Nusser attends program

Tegan Nusser of Lyons was one of 48 high school seniors from across Kansas chosen to participate in the Youth Civic Leadership Institute at the Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas.

"Nusser is the son of Kelly and Beth Nusser of Lyons.

The youth program is designed to foster appreciation and involvement in public service. Students stay overnight on the KU campus in a residence hall.

"Within their high schools and communities, these seniors have demonstrated a commitment to civic engagement and an interest in public service. Their high school administrators selected these students to participate in the leadership institute," said Bill Lacy, director of the Dole Institute.

The program focuses on civic engagement and practicing civic skills. The students work in groups to discuss a range of issues that affect them in their schools and communities and present solutions. They also attended a special Dole Institute public program called "Teddy Roosevelt: Mind, Body and Spirit" with Ted Zalewski, a historical interpreter.

On Thursday, Chuck Berg, professor of theatre and film, led the students in a discussion of the 1939 Frank Capra movie "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." Today, speakers included retired U.S. Navy Capt. Buck Newsom, a civic leader in Lawrence, and Brett Ballard, a former KU basketball player from Hutchinson who graduated with a degree in secondary education in 2003 and is now on the men's basketball team staff. Newsom shared his view on "Civic Participation from the Greatest Generation." Ballard addressed "Teamwork and the KU Basketball Team's Civic Involvement."

A highlight was Thursday's visit to the state Capitol to meet with Kansas government leaders. The high school students began the afternoon in the statehouse at 1 p.m., visiting the Senate chamber and the Kansas Supreme Court Room. About 2:15 p.m. they broke into small groups to meet with legislators.

Ballard noted the Youth Civic Leadership program was offered with the understanding that "it is in our nation's best interest that our youth not only become familiar with our system of government, but also explore the variety of opportunities for public service and the potential for developing their leadership."

The Dole Institute began the Youth Civic Leadership Institute in 2006 and provides the program at no charge.
OLD POST OFFICE/SRS BUILDING

A passion for the past

Restoration could find new use for a classic

“My main goals is to have somebody — myself or someone else — do it the right way.”

— Jeff Altendorf, building owner

By JODIE GARCIA
Herald Staff Writer

Jeff Altendorf had his eye on the building for years. An Ottawa native with a passion for old buildings, Altendorf bought the historic building at 122 E. Second St., Ottawa's former Post Office, in 2004 from Wint Winter.

The Kansas City resident is working to get the building back to its original state.

“It hasn’t been changed that much,” he said.

The building, with its stone facade and large stone columns, was built in 1915 and housed the Post Office until 1963. It then housed Social and Rehabilitation Services.

It was vacant and used for storage for several years, but more recently Altendorf began working to gut it in preparation to sell or lease it.

“Before, you couldn’t see what to do with the building because it was so cluttered,” he said, adding that a lot of work remains, including air conditioning and heating, electrical and plumbing work.

Along with some old photos, Altendorf has the original blueprints of the building, which he said is unusual. He said he plans to use them as a guide for the building's future.

Before moving to 122 E. Second St., the Post Office had many homes, including 201 S. Main St., 106 S. Main St., 227 S. Main St. and 109-111 E. Second St., according to Herald archives.

It cost $65,000 to build the Post Office at 122 E. Second St. A parcel post and loading dock was added in 1933. Before it was a post office, the site was occupied by livery stables and a well for watering horses, the archives said.

Altendorf said the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places and the Kansas Register of Historic Places.

Altendorf, who lives in the historic district Union Hill in Kansas City, Mo., said he’s in the aviation business, sells real estate and owns several properties in the Kansas City area.

He said he’s also owned other buildings in Ottawa, including 222 E. Logan St., which is now Drivers Sports Cafe, and his brother owns the building next door to the former Post Office.

Altendorf said he may lease or sell the building.

See PROJECT, Page 14
Jeff Altendorf, Kansas City, Mo., wipes off an original window which reads “Letters” at the building at 122 E. Second St. He is in the process of restoring the building, which was built as a post office and also served as the headquarters for Social and Rehabilitation Services until it was abandoned.
and admitted that if he lived in Ottawa, he would love to live in it.

A redevelopment proposal completed by students at the University of Kansas in 2004 suggested that the building be converted into a bank on the ground level and offices downstairs, but Altendorf doesn’t yet know what uses will best suit the community.

