There was a time when a big brother would be in hot water back home if he didn't stick up for his little sister outside the house. No such scolding will be necessary for Ramon Murguia.

Murguia is the big brother of Janet Murguia, the chief executive officer of the National Council of La Raza, and she's at the center of the debate over Kansas City Mayor Mark Funkhouser's continuing and apparently permanent support of Frances Semler, a member of the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps.

La Raza, under Janet Murguia's leadership, has threatened to move its national convention from here if Semler isn't removed from the Kansas City Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners. The mayor met with Hispanic leaders last week in hopes of finding a compromise to resolve the controversy.
PENN: When one sibling takes a stand, other one is right there, too

FROM B1

Janet Murguia certainly is capable of defending herself. Before heading up La Raza, she was executive vice chancellor for university relations at the University of Kansas, and she earlier served for five years in the Clinton White House.

But big brother Ramon Murguia recently used a moment meant to focus on his own accomplishments to publicly and forcefully convey his support for his sister. He also used the moment to take on the Minuteman group.

The sibling backup came at the recent Blanco y Negro Annual Awards Gala. Murguia, a lawyer who has made a name for himself serving the legal needs of the Spanish-speaking community, accepted the I. Pat Rios Award for outstanding contributions to the West Side community. Then he vented.

"I'd be remiss if I didn't mention something about the controversy my sister has started here in Kansas City," Ramon Murguia said. "The issue is not about enforcement of our immigration laws. The issue is about standing up to hate-mongering and vigilantism in our community."

The crowd roared.

"We know what's going on, and we're going to stand up to it," Ramon Murguia said. "We're going to stand up for the families who are being scapegoats for this organization. They're not just after the undocumented in our community. They're going after all of us Latinos. And we're not going to take it."

He brings local credibility to the issue. He has served on the board of directors for the National Council of La Raza, the Francis Family Foundation, the Wyandotte Health Foundation and the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. He's currently chairman of the Greater Kansas City Hispanic Development Fund, a foundation that works to improve the quality of life for Latinos.

Murguia thanked the National Council of La Raza for its leadership on the immigration issue.

"We appreciate NCLR for standing with us," Ramon Murguia said. "They've shown a willingness to lose money. They've invested in this conference in order to make a principled point that the Minutemen and all the organizations that want to spew their hate against our community and who want to send us all back, we're not going to take it. And we're going to let our elected officials know when they've crossed the line in how they treat our community."

Border security is certainly the issue the Minuteman group has staked out right now. But many individuals like Ramon think the group simply has a problem with Hispanics and Latinos in general, undocumented or not. Perception or reality, the image of the Minuteman group is what it is.

The pursuit of justice is why Murguia became a lawyer. The same pursuit is also why he so eloquently stood up for his little sister recently.

To reach Steve Penn, call 816-234-4417 or send e-mail to spenn@kcstar.com.
KU Honored Local Participants in the Public Management Program

Kansas Secretary of Administration Duane Goossen joined University of Kansas officials Wednesday, Sept. 26, in Liberal to honor participants in the Certified Public Manager’s program offered in southwest Kansas by KU’s Public Management Center.

Goossen and KU Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Richard Lariviére addressed the participants, legislators, local officials and guests at the Liberal Country Club.

Participants included state, local, and federal workers who have been enrolled in the program since January. The monthly class rotated among sites in Liberal, Dodge City, and Garden City to accommodate students from the area. This year, students from Hays, Larned, and Norton also enrolled in the program.

The certified Public Manager program was established in 1993. Since then, more than 800 public managers have completed certification. The year long course concludes with a December graduation. Classes meet three consecutive days each month, for a total of 288 contact hours.

The program’s goals are to provide a foundation of knowledge and skills in management practice for those at all levels in government; offer opportunities for professional and personal growth for public-sector employees; and foster effective management practice in government organizations.

The program participants from Liberal were: Sally M. Fuller, City of Liberal; Gary L. Scott, City of Liberal; D. (Colleen) Towns, City of Liberal; Janet K. Lewis, Seward County; Sherry Wilson, Seward County; Crystal Ann Clemens, Seward County; Mary L. Bloomer, Seward County Administration; John A. Ralston, Seward County Emergency Medical Services; Mark L. Cowan, Southwest Medial Center; Jo Lynn Harrison, Southwest Medical Center; Lisa L. Mathes, Southwest Medical Center; Sandra Ann Montes, Southwest Medical Center; and Susan Marie Zielke, Southwest Medical Center.
The lure of small town life

By KARREY BRITT

SABETHA, Kan. (AP)—Most communities need mountains, a nearby ocean or college to attract retirees.

