult to hack.



**Derek Schmidt**  
• Attorney General

- Check your privacy settings on social network sites. Make sure the information you share is restricted only to people you know. Sites such as Facebook feature privacy settings that can be customized, so that different amounts of information can be shared with different groups of people.
- Be careful what you click on. Online ads can be deceptive, and lead to malicious sites. Don't download programs, videos or other files unless you know and trust the source of the content.
- Read the fine print. When shopping online, be sure to read the terms and conditions, and be wary of offers that sound too good to be true.
- Back up regularly. Copy your important

files to a removable disk, such as a CD, flash drive or external hard drive, and store it in a safe place.

• Wipe or destroy the hard drive of old computers before disposing. Even after you delete files, information could still be accessible on the hard drive. Several online resources are available to show you how to erase the files from your old hard drives.

Above all, common sense and discretion should guide all online activity. Don't post any information online you wouldn't want on the front page of your community newspaper, because the Internet is just as public, with a worldwide audience.

In the unfortunate event you become a victim of identity theft online, our Consumer Protection Division is available to help. Identity theft is a crime in Kansas, and we can work with your local police to investigate it and with your local county or district attorney to prosecute it.

We also have resources available on our website, [www.ksag.org](http://www.ksag.org), to help you put the pieces back together, and you can always contact us at (800) 432-2310 for more assistance.

## Singer to appear in Atwood, Oberlin

Jerry Bennett, Christian music singer from Nashville, Tenn., will be performing at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Christian Church in Atwood and again at 7 p.m. Sunday at the Gateway in Oberlin. Admission is free but an offering will be taken.



**Jerry Bennett**

Bennett has won honors in the Families Advocating Moral Entertainment Awards including

Keyboard Player of the Year, Gospel Artist of the Year and Entertainer of the Year. In addition, he was the 2010 Peoples' Choice Award recipient. Bennett has written and recorded several songs that have made it to the top 40 charts including "My God Forgets," "The Promise," "I'll Soon Be Gone" and others.

## Streamside trees offer prime wildlife habitat

Riparian (streamside) forests are the habitat of choice in the Great Plains for a wide variety of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. The forests have changed since pioneer days, but continue to provide a unique mix of water, food and cover.

And, they could be doing even more, said Bill Beck, watershed specialist with the Kansas Forest Service.

"So long as you have land with some riparian acreage, the forest service can assist you in managing to meet wildlife objectives," he said. "You can be a hunter, a birder or someone who simply enjoys catching the occasional glimpse of nearby wildlife."

About 200 years ago, the Plains' riparian forests were a de facto meat and herb market for Native Americans and early settlers, Beck said. They were shooting sports sites for the fort-building U.S. Frontier Army.

"One of the biggest changes since then, of course, is that massive herds of bison no longer congregate to ride out the region's weather extremes in large river-bottom stands of cottonwoods and willows," he said. "But, our streamside forests are still a protective transition zone between aquatic and upland ecosystems. So, they offer a wide range of niches and micro-habitats for other wildlife."

The forester offered these examples:

- Tree roots and woody debris in a stream channel provide habitat and attachment surfaces for amphibians, reptiles, fish and macro-invertebrates (e.g., insects, clams, snails, flatworms, crustaceans, etc.).

- Woody debris in the channel also helps to create riffles, runs, and pools – stream structures im-

portant to fish.

- The tree canopies that overhang a stream help regulate the water's temperature, thus improving the stream's dissolved oxygen content. This promotes balance in the aquatic ecosystem, as well as fish health.

- Because they grow alongside a linear stream or river, riparian trees create a lot of forest edge – an important factor for many wildlife species, including rabbits and quail.

- The large woody debris that falls from the canopy to the forest floor creates den sites and attracts both insects and small animals.

- The insects and small animals, in turn, serve as prey for such predators as bobcats, coyotes, snakes and raptor-type birds.

- Standing dead trees, known as snags, become nesting or den sites for woodpeckers, song birds, and such mammals as the squirrel, bat and raccoon.

- Living riparian trees provide roosting sites for turkeys and the occasional bald eagle (particularly in large bur oaks, sycamores and/or cottonwoods beside a river.)

"By their very nature, Kansas riparian forests also are likely to attract waterfowl, including the wood duck, bufflehead, goldeneye and merganser," Beck said. "But, the forest service can help landowners make those forests even more alluring to the bird species that love water and marshes."

