

2017 KRWA Annual Conference Review



The Key to Good Service
KRWA's 50th Annual Conference & Exhibition

KNOWLEDGE 2017
EXPERIENCE
& You . . .



The Kansas Rural Water Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition is the Midwest's largest; it's a highly respected event as witnessed by the attendance and record number of exhibitors. It was held March 28 - 30 at the Century II Convention Center in Wichita. The total registration was 2,280 people. The event provided something for everyone, and kept attendees interested. This is the reason that the KRWA conference has the reputation as being one of the best water and wastewater conferences in America. Representatives came from 312 cities and 176 rural water districts. Registrations were from 34 states and the countries of Finland and the United Kingdom.

The 2017 conference also marked 50 years of conference planning by KRWA. The conference featured a total of 57 training sessions with more than 60 presenters being involved. Nearly 225 water and wastewater operators took the operator certification exam on Thursday, March 30. Tuesday, March 28, was a full day of training on water for Small System through Class IV for exam preparation. KRWA appreciates the staff at KDHE for their extra efforts in helping provide special training for wastewater operators on Thursday morning, March 30 as preparation courses to the exam.

Who attended?

In 2017, registrants came from 312 cities and 176 rural water districts or other public water or wastewater systems.

The attendance breakdown is as follows:

- ◆ Operators: 1,011
- ◆ Administrative Staff: 123
- ◆ Board/Council Members: 133
- ◆ Industry: 875
- ◆ Agency: 52

There were 196 different exhibitors; they filled all 361 available booth spaces in EXPO Hall. Manufacturers' representatives and exhibitors registered from 34 states, and the countries of Finland and the United Kingdom.

While this issue summarizes the 2017 conference, initial plans are already underway for 2018. For starters, EXPO

Hall will have additional booths in 2018 taking the total to 365 spaces. As of June 1, nearly 200 spaces have already been reserved. A review of the conference continues on the next pages.

Mark your calendars for the 2018 KRWA Conference at the Century II Convention Center in Wichita. The dates are March 27-29, 2018.



Pre-conference Sessions

Leadership Doesn't Just Mean Being the Boss

Kansas Leadership Center Conference Session Encourages Leadership at All Levels

By Sarah Green

There's no question that rural water districts often face tough challenges, including maintaining aging infrastructure, navigating federal regulations, and finding good workers.

One session at the 2017 Kansas Rural Water Association Annual Conference provided leadership skills to address those challenges.

Water district board members, local elected officials and staff members attended the session, which was facilitated by staff from the Kansas Leadership Center.

The leadership center, based in Wichita, promotes "adaptive leadership," which focuses on people actively exercising leadership on tough issues, regardless of their position of authority.

"It's all about purpose – and you've got to have one," said Ron Alexander, who co-facilitated the session.

Patty Clark, vice-president of the leadership center and a former state director for USDA Rural Development, shared a cautionary tale about the lack of leadership in Dixon, Ill., a small town in Illinois best known as the childhood home of President Ronald Reagan.

Local elected officials and others trusted the city clerk without question, Clark said, even after noticing that her extravagant lifestyle didn't match her public service salary.

They later discovered that the administrator had embezzled \$53 million from the city.

"Ronald Reagan himself said, 'trust, but verify,'" Clark said. "Because of the nature of rural communities, they trusted the city clerk, but did not verify her actions."

Having a purpose to uphold the public's interest could look like creating checks and balances for procedures, Clark said, and

"That's leadership," she said. "You have to make sure those relationships are in place."

Some of the challenges mentioned by those attending the session included:

- ◆ Implementing new technology
- ◆ Disagreements between family members involved in rural water systems
- ◆ Transitions to new board and staff members
- ◆ Making decisions about what is "fair" when it comes to water distribution and developing rates

It's not always easy to address those challenges, because of other factors at play, the attendees noted – like



completing priorities, different personalities, financial challenges, and a lack of common knowledge between different people working on the same problem.

The challenges are too big for any one person to overcome, Alexander and Clark said – so leadership can become an act of mobilizing other people to do hard work.

Sometimes, they noted, it means working "across factions," or with others who have different perspectives and even different outcomes.

And sometimes, they said, it means keeping those working relationships going for a long time, even when it's difficult.

Sharing knowledge with younger people is one place to start, Alexander said.

"If we are going to make progress on big issues like water in this state, we are going to need people at the table for a long time," he said. "It's not one-and-done."

According to the leadership center's philosophy, a "leader" isn't always the boss – anyone can make choices and try things no matter if they are the authority figure or not. There were 47 people who attended this session.

Comments by two attendees of the session . .

"There's a difference between management and leadership, and there's a difference between management and authority," Clark said.

Marilyn Murphy, the water superintendent and mayor of Isabel, KS said she could use what she learned when she returned to work – particularly in tough situations with unhappy customers, who she'd like to approach differently from now on.

"I think anything that helps you improve as a leader or as a person is good," she said. "I liked the concept that leadership doesn't necessarily equate to authority, and that anyone can be a leader. I've seen people who have authority who aren't leaders."

As a new board member and a former employee of Atchison County Consolidated RWD 5, Adam Potts said he found useful the conversations about leadership as it relates to the current and coming generational transition of younger people stepping into positions of authority that have often been held by older people who have been doing the work for decades.

"I see a lot of people here with a lot of experience," he said. "However, experience and knowledge does not always bring innovation. So I think there are a lot of things that I see that (older people) don't necessarily see as problems. It helps me see what they are seeing as problems. And I want to give them the perspective from younger eyes, with younger ideas."



Eight Additional Preconference Sessions Attended by 856 People

Engineers' Forum for Water and Wastewater Systems

Attendance: 38

USDA Rural Development (USDA RD) is a major funding agency for rural water districts and smaller cities in Kansas for both water and wastewater programs as well as various other community facilities. This "Engineers' Forum" focused on the engineering and environmental elements of an application for funding. The presentations included updates on the electronic PER project and implementation of the new environmental regulations. "RD Apply", the new web-based system for submitting a funding application to USDA RD was demonstrated. Attending were applicants, engineers, environmental consultants and other professionals who were in the process of applying for USDA RD funding. Presenters included:

- ◆ Shane Hastings, USDA Rural Development, Topeka, KS
- ◆ Kellie Kubena, USDA Rural Development, Washington, D.C.
- ◆ Randy Stone, USDA Rural Development, Topeka, KS
- ◆ Deb Corr, RD Architect, Rural Development, Washington, D.C.
- ◆ Richard Boyles, USDA Rural Development, Newton, KS

Water System Components, Operations and Technology Updates

Attendance: 247

Everyone attending this session left with new information. The session was a benefit to both new and experienced operators and others interested in learning about the components required to operate quality water systems. This session showed new ways of repairing, operating and maintaining systems to ensure that the best service possible is provided to customers. Presenters discussed a multitude of topics including valves and valve insertion, maintenance and new technologies with metering. Presenters included:

- ◆ Jason Shelby, Mueller Company, Kansas City, MO
- ◆ Bradley Brush, Neptune Meters, Kansas City, MO
- ◆ Allan Strobl, Municipal Supply, Inc., Lincoln, NE
- ◆ Bob Hennig, Municipal Pipe Services, Hastings, NE
- ◆ Owen Vore, Tyler Union

Wastewater Collection Systems

Attendance: 185

What helps communities to find cost-effective and long-term methods to managing their aging wastewater system? Often, it's through training such as was provided at the 2017 KRWAs conference. This session discussed preventative maintenance programs, the basics of lift stations, CCTV data collection, repairs and rehabilitation and financing to sustain the infrastructures. Presenters included:

