



# KANSAS PRIDE, INC. MARKS NEW MILESTONE

*We've got PRIDE, yes we do!*

Kansas PRIDE has been an extremely important part of community development in Kansas for nearly 50 years. At least one community in every Kansas county, except for one, has participated in Kansas PRIDE at some point in history. This year, a big boost in financial support has been received from the Kansas Masonic Foundation, which will allow much greater levels of participation. The Masonic Foundation has pledged \$1,000,000 to Kansas PRIDE over five years to make an even greater impact in improving community resiliency.

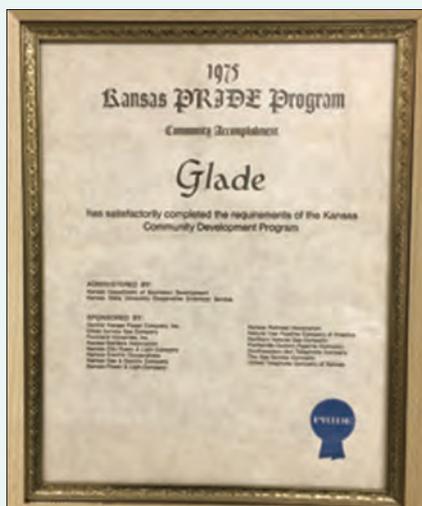
The concept of Kansas PRIDE is attributed to Kansas Governor Robert Docking, who served from 1967 to 1975. The program came together in 1970 under the roof of the Kansas Department of Economic Development, now known as the Kansas Department of Commerce. In 1971, a steering committee was named to make this idea a recognized and highly regarded program that could be used by any and all Kansas communities. P.R.I.D.E. is an acronym for Programming Resources with Initiative for Development Effectiveness. While it might be difficult to fully comprehend what that meant, everyone knows what it means to have Pride. The original program was designed to award cash prizes — to recognize community achievement having substantial progress — and Blue Ribbons for other communities making positive steps toward substantial progress. Community progress was measured in 8 different categories. The Kansas Economic Development Department provided signs, selected judges, did fund-raising and assisted the governor with the presentation of awards, with assistance from the Cooperative Extension Service at Kansas State University.

The steering committee in the first year of Kansas PRIDE recruited communities to participate in the program. Either the committee was very successful in explaining the

