

## TURNING 65 IN 2015?

Are you turning 65 in 2015? PLAN AHEAD to do the steps necessary to enroll in Medicare A & B

### 1. Contact Social Security to enroll in Medicare.

Three months before your 65th birth month call Social Security to enroll in Medicare A & B. Another alternative is to enroll on the internet at the Social Security web site: [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov) Call the *Manhattan Social Security Office* at 877-840-5741, 9am-3pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday; Wednesday-(9am-Noon). Or call the *Salina Social Security Office* at 877-405-3494. The same office days and hours apply at this office. It is wise to be one of the first calls of the day.

If you are already getting a Social Security check, you may receive your Medicare card automatically.

### 2. Investigate Medicare Supplement Plans (Medigap Insurance)

Medicare beneficiaries are responsible for Medicare Part A & B deductibles and coinsurances. Selecting a Supplement insurance can lower these costs.

The Kansas Insurance Department publishes a *Medicare Supplement Insurance Shopper's Guide* which is available free in the District Extension Offices. It lists the various Plans A-N available and companies that handle these plans. The Guide is available on-line at [www.ksinsurance.org](http://www.ksinsurance.org)

### 3. Investigate a Medicare Advantage Plan if desired.

Advantage plans are not standardized compared to Supplement health plans. The Medicare web site [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) has information and premiums on these health plans along with being listed in *The Medicare and You* book. Some Advantage Plans have a prescription drug plan included in them. Make sure the health care providers you use accept the advantage plan that you are considering before enrolling in it.

Make a wise decision between a Supplement and Advantage Plan in a health plan.

### 4. Shop and Enroll in a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan.

Part D Plans cover outpatient prescriptions. Private insurance companies offer these plans. The medicines covered on each formulary and restrictions on specific drugs vary among insurance companies. Every Part D Plan has co-pays, premiums, and some have a deductible.

**New to Medicare Enrollment Period** for Supplemental or Advantage Plan Insurance and Part D Plans are three months before your birth month, birth month, and three months after your birth month. Medicare beneficiaries are under a special enrollment period and guaranteed acceptance in the plans during this period of time. Make a wise decision on your Supplement or Advantage Plan that you enroll in. If you decide to change to a different plan within that same company or to a plan with a different company, you will have to complete and pass a health survey.

Enroll in a Plan the month before you want it to be effective. If you are new to Medicare in April, shop for a Part D Plan ahead of time, but enroll in March for it to be effective April 1st. The Supplemental and Advantage Plan companies will instruct you when to enroll to have continuous health care coverage.

Every person can change to a different Part D plan effective the following month. The annual Part D Enrollment is October 15th-December 7th.

### 5. Take you Medicare Card, Supplement, or Advantage Plan Card to your health care provider when you have an appointment. Also, take your Medicare Part D card to the pharmacy when you visit.

Contact a SHICK Counselor for assistance in shopping and enrolling in a Health Plan and Medicare Part D Plan!

## JANUARY 2015

### Volume 10 #1

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[www.rivervalley.ksu.edu](http://www.rivervalley.ksu.edu)

## AVAILABLE FOR MEDICARE QUESTIONS

Have questions or concerns about your 2015 Medicare Part D Plan or other Medicare questions?

Deanna Turner will answer questions and be in the following Extension Offices on these dates in January:

Clay Center— Friday, January 2, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.  
Belleville— Monday, January 5, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
Concordia— Tuesday, January 6, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.  
Washington— Wednesday, Jan. 7, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Call for an appointment at your local office if you need assistance. You may also call and leave a message at the Clay Center Office, 785-632-5335. Deanna will return your call to answer questions or set up an appointment. Deanna, Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) Counselor, comes to Washington once a month to address questions. Additional upcoming dates are February 18<sup>th</sup> and March 18<sup>th</sup>. Call the Washington Office if you need an appointment. Deanna provides service to the other District Offices upon request throughout the year.

## BECOME A SHICK COUNSELOR

Want to help people? Become a Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) Counselor. SHICK is a program of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.

The rewards are numerous helping Medicare beneficiaries in your county enroll in Medicare Part D Plans during the Open Enrollment October 15- December 7th.

