

First Impressions

Lindsborg, KS

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- Marysville asked for First Impressions, requested Lindsborg as its partner; *despite* the 2:20 drive.
- Holly Lofton received City Council approval and enlisted volunteers.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey and took photos of Lindsborg on May 2.
- Marysville visitors came on May 18 and June 29 and returned surveys.
- Results are presented tonight. (Sept 10)
- Lindsborg uses the report to continue conversations and planning.

- 2010 Census Population 3,458
(up 4.1% since 2000*) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2017 Estimate is 3,268
(down 1.6% since 2000) **KS= +8.4%**
- 95.9% high school or GED, 42.6% college educated,
– **90.3% HS or equivalency, KS 31.6% college education,**
- Poverty rate is 5.5% **(KS=13.3%)**
- Median Age 37.8 years **(36.2)**
- Median household income is \$56,406 **(\$53,571)**

* 2000 Census was 3,321

- **Website**

<https://www.lindsborgcity.org/>

- I was not impressed with the website. It felt hard to maneuver.
- I think bigger homepage graphics would draw people into the website.
- It took me about 4 tries to get where I wanted. Website has an outdated feel.
- The Swedish Village and the Mill were not on the front pages to make me want to visit there; I had to dig deep to find it. They were such a treasure! How did I almost miss this?!

- **Website**



Visit Lindsborg

<https://www.facebook.com/VisitLindsborg/>



Visit Lindsborg ✓
@VisitLindsborg

Home

- Join My List
- About
- Events
- Posts
- Photos
- Videos
- Services
- Reviews
- Community
- Info and Ads

VÄLKOMMEN Lindsborg LITTLE SWEDEN USA

Like Follow Share ...

Create Post

Write a post...

Tag Friends Check in ...



Upcoming Events


4.5 out of 5 · Based on the opinion of 21 people

ABOUT VISIT LINDSBORG

City of Lindsborg Government

<https://www.facebook.com/LindsborgCity/>




 City of Lindsborg Government 



City of Lindsborg Government
@LindsborgCity

Home
About
Photos
Videos
Posts
Events
Notes
Community
Info and Ads


Create a Page

 Like  Follow  Share ...

See All


Videos

Lindsborg City Council September 4, 2018 (Tuesday) M...




Lindsborg City Council Augu... Lindsborg City Council July ...

See All



 Send Message



Utility Company



Hours 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
[Open Now](#)