- ◆ Melinda Lambert, Mayer Specialty Services, LLC, Goddard, KS
- ◆ Ed Hickman, Hickman Environmental Service, Leon, KS
- ◆ Rose Mary Saunders, Ranson Financial Consultants, LLC, Wichita, KS

City Clerks' Workshop

Attendance: 35

"Knowledge, Experience, and You – the KEY to Good Service" was theme then of the 2017 conference. This workshop for city clerks was also a key for those attending in learning various professionalism strategies for local city clerk offices. The topics ranged from methods of gathering feedback to creativity in problem-solving. Technological skills, workflows, software tools and methods of gathering feedback were discussed. Clerks participated in lively discussions with many questions and answers and exchanges of ideas on daily workflow issues. Facilitators were Kimberly Everley, city of McLouth and Doris Fritz, city of Riley. The presenter was:

- ◆ Jen Sharp, Jenssharp.com, Ottawa, KS





Ground Water and Wells: Understanding the Relationship of Aquifers, Well Design, Maintenance and Water Quality

Attendance: 38

This pre-conference session reviewed the different aquifers that have been successfully developed in Kansas by public water systems. The discussions focused important topics such as well site selection, test well drilling, aquifer investigations and potential regional impacts. KDHE's well design and well site standards regarding the selection and type and material of the well casing and screen, the installation and vertical placement of the casing and screen, gravel pack selection, grouting of the annular space and well development were reviewed. Spacing regulations and source water protection strategies for new and existing well fields, which includes the KDHE required sanitary protection easement or ownership requirement, and other optional protection strategies were discussed. Presenters at this session were:

- ◆ Ned Marks, L.G., Terrane Resources Company, Stafford, KS
- ◆ Brad Vincent, L.G., Ground Water Associates, Goddard, KS

RWD Office Forum

Attendance: 38

There's never a dull moment at a RWD Office Forum. Facilitators Sharon Dwyer, Douglas RWD 5 and Patricia Shaffer, Butler RWD 5, took surveys of key topics that those attending wanted to make sure were covered in the presentations. Who wants to talk about all this new lead and copper rule implementation? Who has problems with delinquent accounts and forfeiture of benefit units? How do you work with a board to establish improvements to policies? The main topics were budgeting -- how and why to prepare a budget. On board reporting, what information is provided to the board to help them better understand the financial condition of the district? Are the rates adequate? And a favorite topic -- overtime and taxes! Those attending learned what is considered compensation and what is not. Compliance with paying overtime was another area of discussion. Presenters included:

- ◆ Monica Wurtz, Kansas Rural Water Association, Aurora, KS
- ◆ Michael D. Peroo, CPA, Michael Peroo Accounting, Overland Park KS

Water Operator Forum

Attendance: 180

For the past several years, KRWA's conference has included a water and a wastewater operator forum to help operators prepare for the certification exams. The session offers water operators an excellent opportunity to refresh and review prior to taking the certification exam. And those operators already certified also find this session very informative. KRWA does not know nor is KRWA allowed to see any certification exam so KRWA attempts to formulate training as it best can on these topics: chlorination concepts (free vs. combined, etc.); chlorine residual monitoring; sample collection procedures (bacteriological, THM/HAA5, lead and copper, etc.); well operation and maintenance, troubleshooting problems; knowledge of water quality issues; a regulatory update/Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs); distribution system operation, including leak detection, water line disinfection procedures, water loss, storage tanks, etc.

Presenters were:

- ◆ Pat McCool, Kansas Rural Water Association, Wichita, KS
- ◆ Delbert Zerr, Kansas Rural Water Association, Manhattan, KS

Microbiological Monitoring of Wastewater Treatment Processes

Attendance: 85

Optimizing wastewater treatment was the objective of this presentation. Those attending included operators, lab personnel and consultants and no one left without learning something. The training taught the wastewater professional to learn how to identify the microorganisms that are favorable to the activated sludge treatment process and how to maintain the proper environment for their growth. Understanding the methods for controlling, identifying and monitoring microorganisms in biological phosphorus and nitrogen removal systems was another focus of the presentation. How to diagnose treatment system problems based on the microbiology of the system was another area of extensive discussion. Best of all, the instructor

presented simple and practical step-by-step laboratory procedures for tracking, identifying and diagnosing conditions in the wastewater treatment system environment. The presenter was:

- ◆ Toni Glymph-Martin, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago





17th Annual Attorneys Forum Attended by 36 Attorneys

The 17th Annual Attorneys' Forum was held on Tuesday, March 27 at the 2017 KRWA Conference. This Forum is appreciated by attorneys as it provides an opportunity to share their experiences concerning water and wastewater utility legal matters, regulatory issues and water law. This Forum also provided 6.5 hours of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit. Topics and presenters included the following:

- *Public Water Supply Regulation After Flint*, by Cathy Tucker-Vogel, Section Chief, Public Water Supply Section, Kansas Department of Health & Environment, Topeka, KS



- *The Course of an Ethics Complaint* by Deborah Hughes, Office of the Disciplinary Administrator, Topeka, KS
- *Administrative Hearings Under the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act (KAPA)* by Michele L. Tunnell, Administrative Law Judge, Kansas Office of Administrative Hearings, Topeka, KS

After lunch, a Roundtable discussion was held on these topics: Territory Litigation Update (*Eudora v. Douglas RWD 4*); RWDs, PWWSDs and KDOT Forced Relocation; RWD Elections and Voting; KORA Exceptions; Collecting a Debt from a Governmental Entity; Source Water Protection.

At 2 p.m., Louis Funk, Bartlett & West, Topeka, KS presented on the topic, "Valuing a Water System: The Sum of Its Parts."

From 3 p.m. to 4:15, a second roundtable discussion took place. Topics during this time period included: FLSA Update; On-Call Pay; The ACA and Local Government; Reserving RWD Benefit Units; Transfer of RWD Benefit Units; ROW Acquisition/RWD Easements; Conceal/Carry by Public Employees; Property Tax Exemptions.

The Forum was organized and facilitated by Gary Hanson, Stumbo Hanson, LLP, Topeka, KS. There were 36 attorneys in attendance.

The 2017 "Almost 5K-KRWA Conference Run/Walk"

The 2017 "Almost 5K-KRWA Conference Run/Walk"

And they're off! It's 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 and it's the start of the 5th annual "Almost 5K-KRWA Conference Run/Walk". It was a moderately cool morning, unlike a couple of past runs when the temperature has been low.

KRWA's Mark Thomas was challenged in explaining the detours that were necessary because of downtown construction projects in Wichita. The same construction project on the River Walk from 2016 re-routed the usual course that normally keeps participants off the busy Wichita streets. Just like in 2016, everyone had to cross two intersections. Thankfully no one was injured in a traffic accident and no one became lost.

Shane Hughes of HD Supply Waterworks took home 1st place in the men's division. His time was 18:52 on the 2.8 mile course. Clint White from the City of Olathe



earned 2nd place with a time of 22:02. Lisa Chesnel of USDA Rural Development earned 1st place in the ladies' division at 36:36. Linda Latham with the City of Winona was second in the ladies' division with a time of 40:42.

Hot chocolate with donuts, bagels and fresh fruit was enjoyed by the runners as they returned to Century II.

Board President Paul Froelich Opens 2017 Conference



"Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this 2017 Annual Conference & Exhibition of the Kansas Rural Water Association.

