Public invited to meet project candidate

At 1:30 p.m. today, Claudia Larkin, of Free Bird Business Solutions, will be at the Hoisington Chamber of Commerce office to visit with anyone interested in meeting with her about the capacity planning project that will investigate Hoisington’s tourism needs.

The firm is one of the professionals the capacity planning project interview committee is considering to lead the community through the capacity planning process. Hoisington Main Street Inc. received a grant to research tourism issues related to the scenic byway and Cheyenne Bottoms education center. The company selected will gather information on how Hoisington might be impacted and help prepare goals and objectives that the community will need to work on to be ready to handle the tourists and help Hoisington present itself in the most positive light.

Larkin’s past experience includes being the Kansas Department of Commerce State Tourism Director for the Division of Travel and Tourism. She has a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas and 25 years of experience in management, marketing, strategic planning and community development.
NEW YORK (AP) — Hal Ritter, a founding editor of USA Today who helped launch the newspaper’s Money section, has been named business editor of The Associated Press, responsible for global coverage of financial news.

Ritter, who has been acting business editor for three months, succeeds Kevin Noblet, who resigned.

His appointment was announced Monday by Kristin Gazlay, AP’s managing editor for financial news and global training.

Ritter, 56, began working for AP as a business-side consultant in February 2006, and became director of special projects in April 2007. He was one of the architects of AP’s Money & Markets service.

“Hal’s considerable expertise, smarts and high standards are just what we need to raise even higher the level of our journalism in the increasingly crucial area of business news,” Gazlay said. “He is both innovative and determined.”

Ritter joined USA Today three months before its 1982 launch as deputy managing editor of the Money section. He became managing editor of Money in 1985 and moved to the News section as managing editor in 1995. He left the paper in 2004.

Before USA Today, he was business editor and assistant city editor at the now-defunct Times-Union newspaper in Rochester, N.Y.

He has a journalism degree from the University of Kansas and an MBA from Stanford Business School.
Despite a tuition hike, Fort Hays State University will remain the only four-year institution in Kansas to keep its tuition below $100 per credit hour next year.

The 5.5 percent increase means full-time, resident undergraduates will pay $91.35 per credit hour beginning in the fall.

"You're looking at $500 between us and the next most inexpensive institution per year," said FHSU President Edward H. Hammond. "When you look at tuition and fees, the same things occur."

For the year, students taking 15 hours per semester will pay $2,740.50. Emporia State University is the closest to FHSU in price at $3,294, while upperclassmen at the University of Kansas will pay $6,195.

The Board of Regents approved a tuition compact for freshmen and sophomores at KU, which locks in tuition rates and increases for four years.

FHSU did not have the smallest percentage increase this year, with Emporia State raising tuition by only 5.3 percent.

"Their increase was smaller than ours, but their tuition is still $20 higher than ours," Hammond said.

In other business at this week's Board of Regents meeting, two new programs were approved at FHSU. A bachelor of business administration in international business and economics degree and a bachelor of business administration in tourism and hospitality management degree were approved.

"Both programs will be in place in the fall semester," Hammond said. "We didn't recruit students for the fall. Students that are here could transfer into those programs."

One new faculty member will be hired to instruct the hospitality degree, while faculty already are in place for the international business degree.

The board adopted a new policy that could affect local high school students.

"The state Legislature made sophomores eligible for concurrent enrollment," Hammond said.

Previously, only high school juniors and seniors could take college courses for credit at both the high school and college level.

FHSU faculty also will be getting a raise. Because the salary portion of faculty's three-year contract with the American Association of University Professors was negotiable, all faculty will be receiving a 1.6 percent raise. A merit raise of 2 percent and a 0.4 percent raise for promotion stipends also was included.
Lambert worked to make world better

By BOB LOWEN
Special to The Hays Daily News

She was born in Emporia, has two bachelor's degrees from the University of Kansas and a master's degree from the University of Wyoming, but don't kid yourself. Jeanne Lambert is a Western Kansas farm girl at heart. Lambert has lived in Hays for more than 30 years now and not only made her mark at Fort Hays State University but also with the Humane Society of the High Plains.