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas provides, free, unbiased, and confidential assistance to Kansans who have questions about Medicare and related insurance issues. Beginning counselors take two days of training and a self-study at home. Returning counselors attend a one day update training every year plus take two on-line short courses. The training all helps to answer questions for Medicare beneficiaries. Often the training is in Manhattan and counselors carpool. Deanna will be happy to guide and mentor new SCHICK Counselors in the River Valley District.

During the Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D Plans, Deanna coordinates the Medicare Part D appointments at the District Extension Offices where she and one or more counselors take appointments. A couple of Enrollment Events were held at the Belleville Public Library in partnership with the North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging SHICK Counselors. RSVP Volunteers counseled Medicare beneficiaries in the Washington District Office.

Contact Deanna if you are interested in becoming a SHICK Counselor. She will be happy to answer any questions and provide more information. Call today!

## THANKS SHICK COUNSELORS!

A big thanks to these SHICK counselors who helped Medicare beneficiaries shop and enroll in Medicare Part D Prescription Plans this fall. The Counselors are worth their weight in gold!

**Belleville-** Judy Uphoff  
Crystal Cosand  
**Concordia-** Gertrude Poe  
**Clay Center-** Jim Beck  
Verna Lee Mussleman  
Nola Unruh  
**Washington-** RSVP Volunteers  
Melanie Hawkinson  
Phil Osborne  
Lucy Papes  
Joni Spellmeier, Director

North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging-  
(Counseled in Belleville & Clay Center)

Cindy Brake  
Karen Mayes  
Marsha Rodgers, SHICK Coordinator

## VOLUNTEERING GOOD FOR MIND AND BODY

People age 50 and older increased their longevity and reduced their risk of depression by volunteering. Better overall health was reported by the volunteers in a recent review of 73 studies. Volunteering 2 to 3 hours per week provided the healthy perks. The best type of volunteering was the experience where a person is socially and mentally stimulated and physically active within their own ability according to researchers.

*Deanna Turner, Clay Center Office*

## BASIC PARENTING CLASSES

Being a parent in today's world is no easy task. The KSU-River Valley Extension office in Concordia and Heart Choices are teaming together to offer a series of four "Basic Parenting" classes. The classes will encourage discussion and sharing among the participants while covering topics such as: care for self, understanding, nurturing, guiding, motivating, and advocating for your child. All classes will be from 6-8:00 p.m. on the first 4 Tuesday evenings in March (March 3, 10, 17, and 24). For the location of the classes and more information, contact the RVD Extension office in Concordia at 785-243-8185. There is no charge.

*Patricia Gerhardt, Concordia Office*

## WHY TEENS BOYCOTT FAMILY OUTINGS



There comes a time in almost every family when a teenager no longer wants to go on outings with their family. They may consider such outings to be childish and prefer to be with their

friends. It can make parents feel upset and angry. Parents may feel like it's a rejection of the family when, in reality, it is a natural expression of growing independence.

There are several things a parent can do to make the family outing more appealing, so that the teen wants to be involved. Let the youth be involved in the planning of the outing so that he/she feels more a part of it. Encourage the teen to invite a friend to join the family on the outing, if appropriate. At times, it's also acceptable to allow the teen to skip a family outing. Depending on the youth's age and maturity, it may be all right for the teen to stay alone or with a friend's family or with relatives.

It's important to recognize that when a teen would rather not join the family outing, it's not a rejection of the family unit, but a necessary part of growing up. As this need for independence is recognized, there probably will come a time when the teen will again want to join in with the family.

## STRAPPED FOR CASH???

If money is tight and you are wanting to make your dollars stretch further in 2015 then join us for 'Money Management Tips and Techniques' in January.



Rodney Denholm of the Consumer Credit Counseling Service in Salina will be presenting this program:

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Astra Bank, Belleville

Monday, January 12, 2015

Courthouse, Concordia

Both programs are 6:30-8:00 p.m.

The programs are free and the public is encouraged to attend. To make sure we have sufficient program materials available, pre-registration is requested by calling the River Valley District Extension office in Concordia (785-243-8185) at least 2 days in advance of the class.

