

First Impressions

Syracuse, KS

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



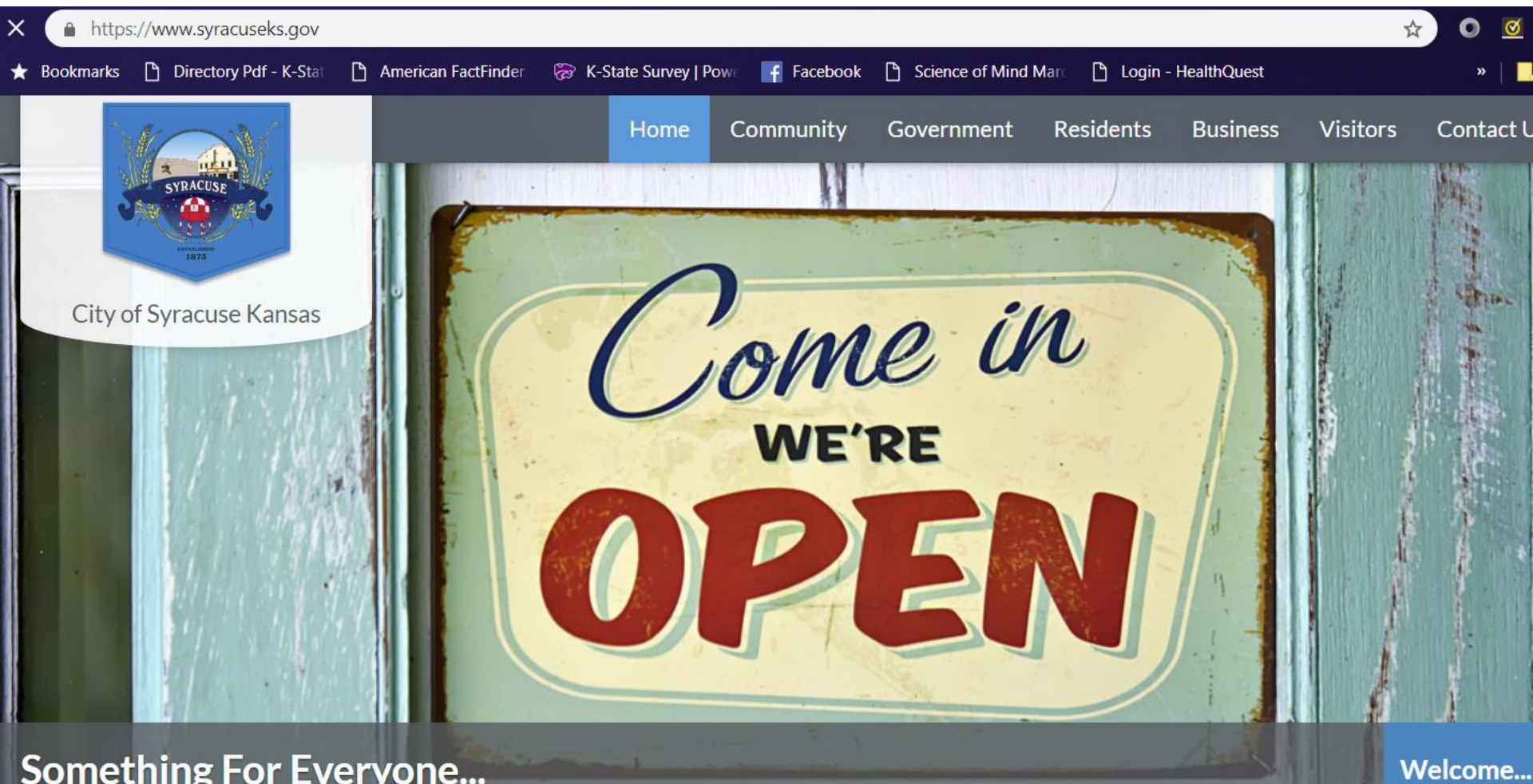
- Syracuse asked for First Impressions, obtained Kinsley as its partner; 2:20 drive is a challenge.
- Faith Orth received City Council approval and enlisted volunteers.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey and took photos of Syracuse on May 22.
- Kinsley visitors came on June 12 and returned surveys.
- Results are presented tonight. (October 24)
- Syracuse uses the report to continue conversations and planning.