"I am proud to stand before you as President of the Association but I am more proud that we live to honor the theme of this year's conference – 'Knowledge, Experience and You – The KEY To Good Service!' I do hope the proceedings of this year's conference are the key to helping you open many new doors. The technical program that has been assembled and the 361 exhibit spaces in EXPO Hall provide resources and services that I hope you will learn from.

"I want to encourage all who are attending to take what you can learn during this conference back to your city or water system, your engineering firm, your agency, your company – and share it as well as to encourage all members of water and wastewater systems to attend future training events as well as future conferences. It does not matter the size of the utility that you represent or the agency, or company. All of us, from engineers, contractors, funding agencies, operators, managers, city council members and RWD directors – everyone needs to work together for the betterment of our systems. Never forget that the Small System operator is just as important as a Class IV operator.

"Another matter that has made so much news in recent months is what has been a crisis in Flint, Mich. The only reason for such a calamity is that many people failed. That sort of event should never have happened; it's given a bad name to water systems across the country and it's raised unnecessary alarm in the minds of many customers. Further it has caused for an increase in regulations that in most cases were not needed. It's so very regrettable that everyone now has to deal with the consequences of what appears to be near criminal, irresponsible operation in Flint.

"On a brighter note, I cannot adequately express our appreciation for the participation of 'The Mayberry Deputy' at this year's conference. 'The Deputy' will be here in a short time with the keynote address. I hope that you enjoyed David Browning's issuances of citations during last night's 'Meet & Greet'. He is a professional in every manner of speaking – and he will be speaking to you here real soon; we are so pleased to have him return.



Paul Froelich, President KRWA

"Last, I am proud of the Kansas Rural Water Association. The staff does a remarkable job. Your Association is financially strong and is highly respected across America. That's because of everyone's commitment to the Association's mission statement which is to 'Provide education and leadership necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Kansas' water and wastewater utilities.

"Thank you for being part of KRWA; thank you for being part of this conference; make it the best it can be for you."



Butler Headliners Give Rousing Start to KRWA Conference

The *Headliners* from Butler Community College have been a regular at KRWA's opening session for nearly 15 years. Their performances are one-of-a-kind. Words like "inspiring", "spectacular" and "amazing" are afforded to them by conference-goers. Their 30-minute performance in 2017 was all that and more.

This high level show choir has won national acclaim in a variety of competitions as has director Valerie Lippoldt Mack. Valerie Lippoldt Mack, music and dance instructor at Butler Community College in El Dorado, Kan. has gained experience and recognition as a music educator and professional choreographer throughout the United States. Her choreography has been featured at Carnegie Hall, Disney World, national ACDA conventions and MENC workshops, the Miss America pageant and various national showchoir competitions and festivals around the country. Joining Lippoldt Mack is music director Joel Knudsen and a five-piece combo. Knudsen has been an instructor of music at Butler since 1998. He teaches First Year Music Theory and Applied Piano, along with other music courses. Mr. Knudsen leads a five-piece combo that accompanies *The Headliners*. He also accompanies Chamber Singers, Concert Choir and Jazz Band. In addition, Mr. Knudsen has been the pianist for the Wichita Symphony since 1984, and maintains an active private studio of piano students.



The Headliners consists of 36 singers/dancers. Two other students serve as stage manager and sound manager. Members must maintain a minimum grade point average to participate in the group. Many of the group's members go on after they graduate from Butler Community College to become performers for the Walt Disney theme parks, Worlds of Fun, own their own dance studios, direct church and community choirs, or become doctors, lawyers and teachers.



"Hair" – the title song to the 1968 musical *Hair*.

There is no such thing as a "repeat show" by *The Headliners*. "No one could ask for more energy and enthusiasm from a group of young people at 8:30 on a Wednesday morning in Wichita, Kansas," said Paul Froelich, President of the KRWA board of directors.

In appreciation, KRWA again provided a \$3,000 stipend to *The Headliners* in 2017.



David Browning Delivers the “KEY” Message –

Knowledge, Experience & You!



The 2017 KRWA conference was an encore event for David Browning. Browning made his first appearance at the 2016 conference. Popular demand said, “Bring him back!” Browning was as thrilled as were the 2017 conference attendees.

Best described as a multi-faceted entertainer, Browning's improvisational talent and his characterization of “The Mayberry Deputy” were all on display to laughter and applause of conference-goers. He sang while King Midas and the Mufflers played rock n' roll tunes, he mingled with the crowd telling jokes and issuing fun citations, and was there early in the morning to greet the very first who were in line for coffee, donuts, muffins, bagels and other ala carte items.



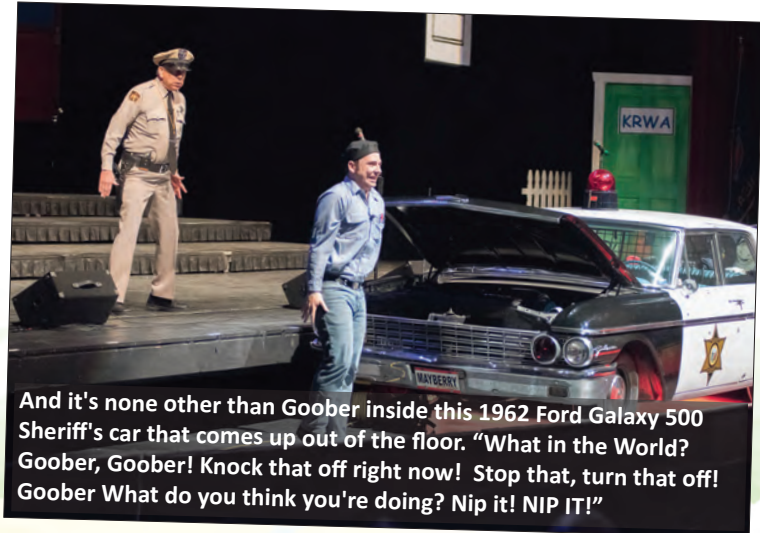
The Mayberry Deputy,
David Browning

Playing the role of “The Mayberry Deputy” is the most noted of his characters. He began that character in 1988 when a friend of Browning hired “The Dillards”, known to watchers of “The Andy Griffith Show” as the “Darling Boys”, to play bluegrass music in Bristol,

Tennessee. Browning, who started out in community theatre, put together a “Barney Fife” type act based on a sense of recall (since Browning has seen and remembers nearly all the Mayberry shows) which made that first performance a hit. Browning discovered that he could make a statement as David Browning that was not funny at all but the same statement made in uniform as “The Mayberry Deputy” had audiences falling out of their seats.

Soon after, Browning was asked by “The Andy Griffith Show” Rerun Watchers Club (TAGSRWC) to perform at a Mayberry Reunion held at Opryland in Nashville, Tennessee. TAGSRWC founder, Jim Clark, saw Browning's act and began mentioning his name across the country. Browning has been embraced as “The Mayberry Deputy” by small and large groups in 35 states with continued referrals and requests wherever he goes.

Browning traveled to Nashville to appear in Confederate Railroad's video, “Elvis & Andy.” He feels that video is as good to an actor as a book is to an author. Browning has also appeared with many of the original stars of “The Andy Griffith Show.” Another connection to country music is



And it's none other than Goober inside this 1962 Ford Galaxy 500 Sheriff's car that comes up out of the floor. “What in the World? Goober, Goober! Knock that off right now! Stop that, turn that off! Goober What do you think you're doing? Nip it! NIP IT!”

Browning's appearance at the “60 Million Sales Party” thrown for music's all-time sales leader, Garth Brooks.

People are entertained and enlightened by “The Mayberry Deputy” character because it reminds them of a time gone by. “We live in a world where people are searching for their own Mayberry,” Browning says. “I value this character for what it gives people today . . . a laugh, a lift and memories.”