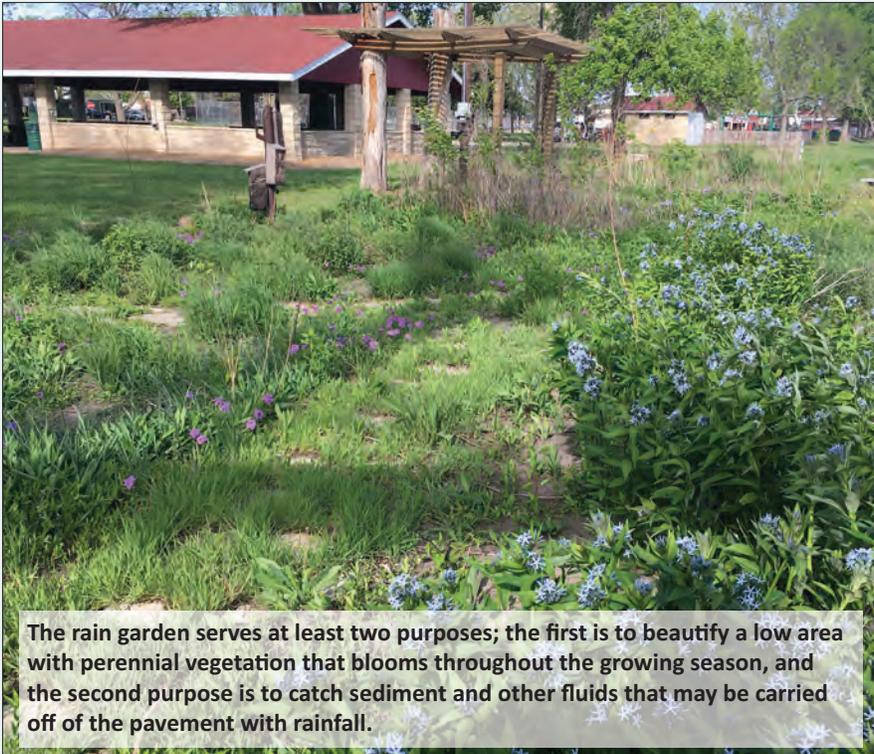


vision, or there was a lot of demand for this kind of assistance. It was likely some of both that explains that a total of 57 communities enrolled this first year in 7 different classes based on population. The first newsletter of Kansas PRIDE made a call for scrapbooks from all of the participants for judging before the first PRIDE awards conference in Topeka. The same newsletter reported that the first Blue Ribbon was awarded to the City of Chanute on July 7, 1971.

The original concept for the operation of PRIDE was to first identify the needs of a community. Often this was done by conducting a survey of the local residents. With the results of this survey or other information, the established PRIDE committee would identify, encourage, and assist if necessary, the local



**The City of Glade in Phillips County, is one of the 57 original communities to participate in Kansas PRIDE. This certificate, signed by Governor Robert Docking on October 20, 1971, hangs in the city office.**



The rain garden serves at least two purposes; the first is to beautify a low area with perennial vegetation that blooms throughout the growing season, and the second purpose is to catch sediment and other fluids that may be carried off of the pavement with rainfall.



The Rossville PRIDE Committee has been very active with city park improvements. The sign above identifies a rain garden installed adjacent to the swimming pool parking lot.

government and other local volunteer organizations to resolve the needs or fulfill the vision. PRIDE committees were encouraged to think big. To encourage communities to do as much as possible, PRIDE committees from communities of like size competed against each other. The most outstanding and substantial progress was rewarded with cash prizes.

In 1975, Newton and Oberlin were recognized as the first communities to be awarded Blue Ribbons in all 8 categories of community proficiency, and were designated as PRIDE Pacemakers. When a community won a Pacemaker Award, it was usually presented at a community banquet with the Kansas Governor in attendance. In 1976, a Youth Involvement Award was created. Spearville and Eureka were the first winners in this category. In 1979, competition in the creation of a silent movie promoting the community was offered. The length of the movie was to be no more than 7 minutes, or two reels of super 8mm color or black-and-white movie film. Courtland PRIDE indicated that they were going to participate and wanted others to join in.

Unfortunately, newsletters printed after the 1979 PRIDE Day make no mention of any movies being created or judged. However, the following year, at least 17 communities expressed a desire to

participate in presentations of photographic slides. Hopefully these are preserved somewhere, and wouldn't it be something to find them posted to YouTube?

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A 9-Hole Disc Golf Course was also installed by Rossville PRIDE in City Park.

It is also noted that the December 1976 PRIDE Newsletter was the first to recognize the many private donors to the PRIDE program. Today, private sponsors are the sole financial contributors to the operation of Kansas PRIDE.

Through the 1980's, many community improvement workshops were held across the state and at the annual Day of PRIDE. Through the 1970's and 1980's, Governors Docking, Bennett and Carlin attended many Days of PRIDE and other award banquets. In 1981, attendance at the Day of PRIDE was estimated to be approximately 700 people.

In 1984, the Kansas Department of Economic Development became the Department of Commerce. With this change and a depressed economy, the type and level of governmental support to Kansas PRIDE by the Department of Commerce and K-State Extension appears to have changed. A big move in the organization of Kansas PRIDE occurred that year when the program was converted from a state government program shared between two agencies

to a corporation, with by-laws identifying the mission, membership, directors and officers. The mission of Kansas PRIDE (Programming Resources with Initiative for Development Effectiveness), Inc. is to empower communities to successfully develop an organizational and leadership structure for community-wide volunteer action for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing community needs and to take action to make their communities better places to live and work. The board of directors is now made up of 21 members, nine of which are from sponsors that have contributed at least \$500 in cash or services and nine directors from PRIDE communities in good standing. The Secretary of the Kansas Department of Commerce (or their designated representative), the Director of K-State Research and Extension (or their designated representative), and a representative from the Kansas League of Municipalities or the Kansas Association of Counties, which serves a two-year staggered term round-out the last three seats.

