

Fort Hays State president touts state jobs program

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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There's a plan in place to create 50,000 new jobs – and Fort Hays State University is smack dab at the center of it.

"We're about to embark on a grand experiment that the governor is leading us on," said President Ed Hammond, who stopped by Oberlin on a tour of northwest Kansas on Friday.

"We're reducing taxes first, growing 50,000 new jobs, and most importantly, educational institutions are making sure they have 50,000 trained people for the workforce when those jobs become available."

The university is ready to rise to the challenge, Mr. Hammond said, because it already offers a high-quality education for a low cost.

The university is the fourth-fastest growing institution in the country, according to an analysis done by U.S. News and World Report, and at Fort Hays, Mr. Hammond said, 94 percent of graduates last May were employed in their field of study or admitted to graduate school.

That's the highest placement percentage in Kansas.

So to create 50,000 new workers for 50,000 new jobs may sound like a tall order, but he says he isn't worried.

"To create these jobs, we aren't just offering a low tuition rate for a high quality education," he said, "we're catering to the needs of business and industry. Just producing graduates doesn't help; we need to produce the ones they need (with the modern training that's in demand)."

"We've put together cooperative



President Hammond

efforts with business and industry. We've networked and gotten advisory groups so they can give us feedback on what they need.

"If we wait until businesses actually need (these workers), then there's a lag between needing employees and getting them there. But we know in advance to build the skill set they want."

Mr. Hammond said that the school will be matching graduates to businesses, so that the students know about the positions before they take them, and even intern at the businesses before they graduate.

"We do a lot of internships," he said. "Employers like them because they bring in three or four people, knowing they'll hire two of them. It's a win-win situation, and good for the students – they graduate with both their education and the experience they need in the field."

The school is poised to succeed in its efforts due to its clever financial

dealings, Mr. Hammond said.

Investing in their programs, and still being able to keep tuition low – the school costs half as much as Kansas State – is no easy feat.

He credits the school's China program, wherein it educates students abroad and in Hays, while raking in millions.

"China paid \$10.3 million last year to educate their students with us," he said. "It cost us about \$5 to \$6 million, so we used that savings to keep tuition low. It's a win for the university because we internationalize our students, and for China because they get an American degree."

Also keeping tuition low are the university's efforts toward energy efficiency, he said.

"We're more efficient than other universities," Mr. Hammond said. "For example, with electricity, we could spend \$2 million a year, but we developed a strategy to reduce it, and next year we'll spend less than \$500,000."

"There's always a demand and a usage charge on your electricity bill, and the demand charge is based on the maximum electricity you use within 15 minutes in a year."

"And you pay this charge every single month. So we put in natural gas generators and monitor the peak usage in August. We turn on our generators and shave off that peak, and we've saved a half million dollars with that."

"Then we're also adding two giant wind generators, and we'll save a million there, so we've taken a \$2 million bill and turned it into \$500,000."

Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*:

Elsewhere: Charlene Hughes, Long Beach, Calif.; Rita Philbrook, Covington, Ga.; Harold Miller, Alma, Ark.

Oregon: James Sawyer, Pendleton; Susan Cotterill, Portland.

Colorado: Jack Roberts, Long-

mont; Mrs. R.E. Sevier, Arvada.

Nebraska: Marsha Seck, North Platte.

McCook: Ray Berndt, Vena Walters.

Kansas: Dixie Westervelt, Robinson; Butch Rittman, Shawnee; Enid Foland, Almena; Marjorie Missing, Wichita; Howard Kuhn, Topeka; Rick Chambers, Hays.

Hoxie: Gayle Bainter, Darlene Robben.

Area: Doug Dempewolf, Norcatur; Barbara Duell, Colby; Norma Ward, Clayton; Martin LaRue, Jennings; Wayne Bosler, Herndon.

Oberlin: Jeff Magers, Jim and Pat Abbey, Karen Bruning, Steve Nelson, Millard Kyte, Ralph LaSalle, Dwayne Jones, Eileene Grose.

Chamber News

By *David Swank, board president*

Black Friday has come and gone. Did you get some good deals? What about customer service? Were you greeted at the door? Shown the item you were interested in? Was the sales person knowledgeable?

Yes? Then – congratulations – you shopped in Oberlin and supported your friends and neighbors!

And another "thank you" for all who attended the Holiday Craft Show at The Gateway on Nov. 24. Fifty vendors filling 66 tables, plus a fantastic show of wind decorations outside, gave the 600 attendees something to look at and shop for. Next year, we'll see if we can get all 70 tables filled.

Other events to look forward to:

R&M Service Center, 150 S. Penn Ave., will sponsor a Coffee Hour at 9 a.m. Friday. Look for the Coffee Hour sign out front, drop in for a "pick-me-up" and hear about the latest news on appliances and other items. And if your business wants to schedule a Coffee Hour in January, please call the Chamber office.

