

# Sublette judge makes positive difference

By Ron Wilson

**Director  
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Imagine ... you are a war orphan in South Korea in 1952. Your world is one of hunger, desperation and fear. The priority in your life each day is simply to survive. As grim as that sounds, it was the tragic reality for those young people. But this grim story has a happy ending, as this young orphan would ultimately come to America and build a successful life in rural Kansas.

Tommy Webb has lived this remarkable life. He was the orphan living on the streets in 1952, who was ultimately adopted at the age of six and brought to southwest Kansas. Tommy went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Mid-America Nazarene University in Olathe and a master of science degree in clinical family therapy from Friends University in Wichita. From 1970 to 1974, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He married Judy in 1971 and they have two children.

In 1988, Tom Webb was elected a District Magistrate Judge in southwest Kansas. He has been reelected

in every election since. Today, he speaks eloquently about his personal story of making a positive difference in a negative world and the importance of valuing ourselves and others.

In March 2012, his message will come to northeast Kansas. Judge Webb is the keynote speaker for the 16th annual Kansas State Leadership Seminar to be held on the Kansas State campus in Manhattan on Thursday, March 15.

The theme for this year's seminar is "Leading in Extraordinary Times." Judge Webb will present his compelling personal message which will set the stage for focused sessions on specific skills that leaders can use in different contexts. These include safer campuses and communities, decision-making, systems thinking and planning and preparation.

Other speakers include Kansas State's April Mason, provost and senior vice president; Suzie Fritz, one of the most successful volleyball coaches in Kansas State history; Heather Reed, Kansas State associate dean and director of student life; Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas; Col. William J.

Clark, garrison commander at Fort Riley; and Tom Roberts, assistant dean for recruitment and leadership programs at Kansas State's College of Engineering.

For the first time ever, the 2012 leadership seminar will be video streamed online beyond Manhattan to two additional locations. Following Judge Webb's remarks, each location will have breakout sessions targeted to regional needs. The sessions will be in Olathe and in Great Bend.

The Olathe session will focus on animal health and safety/risk communications. Speakers include Joye Gordon, Kansas State associate professor of mass communications and journalism; Jason Ellis, Kansas State assistant professor of agricultural communication and journalism; and Scott Rusk, director of Pat Roberts Hall at Kansas State, which houses the Biosecurity Research Institute.

The Great Bend session will focus on rural youth retention and recruitment. Speakers include Carolyn Dunn, Stafford County economic development; Jeff Hofaker, Phillips County economic development and president of the Western Kansas

Rural Economic Development Alliance; Mary Jo Taylor, superintendent of USD 349 in Stafford; Elaine Johannes, Kansas State associate professor and extension specialist in youth development; and Leon Atwell, with the Kansas Entrepreneurial Communities Initiative.

The mission of the leadership seminar is to enhance the leadership skills and capacities of the Kansas State community and communities throughout Kansas. Seminar participants will learn practical, hands-on information and tools;

best practices for effective leadership; sources for additional leadership resources; and a connection to others who are working to grow their leadership skills.

They will also hear about the remarkable journey of Judge Tommy Webb, from the streets of Korea to his hometown of Sublette population 1,583 people. Now, that's rural.

For more information on Judge Tommy Webb, go to [www.judgewebb.org](http://www.judgewebb.org). For more information on the seminar or to register,

go to [www.k-state.edu/leadershipseminar](http://www.k-state.edu/leadershipseminar).

Imagine ... you are a war orphan in South Korea in 1952. Your world is one of hunger, desperation and fear. The priority in your life each day is simply to survive. From that grim beginning came a remarkable Kansan whose story is now inspiring people across the nation. We salute Judge Tommy Webb for making a difference with his remarkable message and his remarkable life. It goes beyond my imagination.

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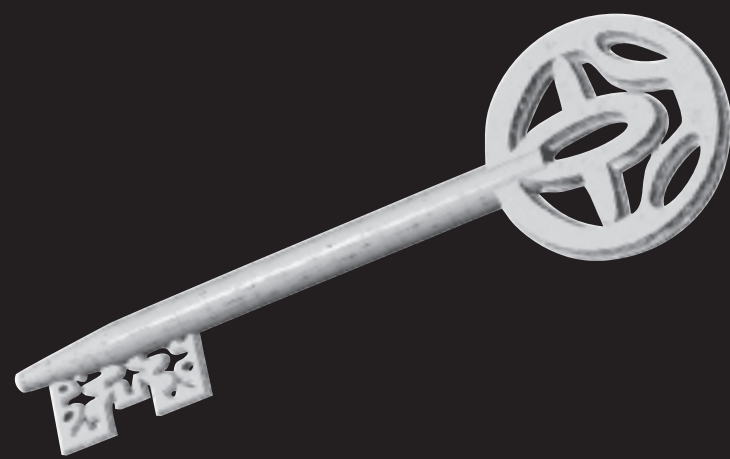
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