 Suggest Edits



Related Pages



 The Swedish Crown R...
Scandinavian Restaurant 

 Svensk Hyllningsfest
Festival 

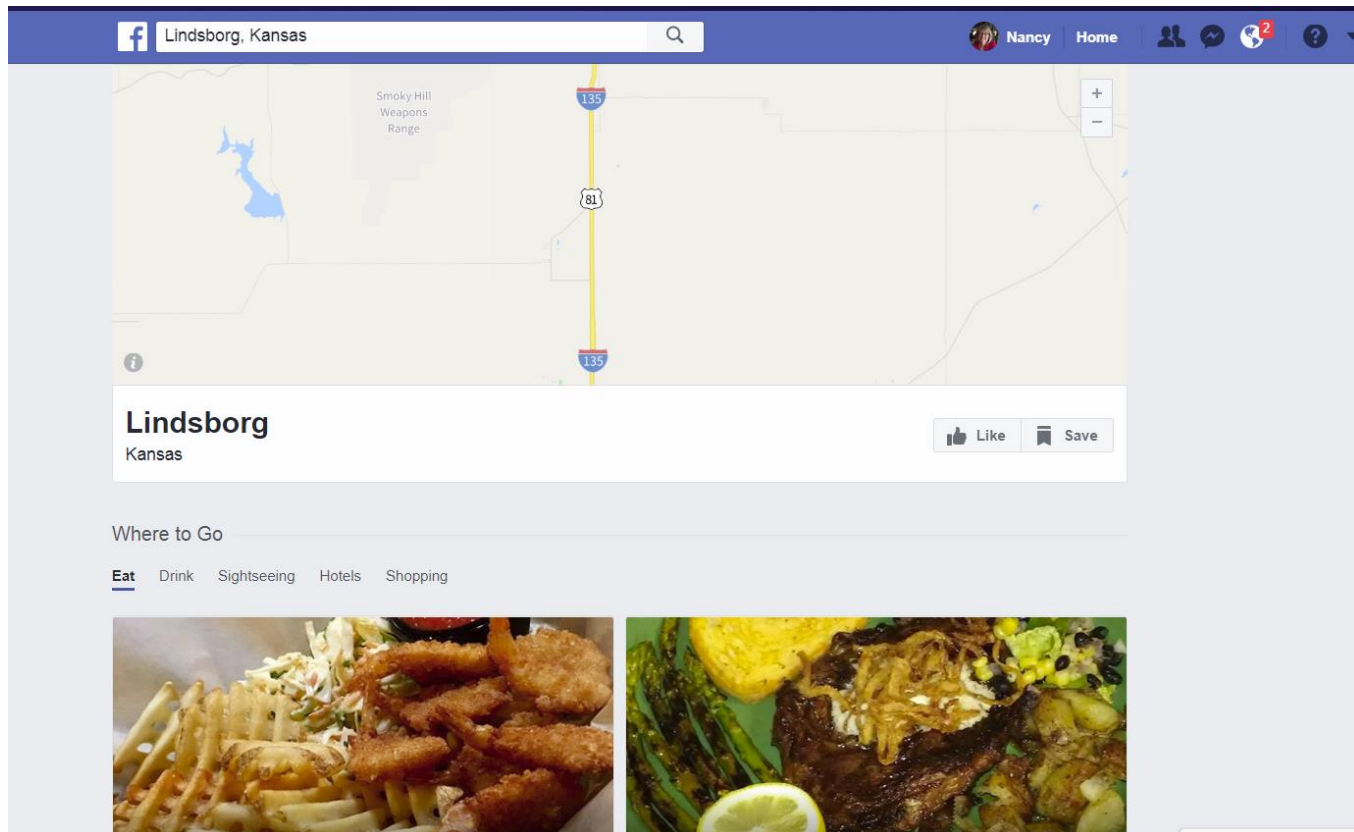
 Bethany College
School 

Pages Liked by This Page

 Lindsborg Golf Course 

 Visit Lindsborg 

- **FaceBook**
 - Lindsborg, Kansas
 - *A Facebook generated page, monitor for appropriateness.*



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Great signage, easy to find downtown.
- Welcoming.
- Big consistent and easy to see signs.
- Finding the golf course and schools is more difficult.





Downtown Business Area

- Uniform signage, lighting, various trees.
- Very walkable and picturesque.
- Kids riding on scooters, people visiting outside a store on a bench.



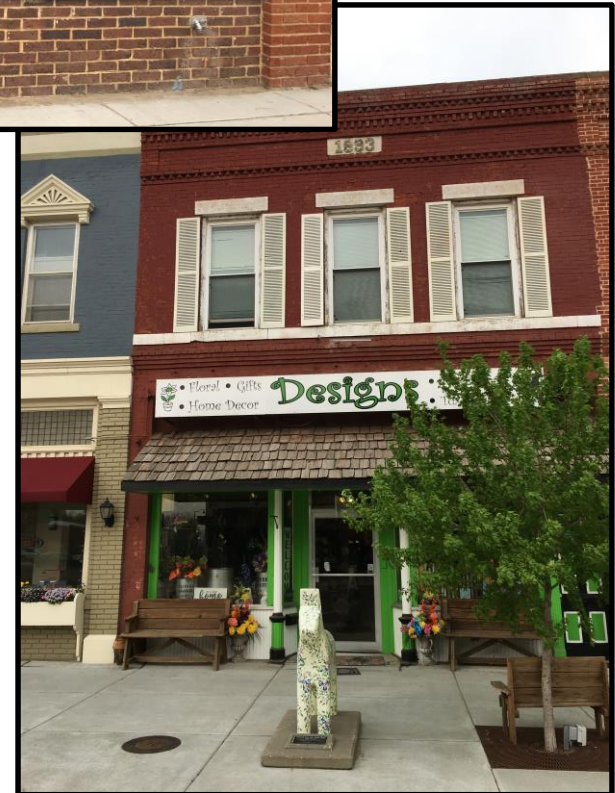
Downtown Business Area

- Many compliments about the friendly businesses and good customer service.
- Numerous a-frame signs, benches, horses, flowers, free library box...
Makes the downtown look alive.















Downtown Business Area

- Public restroom and signage/map was great.
- Loved the art on the side of the building and flower pots around. “I’m glad you’re here.” That was cool.



Downtown Business Area

- Benches, drinking fountains, public restrooms, trash cans and nice Visitor Information Center. Loved being able to grab a postcard from our travels and enjoy a bit of AC on a hot day.