Nemaha County has none of those, but is doing just that.

It is the only Kansas county considered a retirement destination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. To be considered such a destination, a community’s population of those age 65 and older must have grown by at least 15 percent between 1990 and 2000 as a result of people moving into the area.

“It is a very interesting situation,” said Laszlo Kulcsar, a demographer and director of the Kansas Population Center at Kansas State University. “It’s like a fascinating social phenomenon.”

Nemaha County is in northeast Kansas and has about 10,700 residents. Its biggest towns are Sabetha and Seneca; each has about 2,500 residents. The closest cities are Topeka and St. Joseph, Mo., which are about 60 miles away.

Kulcsar said he believes the Apostolic Christian Retirement Village in Sabetha has been key to the county’s retirement designation. The village has grown from a 26-bed nursing home in 1961 to a continuum care area with 210 residents.

“They seem to be attracting people who left Kansas back to Kansas,” he said.

Consider Betty Jane Kusler, 82, who grew up in Wamego and raised her children in Kansas City. She moved to Colorado in 1982. Kusler, who was stricken by polio at age 26, said she looked at nursing homes in Colorado before moving to Apostolic Christian Retirement Village, which is 13 miles away from one of her seven children who lives in Bern.

“Mountains are beautiful, but nothing takes the place of farmland. The hills just roll,” she said. Kusler also enjoys the peace and quiet of a small farm community. She said there are too many people and cars in Colorado.

In Sabetha, she can guide her electric wheelchair on nearby streets to a spot under a tree on a hill. It’s one of her favorite places.

“I watched the formation of a storm and I thought, ‘Oh, how beautiful,’” she said.

The natural beauty isn’t the only thing that enticed Kusler to move there in January 2005; she said it was the health care and friendly atmosphere.

“It’s just like they have known you forever,” she said of the staff. “It’s not just the physical care, but the mental as well. Laughter and happiness can do wonders.”

While many rural communities are struggling to get one doctor, Sabetha has five doctors, four dentists, several chiropractors and a dialysis center. The Sabetha Community Hospital completed a new 27,000-square-foot, $5 million addition about five years ago.

“For a small town, it is pretty strong in health care,” said Ed Strahm, administrator at the Apostolic Christian Retirement Village. “People can get the medical help they need here.”

Dr. Chris Tramp recently began practicing in Sabetha after receiving his doctorate at Kansas University. He returned to the area where he grew up because of the town’s cleanliness, schools and health care.

“They just have a really good medical system here, and it’s attrac—

See Page 6
‘Fascinating phenomenon’ draws retirees to small town

From Page 1

tive to doctors to be here, honestly, because the medical system is so established,” Tramp said.

He also said the town is safe.

“We are well behaved,” he said, laughing.

Apostolic Christian Retirement Village, which is open to all religions, is like a community within Sabetha. It has 97 apartments, 12 assisted living apartments and a 94-bed nursing home on 22 acres. There are several dining rooms, libraries and activity rooms. There is a fitness center, two banks, a therapy room and small store. The buildings are connected with handicap-accessible hallways. Outside, there are walking paths and a pond.

“We’re like a family,” said Virginia Howerton, who was working on one of numerous puzzles in an activity room with another resident. They had participated in a group morning exercise and planned to join others for lunch.

Howerton, formerly of nearby Morrill, said she planned to live there until she “kicked the bucket,” whether it be in the apartment she bought six years ago or in the nursing home.

Not only does the retirement village offer continuum care, but convenience for others such as Ramona Breeden, 78, who has a daughter with multiple sclerosis. In 1994, Breeden and her late husband bought two apartments and had an adjoining
door built so their daughter could live in one. Their daughter now lives in the nursing home area, which can be accessed without going outdoors. Breeden’s twin sister Leona Lukert now owns the other apartment.

“My sister has 11 grandchildren and they just go tearing through her apartment and into mine,” Breeden said. “We love it.”

The sisters grew up in Sabetha, but Breeden moved back after living in Nebraska.