*Patricia Gerhardt, Concordia Office*

## LOOKING AT THE PAST WHILE PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Janus, the god for whom January is named, is pictured with two faces. One face looks forward, the other backward. With 2015 newly begun, here is an exercise that couples can use to review where they've been and where they're going.

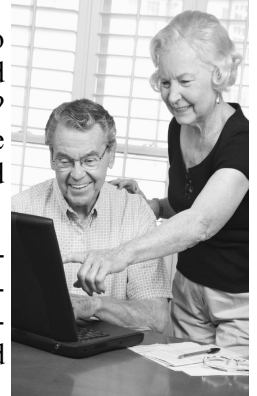
*Looking Back...*

What are some things you can celebrate about your life together? How has your relationship grown or developed?

*Looking Forward...*

What are your plans or goals for the two of you in the upcoming year? What would you like to see accomplished this year? How (or what) are you willing to change so your relationship is more nurturing and satisfying?

Take this opportunity to do some reflection of the past and planning for your future as a couple. Remember that unconditional love requires trust, appreciation and self-discipline.



## HELPING A FRIEND THROUGH TOUGH TIMES

What do you say when you don't know what to say? Many of us find it easiest not to say anything... But does that really show your support and care for that person? Here are some ideas about how to offer help when others have experienced a loss or a trying situation:

\*Instead of asking 'how are you?' immediately when you greet a person, wait until you've chatted a bit. Then pause and ask, "How are things going?" or "How are you doing?". Allow plenty of time for the person to answer.

\*Let the person know you care and are thinking about him/her. A note in the mail or phone call with a simple "I'm thinking of you and wondering how you're doing" can mean a great deal.

\*Sometimes a physical gesture, such as a hug or an arm around the shoulder can convey more than any words.

\*Be aware of especially stressful times for the person, such as visiting a doctor, a lawyer, or banker. Call a few hours later to see how they are doing. Confidentiality is essential, so let the person know you'll keep his/her comments to yourself. It may be a good idea to find a time and place where the two of you can talk and won't be interrupted or overheard. Talking through a situation often starts the healing process.

\*Don't become discouraged if the person doesn't want to talk. Continue to be available and let the person know you care.

Being there for a friend can offer hope that troubled times will pass and better days are ahead.

## LIGHT BULBS IN THE HOME

The light bulbs of today are not like the light bulbs of yesterday. With lighting typically making up 25% of a homeowner's electricity bill, it's important to understand the different types of light bulbs available. Today's market typically offers three types of bulbs to select from for the home: incandescent, compact fluorescent (CFL), and light emitting diode (LED).



Incandescent light bulbs are the ones we are most familiar with. Developed by Thomas Edison in 1879, these bulbs use a tungsten metal wire (aka filament) that heats up and glows brightly to produce light when electricity flows through the wire. These bulbs are quite inefficient, converting

up to 90% of the electricity they consume into heat. This is obvious by how hot the bulb gets after being lit for awhile! These bulbs last typically 1,000 to 1,500 hours.

Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL) use electrodes located at the ends of a glass tube filled with argon and mercury gases. The gases allow electrons to flow to and from the electrodes, transferring energy to the gases. This energy then reacts with a phosphor coating inside the glass tube which gives out light. Very little heat is produced allowing the bulb to use very little energy so the electrical cost is less. CFL bulbs will operate approximately 10,000 hours before needing to be replaced. However, they must be disposed of properly because of the small amount of mercury in them.



Light emitting diodes (LEDs) produce light with a chemical chip embedded in a plastic capsule. Voltage is applied to negatively charged semiconductors, causing electrons to combine and create a unit of light, known as a photon. Several LEDs are usually combined to produce a single light bulb. LED's are the latest lighting technology and are most efficient and longer lasting, up to about 20,000 hours.