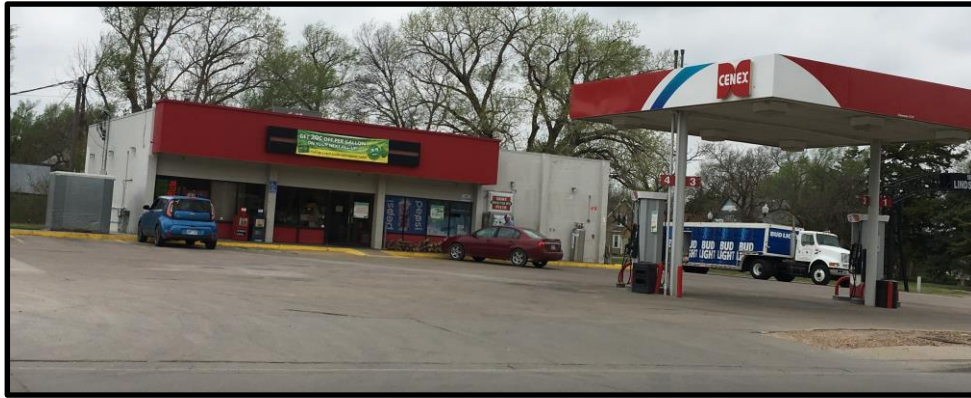


Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Grocery store and pharmacy. Both seemed clean and presented well.



Other Retail Shopping Areas



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- We found the industrial areas, not clear about room for expansion.



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas



Observation:

- “Entrepreneurs who choose to start small businesses are responsible for 63 percent of net new jobs created in the United States every year.”
- *The same UPS truck who competes with your downtown can help your entrepreneur serve the world.*

Health Care Services

- The hospital appears to be doing expansion.
- We didn't notice a lot of signage for it.



Health Care Services

- Visitors didn't see the health care providers in your community.



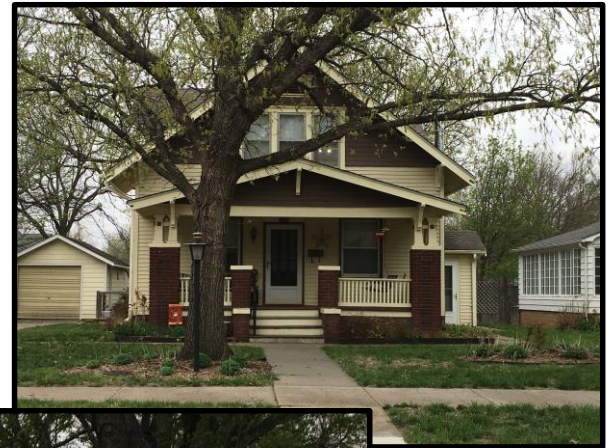
Long Term Care

- Visitors saw Bethany cottages and Assisted Living.
- Facilities appeared very inviting. Residents and children were playing a water balloon activity.



Housing

- Nice trees in neighborhoods.
- Lots of houses for sale (May 18 visitor)
- Not many homes for sale (June 29)





Housing

- A good mix of houses at all income levels.
- Newer construction in one subdivision.



Housing

- Saw apartments; not many homes for rent.
- Never saw a city with such a uniform neat look.
- Lots of housing variety.





Housing data

KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 1,389
- Total Occupied Houses 1,315 (94.7%) (89.3%)
- Vacant Houses 74 (5.3%) (10.7%)

- Owner Occupied 862 (65.6%) (66.3%)
- Renter Occupied 453 (34.4%) (33.7%)
- Family Households 62.6% (65.4%)
- Non-family Household 37.8% (34.6%)

- **Need for clean-up/demolition of older properties**



Schools

- Mistook the high school for a college.
- Some difficulty finding the schools; we had to Google it.





Nice playground at the elementary school.



Online information to help assess schools?

- Visitors didn't check.