At Apostolic Christian Retirement Village, the apartments are from 670 square feet to 1,050 square feet and range in price from $58,000 to $106,000. They are sold like a home.

Joan Whittenburg, 84, said she worked in at least seven nursing homes in Topeka before moving into the nursing home in the Apostolic Christian Retirement Village.

“It’s clean and we have a lot of fun here,” she said of singing, playing dominos and taking out-of-town bus trips to places such as Wamego, Topeka and Omaha.

Despite few eating places and no movie theater, Sabetha Mayor Dave Emert said the town offers plenty of activities such as concerts, swimming, a nine-hole golf course and sporting events. He said his father, who has lived in the retirement village for three years, often has to turn down invitations.

“There’s just too much going on,” he said.
The University of Kansas Army ROTC program’s Wall of Fame ceremony is from 9-11 a.m. Nov. 3 at the KU ROTC building before the Kansas-Nebraska homecoming football game. All former Army ROTC graduates from KU or any of its extension centers are invited to see military demonstrations by cadets and listen to the 312th Army Reserve Band. Contact David Pendleton at (913) 684-5320 or henry.david.pendleton@us.army.mil for information.
Guest Editorials

College enrollment

The Kansas Board of Regents is not an organization shy about touting its success. Last week, it proudly boasted that for the first time, enrollment at the state's six universities had exceeded 90,000 students.

The record mark was established because of an overall increase in enrollment of 557 students.

What the Regents didn't point out was had it not been for the student body at Fort Hays State University, there would have been no need for such a press release. FHSU accounted for 466 of the increase, by far the growth leader. In fact, our local university has set the pace for the past five years with its 62.1 percent spike in enrollment.

Fort Hays is even ahead of its own aggressive enrollment goals. With 9,588 students either on campus or in the Virtual College, FHSU is well on its way to hitting the 10,000 target it has set for 2010. This, in turn, should helped boost efforts to reach 15,000 students by the year 2020.

That growth will bring its own challenges in the forms of physical space and faculty requirements. We're confident the long-range plan under development adequately will address all such needs.

We're hoping the attractiveness of Fort Hays State University will attract close attention by the Board of Regents. The growth here is helping overcome declines at both the University of Kansas and Emporia State University. Such efforts should be rewarded, whether through additional funding for long-term maintenance or a larger share of scholarship funding.

With its affordable success model, FHSU is helping raise the bar for all university students in the Sunflower State. — The Hays Daily News
Epigenetics seeks to control genes' functions, cancer

By Eric Adler

McClatchy Newspapers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (MCT)—At 56, Hazel Soap of Louisburg, Kan., was ready "for God to take me home."

She had been diagnosed with a killer: acute myelogenous leukemia. She had six months to live, maybe a year.

Chemotherapy took her hair. She vomited. She prayed. "I'm ready."

Then her doctor, hematologist Barry Skikne at the University of Kansas Hospital, offered a last resort. A new drug. Experimental. Not radiation and not traditional chemo.

Instead, it was a drug based on epigenetics, a once obscure science now being studied worldwide and whose implications are quickly turning the medical world on its Darwinian ear.

In short, it says this:

Much of who we are—from our eye color and IQs to many of the diseases we get—is determined by our genetic codes.

But that code, epigenetics holds, is controlled by a "second code"—by an array of tiny carbon and hydrogen molecules known as methyl groups that sit like off-switches along the surface of our genes ("epi" means "on top of").

Many of these methyl groups are there naturally. Others can be introduced. Some help us by turning off genes that aren't needed at the moment or might otherwise go haywire. Others, however, can short-circuit genes that protect us.

They can be added or removed by what we eat, drink and smoke, by the chemicals around us, perhaps even by how we were parented. Those lifetime altering epigenetic changes may be passed on from generation to generation.

In other words, say epigeneticists, theoretically the reason you get cancer today may have less to do with something you ate than what your grandmother ate and changed the work of her genes.

That change got passed on to you. Likewise, the environmental stuff you're exposed to now may cause epigenetic changes that, for good or bad, could affect your yet-to-be-conceived children and grandchildren.

"A lot of people will find it scary, this concept that something that might have happened to their great-great-grandparent might be affecting their health today, and what happens to you might end up impacting your great-grandchild down the road," said epigenetic researcher Charles Caldwell, director of the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center at the University of Missouri. "But it's also very exciting."