- 2010 Census Population 1,812
(down .7% since 2000*) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2017 Estimate is 1,769
(down 3.0% since 2000 **KS= +8.4%**)
- 79.0% high school or GED, 15.0% college educated,
– **90.3% HS or equivalency, KS 31.6% college education,**
- Poverty rate is 9.2% **(KS=13.3%)**
- Median Age 32.6 years **(36.2)**
- Median household income is \$47,723 **(\$53,571)**

* 2000 Census was 1,824

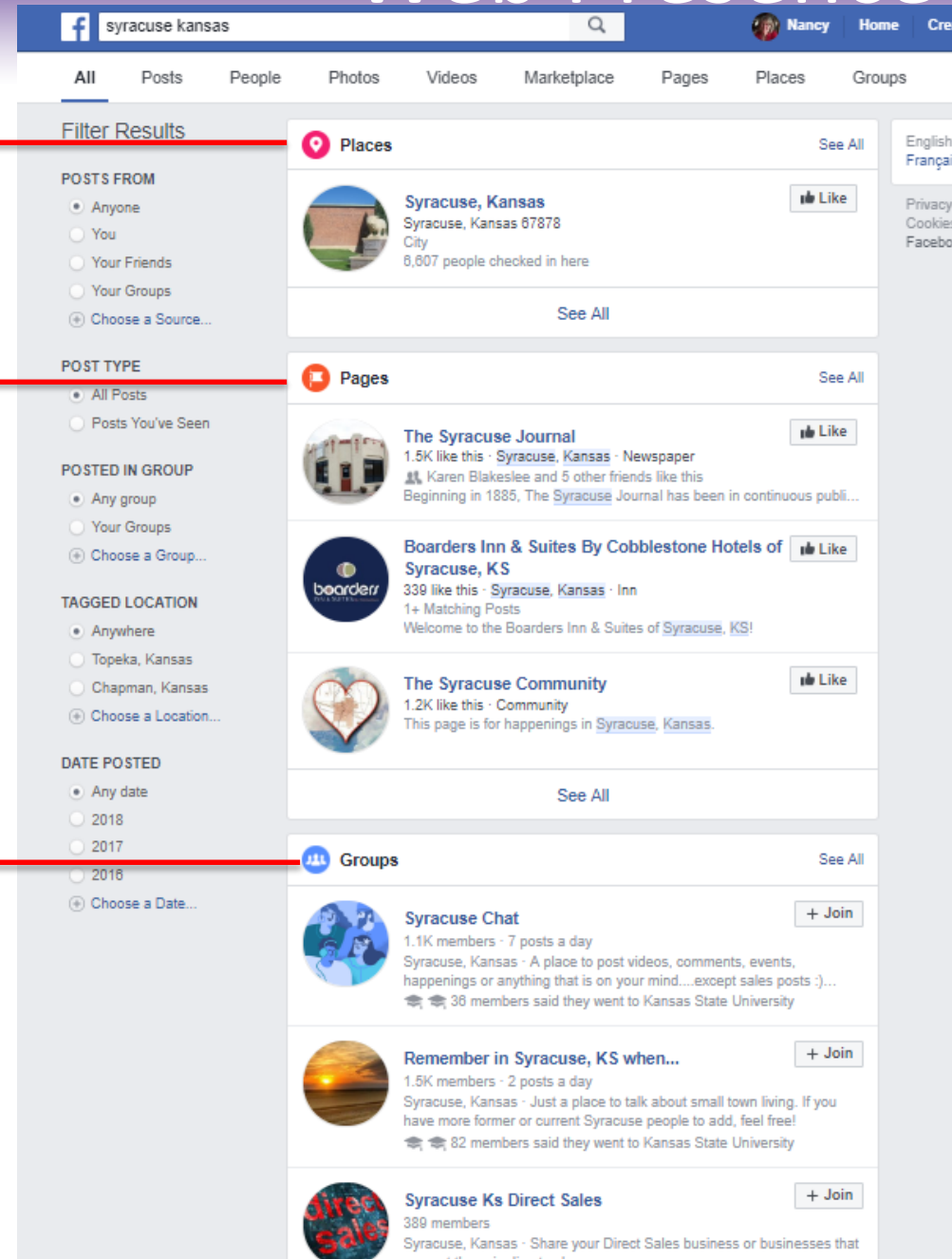
- **Website**

- <https://www.syracuseks.gov/home>



- **Website**
- Found quite a bit of info online ahead
- Getting info on specific businesses was tougher.
- The web page was good. It did make it look a bit better than it was, but that is okay.