USD 400 Home | PowerSchool | Employee Resources | Online Payments | Calendars | Lunch Menus | Back to School | Careers | Contact Us

SMOKY VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Unified School District 400

We Champion for All Students

Smoky Valley High School

Smoky Valley Middle School
Soderstrom Elementary School
Smoky Valley Virtual Charter School
Vision_Tek

« VIEW SCHOOL

▼ About Our District

- About Us
- Community
- Superintendent
- Education Foundation
- Budget Documents
- Blended Learning
- Bullying Policy
- Wellness Policy
- SV Education Today
- Resolution Supporting and Promoting Diversity and Inclusiveness
- Emergency Safety Interventions
- Public Notice of Title I School-Wide Waiver

TWITTER

Tweets by @USD400

Smoky Valley USD 400
@USD400

Thanks to the Lindsborg Arts Council! With the support of the Council, we are providing our children with Art classes at Soderstrom once again! What a GREAT community! #SVstrong

District Calendar

Monday, September 10
6:00pm BOE Meeting @ District (

Tuesday, September 18
Patriot Day

Monday, October 1
NO SCHOOL - Teacher Inservice

Monday, October 8
Columbus Day (regional holiday)

6:00pm BOE Meeting @ District (

Sunday, October 14
National School Lunch Week

Online information to help assess schools?

- *Tell your story— what sets your school apart?*
- *Why would I want my child to attend USD 400?*

A Message from Superintendent Glen Suppes

The Smoky Valley Schools provide students with the finest educational opportunities, hands-on technology, outstanding fine arts programs and an excellent learning environment. Our school was proud to be awarded recognition as "Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America." McPherson County was also named as the #3 "Best Place to Live in Rural America."

We serve nearly 1000 students in 4 learning centers. The Board of Education and patrons of the Smoky Valley take great pride in the dedicated staff and wonderful facilities we have to offer each child.

We are excited about continuing our One-to-One Laptop Initiative at Smoky Valley. Every student in grades 3-12 receives a laptop and works in a completely wireless environment. Furthermore, Smoky Valley High School has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School every year since 2009. Differentiated instruction for all students has officially been designated as the focus for improving student learning and personalized instruction is a major focus in USD #400.

The district opened the charter school in the fall of 2005. The Smoky Valley Virtual Charter School provides a unique style of instruction for students, either virtually (at home) or onsite, provides laptops for students, and has become a leader in the state at providing quality education. The institution provides a wide variety of academic opportunities for students in grades 1-12. Vision_Tek, USD 400's technology portal for school and community, is located downtown across from the SV400 district office. Vision_Tek began with a vision that is based on using technology to create bridges between learning, communication, and skill development. Uniquely, Vision_Tek is home to the only Apple Authorized Service Center in a public school in the entire nation.

Childcare

- No childcare was apparent.



Faith/Religion and their activities

- Liked the “Churches welcome you” sign at one entrance.
- Beautiful churches, all in good condition.



Faith/Religion and their activities





Faith/Religion and their activities

- Concern that the empty Baptist Church might become blighted.
- Saw yard signs that appeared to be church-affiliated.



- Your community values the Thrift Shop and that The Associated Churches of Lindsborg work together to provide it.*



Civic organizations and their activity

- Civic sign at entrance.
- Some civic organizations donated public art.
- *“Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, Swedish Friendship Circle,” Leadership team*



Public Infrastructure (other than downtown)

- Community presented well.
- Nice streets, lots of trees, good/no landscaping.
- Brick streets are nice and in good shape.
- Area around Mill and Swedish village was not as welcoming as downtown. (Lamp posts, flowers, walkways.)



Public Infrastructure



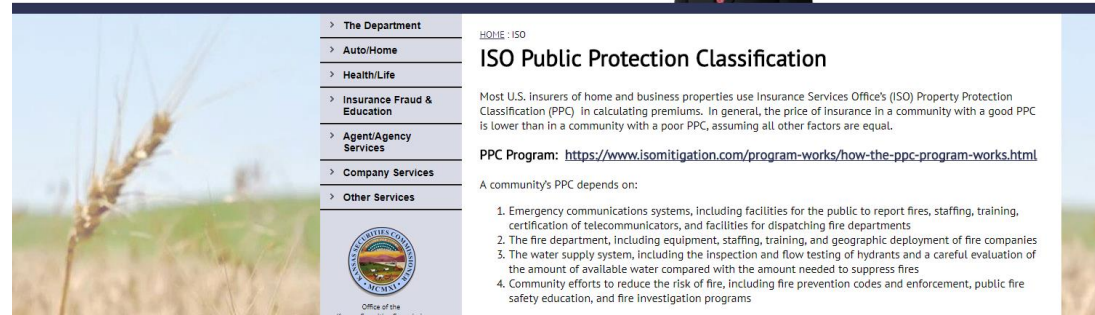
City Hall

- The red building caught your attention!
- Liked the brochure room, but surprised YOUR town's info wasn't at the best eye-level spot.



Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Nice facilities. Loved that they have embraced the Lindsborg “brand.”



Library

- The library was disappointing. The book selection was not good and the books in the bookstore were old, not current.



City Parks

- Every park we saw had wonderful/little to no signs.
(*Conflicting reports.*)
- Disc golf course, walking trail, skate park (very cool).





I loved the documentation that this park was “Designed by kids. Built by a Community.”

- City Parks were clean and had great identifying signage. Loved the small amphitheater. Very large shelters for events. Walking trail was very nice. Loved having disc golf along the route. Pool was full of kids on a hot day. Skateboard park looked well-loved. Saw a biker riding across the bridge. Loved the variety of recreation activities.





A neighborhood green space

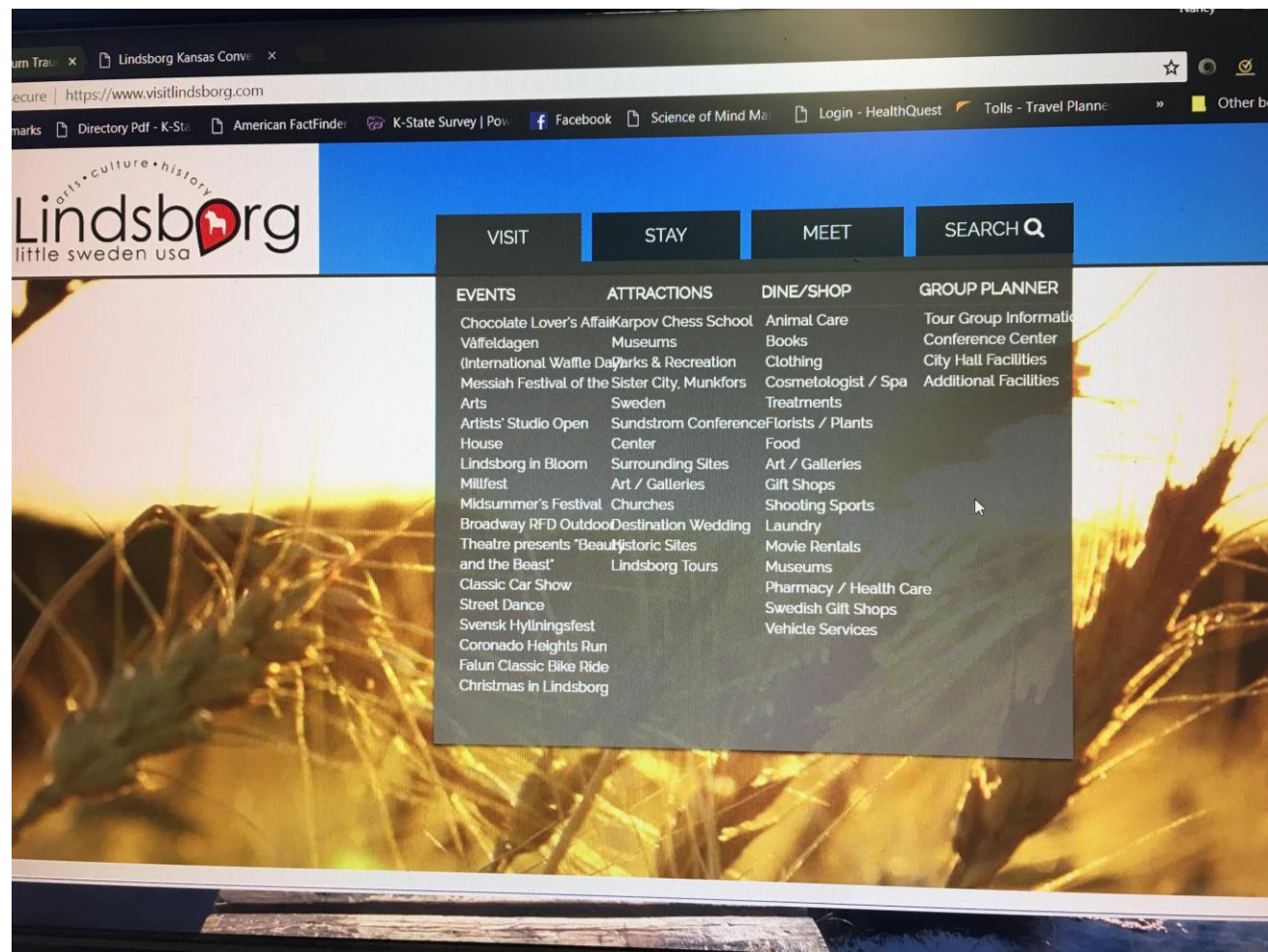
Well-known for an attraction or event?