Lambert has a varied and interesting background. Following a two-year stint as a reporter for the Emporia Gazette, she ventured to Garden City where she also did some news reporting and then came to Hays to work for The Hays Daily News for two years. The Casper, Wyo., Morning Star beckoned Lambert in 1957, and she found a new home in Wyoming.

Lambert tried her hand at teaching in Casper and then went to work as a publications editor for the Wyoming Extension Service. A chance to return to teaching drew Lambert back to Kansas, and she served in many teaching and editing capacities for seven years at Garden City Community College.

When a teaching/news bureau director position opened up at Fort Hays State University in 1977, Lambert was an overwhelming choice for the job. Through her work at GCCC, she had earned a statewide reputation as an excellent teacher and editor. Lambert served FHSU for 15 years, teaching many different journalism classes to hundreds of budding young journalists, directing the activities of the News Bureau (or Information Services as it was known for many years) and was a student adviser as well. In the meantime she served the Kansas Scholastic Press Association in many capacities.

One of Lambert's proudest moments came in 1995, when she was inducted into the Kansas Scholastic Journalism Hall of Fame.

Always an animal lover, Lambert has raised several dogs through the years. Someone said Lambert found it very difficult to turn a stray dog away from her doorstep. It was her love of animals that drew Lambert closer and closer to the Humane Society.

A notorious recycler, Lambert's love for birds might also have been as strong as her love for dogs. She made her own feeders from parts of cans or plastic bottles and hung them from tree limbs or whatever she could find to place them on.

After retiring from FHSU, Lambert spent tons of energy helping the Humane Society with its many activities and programs. The highlight of her work there came when she helped write and lobby for a bill that eventually drew national television attention: a bill that prohibited sub-standard kennels in Kansas. It became known as the Puppy Mill bill. Additionally, Lambert served on the society's board of directors.

Lambert helped organize the Hays chapter of the AARP and is one of the original members of the Generations Advisory Group.

Ladies and gentlemen, simply put, Lambert Lambert is a lady who has helped make this big old world a better place in which to live.

By Bob Lowen, Hays, is the former
director of University Relations at FHSU and executive director of the Hays Medical Center Foundation.
Forty-eight University of Kansas students were recently initiated into Mortar Board, a senior honor society. The initiation ceremonies were April 13 at the Kansas Union, followed by a reception at the chancellor’s residence for students and alumni members and their families and invited guests.

Mortar Board members are selected based on ability and achievement in scholarship, leadership and service. Students must have at least a 3.0 grade point average and hold senior status during some or all of the academic year. What became KU’s Mortar Board chapter was founded in 1912 as the Torch senior women’s honor society. In 1924, it affiliated with the national Mortar Board women’s honor society. Mortar Board opened membership to men in 1975. This year, 85 students applied for membership at KU.

A new member is Sasha Roe, daughter of Keith and Bethany Roe, a junior majoring in pre-journalism and a graduate of Mankato High School.
TOPEKA — It will cost more to attend the six state universities in Kansas next year.

The Kansas Board of Regents on Thursday approved tuition increases ranging from 4.9 percent to 6 percent for the universities and extended a program at the University of Kansas that sets a fixed four-year tuition rate for incoming freshmen.

Under the so-called tuition compact, University of Kansas freshmen will pay $229.25 per credit hour this fall, and that rate will not change through the 2011-12 school year. That’s an increase of $244 a semester, or 7.6 percent, more than 2007 freshmen paid.

Juniors, seniors, transfers and graduate students will pay 6 percent more in tuition at Kansas next fall, or an additional $175.50 a semester for a student taking 15 hours. Nonresident juniors, seniors and transfers would pay an additional $460.50 per semester.