“I don’t know what Ottawa is looking for,” he said. “I just have to figure out what that is.”

Altendorf said he just wants to see the building restored and used once again.

“I’m interested in anyone who’s interested in the building,” he said. “My main goal is to have somebody — myself or someone else — do it the right way.

“I’d just like to see something happen with it.”

Herald staff writer Jodie Garcia can be e-mailed at jgarcia@ottawaherald.com.
Price takes priceless trip

Experiencing Chinese culture

BY KATIE STOCKSTILL
THE MORNING SUN

Gary Price recently experienced life on the other side of the world, in a land with nearly 1.3 billion people and language vastly different from English.

In late June, Price, superintendent for the Pittsburg USD 250 school district, traveled to China with hundreds of other educators from across the U.S. to experience the county and its culture firsthand and help further strengthen the bonds between the U.S. and China.

"It was a tremendous and worthwhile experience," Price said. "It is very eye opening to live in another country and experience another culture."

Price said that many Chinese educators and officials are eager for others to learn about their language and their culture and hosting U.S. educators was one way to spread the word on Mandarin.

In 2006, the state of Kansas developed the Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Learning. The task force was a sub group that began from a larger state-wide initiative to bring additional languages and international education to Kansas public schools.

Carol Woolbright, member of the Kansas Committee for International Education and director of the Greenbush Interactive Distance Learning Network, said that at approximately the same time the state of Kansas began looking into international education, the federal government enacted the National Second Language Initiative, which was designed to help promote the teaching of languages that the U.S. had deemed important.

Because of China’s large population and their ever-increasing international economic impact, Woolbright said Mandarin Chinese was made one of the eight languages the U.S. felt residents should know to interact with the rest of the world.

In 2006, Kansas Department of Education took the next step to securing Mandarin instruction in the classroom by establishing a partnership with the Chinese Language Council International and creating the Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas. The partnership and the institute helped create a pipeline for Mandarin instructors and helped deliver foreign language instruction to school districts throughout Kansas.

Last year Mandarin instruction came to Pittsburg. The Pittsburg USD 250, school district received a FLAP (Foreign Language Assistance Program) grant to help cover the cost of Mandarin instructors and teaching materials. The USD 250 program began in January with one instructor who taught one course at Pittsburg Community Middle School. This summer a foreign language camp was held and during the 2007-2008 school year, the district will be adding two additional instructors, which will teach at the elementary and high school levels.

Price said the district choose to implement Mandarin courses because of the prevalence of the language and the large impact China has and will continue to have on the world’s economy.

In addition to meeting with officials in the Chinese language program, Price said he had the opportunity to interact with Chinese residents and see many of the sights.

"I got to see the Great Wall of China which was just amazing," Price said. "To stand their and see that in person, was just amazing."

Katie Stockstill can be reached at (620) 231-2000 ext. 132 or at katie.stockstill@morningsun.net.
USD 250 superintendent Gary Price poses with a group of schoolchildren during a recent trip to China. The trip was intended to strengthen bonds between the U.S. and China. COURTESY PHOTO
Area students on KU honor rolls

Seventeen Independence students earned honor roll distinction for the spring 2007 semester at the University of Kansas.

More than 4,690 undergraduates from the Lawrence campus and the schools of allied health and nursing at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City were listed. The honor roll comprises undergraduates who met requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and in the schools of allied health, architecture and urban planning, business, education, engineering, fine arts, journalism, nursing and social welfare.

Students reported as listed on the honor rolls include Emily Bannwarth, Nathan Berg, Shannon Beurksens, Echo Dunn, Stephanie Gattler, Joseph Hall, Dean Hayse, Aubrey Heckman, Rachel James, Matthew Kadel, Rebecca Knox, Christopher Landrum, Benjamin Mitchell, Maggie Schabel, Kara Thompson, Zachary Viets and Matthew Ysusi, all of Independence. Robert Read of Colorado Springs, Colo., a graduate of Independence High School, also was listed.

Coffeyville students listed included Mark Bowman, Chris Carr, Chris DelaCruz, Jennifer Hutchins and Stephanie Irwin.

Fredonia students listed were Eric Bambick, Megan Fowler, Whitney Runer, Lindsay Stewart and Tiffany Wambsgans.