In January of 2014, the above three types of 60 watt light bulbs were purchased and tested with the following results:

	Incandescent	CFL	LED
brightness (lumens)	830	800	800
est. yearly cost (3 hrs/day \$.11/KWh)	\$7.23	\$1.69	\$1.26
Cost per bulb	\$.49	\$1.74	\$9.97
Life (yrs)3 hrs/day	1.4	9.1	18.3
Life (hours)	1,500	10,000	20,000

Of the three bulbs, the incandescent was the only one able to be dimmed. The incandescent and LED do not contain mercury like the CFL. All three lights were able to be turned on instantly.

For more information on "Home Light Bulb Use", contact your River Valley Extension District office and ask for publication #4H1064 (December 2014) or find the publication on the website [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu).

## NOW'S THE TIME TO TEST FOR RADON

Winter, when our homes are closed up, is the best time of year to test for radon. This odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of lung cancer. In fact, it causes more deaths every year than carbon monoxide poisoning.

The soil our homes are built on here in north-central Kansas is notoriously high in radon. It doesn't matter whether your home is old or new. It matters what kind of soil the house was erected on. As uranium in the soil decomposes, it becomes radon gas and seeps into buildings through cracks in the foundation. Once breathed and in the lungs, the radon gas acts like a spark, zapping lung tissue, and causing mutations which can lead to lung cancer.

Testing for radon is easy, inexpensive, and something every homeowner should do. Test kits, instructions and informational literature are available at each of the RVD Extension offices in Belleville, Clay Center, Concordia, and Washington. If radon is detected to be at a dangerous level, it can be taken care of by the homeowner or a licensed contractor.

*Patricia Gerhardt, Concordia Office*

## YOUR NEW YEARS RESOLUTION SHOULDN'T JUST BE FOR YOU

It's that time of year again. The time of year we make resolutions for the changes we want to see in the New Year. For many of us these resolutions have to do with weight loss and exercise. However, this year don't make your resolution just for you. This year get your family involved. Statistics show that the majority of Americans do not get enough physical activity and spend too much time in front of screens. When making your resolution this year get your family involved. Try to limit screen time to two hours or less a day. This includes computers, cell phones, TV, and video games. Try to increase physical activity for everyone in the family. Children need an hour of physical activity a day. Adults need at least 30 minutes.



If your family isn't reaching these targets then think about what you need to do to make that happen.

Make changes a little at a time. This will help everyone buy into them and increase your chances of being more successful. Pick activities you can do as a family like go for a bike ride, take a walk, or jump rope. Encourage each other. Some families turn it into a friendly competition.

Once your goal gets easy then set a new goal. The great thing about this is that you are setting in place habits that can help your children throughout their lifetime. Make this year's resolution one that benefits the entire family.

## MUSIC TO MAKE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION ROCK

If your New Year's Resolution involved physical activity you may be looking for music to help keep you motivated and moving at a good pace. Music can help distract you from fatigue, elevate your mood, help increase your endurance, and some studies suggest it may even help promote metabolic efficiency. Studies have shown that when listening to music while exercising people run farther, bike longer and swim faster than usual and often without realizing it.

When warming up or cooling down select songs that have a 80-90 beats per minute (bpm) range. As your workout picks up look for songs that are in the 120-140 bpm range. You can use [songbpm.com](http://songbpm.com) or Google to find out the tempo of songs you may want to use.

Be cautious when wearing headphones. Watch the volume. Ear bud style head phones don't block out outside noise so people tend to turn up the volume to block out distractions. After a while this can be bad for your hearing. When exercising outside it is important not to wear your headphones so that you can hear traffic and things around you.

If you are looking for workout songs try "Workout Songs: What's on Your Exercise Playlist?" by [billboard.com](http://billboard.com). You can also try "100 Best Workout Songs in the World" by Fitness magazine.

*Walk Nebraska: Adding Music to Workout Routines*

## STRESS

We just got done with the holidays. Those should be times of fun and happiness, but they can also create stress. Stress can occur at all times of the year and can come from many areas of our lives. According to a survey from the American Psychological Association the top causes of stress in the U.S are money and work related pressures. Stress can also come from major life changes like the death of a loved one, divorce, a major accident, or a natural disaster. Being a caregiver can also be a source of stress.