Browning's message during the KRWA keynote zeroed home on the word “UNLOCK”. Browning said:

“U is for Usefulness. We each need to feel useful to others.
“N is for Needs – at the same time our needs must be met.
“L is for Love. Everything on this earth requires love of some kind.

“O is for Openness. Are we the same people behind closed door as we are when with others?

“C is for Civility. Are we civil toward one another or do we consider the words first?

“K is for Kindness. We have developed a relationship with others in our lives and with ourselves.”



EXPO Hall Provides Information, Creates Competition

The 2017 KRWA Conference & Exhibition featured the largest displays of products and services for the water and wastewater utilities assembled in one location in Kansas. A total of 361 exhibit spaces filled the 93,000 square feet of EXPO Hall at the Century II Convention Center. State and federal agencies joined suppliers, manufacturers, consultants and other service providers to introduce new technologies and provide information on equipment, software and services. Backhoes, trenchers, utility trucks, tools, computer software, financial services – you name it and those industries were represented.

KRWA's 2018 conference EXPO Hall floor plan has already been announced and will be expanded to 365 exhibits. Nearly 200 spaces have already been reserved by June 1. The KRWA Conference & Exhibition will continue to grow because it provides good value in a down-home fashion. It's like a huge family reunion, where people learn about new products and services, exchange ideas, do business, make new friends and create lasting relationships.

Thanks to all the exhibitors for their participation and support. These pages show a few of the photos taken during the show.

The KRWA conference offers opportunities for attendees to visit with and learn from agencies, engineers and suppliers with goods and services.



Open the Doors!



Jessi Kerchal and Darla Waymaster with Salina Supply



Kevin Crippen with Mayer Specialty Services and Alan Brown, City of Riley, visit about wastewater system maintenance



Dennis Ashcraft with City of Holton and Public Wholesale District 18 sizes up this new back hoe



Jake Dugger with SUEZ Utility Group and Bradley Brush with Neptune Technology Group have a lively debate going



Checking out the interior of the street sweeper on display by Truck Component Services



Jeff Washmon and Austin Myers, City of Sterling visit with Curtis Kilian of Salina Supply Company



Hospitality Area in Expo Hall was always busy





Tuesday Nite's Meet & Greet Rocks

KRWA's conference opener is one big shindig! How else do you describe two large halls at Century II filled with the following:

1. Seating for 1,200 to enjoy a great barbecue meal and desert bar
2. Eight Midway game trailers -- from "Kentucky Derby" to "The Exterminator"
3. A Midway amusement ride
4. Kansas oldest Rock 'n Roll band on stage -- it's King Midas and The Mufflers
5. Casino games
6. Beverage trailer and beverage stations
7. Two caricaturists
8. An oxygen bar
9. Numerous table top games
10. Video car racing
11. Laser skeet shooting
12. Instant photo shoot
13. More than \$10,000 in door prizes!

This Tuesday evening event is a one-of-a-kind opener that was attended by nearly 1,500 people. There was something for everyone, all night long. And at 9:45, it was time to turn in the tickets won at the various venues for drawings of the prizes that filled a stage. Thanks again to The Mayberry Deputy for his help in drawing names and delivering the prizes.

To say the least, a good time was had by all!



Foosball - your hand must be quicker than your eye.



The Exterminator - shoot 'em up!



"King Midas and the Mufflers" rocked away the night.



It's time for barbeque.



March madness, KRWAs 2017.



No cheating in this casino. Everyone wins!



Laser Skeet Shoot takes a steady eye.



Bill Gay, Johnson RWD 7 receives one of the \$250 Visa Gift Cards. Thanks, Deputy!

Tuesday Night Meet & Greet Prize Winners

Prize	Winner	Represents
SaluSpa Hot Tub	Renee Edmonds	Douglas RWD 3
Small Quilt	Marsha Fleming	Kansas Dept. Health & Env.
KitchenAid 4.5 qt Mixer-White	Amy Tucker	City of Mulberry
Metal "Welcome" Sign	Michelle Leddy	Sumner RWD 5
Igloo Portable Countertop Ice Maker	Kris Brown	Butler RWD 5
Folding Wagon W/ Canopy	Jalayne Turner	Leavenworth RWD 7
Cuisinart Soft Serve Ice Cream Maker	Phill Jeanneret	Lyon RWD 3
Zero Gravity Chairs Patio Chairs	Jake Kowalewski	American Water MSG
Mainstays Patio Loveseat Bench	Michael Young	City of Lyons
Keurig OfficePRO Brewing System	Tye Gordon	City of Gardner
Cuisinart Cordless Hand Blender	Michael Young	City of Lyons
Cuisinart 5-n-1 Griller/Waffle Maker	Marcy Johnson	Cloud RWD 1
Blue Rhino LP Gas Outdoor Fireplace	Michael Riese	City of Hoisington
Dyson Bagless Cordless Vacuum	Jennifer Byarlay	Riley RWD 1
Apple iPad Mini 4 32GB Wifi	Ken McNickle	Public Wholesale 4
Power Pressure XL Cooker	John Eaves	Tank Connection
NuWave Air Fryer w Accessory Kit	Len Lehmann	KPERS 457
Nostalgia Margarita & Frozen Drink Machine	Sandy Benoit	Rooks RWD 3
Farberware 25L Digital Toaster Oven	Allen Markley	Douglas RWD 2
Suncast Resin Wicker Cooler	Jalayne Turner	Leavenworth RWD 7
Great Northern Red Popcorn Popper	Christina Burns	City of Lakin
VIZIO D43" LED Smart HDTV	John Musick	Franklin RWD 5
Pioneer Woman 10-PC Cookware Set	Kyla Schlabach	Washington RWD 1
Nixplay Edge 8-Inch Digital Photo Frame	Julie Winter	Riley County Public Works
GoPro HERO5 Accessory KIT Bundle	Marshall Rhyne	Geary County Public Works
TEC.BEAN Game Camera	Mike Todd	City of Scott City
XBOX Gaming System	Alex Budd	City of Dighton
Smart Rod Fishing Rod (by Ed Hope)	Paul Strathman	Nemaha RWD 3
Smart Rod Fishing Rod (by Ed Hope)	Michael Mabrey	City of Edgerton
Meter Lamp (donated by Gary Armentrout)	Judy Price	City of Harveyville
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Ralph Ohl	Sumner RWD 5
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Casey Starnes	City of Haysville
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Dominic Grier	City of Hiawatha
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Paul Froelich	City of Enterprise / KRWA
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Jane Edmonds	Douglas RWD 3
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Bill Gay	Johnson RWD 7
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Sandy Benoit	Rooks RWD 3
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Charlie Vieselmeyer	Republic RWD 2
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Norma Braun	Rooks RWD 3
\$250 Visa Gift Card	Morris Lewis	Sedgwick RWD 2



It's about time for prize drawings!



By Sarah Green

Wednesday Luncheon

Rural Water Systems Commended for Their Vision . . .

Kansas Water Office Director Tracy Streeter Lauds Water Systems for Planning, Cooperation and Service

When it comes to water planning, rural water systems in Kansas are ahead of the game, the director of the Kansas Water Office reported.

Tracy Streeter spoke during the Wednesday Luncheon of the Kansas Rural Water Association's 2017 Annual Conference, providing an update on Gov. Sam Brownback's 50-Year Water Plan. More than 1,200 people were in attendance at the luncheon.

The State of Kansas has been working for the past three years on the long-range plan, Streeter said, a timeframe that isn't "revolutionary" to those who work with rural water systems.

