

We need a new sign



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Workers from Commercial Sign worked on a sign post by Interstate 70 on Tuesday, July 2. A new sign had been put there by the end of that week.

Book details 'dirty thirties' using stories from local folks

Stories from area old-timers will be featured in a new book titled *A Living History of Northwest and North Central Kansas, Sod Houses and The Dirty Thirties*.

The hardcover, coffee-table-sized book, published by Hometown Memories Publishing, features Kansans from all walks of life.

"We are delighted that over 350 folks shared their memories and

pictures for the book," said publisher Todd Blair. "The memories in this book are an extremely valuable part of the region's history and heritage."

Winners of the contest for the book's best stories were: Dave Canfield of Concordia; Paula Erick of Longmont, Colo.; Alvin Weidman of West Monroe, La., formerly of Lincoln County; and Dorothy Erickson of Belleville.

Honorable mention went to the contributions from Kepka Belton of Sanford, Mich., who grew up in Ellsworth County and Betty Barney of Phillipsburg.

Ruth Bombardier of Concordia won a prize for the book's cover photo.

The book can be purchased at www.hometownmemoriesonline.com.

Library program offered across state to keep kids reading during summer

Public libraries throughout Kansas are providing summer reading programs and encouraging Kansas children to spend lots of time with books.

"There is only one known cure for the notorious 'summer slide' - reading," State Librarian Jo Budler said. "Students who do not read during summer months lose reading skills and fall behind their peers. Our librarians have developed programs and activities to foster a love of reading and develop strong reading skills in Kansas' children. Getting young Kansas readers to their local public libraries is the first step."

Last year, over 88,000 Kansas children participated in public-library reading programs that were partly paid for by the State Library. Studies find that when children participate in summer reading programs, Budler said, the ability to improve their academic

outcome increases dramatically and the impact is greatest for those who live in poverty.

"We feel the Collaborative Summer Library Program helps level the playing field for our struggling learners here in Kansas," said Mary Boller of the Northwest Kansas Library System. "They otherwise may lose valuable knowledge during the summer months, and in turn (this) gives our public libraries the resources and the support they need to continue to provide ... programming for all children and teens, regardless of income or circumstances."

This year, Budler said, the State Library contributed \$37,500 to support summer reading programs. Libraries leverage this money to great effect. In 2012, when granted the same amount, Kansas libraries reported they received \$707,228 worth of donated materials and services to support

summer reading and that libraries spent \$493,998 of local money on their summer reading programs.

The State Library helps through the Collaborative Summer Library Program; this year's theme is "Dig Into Reading." The State Library also provides summer programming and resources to teens and adults who are visually impaired and cannot read standard print through Kansas Talking Books. Kansas 14 years of age or older are invited to learn more about Talking Books and its summer reading program by calling (800) 362-0699 or e-mailing KSLIB_Talking_Books@library.ks.gov.

Summer reading participants can win prizes by signing up for the governor's "Read Kansas Read" program. Go to www.read-kansasread.ks.gov for more information on this program.

Founder to recycling business makes goal reuse millions of wine bottles

Peter Corbett
The Arizona Republic

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) - Entrepreneur Ray DeMuro is counting on Valley wine drinkers to help him grow his business and reach a goal of keeping 10 million wine bottles out of landfills.

DeMuro, 35, founder of Refresh Glass LLC, is in his fifth year of turning wine bottles from restaurants and hotels into glasses, candle holders, vases and planters. So far he has reused nearly

330,000 wine bottles, transforming them into 100,000 glasses, all with slight variations in size, weight and color.

"Each of those glasses has a story," said DeMuro, noting that the wine bottle might have been shared by people celebrating or drowning their sorrows. "It's not like these are Chinese mass-produced glasses."

Refresh Glass has a long way to go in reaching its goal of 10 million bottles, but steady growth since 2008 and a recent infusion

of investment capital should speed things up.

Mac6, a Tempe-based business incubator, bought a 17 percent equity stake in Refresh Glass and is providing the company with 6,000 square feet of space in a Tempe warehouse and business-support services. The financial details were not disclosed.

The investment will allow Refresh Glass to increase its capacity of processing 1,000 wine bottles per day.

DeMuro said he plans to double

his current payroll of six employees this year, including the company's first sales representative.

Refresh Glass and Mac6, its new partner, are committed to a business practice known as "conscious capitalism." The idea, espoused by Whole Foods co-founder John Mackey, is that for-profit companies demonstrate a social responsibility that benefits people and their community.

Kyle McIntosh, co-founder of Mac6 with his father, Scott, said they started the for-profit incubator

in November and are backing nine companies.

"We support a long-term approach to business instead of just looking at the quarterly profits," McIntosh said. "The other part is choosing companies that have a higher purpose than just making money."

Mac6's incubator businesses include reNature Inc., which creates fertilizer from food waste, and Endless Entertainment, which recently staged Phoenix Comicon.

"We picked (DeMuro) for the

good his company is doing in taking all those bottles out of the landfill and doing something really cool with them," McIntosh said.

DeMuro explained that his Refresh Glass combines "the heart of a charity with the horsepower of capitalism."

He intends to make money but also contribute to the community interests.

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