Information about riparian forests is available on the Kansas Forest Service website at [www.kansasforests.org/riparian/index.shtml](http://www.kansasforests.org/riparian/index.shtml). That page also includes a link to the "KFS Staff" site, which provides contact information for Beck and for Kansas' district foresters.

## Sorghum harvest updates offered on website

The International Grains Program at Kansas State University has joined the United Sorghum Check-Off Program based in Lubbock, Texas, in an effort to educate consumers about grain sorghum's multi-purpose benefits as a commodity.

The project participants will submit grain sorghum samples for quality testing and the data will be mapped according to production regions and posted on the department's website, said Mark Fowler,

grains program associate director.

In addition to mapping sorghum's regional quality attributes, the program is working with producers from various regions to provide updates as harvest progresses. The producer profiles and harvest updates will be available on the program's website, [www.grains.ksu.edu/IGP](http://www.grains.ksu.edu/IGP).

"As we have seen during wheat harvest," Fowler said, "the producer profiles and harvest updates are popular with our international

buyers and provide a glimpse into American crop production on a more personal level. It also helps strengthen our relationship as they look to K-State for its leadership in the field of grain science."

Jeff Casten, a Kansas producer from Quenemo, sees the grain sorghum quality survey as an opportunity to communicate the benefits of the crop.

"Sorghum's primarily thought of as a feed for animals, but we're finding out through more

research, that there are more uses for sorghum," Casten says. "Today we're seeing good demand in areas where ethanol plants are and they are using it. It's making the market change."

The survey information and interpretation will update grain buyers and potential processors on the quality of the 2011 grain sorghum crop. The survey will begin in June starting with the grain sorghum harvest in Texas and will continue into the fall.

### On the Beat

- COLBY POLICE Thursday**
- 5:13 a.m. – Assisted ambulance crew.
  - 5:41 a.m. – Checked on subject from above call.
  - 7:44 a.m. – Security check at Sleep Inn.
  - 9:33 a.m. – Caller reported dogs at large by Colby Care Center. One caught; one notice to appear issued.
  - 11:14 a.m. – Caller reported woman screaming and then leaving in vehicle. Contact made, all OK.
  - 4:05 p.m. – Caller reported ve-

- hicle parked for months on street. Tow away notice posted.
- 8:24 p.m. – Caller reported subjects using paint ball guns at Ferguson Park. Spoke to subjects; all OK.
- 8:57 p.m. – Attempt to locate subject for emergency message. Not found.
- 10:48 p.m. – Caller reported possible drunk driver westbound in the 100 block of Davis Avenue. Driving under the influence report filed on traffic stop.
- 10:54 p.m. – Caller reported two children left home alone. All OK; spoke to subject.

## Meeting on human resources Wednesday at Colby College

The Western Kansas Human Resource Management Association meets Wednesday at the Colby Community College Student Union. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m. The program will be from noon to 1 p.m., with Phil Hayes giving a Kansas unemployment insurance update. is vice president, human resource services and operations for The Arnold Group, a human resource company providing consulting, supervisory training, employment assessments and staff-

ing services.

The group is a local chapter of the Society of Human Resource Management, meeting once a month with a presenter speaking on topics important to today's employers, such as healthcare reform, leading change, managing generations, unemployment. Networking opportunities with local business people are a benefit.

To attend, notify [mel.fortin@colbycc.edu](mailto:mel.fortin@colbycc.edu) by noon on Tuesday. [wkhrma.org](http://www.wkhrma.org).

## Groundhog hitches ride with unsuspecting Pennsylvania man

WHITEHALL, Pa. (AP) — A stowaway groundhog created quite a mess, not to mention a neighborhood ruckus that drew police, a state wildlife officer and even the mayor, when it became trapped inside a car in suburban Allentown.

The fat, furry rodent tore up the back seat of a 1995 Pontiac Bonneville and used the car as a toilet.

Tyler Duncan, 20, of New Tripoli, made the

unpleasant discovery when he returned to the car following a sleepover at a friend's house in Whitehall Township, according to the *Morning Call* of Allentown.

"I screamed," he said.

He called his mother, Sharon Duncan, who was brave enough to get in the car and start cleaning it. As she was picking up, Duncan's friend's mother caught a glimpse of the buck-toothed varmint trying to escape from under-

neath the seat. She, too, began screaming.

Township police and a state wildlife officer worked together to catch the woodchuck, which was put in a cage and released to the wild. Authorities believe the critter had traveled with Duncan from New Tripoli to Whitehall, a distance of about 15 miles.

Whitehall Mayor Ed Hozza Jr. joked that he gave a "direct order" to take the groundhog back to New Tripoli.

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