

Harvest University moves out of office

By Sharon Corcoran

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A new university opened an enrollment office here but then moved out, saying it has changed direction, and now is operating with on-line registration for seminars and workshops.

Harvest University had opened for enrollment, operating in the Sherman County Economic Development building as part of the agency's "incubator" program for new businesses.

Instead of filing with the Kansas Board of Regents to become an accredited university, though, Harvest's director has changed the institution's direction from offering degree programs to offering "seminars and workshops to teach life and job skills and help businesses resolve workplace conflicts."

"After weighing our options," said Director Laura Wing, "we have decided the most economical and beneficial thing for our customers is to not exercise our right to submit an application to the state, which would stifle our ability to provide flexible learning opportunities to the public."

"This has worked out to be a tremendous, awesome opportunity. Not having to secure a building will cut our costs tremendously."

Instead of costing thousands of dollars to enroll in a program, she said, it will cost less than \$100 to attend a seminar.

She said the board of regents gave her the opportunity to file to become an accredited university, but she learned that would cost so much, it was likely the university would need tax money to operate.

And it would be shut down for 90 days to one year while the board evaluated it and made a decision



Director Laura Wing worked at her computer in Harvest University's office in the Sherman County Economic Development building before changing the school's direction and moving out last Tuesday.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

about accreditation, she said, and the board would decide what they can and can't teach, removing the flexible learning environment she was aiming for.

The seminars will help people with a variety of things, she said, like building a resume and looking

for a job. She said the university will work with businesses that might need team-building exercises for employees and provide ombudsman services.

Forexample, she said, a company with a lot of turnover in workers may realize personality conflicts

are to blame and decide they need help with conflict resolution. After seeing what is going on in that workplace, she said, an ombudsman can present solutions and offer a training class.

There will be business and life coaching seminars and motivational

learning, she said, since one of the main focuses from the beginning has been to provide programs that will facilitate opening new businesses in the area and create economic growth.

Once the decision was made to have only on-line registration, Wing said, there was no need for an office. She took the web site down for reformatting and said it probably will be down for about a week but then will be available at www.harvestu-nwk.com.

Wing said she will post a calendar of events quarterly, beginning when she has the first quarter's calendar ready. Wing said she is planning a workshop series called "The Power of Failure." A former vocational instructor at the Kit Carson Correctional Center in Burlington, Wing says she has a license in Colorado as a transitional specialist for corrections. She said she taught a variety of topics at the prison, including life skills, risk management and parenting, and will teach a lot of workshops for Harvest.

She said she hopes to attend conferences around the state and nation and try to secure speakers she meets there, adding that she is open to suggestions.

"If someone knows of a workshop they would like to have," she said, "or one they could present, let us know." Wing can be reached at 890-5417 or (877) 534-6094.

Though Harvest University moved out of the office and is changing directions, Wing said, she wants people to know it is not gone.

"Harvest is not going anywhere," she said. "We have not closed our door — we're just making changes as quickly as possible."

The university's board held its

first meeting in January, Wing said, and the university published a newsletter for January and February.

Board members who attended, she said, were Ken Klemm, buffalo rancher and co-owner of the Buffalo Guys; Megan Murray from Golden West Community Services; Jeremy Jennings, former economic development director; the Rev. Bob Willis of the Nazarene Church; and Ashley Huwa, a business student at Fort Hays State University. Other board members are Nancy Farris, counselor at Goodland High School; Sabrina Erhart, a former educational secretary who works at the Burlington prison; Donna Terry, business manager at the prison; and Andi Nelson, Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce director.

Even with half the board out with the flu, Wing said, the first meeting was productive.

"We have fantastic board members," she added.

Wing said she sent letters Friday to the board members to let them know about the changes and asked them whether they wanted to remain on the board.

"We were offering them scholarship certificates for serving on the board," Wing said, "and that was a motivating factor for some. I want to give them the opportunity to back out."

When she finds out what the board members decide, Wing said, she will decide whether to seek out more board members or to have a smaller board.

The university had been advertising to hire student recruiters but will not be doing that. Wing said she will hire speakers and eventually will hire someone to set up conferences, help with marketing and other tasks.

County approves renewal of bridge inspection contract

By Tom Betz

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The Sherman County commissioners approved renewal of a bridge inspection contract with Penco Engineering of Plainville at their meeting on Friday.

Curt Way, public works manager, said the contract to inspect the 73 bridges is the same as in the past, except the price went up from \$45 to \$47 per bridge, or \$3,431 total.

He said of the bridges 42 are considered on the road system and 31 are off-system.

Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked Way about a wooden bridge south on Road 26 in the southeast part of the county he was worried about.

"I will watch and see how it comes out in the rating," Way said. "We could put in a steel beam or a six-by stringer."

Way said it has a good rating, but over the years some of the stringers have cracked and the county has shored them up. He said the crews go through and

repair stringers as they can.

Tiede said it is a pretty narrow bridge. Way said it does not get a lot of traffic, but the farmers do run trucks across it during harvest. Way said the bridge is about 4 miles south of old U.S. 24 and is posted at a six ton limit.