- Loved the consistency of incorporating the Swedish heritage into the entire community. From Dala horses downtown and small versions on the houses, to the architectural details, the entire town was truly an experience.



Well-known for an attraction or event?

- Saw posters for an event that was just over.
- *A full page of events on Visitors website.*



Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Coronado Heights! But it needs signage.
 - “I want to learn about where I am and how it came to be.”



Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Multiple museums.
- The Red Barn studio wasn't well marked and we almost missed it.



Visitor's Center

- The information booth was awesome. Great idea to have access 24/7.
- Kiosk and convention and visitor's office.



What would bring you back?

- The Swedish Crown. Small World Gallery.
- Wish we could have more time to eat at Farley's and the Blacksmith Shop, both were recommended by clerks.



What would bring you back?

- Food was okay. Husband said, “Not golf course.” I liked the shops, and would like to see the Village in full some time and to see the mill working.



Most Positive Observations!

- Welcoming, full downtown.
- There were several moments when a kid was riding a scooter down the street or a biker was coming across the bridge that it honestly felt picture-perfect.



Most Positive Observations!

- The cleanliness and effort to look great says they care.
- City government is doing an amazing job to protect tourism.



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Figuring how to keep business downtown, directional signage outside of downtown.
- Is there enough motel space for festivals and large tour buses?
- Don't take the mill for granted and make Heritage Square as fantastic as the downtown area.



- Interpretive signs were hard to find at the mill.*





What will you remember the most in six months from now?

- I will remember how welcoming the town felt. I can't get over how neat driving towards downtown with all the signs lining both sides of the street. I would definitely come back. There is much more to see.
- Downtown shopping and dining, Coronado Heights.
- Friendly and inviting downtown...and just the uniqueness of the whole community. Truly an experience and a must-visit place. Great work, Lindsborg!

What will you remember the most in six months from now?

- I had been to Lindsborg once before and was unimpressed. I wonder now if it was on a weekend or in the evening. I just didn't get what all the hype was about. On our recent visit, I was blown away. Although it was a slow day without much going on, the downtown was alive, the signs were out and the shops were open and welcoming.
- Great deal I got at the store, the cleanest co-op area EVER, and how the Mill left me speechless in wonder...and then wonder how I almost missed it!

- I will remember: the value of fresh paint, clean sidewalks and clean windows!*



Next Steps:

Thank our leadership team:

- *Holly Lofton*
- *Erica Kruckenberg*
- *Mari Loder*
- *Charisse Nurnberg*

Contact me if you need resources or help:

Nancy Daniels
Community Vitality Specialist,
K-State Research and
Extension 785.410.6352
nkdaniels@ksu.edu

Set next steps!

- Which group will lead the discussion?

K-State Research and Extension

PRIDE: <http://kansasprideprogram.k-state.edu/>

- Local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future and volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.



K-State Research and Extension

Grant Writing Workshops

Grants are a vital piece in your community's funding puzzle...and *you* can do it.

K-State Research and Extension's Community Vitality Team offers grant writing workshops for local communities.

Objectives

- Conquer your grant writing fears and start writing.
- Learn new sources of data to document community needs.
- Learn new sources of grant funding.
- Practice developing the Grant Elements: Problem, Outcomes, Activities, Evaluation, and Budget.

Short Term Outcomes

- 93% have increased confidence to write a successful grant.
- 94% learned new sources of data to document community needs.
- 80% learned new sources for finding grants.
- 91% have increased confidence to develop the elements of a successful grant.



K-State Research and Extension


- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am (CT)**
 - Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.
 - Contact Nancy Daniels nkdaniels@ksu.edu to participate.
 - Previous calls are recorded at <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>
 - Community Vitality Calendar of events: <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/>

- <http://smallbizsurvival.com/>
– THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

NEW! SURVEY	BOOK BECKY TO SPEAK	THE BOOK: SMALL TOWN RULES	SHOP LOCAL EBOOK	SAVEYOUR.TOWN	
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SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL

THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE




FRONT PAGE	LATEST STORIES	ABOUT	GUIDED TOUR	SUBSCRIBE	PODCAST	CONTACT	RSS	
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WHAT BUSINESS STAGE ARE YOU IN?