The regents also approved a 5.9 percent increase, or $164.55 per credit, for undergraduate students taking 15 hours at Kansas State. In May, Kansas State had proposed imposing most of the increases on juniors and seniors, but that plan was later dropped.

Tuition will not increase for Kansas State students on the university’s Salina campus, which emphasizes technology.
‘Lower tuition increases’ are still an increase

It seems that Kansas University isn’t the only state university trying to put a positive spin on rising tuition rates.

Officials at Kansas State University issued a press release this week indicating that the school was proposing a “lower tuition increase.” The move, it said, was “to respond to difficult economic conditions and concerns from students and their parents.”

The only problem is that the new tuition proposal actually will result in many students paying more than they would have under an earlier proposal taken to the Kansas Board of Regents.

K-State initially proposed to raise tuition by 4.5 percent for resident freshmen and sophomores and 7.3 percent for resident juniors and seniors. ... The plan announced this week is to raise tuition by 5.85 percent across the board. ...

Although it seems disingenuous to portray this as a “lower tuition increase,” K-State, like KU, offers various justifications for its action. The Kansas Legislature gets significant blame for not providing better higher education funding.

Officials also point out that “tuition increases are offset by additional financial aid and more scholarships.”

This Robin Hood approach of taking tuition money from some students and sharing it with students who supposedly are more worthy or in greater need gets surprisingly little attention from higher education officials in spite of the fact that it displays a basic lack of fairness, especially to the students and their families who are scraping together loans and savings to pay full tuition. ...

When the regents consider those rates, they should keep their focus on the effect rising tuition is having on the availability of higher education to Kansas students and the cost of this education for families and students who already are facing severe fiscal challenges. Regents should not be fooled by the tuition spin being served up by university officials.

- The Lawrence Journal World
Connor McMullen has been selected to receive the Max Malin Memorial Scholarship for the 2008-2009 school term at the University of Kansas. He will be in his third year of study toward a bachelor degree in Aerospace Engineering with a minor in business.

Connor is a member of the professional engineering fraternity Theta Tau and has been elected Activities Chair for the 2008-2009 School of Engineering Student Council. He is treasurer of the Experimental Balloon Society and also a Team Lead on a Microgravity team that will spend a week this month in Houston running their experiment in a microgravity airplane.

Connor was involved in many activities while in high school and continues to be an active part of the community of Lawrence where he now lives. He enjoys working with youth as an assistant coach for the Kaw Valley Kids Wrestling Club there.

Connor is the son of Karen McMullen Hageman and the late Patrick McMullen. Other recipients of this scholarship in previous years were Jason Hrabe, Wendy Rohleder, Marcie Rohleder, Rebecca Siefers, Kelly Wilson, Heather Plante and Jessica Casey.

Over $4,000 has been awarded to aid these outstanding graduates of Plainville High School as they continued their education at the University of Kansas.
Flood victims worry: What's in the water?

By ALLEN G. BREED
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

OAKVILLE, Iowa — The floodwaters that deluged much of Iowa have done more than knock out drinking water and destroy homes. They have also spread a noxious brew of sewage, farm chemicals and fuel that could sicken anyone who wades in.

On Monday, Bob Lanz used a 22-foot aluminum flatboat to navigate through downtown Oakville, where water reeked of pig feces and diesel fuel.

"You can hardly stand it," Lanz said as he surveyed what remained of his family's hog farm. "It's strong."

LeRoy Lippert, chairman of emergency management and homeland security in nearby Des Moines County, warned people to avoid the floodwaters: "If you drink this water and live, tell me about it. You have no idea. It is very, very wise to stay out of it. It's as dangerous as anything."

In addition to the poison in the water, there are mosquitoes — millions of them spawning in acres of standing water.