"You were doing 50-year plans for your water supplies long before we came along and decided to develop one statewide," he said.

Streeter, who said he has worked in state government for 31 years, praised the longevity of many in the audience for their decades of service in their communities, and also the work happening to transition rural water systems to the next generation.

"The encouraging thing is that when I look around the audience, I see a lot of young people," he said. "There's going to be a lot of knowledge and experience that leaves state government and the federal government, water supplies and rural water districts, so it's good to see kind of the changing of the guard here, training the new, and getting exposure to the younger folks, because that's always the concern when you start seeing that institutional knowledge getting ready to walk out the door, and you go, oh my gosh, what are we going to do?"

Streeter reminded the audience of the landscape just a few years ago, when Gov. Brownback asked the Kansas Water

Office and the Kansas Department of Agriculture to develop a 50-year "vision" for water in Kansas.

"You have to keep in mind that three-and-a-half years ago, we were coming out of a pretty historic drought," Streeter said. "It was not the drought of record in Kansas, but it was a pretty historic drought. If you'll remember in 2012, all 105 counties, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, were in a D-4, or exceptional drought.

"We were seeing the aquifer decline, as it continues to, but at a much faster pace. That's all they have for water in Western Kansas, and Mother Nature did not help them out at all. Our reservoirs were starting to see diminished capacity, especially the ones that are silting in, and John Redmond Reservoir in Coffey County has been our poster child for that.

"We started seeing vulnerabilities all over the state, and we knew we weren't going to be capable of making 10 years, let alone 50."

The water vision focuses on the sources of water in Kansas, Streeter said – groundwater, surface water, raw water.

"You guys are at the other end of food chain," he told the audience. "You're delivering treated water to your customers."

Streeter commended the communities that had banded together to build regional water systems, through Public Wholesale Water Supply Districts or other arrangements.

Hillsdale Reservoir, he said, had been the source of great concern. The lake in eastern Kansas is one of the newest U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reservoirs, but also one of the first to have its water almost fully allocated to local users.

Hillsdale, which is south of the Kansas City metro area, serves communities that

are projected to grow in coming years, Streeter said, assisted by such new developments such as the intermodal facility near Gardner.

"It was very daunting to me," he said. "How in the world do you decide who's going to get that last drop of water out of Hillsdale?"

The local communities and water systems served by the lake solved the problem, Streeter said, when they requested the ability to make those decisions themselves, which resulted in the formation of the Hillsdale Area Water Cooperative.

"They are going to decide collectively how to best utilize that water," he said. "Now the ball is in their court, and they have a reliable source of water for the future."

At the state level, representatives from agencies such as the Kansas Department of Commerce, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the state office of U. S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, have come together to sign a memorandum of understanding to work together on local water projects.

"You get the maximum incentive when you're working that tightly together," Streeter said.

He also noted the investment of public dollars into local projects. The Community Development Block Grant program, administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce, recently awarded more than \$5 million to 14 Kansas communities for water and wastewater system projects.

Those 14 communities will contribute a combined \$24.8 million to those projects.

"Talk about having a long-term vision and an investment in your water supply," Streeter said. "These communities are already doing that."



Tracy Streeter, Kansas Water Office

Streeter also gave examples of communities that came together in times of great need. The March 2017 Starbuck Fire in south-central Kansas hampered local infrastructure, including the water supply for the city of Englewood in Clark County, which dropped significantly because of the need for water to fight the fires.

And in Neodesha, Streeter said, people worked around the clock last year after an explosion at an aerosol plant days before Thanksgiving.

Between the massive need for water to fight the fire to keep it from spreading, and contamination in the Verdigris River, the local responders worked around the clock to test the water and to find a solution to the water supply challenges for Neodesha and nearby communities such as Independence and Coffeyville.

State, federal, regional and local partners all came together to solve the problem, he said.

"It was gratifying experience for me to be a part of that, and to see all those folks do their job," Streeter said.

In that same spirit, there are "champions" who are volunteering to tackle long-term water challenges, Streeter said, such as the northwestern Kansas producers who have come together to form a Local Enhanced Management Area, or LEMA, which, along with Water Conservation Areas, are models being explored in other parts in western Kansas.

A dairy processing facility near Garden City is just one in the state that is extracting water from milk, and shipping the dry milk powder off for further processing, he said. The city will use some of the water to irrigate its sport fields.

Addressing silting reservoirs is another priority going forward, Streeter said. A \$20 million project to dredge silt from the bottom of John Redmond Reservoir near Burlington has been completed, resulting in 2,000 acre-feet of storage reclaimed in the reservoir. Studies continue to find the most effective ways to remove silt in other reservoirs in the state, he said.

"I don't see us building more lakes in the future," he said. "I see us taking care of what we've got."

Part of that caretaking may come in the increased investment in stabilizing the state's streambanks, preventing silt from entering the reservoirs in the first place.

"The big bang for our buck is doing watershed work above the lakes," Streeter said.

One farm in north central Kansas lost 14 acres of farmland into the Little Blue River and, consequently, into Tuttle Creek Reservoir, during the 1993 floods. After a project to fix up the riverbanks in 1995, Streeter said, the bank "hasn't moved one inch."

Fourteen acres of farmland equals about 660,000 tons of soil, Streeter said, which equals about 400 acre-feet of storage in Tuttle Creek Reservoir. Removing that volume of silt, at prices used for the John Redmond dredging project, would cost \$4.5 million.

The project to stabilize the riverbank in that location cost \$210,000.

"The return on our investment is about 20-1," Streeter said.

Funding for water projects continues to be a hot topic for the Kansas Water Authority and the agencies involved in the Governor's Water Vision. A blue-ribbon task force of legislators and representatives from various sectors,

including KRWA, convened in 2016 to determine various sources of funding.

Taxing irrigators wasn't popular, Streeter said, nor an increase in fertilizer taxes or electric bills. Neither was a proposal that would levy a \$0.04 tax on bottles of water.

The proposal that garnered the most support was to redirect 1/10 of the state's sales tax revenue toward water projects, he said. It wouldn't increase taxes, but dedicate to water projects \$43 million currently going into state coffers. The strategy is used in neighboring states, including Iowa and Missouri, Streeter said.

"The problem is that in this budget crisis, you'd be making their problems \$43 million worse," he said. "The first thing they asked us is how we would replace that \$43 million."

Legislators are unlikely to pass either fee increases or the sales tax initiative in 2017, Streeter said.

Instead, the focus will return to resuming transfers from the State General Fund and from the economic development fund supported by lottery revenues. The transfers, required by statute, have not been made during the last several years, as legislators have scrambled to fill widespread budget gaps.

"I've been optimistic, even in this horrible budget crisis, that they will start to get the ball rolling for sustainable funding for the state water plan," Streeter said.

Policymakers are more educated on water issues than in recent memory, he said, thanks to groups such as the KRWA.

But perhaps water system operators are doing too good of a job, because the public does not always see the need for change.

"Kansans, by and large, still take water for granted," Streeter said. "Part of the reason they take it for granted is that you guys do such a fabulous job that they never run out of water, even in a disaster or a crisis. They turn it on, and it's always there."



Cast of “Life Could Be a Dream” Brings Down the House

The 2017 KRWA conference provided another fabulous entertainment following the Wednesday evening awards presentation. It was the musical, “Life Could Be a Dream”. The show was produced by The Forum Theatre, and directed by Kathryn Hauptman.