In small doses stress can be good for you. The hormones that are released when you feel stressed help prepare you for action. You breathe quicker, your heart rate quickens, your blood sugar rises to give you energy and your brain uses more oxygen to keep you alert. However, if the stress continues then it becomes harmful to your body rather than helpful. Stress can affect the body's immune system and has also been linked to digestive disorders, urinary problems, headaches, sleep difficulties, depression, and anxiety.

What can you do to help cope with stress in a positive manner? **1<sup>st</sup>** : Get enough sleep. Go to bed at the same time each night and try not to use electronics like your phone or computer for at least a half an hour before bed as the light from them can help reduce your body's supply of melatonin. **2<sup>nd</sup>**: Build a social network. Take time to develop relationships with people who you can talk with and share your feelings. Spend some time each week with people that are there for you. **3<sup>rd</sup>**: Set priorities. Decide what really needs to be done and what can wait until later. Don't take on new tasks if you are already overwhelmed by those tasks that you have.

**4th**: Think positive. Take time to note what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you didn't get done. **5th**: Try relaxation methods. Mindfulness, meditation, yoga, or tai chi can all be helpful methods of relaxation. **6th**: Seek help. Talk to a mental health professional if you feel that you are unable to cope, have suicidal thoughts, or tend to turn to drugs or alcohol to cope.

By reducing the stress in your life you can enjoy your time doing the activities you truly cherish and enjoy the people you really care about. *NIH News in Health Dec. 2014*

## COCONUT OIL: THE NEXT WONDER FOOD?

By now you have probably read about the wonderful health benefits of coconut oil. In the media you can find many uses and proponents listing all the valuable things coconut oil can do. But is it really as good as it sounds?

Coconut oil is a saturated fat. Saturated fats have been shown to increase the risk of heart disease and to raise the level of LDL cholesterol. LDL cholesterol is the "bad" cholesterol. Coconut oil has been shown to raise the level of HDL or good cholesterol. However, it is still a fat. Most of us have way too much fat in our diets to begin with. The American Heart Association recommends that we eat between 25-35% of our daily calories from fat and that less than 7% should come from saturated fats. So that means in a 2,000 calorie a day diet less than 600 calories should come from fat and of those less than 42 calories should be from saturated fat.

Coconut oil does have the same cooking properties as butter, but without the cholesterol. Some experts feel that it is a good substitute for butter in some cases. However, experts tend to agree that it isn't some kind of magic bullet and that it is best to use coconut oil in moderation just like any other fat in your diet.

## SLOW COOKER FOOD SAFETY

Slow cookers can be life savers for busy families. Having dinner ready to eat when you walk in the door on your way to another activity can be a blessing, but it's just as important to follow food safety rules with slow cookers as it is with any food preparation method.

Slow cookers cook at low temperatures, usually between 170 and 280 degrees F. The direct heat from the cooker with lengthy cooking time and the steam in a tightly sealed container combine to destroy bacteria and make this a safe cooking process.

Always use thawed meat and poultry in a slow cooker. It's important to follow the manufacturer's directions for your slow cooker. Do not over fill the slow cooker to ensure proper cooking.

Resist the temptation to take the lid off frequently. It can take up to an hour for the cooker to return to the proper temperature.

*Gina Aurand, Belleville Office*

## GROWING TRANSPLANTS? START EARLY!

Here in the dead of winter gardening is often the last thing on our minds. However, for those that want to grow their own transplants, now is the time to start planning. North Carolina State University put out a really nice publication several years ago entitled "Starting Plants from Seeds," HIL-8703. The following table was adapted from that material and gives the number of weeks ahead of transplanting to the flower or vegetable garden that one should start seeds indoors. It also gives the ideal temperature that should be maintained in order for the seeds to germinate well. Thanks to Ward Upham, K-State Research and Extension, Horticulture Rapid Response Specialist for adapting this chart.