Other students listed included Mani Paxon of Neodesha and Libby Allen and Laura Allison, both of Sedan.

Honor roll criteria vary among the university’s academic units. Some schools honor the top 10 percent of students enrolled, some establish a minimum grade-point average and others raise the minimum GPA for each year students are in school.
State's latest poet laureate to emphasize Kansas writers

EMPORIA, Kan. — As a child growing up in Emporia, Denise Low dreamed of becoming a painter, but admits she never had the opportunity — or the talent.

Instead, she learned to create images with words.

"I constantly think about writing. It's always in the back of my mind," said Llewellyn Crain, executive director of the Kansas Arts Commission, the group that will work with Low as Kansas' second official poet laureate.

"She's a Kansas native. She uses the land and history to convey very profound thoughts about what it means to be alive now in 21st century Kansas," Crain said.

Recently, Low began a two-year appointment as poet laureate. The title comes with a $5,000 annual honorarium to help cover travel costs and other expenses.

"I think that people are hungry to understand and feel good about their place in the world," she said.

Low, of Lawrence, hopes to feed that hunger with large helpings of homemade poems. Well-versed on other poets from the Sunflower State — both living and deceased — Low plans to put the spotlight on them during her term.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius created the poet laureate's position in 2004, charging that person with developing a greater appreciation for writing and poetry among all Kansans.

"It's not only an outstanding poet, but someone who wants to bring it to the public," Crain said. "Someone who's a real crusader for poetry and has a real commitment to it."

Amid her many public appearances — including guest lectures at Kansas University Continuing Education programs in July and the River City Reading Festival in October — Low plans to publish an e-mail profile of a Kansas poet every other week.

"This is the literary culture of this area, and I think it needs to be celebrated and recognized more fully," Low said.

Among other ideas, Low admits she has a "not-too-hidden ecological agenda." Nature, and the human relationship to it, is a recurring theme in her poems.

"People need to respect and interact with and have many kinds of relationships with nature, and these words are a vehicle for that," Low said.

Since she was selected as poet laureate in December, Low said she's received many e-mails from aspiring poets asking for critiques and advice.

She said beginning writers must learn to look at the world around them.

"Not many people care about your lost love, your dead dog or what you had for breakfast, but people do share an environment," Low said. "But you'd be surprised how many people are out there writing poems."
On campus: Earth day, every day

Colleges throughout the nation are seeing the benefits of having their campuses go green.

By MARA ROSE WILLIAMS
The Kansas City Star

Classrooms lighted by wind power. Water-conserving restrooms. A grass-powered energy plant.
More than ever, the go-green movement is going to college.
It’s flourishing in Missouri, Kansas and across the country as universities and colleges explore new ways to save energy and preserve the environment, while satisfying students’ social consciences.
“I really think that we are in the early stages of a fundamental change in our society,” said Tom Kimmerer, executive director of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.
About 18 months ago, the Kentucky-based organization started promoting greening in higher education. It now has 300 members.
“I think the patterns of consumption are beginning to change and that it is up to colleges and universities to lead this change,” Kimmerer said.

Although the schools are shelling out millions to become greener, they expect ultimately to save money, particularly on energy costs.
“It costs more to build green to begin with, but if it’s done right it costs less to operate in

SEE GREEN | A8

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Rain gardens have become part of the landscape on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

FRED BLOCHER | THE KANSAS CITY STAR
GREEN: Expenditures are viewed as investments

FROM A1

the long term,” said Bob Simmons, director of facilities at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Changing campus culture, from choosing greener cleaning chemicals to building environmentally friendly buildings, is an arduous process, said Bob Berkebile, a Kansas City founder of the U.S. Green Building Council.

But as more schools join the movement, it is becoming easier to get campus decision-makers to think green, Kimmerer and Berkebile said.

In June, 300 university presidents signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment to join the fight against global warming emissions. Three Kansas and Missouri schools — Kansas Wesleyan, Drury University and Park University — were among those signing.

Joining the pact “epitomizes Park University’s dedication to prepare our students to become global citizens,” said Beverley Byers-Pevitts, Park University’s president.

Different ways to go green

How does a school go green?

Some schools are installing energy-efficient bulbs, as well as lights that automatically turn on or off based on the presence of CO2. They are lending bicycles to students and faculty, and adding hybrid vehicles to their fleets.