Dreaming

For those who are dreaming or planning to start a business of their own. ... [Get started.](#)



Doing & Growing

For those who have a business and have grown to the point that it's

Get our articles plus special bonus emails, a positive view of rural once a week:
Join me and 3546 rural friends.

Newsletters

- ☒ Small Biz Survival
- ☒ Positive View of Rural
- ☒ Building Possibility

JOIN

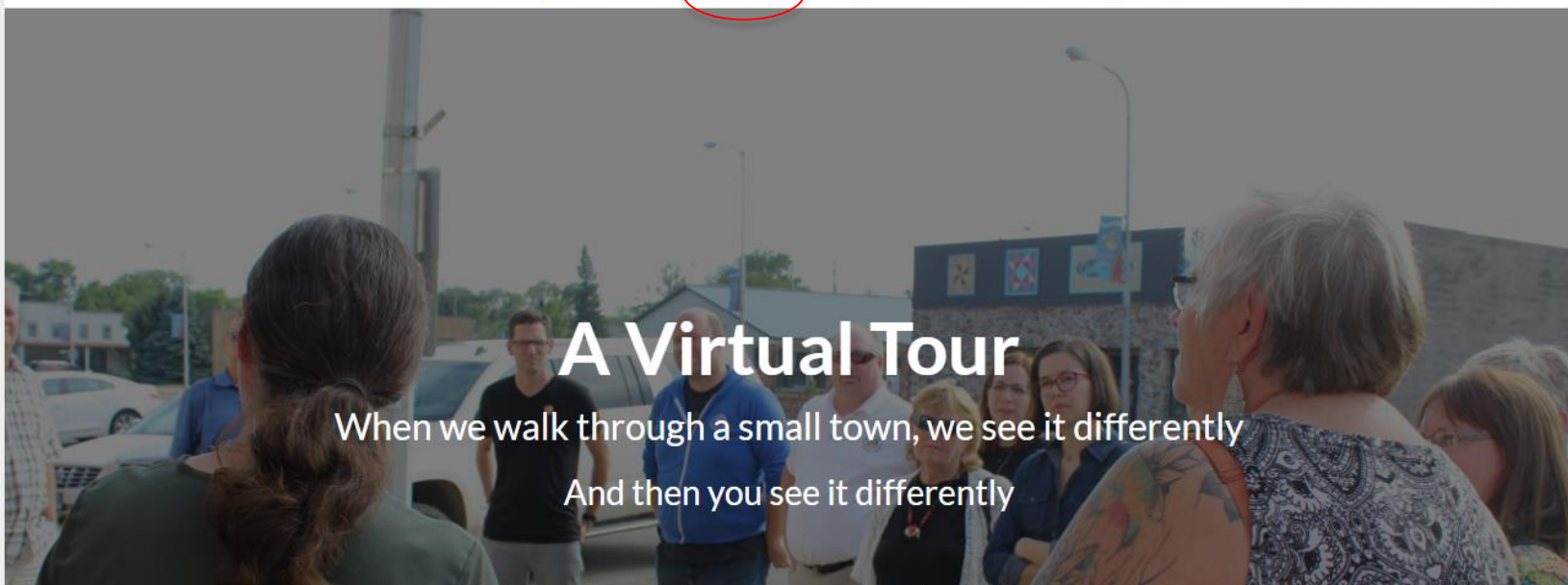
I will never sell or rent your email.

Resources I like:

- <http://saveyour.town/>
 - Monthly live webinars; available on recording.
 - Pay once and show as many times as you want.
 - Watch parties encouraged.