Plant	Number of Weeks Seed to Transplant	Germination Temperature
Ageratum	8	70
Alyssum	8	70
Aster	6	70
Begonia	12 or more	70
Celosia	8	70
Centuria	6	65
Coleus	8	65
Cosmos	4 or less	70
Dahlia	8	70
Dianthus	10	70
Geranium	12 or more	70
Impatiens	10	70
Larkspur	12 or more	70
Marigold	6	70
Pansy	12 or more	65
Petunia	10	70
Phlox	8	65
Snapdragon	10	65
Verbena	10	65
Vinca	12 or more	70
Zinnia	6	70
Broccoli	8	70
Cabbage	8	70
Cauliflower	8	70
Cucumber	4 or less	85
Eggplant	8	70
Lettuce	8	70
Muskmelon	4 or less	70
Pepper	8	80
Squash	4 or less	85
Tomato	6	80
Watermelon	4 or less	85

### LOCATING TOMATO SEEDS

Gardeners who start tomatoes from seed often have difficulty locating a source for specific varieties. We have put together a table identifying sources for all of the tomatoes we recommend at <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/L41.pdf>\*. We have also included a number of other newer varieties that have done well in tomato trials as well as a few heirlooms. We could not include all possible sources of seed but tried to include the more common companies used by home gardeners. The document can be found at <http://www.hfr.ksu.edu/doc3643.ashx>. Note the first page identifies varieties and sources and the second page gives the web address and phone number for each company.

### PLAN NOW TO PRUNE & SPRAY FRUIT TREES

Home gardeners with one or just a few fruit trees often stop in throughout the summer with questions on fruit problems or a leaf sample for me to take a look at. We can almost always identify the problem, either in the office or by sending the sample to our diagnostic labs. However, the window of opportunity to prevent the problem is almost always long past.

Home Gardeners should begin to plan now for good fruit production by picking up two bulletins at the local extension office. The first is C592, Fruit Pest Control for Home Gardens. This bulletin has a wealth of information from safe handling of pesticides, to explaining the difference between organic, inorganic, and synthetic pesticides, to controlling nuisance pests such as mice and birds. An invaluable part of this bulletin is the Fruit Tree Spray Schedule that gives a nice guide of what to spray and when for the common fruit diseases and insects.

Any spray job will be much easier to accomplish if the trees are properly pruned. Therefore, the second bulletin to pick up is c631, Pruning Fruit Trees. This bulletin does a really nice job in describing and showing with line drawings proper pruning techniques for the various fruit trees commonly grown in Kansas.



*John Forshee, Clay Center Office*

## LEACHING HOUSEPLANTS

Regular fertilization of houseplants is recommended to keep them healthy and growing and give them vibrant, green color. However, over time, the side-effects of heavy fertilization can create some problems for the plants that must be addressed.

Houseplant fertilizers must be some formulation of a salt in order for the plant to take them up as a nutrient and access the nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium it needs. Houseplants have a limited volume of soil in pots that does not change until the plant is repotted. With heavy fertilization over time these salts can build to a level that can harm roots and lead to scorched leaves. There are basically two options to remedy this situation.

The first is to repot the plant, replacing as much of the planting medium as possible.

The second is removal of the salts. This is a two-step process. If the salts have formed a white crust on the surface, simply remove the top ¼ inch of the potting soil and discard. Next, simply leach the excess salts out by running water through pot. Place the pot outdoors if temperatures are warm or in a sink or bathtub during colder weather. Slowly pour water through the pot using a volume of water that is twice the volume of the pot. For example, if the pot is approximately one gallon then one would use two gallons of water to leach the salts. Allow the water to drain and use new planting medium to bring the soil back to the desired level in the pot.

## AREA IN-DEPTH FARM BILL MEETINGS

The information for the area In-depth Farm Bill Meetings to be put on by K-State Research and Extension, Agricultural Economics on January 20, 2015 at the Ambassador Hotel in Salina, and February 12, 2015 at the Annunciation Cigna Center in Frankfort can be found at

<http://www.agmanager.info/events/FarmBill>

**You must register with the host county to guarantee admittance to the meeting and receive materials.**

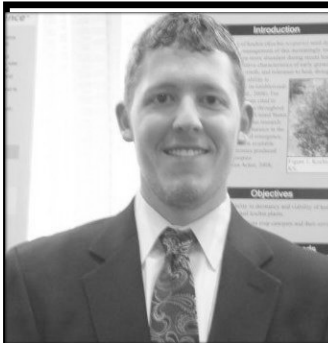
## REGISTER NOW FOR UPCOMING WINTER BEEF PROGRAMS

**2015 Winter Ranch Management Seminar—Building Better Replacements** will be held January 15 in the Student Union of the NCK Technical College in Beloit. The cost is \$10 per person and is due to any RVED office by January 9th. Make checks payable to the Post Rock Extension District.