He said he would come back after the inspections and tell commissioners if any bridges need more work. He said the inspection is done every two years as required by the state.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked Way some questions he had from the monthly bills. He asked if the trips to Colby to pick up parts at Martin Tractor or Colby Wrecking Yards are worked out so they are done in as few trips as possible. Way said he could not say.

"Sometimes on repairs, those are brought over from Martin Tractor," Way said. "We do try to coordinate the trips if possible. We don't just make a trip, but there are times when

it is not possible."

"I ask once in a while if you need something brought back," Tiede noted.

Rasure said he had a couple of questions from earlier bills for Herl Chevrolet for pickup repairs. He asked if it was something that could not be done in the county shop.

Way said he would have to check and come back. He said he would need to see the unit number and find out what was being done. Tiede said one bill was to check a leak on the front end.

Rasure said all the bills appeared for pickups. Way said that one was on his pickup and Herl had fixed it. Tiede said the other bill is machine work to Durst.

Way said the county shop can't do some of that work, particularly in specialty situations. He said he would have to get a copy of the bills and see what they were. Rasure said he would appreciate know if those are things they cannot do in house.

Tiede said the county certainly

couldn't do the machine work.

Way said if it is an electrical problem, the county does not have the diagnostic tools. He said he would get back to Rasure.

Steve Duell, a Ruleton area farmer, asked Way about some bills from last year he had noticed, including D&D Filter for cleaning for road and bridge equipment for \$2,298 and California Contractor Supply of California for \$2,475.

Duell said he did not feel the filter bill was reasonable, and he had said previously he did not think it is necessary. He said the cost is about 30 percent of the price of a new one.

Way said it did not cost much to clean the filters. He said D&D charges \$10.25 to clean the filters, then after three times, the filter is discarded, for a cost of \$30.75. He said a new filter costs about \$40.

Tiede said he talked to Steve Goodman, shop supervisor, who said they change filters when they change oil about every 25 operating hours. He said the county mechanics put new filters in the trucks.

Duell said the county shop could clean the filters, going by his experience.

Way said the county has quite a

large fleet, and he feels this is a good way to get use out of the filters.

Duell asked about the bills to California Contractor Supply. Way said they have a catalog at the shop and could show him what they use. Duell said it was quite a lot of stuff, and he could not find out what the company did.

Way said the company provides municipal supplies, and that some of what the county gets is for the landfill. He offered to show Duell the catalog. Duell said he would stop by the county shop.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked what the county was going to do about burning its Conservation Reserve land.

"Are we going to use county employees on our own land?" he asked.

Tiede said Rich Simon, city public works director, had asked about their plan to burn the airport ground, and wanted to know if the county would allow the city to back-burn into the county land.

"I said I felt we would be good with that," he said. "We need to get a burn plan on the county land..."

Thomas said he wanted to know about extra help for when the land

is burned. He said it could be tough, because you may not be sure what day you are going to burn. It depends on the wind, he noted.

Way said he was not sure how his crew could help except by providing water in a tanker.

"I am sure we can get a couple of guys from rural fire to bring a truck out," Tiede said, "especially on the land down south by the Smoky Gardens and the landfill."

Duell said since he had finished his burn plan but has not had a single day when the wind was right.

Tiede said he had not thought about it, but the county land down south is going to be a big burn.

"We might not have to worry about the airport part," he said. "The city may burn it all off."

Thomas said a farmer down by the Smoky Gardens is equipped to help with the burning. Tiede said Thomas should ask for a price.

"He is going to think about it," Thomas said. "I caught him off guard."

The next commission meeting will be 8 a.m. today in the commission room on the main floor of the Sherman County courthouse, 813 Broadway.

DECA members to go to Atlanta

By Sharon Corcoran

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Goodland High School's DECA clubs had three members qualify for the International DECA Career Development Conference April 25-30 in Atlanta.

One member was elected as a state officer, one took home first place in an event and another qualified as an alternate by finishing second in two categories at state competition March 1 through 4 in Overland Park.

"It's exciting to get to go to Atlanta," said sponsor Richard Schwasinger. "We've gotten to go about everywhere else, but we haven't been to Atlanta before."

He said they expect to fly from Denver.

Junior T.J. Freeman was elected

DECA Western Region vice president for Kansas; senior Jonathan McClung finished first in Role Play No. 1, quick serve restaurant management; and senior Robert Borneman was second in Comprehensive Exam, automotive services marketing, and in Role Play No. 1, automotive services marketing.

McClung also finished second in Comprehensive Exam, quick serve restaurant management, and was fourth overall in quick serve restaurant management. Borneman and Freeman were fourth overall, working together on the Learn and Earn Manual, and Borneman was sixth overall in automotive services marketing.

Also competing for Goodland were seniors Thomas Terry, Dylan Hageman and Mindi Keith, who placed fourth overall in Public Rela-

tions Manual.

Terry was fourth in Role Play No. 2, quick serve restaurant management, and 10th overall in quick serve restaurant management.

The Goodland High DECA II and DECA I chapters both received H.D. Shotwell Chapter Service Awards. They were the only chapters to win this award for community service, Schwasinger said.

Freeman will serve as a state officer for a second year, Schwasinger said; he is Kansas secretary/treasurer this year.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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WE NOW PRORATE WATERCRAFT.

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