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Like many organizations, participation in Kansas PRIDE is smaller now than in the past. In a way, PRIDE may be a victim of its own success. Many PRIDE committees have learned how to organize volunteers and volunteer organizations, and instead of maintaining their enrollment in Kansas PRIDE, many have decided to focus their attention on their community. Today, Kansas PRIDE has a more basic, focused approach toward community development with communities looking for direct assistance.

The Kansas PRIDE program is directly supported by three full-time staff and (usually) a student intern at K-State Extension and Research. This staff, with the assistance of local extension agents, provide strategic planning assistance and give presentations and workshops. The Kansas Department of Commerce has six Regional Project Managers that are part of the Business and Community Development Assistance Team that also contribute expertise and training to volunteer community leadership. Financially, the Kansas Masonic

**Financially, the Kansas Masonic Foundation has pledged to provide \$200,000 per year for five years to support local communities across the state through Kansas PRIDE.**

Foundation has pledged to provide \$200,000 per year for five years to support local communities across the state through Kansas PRIDE. The Dane G. Hansen Foundation has also supported the First Impressions program, starting in Northwest Kansas which was implemented in 32 communities in 2015-16. After a very successful implementation of this program, it has been expanded statewide to another 19 communities. Other private sponsors providing at least \$500 are Kansas Gas Service,

Westar Energy, Atmos Energy, Midwest Energy, Inc., Casey's General Stores, Kansas Bankers Association, Black Hills Energy, Blue Valley Telecommunications, NetworksPlus, Hutton Construction, Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline, Kansas Foods LLC, Tri-County Telephone Association (TCT) and Kansas Rural Water Association. Many of these sponsors have been with Kansas PRIDE since the beginning. KRWA has been a member since approximately 1990. KRWA's support is \$1,500 annually.

The motto of Kansas PRIDE is, "Vibrant Communities with a Positive Future." Guiding this goal, Kansas PRIDE encourages communities to identify and support the seven capitals of community vitality. These are: Built Capitals, such as downtown buildings and parks; Natural Capitals such as the local river or the public water system's aquifer; Cultural Capitals such as a unique ethnic or historical heritage; Financial Capitals such as a local foundation; Social Capitals such as fairs and festivals; Human Capitals such as food banks, health fairs and

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blood drives; and, Political Capitals such as leadership training opportunities through 4-H, Scouting, etc. Many capitals in a community overlap categories, such as an annual Czech Festival which build upon two or three and maybe four different capitals.

The First Impressions program groups participating communities together to give and receive feedback regarding what a visitor sees, hears and feels when they visit the other community for the first time. Fresh sets of eyes and ears can give valuable information about the community's park and its picnic facilities or other eating options. Is there a peeling or faded sign a mile or so out of town for a closed business telling visitors to pass through? Is there something missing that could convince a visitor to spend a few more valuable minutes in your community or to come back for a longer visit? With this important information, the local Kansas PRIDE committee can spur residents and other community organizations into action.

To help new or re-establishing PRIDE committees get on their feet,

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Kansas PRIDE provides grants to help meet operational expenses in the amount of \$200. To qualify for these competitive Growth and Action Awards, committees must registered in the program, have a signed resolution of support from their local government body, and be up-to-date with quarterly reporting requirements. In 2016, the cities of Delia, Linn Valley, Elk City, Columbus and McPherson received these awards from Kansas PRIDE.