- **FaceBook**

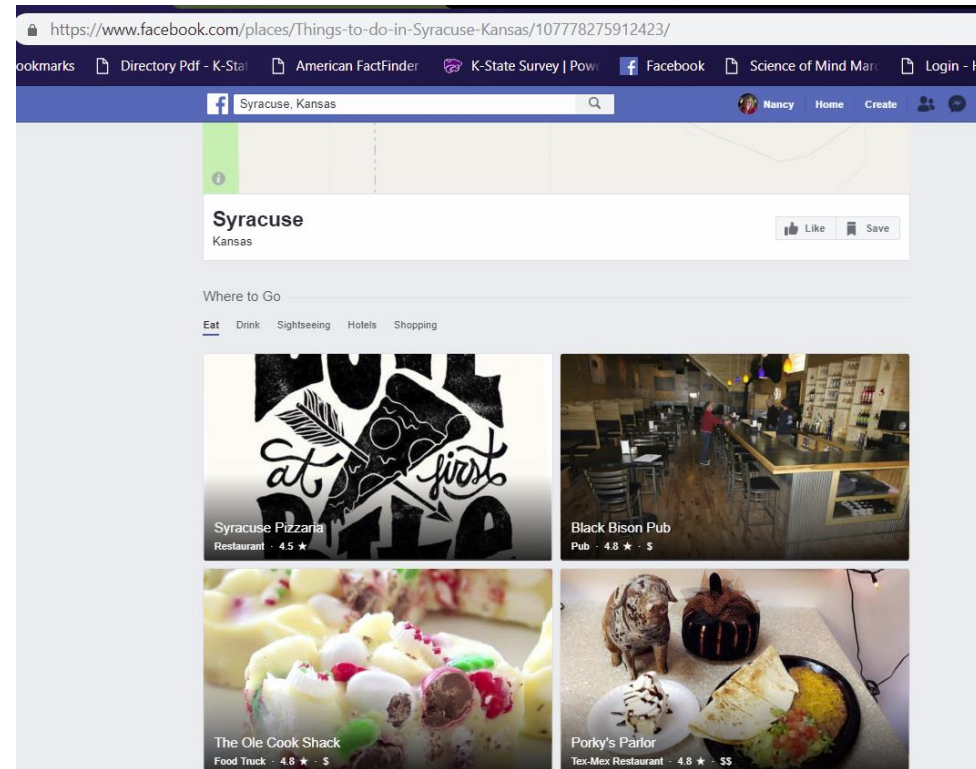


- **FaceBook**

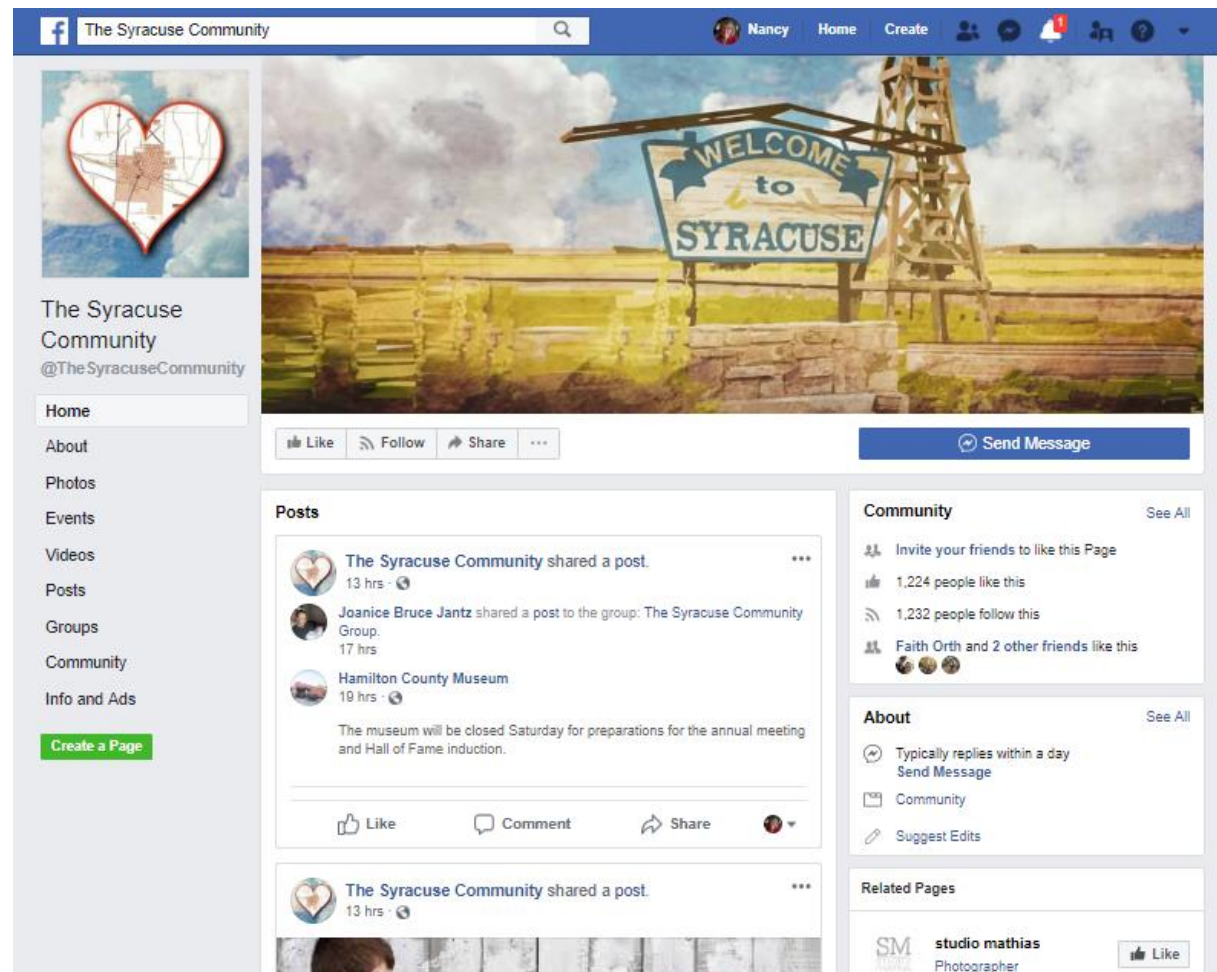
Syracuse, Kansas

<https://www.facebook.com/places/Things-to-do-in-Syracuse-Kansas/107778275912423/>

– *A Facebook generated page.*



- **FaceBook**
 - The Syracuse Community (and 30+ others!)
 - *An opportunity for co-marketing.*



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Properties along the highways look a bit rundown.
- A mix of very nice and not so nice.



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Street signs were present and visible.
- Banners were nice but some were too faded to read.
- Nice town layout.





The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Some very pretty streetscaping along the highway near Porky’s Parlor.
- The awning on the old Phillips 66 gas station looks like a strong wind could take it down; could be dangerous.



Downtown Business Area

- Lack of signage made it difficult to tell what the business was.
- Sidewalks and curbing needs attention.
- Windows need to be washed.



Downtown Business Area

- Tinting on windows made it difficult to see which store is open and what is inside.
- Theater is a gem! Bison is beautiful. Small green salon is very attractive.
- Went into drug store, quilt shop. A nice variety, but a bit lean on products.
- Everyone was very friendly and helpful.

Downtown Business Area

- Some buildings need sprucing up.
- Wood awnings don't add to downtown.
- Visitors couldn't find the flower shop they were referred to.













Downtown amenities

- Benches, gazebo with weeds, but painted. Big dips in streets are hard on bumpers.
- Could park in one place and get access to multiple services
- Didn't see: trash receptacles



Downtown Business Area

- A small salon painted green—a standalone- and very attractive.