**2015 KSRE Calving Clinic**— will be held on January 14 at the Webster Conference Center in Salina from 6 to 9 p.m. The cost is \$10 and is due to any RVED office by January 7th with checks payable to Central Kansas District.

For more information contact John Forshee, Katelyn Brockus, or stop by any River Valley Extension Office. Registration at both sites includes meals and materials.

## NC KANSAS EXPERIMENT FIELD WELCOMES ESSER AS AGRONOMIST-IN-CHARGE



Andrew Esser has been hired as the new Agronomist-in-Charge at the Kansas State University North Central Experiment Field in Belleville and Irrigation Experiment Field in Scandia. He began his duties at the fields on Dec. 1, 2014.

Andrew is from Lenexa, Kansas. He received his B.S. in Agronomy from Kansas State University in 2011. While working on his bachelor's degree, he worked as an undergraduate research assistant in the Department of Horticulture under Dr. Sunghun Park.

He then received his M.S. in Agronomy- Weed Ecology from K-State in 2014, under Dr. Anita Dille. His thesis was titled "Maternal environmental factors influencing kochia seed characteristics." His field research was conducted at the Kansas State Agricultural Research Center in Hays, Kansas.

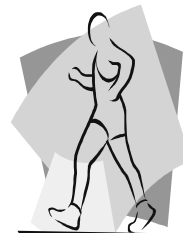
Since graduating with his master's degree, he worked in Boise, ID with J.R. Simplot Plant Sciences as the Commercial Agronomy Intern. He helped manage research trials involving Simplot's new Innate potato. Andrew states he is "looking forward to serving as the agronomist at the experiment fields." His main goal as the lead agronomist for the experiment fields is "providing relevant agronomic research to North Central Kansas." We welcome Andrew to the area and are excited about his leadership at the experiment fields.

## WALK KANSAS

**MARCH 15-MAY 9, 2015**

**PUT WALK KANSAS ON YOUR  
2015 CALENDAR  
& PLAN TO PARTICIPATE.**

**MORE DETAILS COMING!**



## NEW OFFICE HOURS in 2015

**To better accommodate our district clientele beginning**

**JANUARY 2, 2015**

**River Valley Extension District**

**Office Hours will be:**

**7:30 am to 12:30 pm & 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm**

**NON-PROFIT  
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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT  
“2015 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Jan. 14	TBD	KSRE Calving Clinic	Salina
Jan. 15	TBD	Winter Ranch Mgt.– Focus on Heifers	Beloit
Jan. 16	9am-4:30pm	Farm & Ranch Succession Planning Conference	Manhattan
Jan. 20	1-5pm	Regional Farm Bill Meeting	Ambassador Hotel, 1616 W. Crawford St., Salina
Jan. 21	1:30-3pm	RVED Lease Meeting	Greenleaf
Jan. 22	9:30am	RVED Lease Meeting	Miltonvale
Jan. 26	TBD	Weed Control Meeting	TBD
Feb. 5-Mar. 12	3-8pm	Women In Ag Series	Jensik Insurance Harvest Room, 1309 18th St., Belleville
Feb. 10	6:30-9:30pm	Beef Sire Selection Workshop	Clay Center
Feb. 12	1-5pm	Regional Farm Bill Meeting	Annunciation Cigna Center, 402 N. Maple St., Frankfort
Feb. 17		Ag Succession Planning Conference	Emporia
Feb. 17&18		MAST: Management Analysis & Strategic Thinking	Manhattan
Feb. 19	TBD	Crop Nutrient/Fertility School	TBD
Feb. 26	TBD	Controlled Burn Workshop	Jewell
Mar. 5	TBD	Canola Meeting/Field Day	Concordia

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact John Forshee, Director, River Valley Extension District # 4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335.