The Oberlin Business Alliance will be sponsoring Ladies Shopping Night from 8 to 10 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12. Here's your chance to get some special gifts for your husband, the kids and friends. Don't miss out.

And for the men, Friday, Dec. 21 is their chance. Labeled "The End of the World Shopping Night," stores

will be open again from 8 to 10 p.m. With only two shopping days until Christmas, this could be your last opportunity to get the perfect gifts. (And, of course, if the Mayans were right, this WILL be your last chance.)

The alliance is also sponsoring a couple of free kids' movies at the Sunflower Cinema this month. The first will be at 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 15. Check the paper for the listing. Another kids' movie is planned right before Christmas.

Finally, the deadline for the January/February table tents is Monday. Call the Chamber office with your information; if no one is in the office, just leave a message.

Midway News

By *Mary Lou Olson*

Sympathy is extended to the family of Lyle Hackney, who died Saturday at his home in Herndon. Funeral services will be at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Christian Church in Atwood with the Rev. Mike McVay officiating.

Sympathy is also extended to the family of Don McWilliams, 91, who died Nov. 23, 2012, at Gove County Medical Center Long Term Care in Quinter. He was a former county agent in Rawlins County and he and his wife, Oneita, and family, attended the Herndon Covenant Church. His wife died on April 10, 2012.

Survivors include four sons, Dennis and Ron, Salina; Rob, Olathe; and Larry, Oklahoma City; 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held Thursday morning at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, rural Studley. Burial was in the church cemetery with military honors by McConnell Air Force Base Honor Guard. Memorials are suggested to Hospice Services or Gideons International, in care of Schmitt Funeral Home, 901 Main Street, Quinter, Kan., 67672.

Covenant Women will sponsor their annual Christmas potluck dinner following morning worship on Sunday at the Herndon Covenant Church. Meat will be furnished. Practice for the Sunday School Christmas program, which will be presented at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 16, will follow the dinner at 1 p.m.

Gary and Mary Ann Erickson returned home Saturday after spend-

ing the past month in Sedona, Ariz.

Covenant Women will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13, at the Herndon Covenant Church to prepare Christmas plates and for a gift exchange of Prayer Sisters.

Esther Noren, Steve and Connie Noren and Michael, and Jimmy and Britta Spitzer, Oberlin; Larry and

Judy Noren, Salina; David Noren, McPherson, and Kirk and Janelle Robson and girls, Ellsworth, were

Thanksgiving Day guests of Ken and Alice Noren of Ellsworth. Andy and Dayna Robson of Bennington were unable to attend since they have a new baby boy, Silas Wesley. He was born Nov. 8, 2012, and weighed 8 pounds, 10 ounces.



A Bright Idea for Investors

Oberlin-Decatur Area Economic Development Corp. is looking for investors to construct a motel in Oberlin.

Come to a public meeting at **7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 13** in rooms 1 and 2 at The Gateway. A contractor, architect, and economic development corp. board is available to answer questions and discuss in detail for the need for a new modern motel. For more info call Greg Lohofener at 475-3459 or Connie Grafel at 475-2901.

Good Samaritan News

By *Whitney True*

With the beginnings of the holiday season underway I have found myself thinking about the real meaning of this special time of year.

In the hustle and bustle of the season it is so easy to get wrapped up in the gift giving, parties and the secular celebration of it all.

One of the most wonderful parts of working at the Good Sam is the daily conversations I have with residents about their faith.

So many residents are excited to share their belief and hope in the Lord.

Join us as we work to keep the celebration of this hope centered in our minds and hearts!

We have a fun-filled month ahead and would like to invite everyone to participate!

Please contact the center, 475-2245, if you are interested in receiving the monthly schedule.

This week we had many wonderful visitors including: Max Carman

for **Myrtle Waldo**. Marilyn Horn for **Myrtle Ross**. Cheryl Miller for **Loren Schrock**.

Gerald Benda for **Eulaine Benda**. Eunice Martin for **Glenn Martin**. Reva Marshall and Penny Fringer for **Dorothy Hunt**. Susie Sabatka (Atwood) for **Vera Kacirek**.

Gene Leitner for **Marcella Leitner**. Pat Fringer and Reta Barratt for **Margaret Vacura**. Nadine Tacha (Jennings) for **Galen Tacha**.

Connie Simmonson for **Amy Rehm**. Frank and Mert McEvoy for **Lucy Schissler**. Jeanie May for **Elwood May**.

Bernice Martin and Pat Wurm for **Louise Pollnow**. Ralph Unger for **Earl Brown** and **Margaret Vacura**.

Martin and Evelyn May for **Elwood May**. **Leona Helmkamp** and **Marcella Leitner**. Helen Brooks for **Ethel Nemeth**.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

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