Other Retail Shopping Areas (Hwy 50/400)

- Grocery Store is nice.
- *Other visitor comments under this section appear to still relate to downtown.*



Other Retail Shopping Areas (Hwy 50/400)







Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Would probably be on town periphery.
- Empty businesses west of main street would be an opportunity.

Observation:

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

Health Care Services

- A wonderful hospital and a new physician.
- Hope the community supports the hospital and its efforts.



Health Care Services

- Physician's office, dentist and optometrists.
- A wonderful asset for the community.
- Intermediate care at hospital. Long term care closed.



Housing

- Ranged from bad to great; a wide variety of incomes.



Housing



Housing



Housing

- Trash dumpsters in front of homes are a distraction.



Housing

- Eight houses on the market- they appeared to be in good shape and reasonably priced for the size.



Housing

- Saw some apartments.
- City hall had a huge list of people who rent.
- Downtown rentals need spruced up.





Housing data

KANSAS

• Total Housing Units	729	
• Total Occupied Houses	611 (83.8%)	(89.3%)
• Vacant Houses	118 (16.2%)	(10.7%)
• Owner Occupied	458 (75.0%)	(66.3%)
• Renter Occupied	153 (25.0%)	(33.7%)
• Family Households	65.8%	(65.4%)
• Non-family Household	34.2%	(34.6%)

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



Schools

- Schools looked very nice and well-maintained.
- Online information doesn't help assess the quality.





Childcare

- City hall has names of 5 child care providers.
- *Only your community can assess whether these provide enough access to high quality care.*

Faith/Religion and their activities

- A nice mix of churches, most are well-maintained.
- Bible School was going on.







Civic organizations and their activity

- PEO and Rotary; didn't see any evidence of activity.



Public Infrastructure

- Streets in pretty good shape.
- Street signs were visible.
- Restrooms in parks.



City Hall

- Employees were wonderful- friendly and with good information on housing, child care, rentals, etc.



Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Nice facility
- Under the sheriff's department.



I couldn't tell what this building was.

Fire

- What is your community's ISO PPC?*

“Most U.S. insurers... use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.” Kansas Insurance Commissioner.



The screenshot shows the Kansas Insurance Department website. At the top, the URL is www.ksinsurance.org/otherservices/iso.php. The page features a header with the Kansas Insurance Commissioner's name, Ken Selzer, CPA, and a photo of him. To the right of his name is contact information for the Kansas Insurance Department: 420 SW 9th Street, Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678, Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only), and Email Us | Phone: 785-296-3071. Below the header is a navigation menu with links to The Department, Auto/Home, Health/Life, Insurance Fraud & Education, Agent/Agency Services, Company Services, and Other Services. The main content area is titled "ISO Public Protection Classification" and includes a brief explanation of the PPC program, a link to the PPC Program, and a list of factors that determine a community's PPC.

Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

Kansas Insurance Commissioner
Ken Selzer, CPA

Kansas Insurance Department
420 SW 9th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678
Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only)
Email Us | Phone: 785-296-3071

HOME : ISO

ISO Public Protection Classification

Most U.S. insurers of home and business properties use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

PPC Program: <https://www.isomitigation.com/program-works/how-the-ppc-program-works.html>

A community's PPC depends on:

1. Emergency communications systems, including facilities for the public to report fires, staffing, training, certification of telecommunicators, and facilities for dispatching fire departments
2. The fire department, including equipment, staffing, training, and geographic deployment of fire companies
3. The water supply system, including the inspection and flow testing of hydrants and a careful evaluation of the amount of available water compared with the amount needed to suppress fires
4. Community efforts to reduce the risk of fire, including fire prevention codes and enforcement, public fire safety education, and fire investigation programs

Library

- Nice facility and friendly staff! Very helpful and informative.
- Impressed with children's and teen areas.



City Parks

- The park by the hospital is wonderful! The one in the south part of town could use a little paint and freshened up the covered picnic areas.



Disc Golf





- We couldn't locate the walking trail or ball fields
- *Visitors did not mention the golf course.*



Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- The Sand Dunes Park should be a great asset.
- Two hours away, we've never heard of it.



Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Museum.
- Theatre is a gem.
- Sand Dunes.



Public Art



Visitor's Center

- Staff at City Hall do a great job.
- Very friendly, nice facility, good signage.



What would bring you back?

- Black Bison Pub and loft.