They’re reusing water, starting campuswide recycling programs and stocking cafeteria shelves with locally grown food. They’re fueling campus power plants with grass, corn cobs and wood chips; and constructing buildings using wood from forests that regenerate quickly.

Admissions officials report that more students are considering whether a college is committed to sustainability when choosing a school, Kimmerer said. When a college’s environmental commitment determines where families spend their money, “then that impacts the institution’s bottom line,” he said.

Students at 120 U.S. universities have voted to increase student fees so their schools can buy solar or wind power or convert to biofuels.

University of Kansas students this year approved a referendum that puts $1.50 of each student’s fees into a renewable energy and sustainability fund. The money will be used to ensure that the campus is using renewable energy sources for 20 percent of its needs by the year 2020.

The fund is expected to generate $70,000 a year to make campus buildings more environmentally friendly. The levy will help the university switch to solar, wind, geothermal and biofuel energy.

University of Missouri-Kansas City students in April rejected a proposal to raise student fees to build an environmentally friendly student union. But administrators said they would encourage student leaders to put the referendum to another vote in the coming school year.

“Another reason universities gravitate to green is because of our role of teaching students how we should live, respect of others and respect for the environment,” Simmons said. Then there’s the money.

“If we can reduce costs, it is good for the university and it helps to keep tuition lower,” said Paul Hoemann, director of energy management at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Paying for going green

Although going green can require a sizable investment, many schools are finding ways to pay the bill.

This summer, Crowder College in Neosho, Mo., will erect a 65-kilowatt, 125-foot-tall wind turbine on campus, using state and federal money. The college expects to save as much as $1,000 a month in electricity.

The turbine will be one of the largest in Missouri, said Judy Walton, director of strategic initiatives with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

Three years ago, Kansas State University completed a $19 million energy-saving overhaul on its Manhattan and Salina campuses, installing energy-efficient lighting, toilets that flush with less water and faucets that limit water flow. K-State also upgraded its cooling plant and installed new boilers.

The company that retrofitted the buildings projected $1.6 million a year in utility savings.

Before the changes, K-State budgeted about $9.5 million in 2004 to pay utility bills for its Manhattan and Salina campuses.

For the most recent academic year, $12.6 million was earmarked for utilities. Dale Boggs, K-State’s associate director of facilities, said that because the university had constructed five buildings and expanded several others since the energy-savings project, he’s unsure whether the increased cost is due solely to new construction or if savings’ projections were off.

“We have hired an outside consultant to look into it,” Boggs said.

UMKC this year will begin a similar project. It will use revenue bonds to finance a $19.6 million energy-savings program that includes a new cooling system for its main campus and the replacement of incandescent lights with fluorescent lighting. UMKC expects the savings to pay off the bonded debt.

Some schools, such as the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, are taking smaller steps.

Whenever motors or pumps are replaced, more energy-efficient ones are installed, said Jeff Murphy, university spokesman. Old light bulbs are replaced with smaller, electronic bulbs. Incandescent exit lights are replaced with LED versions that use 1 watt of power rather than 30 watts. At MU, the latest green efforts include working with agricultural and engineering researchers to use biofuels to run the campus power plant.

For nine years, the plant has burned tire chips as a supple-
ment to coal and natural gas. Now it's also using corn cobs and wood chips. In one year, it has burned through 14 tons of cobs and 150 tons of wood chips.

Soon the university will try corn stalks and various types of grass.

“It has been a beneficial project for the plant and the environment,” Hoemann said. “It improves our efficiency and reduces emissions by reducing the burning of fossil fuels.”

And, he said, the benefits go beyond the cost savings.

“Since most biofuels are crop based,” he said, “it also helps our crop industry in the area, and in turn is good for the local economy.”

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Kevin Thomas of the University of Missouri-Kansas City tilled an area near the Fine Arts Building this month, installing the campus's third rain garden.
Dance Camp- The Ulysses Dance Team pose for a team photo while at dance camp. Top Row (l to r) Adriana Barron, Brooklyn Greim, Angela Barbo, Megan Zerr, Melissa Rose, Eden Fowler. Bottom Row (l to r) Jaden Leiker, KaLea Barlow, Lauren Fowler, Jacque Rodriguez, Tia Ybarra, Claudia Cossio. (Not Pictured) Destiney Hampton

By Jessica Walters
Assistant Managing Editor

Hips swaying, stepping in time with the beat. That is what you see when you watch the Ulysses Dance Team perform. The team has performed throughout the county for several events over the past three years. This year the girls have performed at Relay for Life, Cinco De Mayo, Spring Fling and Veterans Day Parade.

