

# Sherman among counties on Rural Zone list

Over the past month, nine counties have joined the effort to help revitalize rural Kansas through the Rural Opportunity Zones student loan forgiveness program.

Cheyenne, Clark, Decatur, Harper, Norton, Sherman, Smith, Stafford and Thomas are now participating in the program, which was proposed by Gov. Sam Brownback and passed by the Legislature earlier this year.

The ROZs program is a centerpiece of Brownback's efforts to provide incentives to move people into rural areas of the state that have seen significant population declines.

These counties join the other 20 including Barber, Graham, Greeley, Hamilton, Hodgeman, Kearny, Kingman, Lane, Mitchell, Morton, Ness, Pratt, Rooks, Russell, Scott, Stanton, Trego, Wallace, Wichita and Woodson counties that have already opted in to the program.

"This visionary program gives Norton County another tool to assist with workforce development," said Scott Sproul, executive director of the Norton City/County Economic Development. "Norton City/County Economic Development identified an aggressive strategy to develop jobs and infrastructure. The ROZs

fit within that strategy as a powerful recruitment tool. We have already had several people from Nebraska get information on how to apply for the program, and it aided in the recruitment of a Texas company that will be relocating to Norton County next summer."

Individuals who move to one of these counties can qualify to have 20 percent of their student loans repaid (up to \$3,000 per year for up to five years) by the county and state, if the individuals graduated from an accredited post-secondary institution.

Interest in the ROZs program

has substantially increased, with the Department receiving 49 online requests for information about the program from several states including Kansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Ohio and Washington. Department officials have received more phone calls requesting information. The Department has received 38 applications from Kansas, Colorado and Oklahoma.

"The volume of calls and e-mails from interested people and the number of formal applications into the

student loan repayment program tell us the Rural Opportunity Zones are resonating with a lot of people," said Kansas Commerce Secretary Pat George. "We now have more than half of the eligible counties participating in the student loan repayment program. This is a great start to our efforts to recruit people who want to call rural Kansas home."

The application form for the student loan repayment program is available online on the Department's website at [KansasCommerce.com/RuralOpportunityZones](http://KansasCommerce.com/RuralOpportunityZones). A printed version of the form can be requested by contacting Dan Lara, public

information officer for the Department, at (785) 296-3760 or [dlara@kansascommerce.com](mailto:dlara@kansascommerce.com).

The ROZs program provides a state income tax exemption for up to five years to individuals who relocate to a ROZs county from out of state. Since the tax exemption is entirely state financed, all ROZs-designated counties are automatically participating in the program. In addition, there is not a formal application procedure for this part of the program. Questions about the tax exemption should be directed to the Department of Revenue at (785) 368-8222.

## Kansas farm photography, painting exhibit opens at Carnegie Arts Center



Bonnie Stasser (above) has a wonderful collection of her Kansas photographs and painting on display this month at the Carnegie Arts Center, and there was a good crowd at the special opening on Sunday afternoon. Stasser said she used to work in St. Francis, and for the past several years has been concentrating on her photography and painting. Her photos show a wonderful connection with the rural life in Kansas, and the subjects are farm and family related. One of her great photos shows a rainbow reaching out of a storm cloud to touch a combine cutting a wheat field. Fred Stasser provided some live music for the opening and Bonnie Stasser handed out (left) prints to those who attended. Check out Stasser Galleries on Facebook.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Check with schools before going shopping

While back-to-school spending is typically second only to holiday purchases, families are encouraged to check school fees and other fixed costs before shopping.

As a result of budget cuts to education, parents are likely to see increases in fees. In some cases, families may be asked to cover or contribute to costs for activities or services previously provided without cost, said Kansas State Research and Extension financial management specialist, Carol Young.

As the educational community struggles with how best to manage the current economic climate,

Young noted that the increased costs will challenge families. The dilemma also offers a valuable lesson in helping children learn to weigh wants versus needs.

Young, who is based in Kansas State University's Department of Family Studies and Human Services, offered cost-saving tips:

- Check with the school for a list of costs and requirements, such as registration, book and computer rental or deposits, or other requirements, such as a calculator for math, art supplies or kindergarten mat, and school breakfast or lunch.

- Note costs for activities, such as

rental fees for a band instrument or uniform, or add-ons for transportation, rather than regularly scheduled bus route, and for information about dress code or school uniforms. (Examples might include khaki slacks, T-Shirts without names or sayings or a minimal length for shorts.)

- Ask about options for paying enrollment fees, such as spreading out payments.

• Consider required school-related expenses, including immunizations, health screenings, and athletic physical, and check to see if these needs can be met at an economical or group rate with a local health care provider or

through the local Health Department.

- Review the school district list for required supplies. Plan to shop at home first, by checking supplies on hand and hand-me-downs such as a calculator from a previous year, backpack or book bag in good condition to hold down costs.

• Check sale flyers for the best prices on school supplies; wait to stock up through, as back-to-school supplies are typically reduced once the school year begins.

- Set aside time with each child to inventory and check the condition of clothing; make a list of items needed and note priorities such as shoes.

## Welcome Alumni, check The Goodland Star-News out on Facebook

### Check out these new listings!

**1108 Caldwell...**This adorable Bungalow is loaded with charm



with its original woodwork and inviting front porch. It has a no maintenance exterior with steel siding and soffets. There are 2 main floor bedrooms, spacious living room and eat-in kitchen. The full basement offers family room, two bedrooms and utility area.

It includes a fenced backyard and detached garage. This home is neat, clean and ready for your family. Call Rose Koggie for your appointment at 866-899-3060, 785-899-3060 or 785-821-1179.

**503 Clark...**Check out this Ranch style.



It offers three main floor bedrooms and two bedrooms in the basement. It has one full bath and a 3/4 bath in the basement. The shingles are newer and the Seller is providing new chain link fencing to fence in the backyard. The Seller is offering a \$5,000.00 Buyer allowance for remodeling, closing costs of whatever you need it for. Call Rose at 866-899-3060, 785-899-3060 or 785-821-1179.

### corrections

In the special All-School Reunion section inside today's edition of *The Goodland Star-News* is a story about Gorda (Hilty) Adelgren, and unfortunately there was a mistake on her daughters married name it should be Shawna Adelgren Dosey. In Adelgren's list of class friends it should be JoAnn Scheopner Charles. These were reporting and editing errors.

☆☆☆☆

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call (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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Patrick from France, 17 yrs. Loves the outdoors and playing soccer. Patrick's dream has been to spend time in America learning about our customs and attending American high school.

Elisa from Italy, 16 yrs. Likes to play tennis, swim, loves to dance. Elisa hopes to play American softball and learn American 'slang' while in the USA.

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