Most Positive Observations

- Very friendly residents. Good restaurant selection.
- Nice motel, homes for sale, child care, convenience stores, health care, theater, library and nice schools.



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Improving downtown infrastructure.
- Downtown looks like it is dying. Fix sidewalks, paint, wash windows, signs for businesses, clean up the abandoned buildings.
- Houses, especially on highway through town.
- Promote and advertise your assets.

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

- People were friendly
- Good restaurant selection and the excellent meal at the Black Bison.
- How rough some of downtown and properties on highway looked.

Next Steps:

Thank our leadership team:

- *Faith Orth*
- *Crystal Loder*
- *Bill and Martha Royer*
- *Jordan Spears*
- *Michele Boy*
- *Rick Dikeman*
- *Mark Davis*

- **Set next steps!**

- Which group will lead the discussion?
- Contact me if you need resources or help:
 - Nancy Daniels
 - Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension
 - 785.410.6352
 - nkdaniels@ksu.edu

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

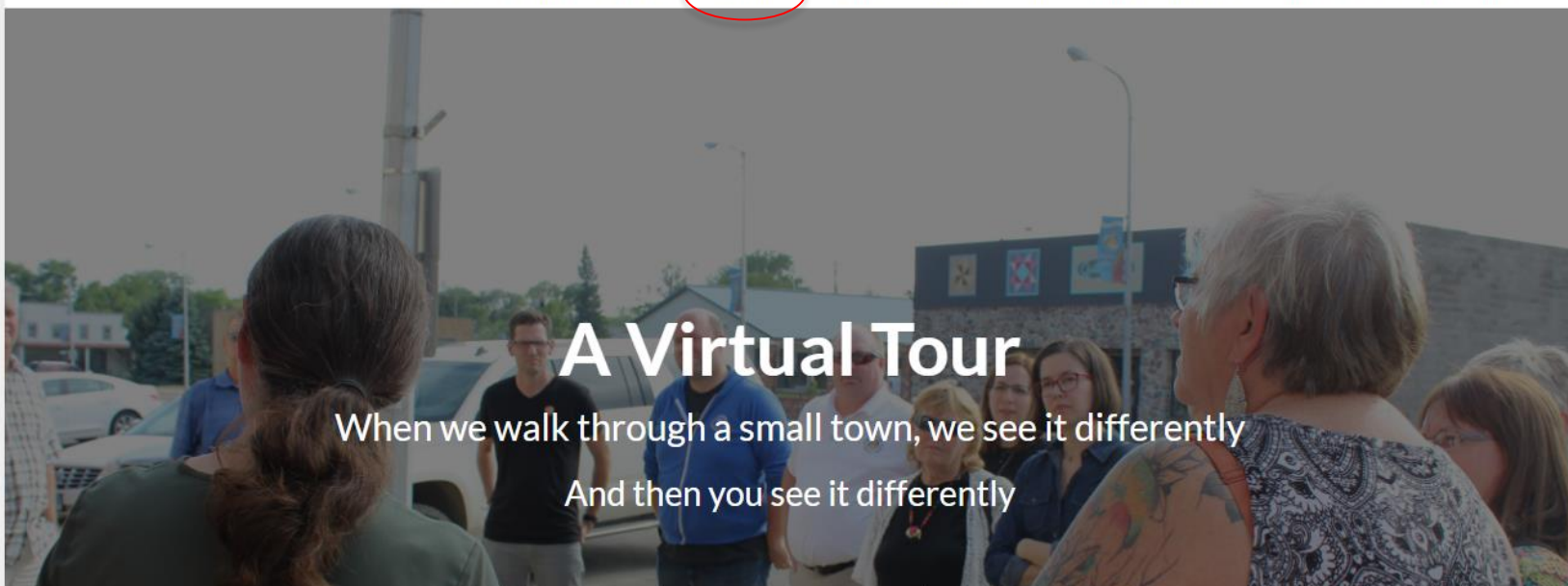
I will never sell or rent your email.