Set in 1960, its spotlight is on Denny and the Dreamers, a fledgling doo-wop group preparing to enter a radio contest that could propel them to the big time. The show’s vocal selections included “Tears on My Pillow,” “Runaround Sue,” “Stay,” “Unchained Melody,” “Glory of Love” and “The Wanderer.”

The book was written by Roger Bean.

The show was not just a revue with one song after another but a story with a compelling plot.

Chelsea Moore, who played Lois – was the girl who two members of the quartet attempted to impress.

Ryan Ehrnsman played Wally, a preacher’s son. Ehrnsman also appeared earlier in the day on stage with The Mayberry Deputy as “Goober”.

Cast members in addition to Chelsey Moore and Ryan Ehrnsman were Matt Starkey as group leader Denny and Ted Dvorak as the nerdy Eugene and Michael Karraker as Skip. All cast members have lengthy Wichita theater resumes and have appeared in prior shows staged for KRWA conferences.

The KRWA audience certainly ate it up! The audience showed appreciation with a rousing and extended standing ovation.



2017 Presenters



The Kansas Rural Water Association appreciates the time and effort by all the presenters at the 2017 conference. Thank you for helping all those who attended “The Key to Good Service – Knowledge, Experience & You!”.

Ron Alexander	Kansas Leadership Center
Richard Boyles	USDA Rural Development
David Browning	The Mayberry Deputy
Bradley Brush	Neptune Technology Group
Ed Carney	Ed's Lake & Algae Service, LLC
William Carr	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Patricia Clark	Kansas Leadership Center
Kristina Clark	KU Public Management Center
Brian Conroy	Duke's Root Control
Mitch Copman	SEMS Technologies
Chris Corkran	NRWA Healthy Benefits
Deborah Corr	USDA Rural Development
Jeanie Cunningham	NRWA Healthy Benefits
Salih Doughramaji	Kansas Department of Commerce
Eric Duderstadt	Water Systems Engineering, Inc.
Jake Dugger	SUEZ Water Advanced Solutions
Darin Duncan	Associate Drilling
Rick Elliott	Elliott Insurance Group
Shannon Farmer	Rural Water Impact/Municipal Impact
Margaret Fast	Kansas Water Office
Tom Finger	USDA Rural Development
Marsha Fleming	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Paul Froelich	City of Enterprise / KRWAA
Louis Funk	Bartlett & West
Toni Glymph-Martin	Metropolitan Water Reclamation Dist. of Greater Chicago
Jim Grimes	Rycom Instruments
Elizabeth Grove	Missouri Rural Water Association
Tim Halfhide	City of Concordia
Gary Hanson	Stumbo Hanson, LLP
Shane Hastings	USDA Rural Development
Bob Hennig	Municipal Pipe Services
Ed Hickman	Ed Hickman Environmental Services
Ryan Hoffman	Kansas Corporation Commission
Chad Hollins	Collection Bureau of Kansas
Shelly Howay	Rural Water Impact/Municipal Impact
Deborah Hughes	Disciplinary Administrators Office
Casey Kane	InterfitUSA
Kellie Kubena	USDA Rural Development
Melinda Lambert	Mayer Specialty Services, LLC
Jeff Lamfers	Kansas Rural Water Association

Kyle Lang	Kansas Department of Labor
Lane Letourneau	Kansas Dept of Agriculture
Ned Marks	Terrane Resources Company
Dallas Massie	R.E. Pedrotti Company
Todd Mayer	Mayer Specialty Services, LLC
Pat McCool	Kansas Rural Water Association
Brian McCrary, P.E.	Insituform Technologies
Mark McIntire	McIntire Management Group
Deborah Midfelt	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Traci Miles	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Roger Miller	Water Systems Engineering, Inc.
Bob Myers	City of Newton
Michael Peroo	Michael D Peroo CPA
Tim Postula	Carus Corporation
Steve Prasko	Jayhawk Software
Charles Prather	Infrastructure Technologies, LLC
Terry Randles	Randles Consulting
Leslee Rivarola	KU Public Management Center
Camille George Rubeiz	Plastic Pipe Institute
Kelly Rundell	Hite, Fanning & Honeyman
Rose Mary Saunders	Ranson Financial Consultants, LLC
John Schwartz	USABlueBook
Jen Sharp	JenSharp.com
Jason Shelby	Mueller Company
Curtis Smith	Chlorinators Incorporated
Jason Solomon	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Tom Stiles	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Randy Stone	USDA Rural Development
Tracy Streeter	Kansas Water Office
Allan Strobl	Municipal Supply
Mark Thomas	Kansas Rural Water Association
LeAnn Thurman	Kansas Department of Commerce
Cathy Tucker-Vogel	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Michele Tunnell	Office of Administrative Hearings
Brad Vincent	Ground Water Associates
Owen Vore	Tyler Union
Kurtis Warne	SEMS Technologies
Rick Wiedmann	Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment
Ron Wilson	Huck Boyd Institute
Brownie Wilson	Kansas Geological Survey
Delbert Zerr	Kansas Rural Water Association

Thursday Luncheon

Tumbleweed Tales . . .

Rural Kansas is “Changing, Not Dying”, Expert Says

Rural Kansas is no stranger to hard times, but the quality of life in and around the state’s smallest towns still can’t be beat.

That was the message from Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, who delivered the Thursday luncheon presentation called “Tumbleweed Tales: Change, Challenge, and Champions” during the 2017 Kansas Rural Water Association’s annual conference.

Connections to people are a strong component of the rural lifestyle, Wilson said – starting with the rural water district where he lives.

“I am a member of Wabaunsee County Rural Water District No. 2, as was my dad, and I appreciate the important service that you all provide,” he said. “You hear about the big, corporate, faceless utilities. In our case, I know I can call on Tammy and Nathan and we’ll get taken care of.”

Rural Kansas is best understood when it’s put in context, Wilson said. He displayed a series of slides noting trends in agriculture, employment, economic development, and social issues.

In recent years:

The western half of Kansas has a significant number of agriculture-related jobs, a trend that stretches toward the Pacific Ocean and covers the western half of the nation.

The eastern half of Kansas is heavy with manufacturing jobs, a trend that stretches east toward the Atlantic Ocean.

Counties rich in service industry jobs and government jobs are unevenly sprinkled across the state, and the nation as well.

“Ladies and gentlemen, where do we see the highest percentage of people employed by agriculture? It’s right down the center, right through the Heartland, right through Kansas,” he said. “It’s fashionable in some circles to say that agriculture is an unimportant part of our economy. It’s



Ron Wilson, Huck Boyd National Institute

fashionable for some to say that agriculture is not relevant anymore. It’s not true. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy, and besides everything else, it feeds us three times a day.”

In 86 of the state’s 105 counties, local government is one of the top two employers.

“What does that mean for our future?” he asked. “I think that’s a challenging question for us.”

Adding all the sectors together produces an effect that looks like a mosaic, with many colors and features, but one where agriculture still is in the lead for jobs.

“It’s a significant part of Kansas, and a significant part of rural America,” he said.

Population trends are also affecting rural Kansas, Wilson said. A series of maps showed a contrast between the highly populated areas assembled along the coasts, and the less-populated center of the country.

Population distribution has wide-ranging impacts on making policies, Wilson said.

“This is what our politics is about right now,” he said. “This is the ‘red state, blue state’ thing right here.”

Recent elections have highlighted the difference in voting preferences between urban and rural voters, Wilson said, including the 2016 victory for President

Donald Trump, who won the Electoral College with help from rural areas, versus Hillary Clinton, who won the popular vote with help from urban areas.

Bob Dole’s 1996 presidential bid was another example of the phenomena, Wilson said, where Dole lost the election to President Bill Clinton, but won the majority of the nation’s counties.