### PRIDE Stars

Established PRIDE committees can be recognized for outstanding progress with community projects. PRIDE STAR Capital Awards were given to Lucas PRIDE in the Financial category for securing a trust to fund future local community projects. PRIDE committees from Rossville, Delia and Lenora were recognized for Social Capital improvements. Perry and Delia PRIDE committees enhanced the Cultural Capitals of their communities. The Iola PRIDE committee was recognized for enhancing a Natural Capital by creating a disc golf course. Delia worked on the local school library and made improvements to the community building to be recognized in the Human and Built Capitals and Lenora was recognized in the Human Capital category by scheduling and promoting a local blood drive.

The Partners in PRIDE program is available to PRIDE communities that are also enrolled and up-to-date with their quarterly reports, and have been designated by Kansas PRIDE as a Community of Excellence. Eleven PRIDE committees were able to secure

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\$12,545 of funding through Kansas PRIDE to help fund park and swimming pool improvements, historical building restoration, entrance signage and pavilion lighting. Communities benefiting from this grant funding are Ashland, Highland, Lecompton, McFarland, Randolph, Rossville, Grainfield, Larned, Lenora, Leonardville and Lucas.

Week of PRIDE, which is usually held in May, is an effort to encourage PRIDE committees to implement projects that involve as many people as possible in their communities. In recent years, 4-H clubs have been invited to participate with their 48 Hours of 4-H outreach effort in conjunction with the statewide Week of PRIDE. In 2016, reports were received that 356 adults and 315 youth (many from fifteen 4-H clubs) worked on community projects in 36 Kansas communities.

Small communities significantly contribute to the economy and social well being of Kansas residents. To ignore the need and local desire for assistance to improve community vitality is to ignore the seeds for the future success of Kansas. If you want

your community to not only survive but thrive, see if Kansas PRIDE can help. If you know a local business who needs local communities to be successful to maintain their success, share this information with them. If your community has benefited from Kansas PRIDE, be sure to thank any or all the financial sponsors of Kansas PRIDE for their vision. KRWA intends to be associated with this beneficial program for as long as Kansas PRIDE continues to serve the needs of local communities.

More information about the details of Kansas Pride can be found online at <http://kansasprideprogram.k-state.edu/> and also <http://www.kansascommerce.com/index.aspx?NID=123>.

*Douglas S. Helmke has been the Water Rights Tech at KRWA since June 2000, and also a Wellhead / Sourcewater Protection Tech since 2003. He holds professional geologist certification in Kansas and Missouri. Doug*



*received a bachelor degree in geology from Kansas State University.*



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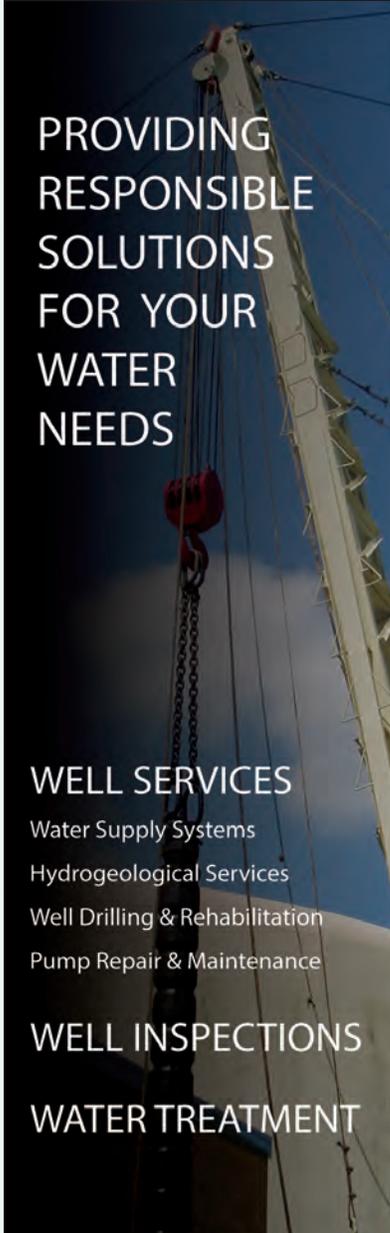
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