Coached by Paula and Chelsea Ybarra, the team welcomes some new faces this year: Brooklyn Greim, Angela Barbo, Claudia Cossio, Alisha Alvarado, Destiny Hampton, Kaylee Barlow, and Jacque Rodriguez. Returning dancers are Tia Ybarra, Megan Zerr, Lauren Fowler, Eden Fowler, Jaden Leiker, Melissa Rose, and Adriana Barron.

The girls have been busy this summer, practicing at least three times a week and attending dance camp. When the girls aren’t practicing or performing at community events they are fund raising with dance clinics, candle sales, car washes, and working concessions for the Junior High during the school year. The girls fund raise to earn money to support the dance team’s trips, outfits and other necessities the girls need to perform.

Started by Paula and Chelsea Ybarra in 2005, the Ulysses Dance Team began because of the lack of dance classes in the area. "We wanted to make it available to the community, so dancers can have a place to express and show what they can do," said Chelsea.

Their dances are a mix of pom, kick, hip-hop, and a majority of jazz. The team’s favorite dances are hip-hop but, the routines are a mix of all styles so the community can “enjoy the other dance styles as well.

Coach Chelsea Ybarra attends Kansas University turning the fall and spring semesters. At school she takes part in a Hip-Hop Dance team called Unity. When she is at home she choreographs for the local dance team. Most of the routines are learned from videos the girls are given at camp.

The girls have also won several awards this year as a team including the Gold for team routine and the Spirit award. The girls have individually won many awards however there have been two particular dancers that were greatly rewarded for their efforts, skills, and talent. Tia Ybarra and Megan Zerr have both been selected as All-American Nominees.

During the rest of 2007 the team will perform at their usual events including the upcoming Fair parade, Parade of Lights, and hopefully they will be able to dance at some of the local school events. They have also been invited to perform at the GCRC Recital August 4th, and anywhere else they’re able to perform.
KU ANNOUNCES
SPRING 2007
HONOR ROLL

More than 4,690 undergraduate students at the University of Kansas earned honor roll distinction for the spring 2007 semester.

These students, from the Lawrence campus and the schools of allied health and nursing at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas, represent 99 of 105 Kansas counties, 44 other states and the District of Columbia and 37 other countries.

The honor roll comprises undergraduates who met requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and in the schools of allied health, architecture and urban planning, business, education, engineering, fine arts, journalism, nursing and social welfare.

Among those named to the spring honor roll list were from Alma - Chase Boucher, Amanda Lasswell; from Eakridge - Derek McFarren; from Paxico - Sharon Johnson; and formerly of Alma - Jenny Wilson.

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The Hazel T. Nelson Scholarship Fund awarded $19,359 in grants to 17 Hiawatha High School graduates attending college and graduate school. Undergraduates are Matthew McElroy, Kansas State University; Jeni Fee, Northwest Missouri State University; Joel Call, Kansas State University; Jenny Rieger, Washburn University; Daniel Schmitt, Kansas State University; Halley Spellman, Pittsburgh State University; Anna Noll, Kansas State University, Ben Tryon, Kansas State University.

Grad students are Melissa Iron-Horse Kent, Peru State College; Kara Schuetz, Emporia State University; Rachel Williams, Baker University; Adam Ewing, Indiana State University; Jacob Mauslein, Kansas State University; and Elaine Schilling, Peru State College.

Citizens State Bank and Trust Co. in Hiawatha administers the fund.

Nelson, a Hiawatha resident, passed away in 1987. Scholarships totaling more than $390,000 have been distributed over the past 20 years.
MOSIER, EATON NAMED TO HONOR ROLL

Riley County graduates named to the Honor Roll at Kansas University included sophomore Liberal Arts undergraduate Whitney Alisa Mosier, Manhattan, daughter of Michael and Becky Mosier and senior Liberal Arts undergraduate Matthew Benjamin Eaton, Riley.