As some of Iowa's flooded towns began cleaning up Monday, others braced for new flooding risks, particularly in southeastern Iowa along the Mississippi River. Most requests for state aid were coming from Des Moines County, where the Mississippi was not expected to crest until Wednesday. The county had asked for a half-million sandbags.

"We have just begun to fight," Gov. Chet Culver said. Two more deaths were reported Monday, including a woman whose car was hit by a National Guard truck, bringing the state's death toll to five.

Elsewhere, damage in the college town of Iowa City appeared limited. Some 400 homes took on water Sunday, and 16 University of Iowa buildings sustained some flood damage over the weekend. But the town's levees were holding and the Iowa River was falling.

Officials in Illinois were building up the approach to the only major bridge over the Mississippi River linking Hamilton with Keokuk, Iowa, so the bridge could stay open despite rising water.

In Cedar Rapids, hazardous conditions forced officials on Monday to stop taking residents into homes where the water had receded. Broken gas lines, sink holes and structural problems with homes made conditions unsafe, said Dave Koch, a city spokesman.

Frustrations spilled over at one checkpoint, where a man was arrested at gunpoint after he tried to drive past police in his pickup truck.

Warnings about the dangers of walking in the polluted water prompted hundreds of people to line up at a downtown clinic Sunday for free tetanus shots.

Teresa Schirm wore latex gloves and shorts as she stood ankle-deep in smelly brown water in her garage in Cedar Rapids.

"You can see the oil on top of the water," she said. "But when you're trying to salvage what little you have left, you do it. I don't know what else to do."

In downtown Cedar Rapids on Monday, all manner of refuse could be seen floating down the Iowa River — 55-gallon drums labeled "corrosive," propane tanks, wooden fences and railroad ties. Dead birds and fish sat on the city's 1st Avenue Bridge.

A few blocks away, a paint store stood with its windows blown out. A line indicating the high-water mark could be seen about eight feet above the floor. At the gas station next door, strong currents had knocked over two pumps. Also mixed into the floodwaters are pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer from Iowa's vast stretches of farmland.

Ken Sharp, environmental health director for the Iowa Department of Public Health, acknowledged that the floodwaters had the potential to make people sick. But he said the sheer volume of water can dilute hazardous substances. "We don't typically see mass cases of disease or illness coming from floodwaters, but under any circumstance like this, we want people to avoid it because we don't know what's in there." The flooding also raised concerns of contamination in rural wells, said G. Richard Olds, professor and chairman of the Medical College of Wisconsin. "For rural folks, it's going to be hard to know if their water's safe or not," he said.

Adding to the misery were mosquitoes, which can breed rapidly in the standing water.

Greg Burg, assistant director of undergraduate biology at the University of Kansas, said the flooding "adds that much more water where they could potentially lay eggs and have the eggs survive." Business was already heating up at Mosquito Control, a company in Rolfe, Iowa, that sprays insecticide from a crop-duster airplane.

"We are already getting several calls that mosquitoes that have finally hatched," said co-owner Rich Welte. "We're hearing from folks around Cedar Rapids and all around the northern half of Iowa."

When the waters rose Sunday in Oakville, a town of 400, Bob Lanz and his family tried to move their pigs out of harm's way. But they could only save a few. Most of their 350 sows and their 800 piglets were lost. The family ripped out canvas ventilation curtains in the barn so the pigs "could at least have a chance," said Logan Lanz, Bob Lanz' grandson. "They were screaming. They were on top of each other. We had some big sows in there. They're frantic, and they run you over."

He said the water was choked with dead piglets.
Pittsburg alumnus recognized during KU awards ceremony

Jesse Niebaum, Pittsburg, was among more than 60 students recognized during the University of Kansas English department annual awards ceremony.

Niebaum, a KU senior pursuing a bachelor of art in English, received the Ilus W. Davis Award for Scholarly Writing and the Harry and Jessie Jacobs Prize in the Humanities.

A Pittsburg High School graduate, he is the son of Tysha Van Becelaere, Pittsburg.