Resources I like:

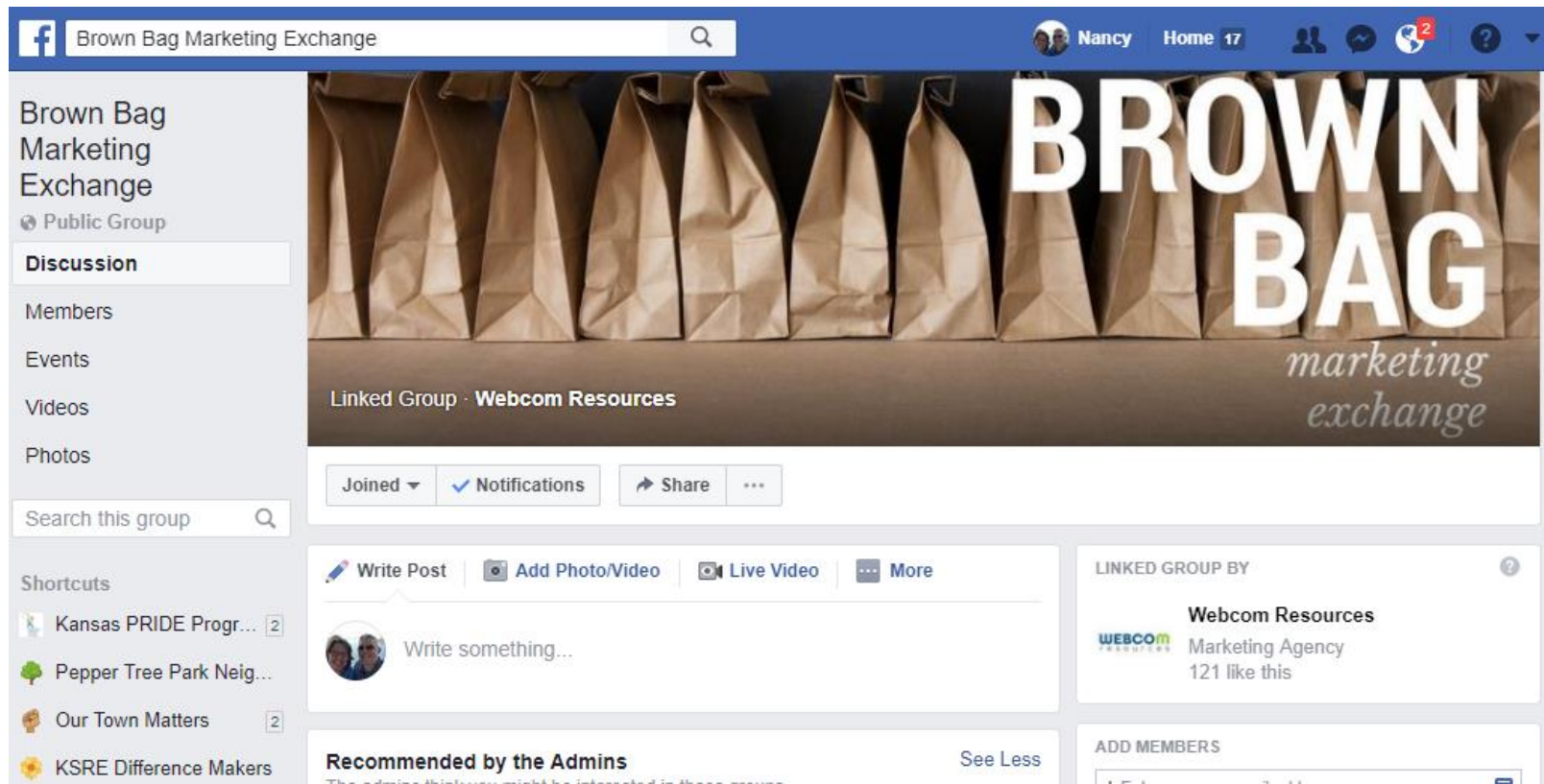
- <http://saveyour.town/>
 - Monthly live webinars; available on recording.
 - Pay once and show as many times as you want.
 - Watch parties encouraged.

SAVEYOUR.town

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



- <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!
- Don't buy in to someone else's narrative.
- 1/5 of dollars come from transfer payments—not employers.

- 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.



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

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

*Ben Winchester will be our guest at the
March 1, 2019 First Friday Call @ 9:30 am.*

*To be invited to this Zoom Call, email me at
nkdaniels@ksu.edu*