“This map conclusively proves that rural people are not as dense as urban people,” Wilson said, drawing chuckles from the crowd.

Some states, such as California and Florida, continue to grow rapidly, while states like Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas are experiencing strong rates of population decline.

Some counties in Kansas and North Dakota grew quickly in the last decade following the oil boom, Wilson said, but now that it is an oil “bust,” that growth has faded.

Social scientists track migration – the numbers of people moving in and out of a place, as well as the “natural increase” of population, where the number of babies born outpaces the number of people who die, he said.

“In an awful lot of rural Kansas, we didn’t have a natural increase, we had a natural decrease,” he said. “The babies were not keeping pace with the old folks. The undertaker was busier than the baby doctor down at the hospital. This is a concern for the long run.”

Wilson offered a solution: “Tell your children and grandchildren to get busy back home,” he said.

Many areas of rural Kansas have seen a “huge increase” in the local Hispanic population, Wilson said – with some counties growing by more than 1,000 percent.

“The Hispanic population has enriched our population in many, many ways, in terms of workforce, and in terms of their culture, when they are embraced,” he said.

Kansas counties are rich in people age 65 and older – in some counties, they make up between 23 and 43 percent of the population, Wilson said.

“Folks, it’s not because snowbirds are flocking to Kansas to play golf in the wintertime,” he said.

But the percentage of people without at least a high school education is relatively low in most of the state.

“Education is really something we do well in rural Kansas,” Wilson said.

Unemployment is low in rural Kansas, Wilson said – “We work hard,” he said – but underemployment, or not earning a salary that matches experience and, generally, worth, is a problem.

Kansas continues to experience “brain drain,” where young, college-educated people move out of state for jobs. Yet the same people who leave start to consider moving back home, Wilson said, when they are between ages 30 and 34 – a phenomenon described by University of Minnesota researcher Ben Winchester as “brain gain.”

“Yes, our young people will graduate, and they go away, and maybe that’s what we want – we want them to go explore and see the world,” Wilson said. “But when they reach that 30-ish age, they’re getting married, having kids, and Grandma and Granddad want them home, and will provide free babysitting, and they decide that rural Kansas looks pretty good.”

Wilson referred to statistics gathered over a roughly 25-year period, ending in about 2007, that showed a region in southwest Kansas – called the “value-added agriculture” region – grew faster over time than the urban areas of the state.

“These are the counties where irrigated grain led to the packing plants to be close to the source of the grain, and for the feedyards, because the packing plants wanted to be close to the source of the cattle,” he said. “This growth in southwest Kansas was based on irrigation, so it’s based on water, and the entrepreneurs who developed the agribusiness industry there.”

The region grew faster than the Kansas City and Wichita areas in the same amount of time.

“Now, is it sustainable?” Wilson asked. “That’s another question.”

Otherwise, he said, most rural counties with low population density are experiencing persistent and long-term population declines.

“Where are we going to be in twenty or thirty years in rural Kansas?” he asked. “We have 12 counties that peaked in population in the 1890 Census.”

From 2000 to 2010, he said, nine metropolitan counties around Kansas City and Wichita grew by the equivalent of the population of Overland Park. In that same timeframe, the remaining 96 non-metro counties lost the equivalent of a city the size of Salina.

It’s a challenge for that decreasing population to draw attention from national media, he said.

“If a tornado hit tomorrow, and wiped a Salina off the face of the Earth, that would make the news,” he said. “But because we’re not talking about population, we’re not talking about life lost, we’re talking about population change and movement, because it’s gradual, and because the national media doesn’t care, this is ignored. Our urban areas are growing, and rural Kansas faces a lot of challenges.”

Wilson pointed to other factors impacting rural Kansas, such as marriages. Sedgwick County, for instance, reported 3,904 marriages in a recent year, while Wallace County recorded seven.

“I believe that we in rural Kansas have a tremendous quality of life that we as Kansans tend to take for granted,” he said. “Folks, we have the good life here and we don’t know it.”

Quoting Ben Winchester, the University of Minnesota researcher, Wilson said that “rural Kansas is not dying, it is changing.”

Two rural Kansas entrepreneurs who Wilson considers champions for rural Kansas, because they embrace the idea that the state is changing and not dying:

Don Landoll, of Marysville, whose dream of flying airplanes for the Air Force ended quickly after failing a military physical. He took the welding skills he had learned in his agriculture classes in high school and built an equipment company that now employs 700 people and has clients all over the world.

Linda Katz, who started her Prairie Tumbleweed Farm business on the Internet as a joke, posting photos of family members ostensibly “raising” tumbleweeds on a farm. The prank quickly turned in to an actual business when she began receiving orders from around the country for tumbleweeds.

“We now have technology that overcomes the distance gap that our ancestors had,” Wilson said. “People who live in The Middle of Nowhere, Kansas, are now selling products literally around the world to customers who can order them at the tap of a button.”

Wilson himself realized the power of the technology when he received an errant phone call in his early days working with the Huck Boyd Center.

A woman called to ask for information about horseback riding in Kansas. He offered to track down the information and mail it to her. She gave her mailing address in a town in France.

“A more likely scenario might be for someone in Kansas to dream of taking a vacation in France,” he said. “Instead, here was a woman from France, making a transatlantic phone call to get information about coming to Kansas.”

It wasn’t Times Square that she wanted to see, it wasn’t Hollywood that she wanted to see. She wanted to travel around the globe to come to Kansas so she could go horseback riding; so she could enjoy our wide, open spaces; our western heritage; and our clean air and water, things Kansans have all around us every day.

“We face a lot of changes. We face a lot of challenges. But the quality of life in rural Kansas is our ace in the hole. Each of us, in our own way, needs to be a champion of rural Kansas.”



294 CONFERENCE-GOERS CONTRIBUTE \$8,795 TO WATERPAC

Kansas Rural Water Association conference-goers in 2017 supported the WaterPAC with a record amount. Total donations to Raffle Tickets came to \$8,795 from 294 donors. WaterPAC is the political action committee of the National Rural Water Association (NRWA).

The WaterPAC Raffle is one way that the Kansas Rural Water Association conference-goers support the legislative efforts of the NRWA. Paul Froelich, President of the Association's board of directors, commented during the annual meeting of membership of the KRWA how important the support by Kansas Rural Water Association has been to WaterPAC. Legislative proposals concerning reduction of regulations and funding (loans and grants) for USDA Rural Development and the revolving loan funds for water and wastewater utilities are among NRWA's top priorities in Washington.



NRWA's WaterPAC allows the NRWA to support those members of Congress who have helped support legislation that has been in the best interests of water and wastewater systems.

During the conference, KRWA directors explain programs and receive donations for the Raffle. The process also allows directors to visit with many attendees.

The NRWA works on behalf of all water and wastewater systems in support of reasonableness in



regulations dealing with water and wastewater utilities. In 2013, it was the NRWA and its state affiliates who led the effort to ask Congress to end the mailing requirement of the Consumer Confidence Reports. Whether it's seeking support for compositing of samples for groundwater monitoring or asking Congress to support USDA Rural Development and EPA funding for the revolving loan funds, it is the NRWA and state affiliates such as KRWA that carry that message effectively for water and wastewater systems. "The power of an Association" is apparent each year during the National Rural Water Rally in Washington where KRWA and other NRWA state affiliates meet with members of Congress and ask them for their support of various loan and grant funding programs and training and technical assistance programs that directly benefit water and wastewater utilities. And the members from Kansas do support the requests.