Exciting, researchers say, because if our environment can turn genes on and off, maybe we can, too.

At the University of Kansas, Hazel Soap steered herself for five months of injections—one injection a day for one week out of every month.

If the drug was to work, it would do so by seeping into her bone marrow and epigenetically switching on a protective gene that would slow or halt her cancer's growth.

Her first shot came in October 2003. "I'm doing exceptionally well," Soap said recently, her voice strong and sharp. "I'm heading into my fifth year of remission."

Worldwide, interest in epigenetics is booming.

In May, the National Institutes of Health listed epigenetics as one of its top five research priorities for the next five years.

In Europe, private and public laboratories are now engaged in the European Human Epigenome Project, to map the array of controlling surface molecules embedded in the human genome.

At least a dozen pharmaceutical companies are hunting for new epigenetic drugs to treat everything from cancers to sickle cell anemia to schizophrenia to Alzheimer's disease. (In 2004, the Colorado-based Pharmion Corp. received fast-track approval for Vidaza azacitidine, the drug used to treat Hazel Soap. Other drugs are in development.)

At the University of Missouri, Caldwell and colleagues are working under a $400,000 grant from the NIH to explore the epigenetic
roots of lymphomas.
“Literally every cancer has epigenetic alterations,” Caldwell said.

At laboratories worldwide, virtually every cancer—from breast to brain, liver to leukemia—is being explored in a new epigenetic light.
“We have a trial about to start in renal cancers and melanoma,” said Jean Pierre Issa, a leading researcher at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. “Other doctors are doing trials on ovarian cancer and lung cancer and so on.”

The implications go far beyond cancer.
“People are studying epigenetics in just about every kind of human disease you can think of,” Caldwell said.
That includes the main diseases of aging: diabetes, heart disease, dementias.
“If the tip of the iceberg is the human genome, this is the base of the iceberg,” said Duke University researcher Randy Jirtle, a leader in the field that examines how environmental chemicals and nutrition might be affecting the epigenetic fate of subsequent generations.

In August, Jirtle and his team published research in the journal PNAS, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences focusing on bisphenol-A, a common chemical in polycarbonate plastic.
“It’s everywhere,” Jirtle said.
“It’s in most hard plastics, clear plastics, like the containers your water comes in. It’s used inside food cans. It’s in dental sealants, adhesives—everywhere.”

The chemical is already known to cause epigenetic changes. In his work, Jirtle exposed female mice to the chemical and later bred them. The mothers seemed unaffected, but their pups all later became obese, had fertility problems and either prostate or breast cancer.

In the main part of his experiment, Jirtle then fed the mothers folic acid or genistein, a compound found in soy. Both are nutrients also known to cause epigenetic changes, but opposite of those of bisphenol-A.

The question was whether feeding the mom the dietary supplements would save her next set of pups from a bad genetic fate.

It did.
“By giving the mom that diet, you’re not curing her, but you’re curing her offspring,” said researcher Cheryl Rosenfeld, who is conducting similar research at the University of Missouri.

What makes epigenetics so significant, said Rosenfeld and others, is the dramatic way in which it is now bridging the chasm between nature and nurture, between what’s caused by biology and what’s caused by experience. In epigenetics, experience changes biology.

—At the University of Ottawa in Canada, scientists are looking at the high rate of schizophrenia among Latin immigrants. One hypothesis is that the decreased sunlight (and thus vitamin D), together with stress and changes in diet, may be causing epigenetic changes which, in turn, have led to a rate of schizophrenia that is three times higher than average.

—At McGill University in Montreal, scientists Moshe Szyf and Michael Meaney made epigenetic history in 2006 when they looked at the nurturing behavior of female mice. To no one’s surprise, they found that baby mice that were lovingly groomed by their mothers turned out to be calmer and friendlier than mice that were not groomed. Good mothers produced good babies. Neglectful mothers produced bad babies. The surprise: The grooming produced calming brain chemicals that caused epigenetic changes. Those changes were passed on. The good baby mice gave birth to more good baby mice.

—At Indiana University, researchers are investigating whether Alzheimer’s disease may be the result of epigenetic changes spurred by diet, hormones or chemical exposure.

“This is what epigenetics is all about. I think this is why we’re getting all these diseases,” Rosenfeld said. “Your diet, your environment: You not only have to think about your epigenes, but your kids’ epigenes.”

