

Rice County continues economic growth in 2017

By RYAN CARLSON
Rice County Economic Development continued in 2017 with the opening of several businesses and infrastructure improvements. In January a project to pour concrete on Foundry Road from Highway 56 to the KSTW Tractor Plant east of Lyons neared completion. The project not only provided better access to the facility, but also dramatically increased the turn safety for farmers and other traffic seeking to turn onto the road. In March Jacam Founder Gene Zaid announced his next project, Hyatt Life Sciences. The company seeks to produce plant based health supplements to increase health and vitality. The company is an addition to Zaid's already existent Genzada pharmaceutical corporation which is working on plant based medicines to treat various types of

cancer. Along with a new office space at the intersection of Broadway and Main in Sterling, the company is also constructing new greenhouses to grow their product on Avenue V east of Sterling. In May Robertson's Pest Control, a company which has existed in Lyons since 1957, announced a changing of hands. Former owner Garlan Old passed the business to his son-in-law Matt Ankerholz and daughter Hollie Ankerholz. Together Matt and Hollie brought a combined 23 years of experience to the company. June marked a period of expansion for the Rice County sportsman's Club north of Lyons. The club needed the ability to handle more clay target shooters due to several high school teams using it for practice. The project to build a new trap shooting area cost around \$20,000 and Rice County Community

Foundation provided around \$1,000 of that in a grant. In June City of Lyons completed a project to extend a sidewalk on the south side of Highway 56 west from Wendy's to Shopko. Business owners paid for the materials and City of Lyons provided the labor. An estimated 110 yards of concrete was used for the project. Work began in June to remove air obstacles around the Lyons Rice County Municipal Airport after months of closure of the 4,400 linear foot runway. The obstacles included five power poles, tree lines and a large compost pile. The effort included farmer Harlen Ebright and electrical company Midwest Energy. In July City of Chase undertook a project to replace playground equipment. In total the project cost around \$43,000. Some of that money was donated

by USD 401 alumnae. Sterling saw the opening of Dos Amigos, a new Mexican restaurant, in August. The restaurant opened in the former location of Jethros Steakhouse, also known to many as Paddy's. The restaurant is owned by Latashia Gutierrez and her husband Jesus. In September City of Lyons conducted a project to replace sewer lines. 1,000 feet of sewer line was replaced by Layne Inliner along North Douglass. The new pipe generally lasts for up to 100 years. In September the Bob Bethel Car Show, held annually in Alden, saw an increase in participation from 76 in 2016 to 93 in 2017. The car show is named after the late Bob Bethel, who was an Alden resident and Kansas legislator. In October Minix Realty moved their office to

112 West 1st Street behind the Lyons Post Office. The Minix family had done business in their West Avenue North office for 44 years, but decided to use one of their rental homes that had recently become unoccupied. In November the Gather Restaurant held their first ever chamber coffee at the Bar K Bar Arena. The Gather Restaurant has long existed in Ellinwood but decided to branch out into Lyons with a location at the arena. December saw the opening of the new Brew 56 coffee house on the north side of the Rice County Courthouse Square. The business was opened by retired Sterling College professor Mark Clark and his family. Along with normal coffee drinks the location also serves as a tap house serving various craft beers.



The Woydziak Do It Best staff is ready to help you. Woydziak Do It Best is undertaking a complete remodel of their hardware store, replacing many older items with new up to date stock as well as making the shopping experience easier for their customers. Pictured are (L-R): Danica Huddleston, Cami Ryan, Andrew Taverner, Jacob Cain, Matthew Westenfeld, Jason Black, Jason Huddleston, and Hayden Huddleston.

Woydziak Hardware continues remodel

By RYAN CARLSON
After seven years of ownership, Jason and Danica Huddleston are in the midst of remodeling Woydziak Do It Best Hardware. The remodel began in January of 2017 and still continues. The remodel is a major undertaking because the store is looking at every item and deciding if they should keep it in stock or replace it

with something more modern. As of this writing the store is around 50 percent complete. "It will go quite a bit faster now because we are through we are through some of the hard little bitty pieces like nuts and bolts," said Jason. The first part of the remodel was lawn and garden. In the past that section was towards the back of the store. The Huddlestons moved it

to the front and added an extra door to their lawn and garden center located on the south side of the building. To date around 6,000 to 8,000 SKUs have been added to the stores stock. Every SKU represents a new product. Woydziak has existed in it's current location for over 30 years and since that time has never had a major remodel such as this. Some

of the product was found to be unsalable. "It's given us a chance to bring in new products that people need, or may not know they even needed because they never saw it before," said Huddleston. Professional merchandisers recommend a full store remodel every five years. The primary reason is changes in technology and materials used in products. Other reasons are

to make certain products stand out. Jason said "If you don't do those remodels you are stuck in the old days," said Huddleston. Along with the remodel in products, the store is also changing its look. A local craftsman has taken pallets used for products at Woydziak and turned them into isle markers. Those markers are painted blue and white in honor of the Lyons Lions.

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Woydziak **Do It Best** Hardware

109 W. Avenue South • Lyons, Kansas 67554 • (620) 257-2131
Monday -Saturday, 8-6:30 & Sunday, 11:30-5