Prizes for the Raffle are paid for by KRWA so 100 percent of the donations go to WaterPAC. KRWA and NRWA appreciate the support for WaterPAC during the KRWA conference. Donations in prior years have been as follows: 2005 - \$3,001; 2006 - \$3,000; 2007 - \$4,324; 2008 - \$4,692; 2009 - \$6,110; 2010 - \$5,073; 2011 - \$5,065; 2012 - \$7,193; 2013 - \$7,350; 2014 - \$7,650; 2015 - \$6,500; 2016 - \$7,969; 2017 - \$8,795. Donations over the last twelve years total \$76,700.



Rick Elliot and Jay Hastert of the Elliot Insurance Group, meet "The Mayberry Deputy". The sheriff's car, a 1962 Ford Galaxy 500, was provided by Mike Hertel, Hays, Kan.



WaterPAC Raffle Winners

Prize	Winner	System
Quilt - Kansas Sunflowers	Paul Froelich	City of Enterprise / KRWA
Green Mountain Pellet Smoker w/WiFi	Rod Boerger	City of Inman
Metal Flag	Greg Duryea	Kansas Rural Water Assoc.
KitchenAid 4.5 Qt Mixer - Black	Debra Schlabach	Washington RWD 1
VIZIO LED Smart HDTV	Adam Hartley	City of Derby
HP 15.6" Laptop, Windows 10	Cindy Conrardy	City of Kingman
R-TIC Cooler	Mike Douglas	Douglas Pump Service
Hitachi Dual Compound Miter Saw	Elmer Ronnebaum	Kansas Rural Water Assoc.
Apple iPad Air 2 32GB WiFi	Preston Harness	Doniphan RWD 6
Dyson Animal Vacuum	William Huss	Doniphan RWD 5
29" Mantis Colossus Men's Mountain Bike	Darrell Schlabach	Washington RWD 1
Stihl Chain Saw	Sharon Dwyer	Douglas RWD 5
Stihl Weedeater	Wade Webber	City of Cherryvale
Stihl Tiller w/Brush Chopper	Bill Shroyer	City of Sabetha
Stihl Leaf Blower/Vac	Tom Reimer	City of Hesston
Bosch 2 piece Cordless Kit	Wade Webber	City of Cherryvale



Grand Prize Winners Take Home the Quilts

Since 1984, KRWA's conferences have provided pieced-quilts as grand door prizes. Over the years, lucky winners have taken home 92 quilts from KRWA conferences. From 1984 to 1988, the quilts were pieced by Anna Ronnebaum. From 1988 until 2017, Kathleen Ronnebaum took on the effort of creating 84 quilts for door prizes. Because of health issues, in 2017, "Kate" assembled one design – *Kansas Sunflowers* that was a prize in the WaterPAC Raffle. Additional help was needed to have quilts for the conference. *Broken Star* was made by Louise Henderson. *Circles & Squares* and *Triangles Galore* were pieced by Connie Huerter of Seneca, Kan.

There is high confidence that the tradition of having quilts as door prizes will continue at KRWA conferences.



Ed Junek, Republic RWD 2, chose the design *Triangles Galore* at the Wednesday evening Awards Banquet.



Allan Markham, Wilson RWD 5, selected *Broken Star* at the Thursday noon luncheon.



Janette Froelich, city of Enterprise (on right), shared the spotlight for winning *Kansas Sunflowers*. Kathleen Ronnebaum, on left, designed and pieced this quilt.



Sandy Benoit, Rooks RWD 3, selected *Circles & Squares* at the Thursday noon luncheon.



FACES OF THE 2017 KRWA CONFERENCE

The Kansas Rural Water Association's 2017 Annual Conference and Exhibition is often the highlight of the year for the water system operators, staff, board members, consultants, vendors, and even family members who attend the three-day event in Wichita.

Here are the stories of just a few of the 2,300 people who registered to attend this year's conference.

The Schlabach family from Washington County RWD 1 was well-represented. Operator Darrell Schlabach and his wife, Debbie, attended with son Jeff Schlabach, also an operator for the district, along with his wife, Kyla.

"It is awesome!" Debbie Schlabach said. "The entertainment is good, the classes are good and the education is good. We had Barney Fife (The Mayberry Deputy) as keynoter. What more could you ask for?" (Debbie later won a KitchenAid stand mixer in the door prize drawing.)

The Mayberry Deputy, also known as David Browning, "related to us in the rural

areas. We're all working together. That's what we try to do, and that's what Elmer and KRWA try to do, too."

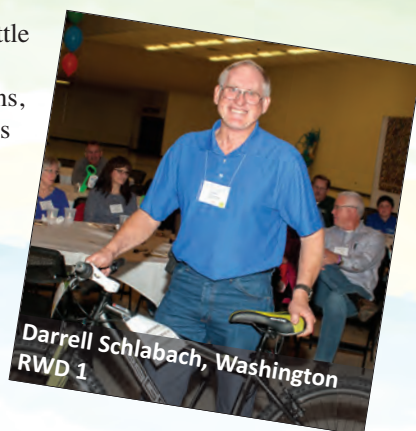
Kyla Schlabach said she appreciated the diversity of opinions, information, and approaches presented in the education sessions.

"I like that they get people in who think a little different," she said. "I think people need options, especially when it comes to things like health insurance. You need to hear from different people. You need each other to help each other."

Kyla's father-in-law Darrell Schlabach agreed.

"You learn an awful lot from the other people who come here, not just in the classes," he said.

(Darrell also won a mountain bike in the door prize drawing at the conclusion of the conference.)



It was the first KRWA annual conference for Trenton Morris, who works on the design side of Shafer, Kline and Warren in Lenexa.

"I'm here to learn," he said on Tuesday afternoon. "I thought the engineers' forum this morning was beneficial. The information from USDA Rural Development about their loans and all they are doing was helpful, too. Overall, it's pretty cool."

Stan and Maxine VanMeter from Concordia, who are both operators for Cloud County RWD 1, said this was at least their eleventh annual conference – maybe even their twelfth.

"It's a really well-organized conference," Maxine said. "We get excited about it every year. This is our annual vacation!"

"We come for the good information, and for seeing all the people that you get to see every year. It's a good social event. We always appreciate being able to see the vendors, to talk to them and learn from them. The classes are good, with all the information that's important to keep up on."

The conference is just one of the assistance opportunities that KRWA offers, the VanMeters said, noting that the Association provided hands-on assistance when their son needed help in a nearby town.

"You can't top what they did to help," Maxine VanMeter said.



Mike Lockwood, of JCM Industries in Holt, MO., said he was attending his 24th KRWA annual conference.

His company manufactures repair and connection fittings for water mains. He reported that business Wednesday afternoon was good.

"This is one of the shows you don't want to miss," he said.

Galen Penner, operator of Marion RWD 4, also has attended the conference for more than 20 years.

He finds value in attending some of the same classes year after year.

"You really can't go to the same session too often," he said. "Things change, and there are always new problems that need to be solved. There's always something new to learn, it's not just the same old thing."



King Midas and the Mufflers

Darrel Just, assistant operator for Marion RWD 4, and his wife, Geneva, were attending for the first time.

"A lot of the sessions were very informative," he said. "The food, entertainment, and everything were just excellent."

"I've been to a lot of conferences, and this is a fun one," said Geneva, who attended the spouse program on Wednesday. "Everything was just well-done and fun."



John and Gayla Pendleton, Atchison RWD 6.

Sarah Green is a writer, editor and consultant. A graduate of the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Kansas, Green has written for local



and national publications including *The Hutchinson News*, the *KHI News Service* and *Saveur* magazine. She lives in Wichita.

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