SAVEYOUR.town

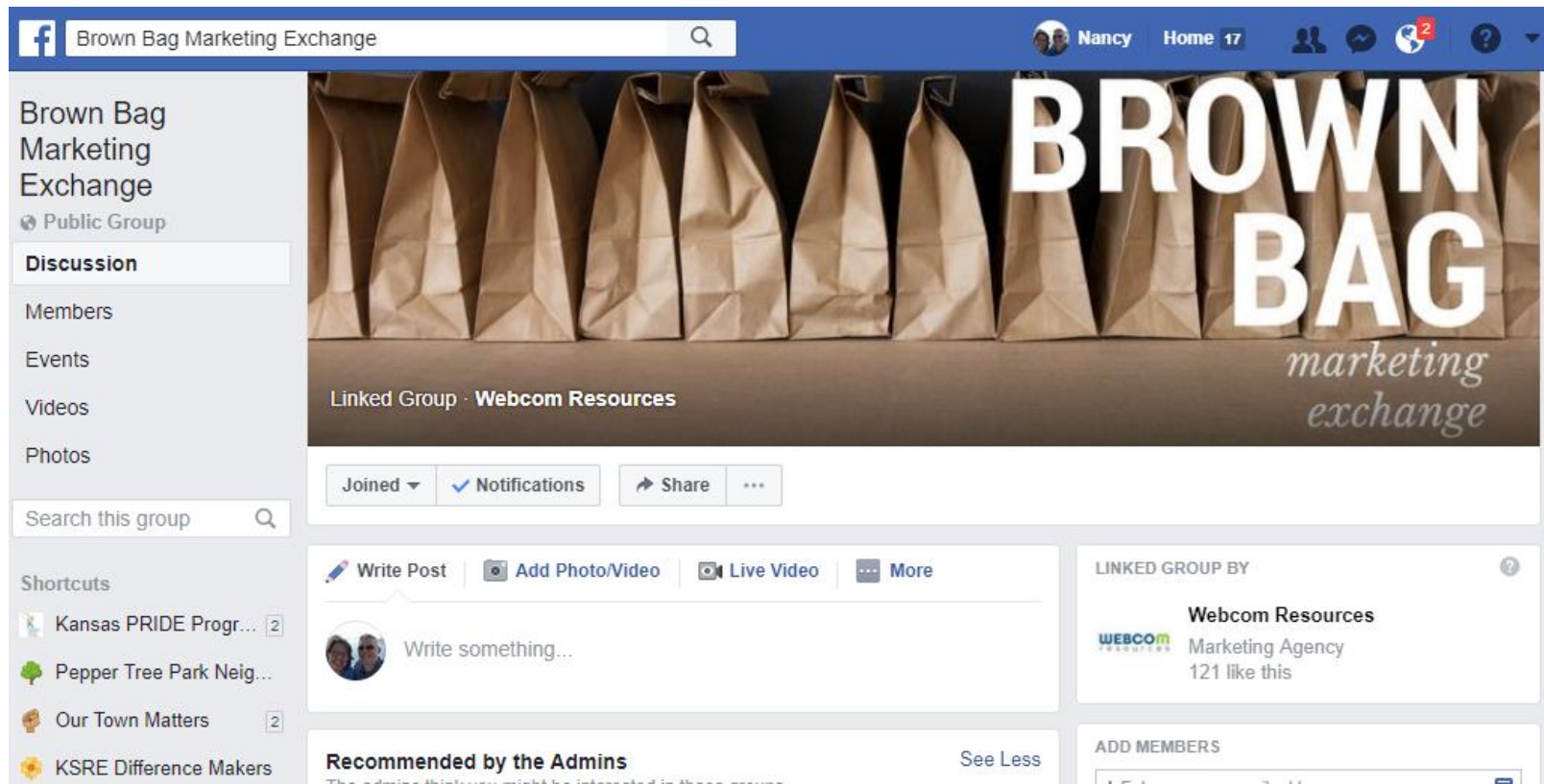
[HOME](#) [ABOUT DEB & BECKY](#) [WEBINARS](#) [TOOLKITS](#) [WORK WITH US](#) [I DON'T HAVE TIME!](#) [CONTACT](#) [MEMBERS LOGIN](#)



A Virtual Tour

When we walk through a small town, we see it differently
And then you see it differently

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brownbagmx/>
Brown Bag Marketing Exchange
(Atchison, KS Co-Marketing group)



Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s and no one is noticing or talking about it.
- Rural is in the middle of everywhere. You live one place, work another and play another. With transportation and internet, it’s all accessible to you.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- Only 1/3 of the people who move rural have a previous connection with that area.

- If you bring 7 people to a 700 citizen town every year in 10 years you'll have a 10% increase. It matters! It is a challenge with housing, but it is achievable.
- We are our own worst enemies. We have to monitor our customer service! It matters!
- The number of people who live in rural areas is increasing—from 54M to 60M from 1970-2010. The relative % of people who live rural is smaller (19% instead of 26%) but the real number has increased.
- Don't buy in to someone else's narrative.

- Housing will be freed up as the baby boomers retire and move closer to medical services.
- Rural communities need retirement housing (not nursing facilities, but maintenance free) to retain seniors.
- 1/5 of dollars come from transfer payments—not employers.



- *Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow,
University of Minnesota*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOIMRJ-jc14>