But epigenetics still is in its infancy. Right now, at least, there’s not much people can do to control their own epigenes, scientists said.
Drugs exist that can add methyl groups to our epigenes (to turn genes off) or strip them from it (to turn genes on). Newer drugs focusing on different areas along the epigenome are also being developed.

But these drugs all act broadly—turning genes on or off indiscriminately with the chance for considerable side effects. The drugs don’t work for everyone.

As for diet: The list of chemicals or foods or nutrients that might be turning genes on or off is vast.

“The more we learn, the more we realize we don’t know,” said Caldwell.

Still, Hazel Soap of Louisburg knows this: She’s grateful.

“I do get teary sometimes,” she said. “I think it’s the fact that I’m still here. I didn’t expect to be.”
Centre seniors receive honors

LOST SPRINGS — Three Centre High School students were recently honored as Kansas Honor Scholars by the University of Kansas.

Those honored were Kristine Jirak, daughter of Francis and Mary Jirak of Tampa; Julie Rziha, daughter of Gerald and Jeanne Rziha of Tampa; and Nikki Stenzel, daughter of Greg Stenzel and Lori Moldenhauer of Tampa.

The Kansas Honors Program recognizes and rewards students in the top 10 percent of the current senior class in all high schools across Kansas.

The University of Kansas Alumni Association sponsored a dinner and awards to promote academic excellence in second education, to reward high school seniors for their work and dedication and to support Kansas communities.

The banquet was held at Holiday Manor Center in McPherson on Sept. 19.
Hagen is resident assistant at KU

Danielle Hagen has been named a resident assistant at McCollum Hall, the University of Kansas, Lawrence.

For the 146 students chosen as live-in resident assistants, proctors, or food board managers, duties include serving as role models, handling administrative and programming duties and performing paraprofessional advisory functions for residents.

Hagen is a sophomore in the pre-med program. She is the daughter of Terry and Cheryl Hagen of Hillsboro.
Honored seniors

University of Kansas Alumni Association hosted students Sept. 19 at McPherson from Marion, McPherson, and Rice counties at an honor banquet. Goessel High School seniors Katie Flaming and Cameron Voth were honored as Kansas Honor Scholars at the banquet after qualifying in the top 10 percent of their graduating class. Each participant received an American Heritage College Dictionary as a gift from the alumni association.

Courtesy photo
Jews for Jesus speaker to make presentation

Bob Mendelsohn, director of the Jews for Jesus organization's Sydney, Australia, branch, will speak at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Marysville Christian Fellowship, 1137 E. Pony Express Highway.

Mendelsohn will explain how the Feast of Tabernacles, or Sukkot, is a part of Jewish life and how the holiday offers meaning for Christians who value their Old Testament heritage. He will demonstrate how Sukkot plays into God's worldwide plans for tomorrow, says a press release.

A temporary ceremonial booth, or sukkah, will be constructed to help explain the feast and its traditions. Those attending will be invited to help adorn the booth with harvest fruits and foliage as part of the demonstration.

The program is designed to transport the audience to Jerusalem in Jesus' day and set the stage for Jesus' claims to be Light of the World and the Living Water.

"The presentation is a glimpse into the Jewish life that Jesus lived on earth," says the news release. "Anyone who loves Jesus will feel they know him even more intimately as they learn more about the rituals he and his disciples observed. Seekers or skeptics who wonder about the Jewishness of Jesus are also very welcome."

Mendelsohn is a native of Prairie Village and grew up in an orthodox Jewish home. He graduated from Hebrew school and after high school enrolled in college but soon dropped out to search for life's meaning, he says.

"I didn't find what I was looking for — meaning and reality — in the counterculture. I found it in Y'shua (Jesus)," he says.

He graduated from the University of Kansas in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in education. He taught high school math and founded and pastored The Mustard Seed, a church of more than 700 people, which grew out of a prayer group.

Mendelsohn is a senior staff members of Jews for Jesus. He has written several articles for publications and some gospel tracts and Bible study materials. He has a master's degree in missiology with a concentration in Jewish evangelism/Judaic studies from the Fuller School of World Mission in Pasadena, Calif.

Jews for Jesus was founded by Moishe Rosen, a Jew who has believed in Jesus for more than 35 years.

Information about the presentation is available from Marysville Christian Fellowship pastor Rick Glowacki. 785-562-3088.