

# First Impressions

## Washington, KS



K-State Research and Extension in Partnership  
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- River Valley Extension Director John Forshee promoted First Impressions and suggested Washington and Wakefield as partners.
- Lydia Hiesterman received City Council approval (March 5, 2018) and enlisted volunteers.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey and took 297 photos of Washington on August 20.
- Wakefield visitors returned 3 surveys from October visits. They are verbatim on your compiled report.
- Results are presented tonight. (November 27)
- Washington uses the report to continue planning and conversations.

# Why: First Impressions?

- **Feedback:**

How does a first-time visitor view my town?

- Evaluate successes,
- Set goals and priorities for next steps.

- **If you don't agree with the observation:**

- *Be curious*, Why does the visitor see it this way?
- Is the observation worth considering?
- What can we do to change **it** or the *perception*?

**Curiosity: A strong desire to know or learn something.**

*-Oxford Living Dictionary*

- 2010 Census Population 1,131  
(-7.5% since 2000\*) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2017 Estimate is 1,073  
(-12.3% since 2000 **KS= +8.4%**)
- 96% high school or GED, 13.6% college educated,  
— **90.3% HS or equivalency, KS 31.6% college education,**
- Poverty rate is 8.0% **(KS=13.3%)**
- Median Age 42.9 years **(36.2)**
- Median household income is \$48,000 **(\$53,571)**

\* 2000 Census was 1,223



- **Website**

- <http://www.washingtonks.net/>



*City of Washington, Kansas*

banner made at [www.puresilva.com](http://www.puresilva.com)

HOME

CEMETERY RECORDS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PUBLIC NOTICES

CONTACT US

## CITY GOVERNMENT

City Administrator  
City Clerk  
City Treasurer  
Public Works

### City Government

Agendas/Minutes  
Charter Ordinances  
Municipal Code  
Ordinances  
Policies  
Resolutions



**The City Of Washington is now on Facebook! Click here to view our Facebook page.**

Emergency Medical Service  
Fire Department

**Pay Your City Bill Online**

## Website

- Obtaining information was simple. I appreciated the calendar of events.
- The website was good. Easily accessed and maneuvered.
- **Liked:**
  - Info on permits and licenses and the water reports on the website for easy access.
  - Moving to Town section.
    - Suggestion: Add recreation programs for children and youth, if applicable.

## Website

- Suggestions:
  - I didn't think the first click on the website should be about online bill payment.
  - Add business info: Days of operation/closings.
  - Add City Council meetings to the calendar.
  - More pictures, including the mayor of Munchkin Land house to tie in with the Munchkin Land park, cool point of interest.
  - *Pictures of your community having fun together.*

- **FaceBook**

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of the City of Washington, Kansas. The page header includes the Facebook logo, the name "City of Washington, Kansas", a search bar, and a user profile picture of "Nancy". Below the header, there are buttons for "Like", "Follow", "Share", and a menu icon. A navigation bar contains "Photo/Video", "Tag Friends", "Check in", and a menu icon. The main content area is titled "Photos" and features a large poster for a Santa Claus event. The poster text reads: "Santa Claus is Coming To Town", "Washington City Hall", "Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018", "10 am — 11 am", and lists activities: "Drawings for jumbo stockings", "Refreshments", and "Photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus". A cartoon illustration of Santa Claus is at the bottom of the poster. To the right of the poster is a photo of a woman wearing a black shirt, glasses, and a headband with black ears, holding up white gloves with black paw prints. Below this photo is a smaller, darker photo. On the left side of the page, there is a profile picture of the city (partially visible as "ngton, K") and the text "City of Washington, Kansas" with a verified badge and the handle "@washingtonkansas". A sidebar menu on the left lists: "Home", "About", "Photos", "Notes", "Videos", "Posts", "Community", and "Info and Ads".

City of Washington, Kansas

Like Follow Share

Photo/Video Tag Friends Check in

**Photos**

**Santa Claus is Coming To Town**  
**Washington City Hall**  
**Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018**  
**10 am — 11 am**

Drawings for jumbo stockings  
Refreshments  
Photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus

City of Washington, Kansas  
@washingtonkansas

Home  
About  
Photos  
Notes  
Videos  
Posts  
Community  
Info and Ads



# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Three of the four entrances had a negative first impression. The “car dump” was specifically noted.





Google Maps Image, April 2018  
Retrieved from Internet, November 2018





Google Maps Image, April 2018  
Retrieved from Internet, November 2018

# “Five-Minute” Impression

- Quaint little community. Love the small town feel and the red brick roads in the main section of town. Very nice town center area.





# “Five-Minute” Impression

- Downtown was clean, well groomed, and very cute. Businesses, with very few exceptions, were well kept. The business with the golf carts didn't present as well.



## Downtown Business Area

- Overall it appears Washington takes very good care of their downtown area. The landscaping and roads were charming. I especially loved some of the old brick roads. I observed many different businesses.





## Downtown Business Area

- The gathering place is Casey's\* and the clerk was hospitable.



## Downtown Business Area

- I love the main street look, but very sad that most of the buildings were empty.































- Liked that the city has its own newspaper – added to the hometown feel.





- Great service dog training facility – shows the town is interested in contributing to the rest of the world and not just internal.



- I REALLY wanted to try out Mayberry's – my husband bragged about it. Disappointed it was closed and the only place to have lunch were the gas stations. Had to pull the clerk away from a conversation to order lunch at Casey's.





- Great visitor hospitality at the Brewery (Thanks, Brad!)



*Visitors didn't specifically comment on little niceties like the Little Free Library, but they contributed to the feeling that "Washington is working to keep their downtown up."*

- Parking was easy. Sidewalks were well kept, even for a visitor with handicaps.
- Parking would be easier with straight on parking, not one-way slant parking.
- Eye-catching “Welcome to Washington” banners.
- All the main and/or older downtown streets were either cobblestone or brick.





## Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Dollar General was easily accessible off the main road.



# Other Retail Shopping Areas





## Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- The industrial area and near the County Fairgrounds seemed to have some room for expansion.
- Good diversity. Looks like there are lots of job opportunities within town and a market for a restaurant.



## ***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.”*

*Only one visitor happened across Marcon Pies. According to their webpage, we could have stopped in for a pie. We did not know that. It would have been lovely to have pie, a cup of coffee and a place to visit.*



*Google Maps, photo May 2014, retrieved from internet 11/2018*



## Health Care Services

- Washington has a lot to offer in the healthcare areas. Hospital, ER, 2 doctors, 2 chiropractors, 2 eye doctors, 1 dentist, and a nursing home facility.









- Sad to see the conditions of the long-term care facility: building, windows, and the yard itself. The condition doesn't reflect “home” for the people who live there.
- Very nice nursing home facility with easy access to hospital. I really liked that!





# Housing

- Although I did not see many homes for sale or rent, I did see multiple areas for low income households, a nice benefit for families who can raise their children in a small community.





- I saw multiple neighborhoods where there would be beautiful homes and yards and next door homes that could stand to be painted or given TLC.
- Didn't see anything for rent, but City Clerk has listings available.















## Housing data

## KANSAS

- Total Housing Units      575
- Total Occupied Houses 480 (83.5%)      (89.3%)
- Vacant Houses      95 (16.5%)      (10.7%)
  
- Owner Occupied      340 (83.5%)      (66.3%)
- Renter Occupied      140 (16.5%)      (33.7%)
- Family Households      65.0%      (65.4%)
- Non-family Househld.      35.0%      (34.6%)

# Schools

- The schools looked great!
- Nicely sized and wonderful playgrounds.





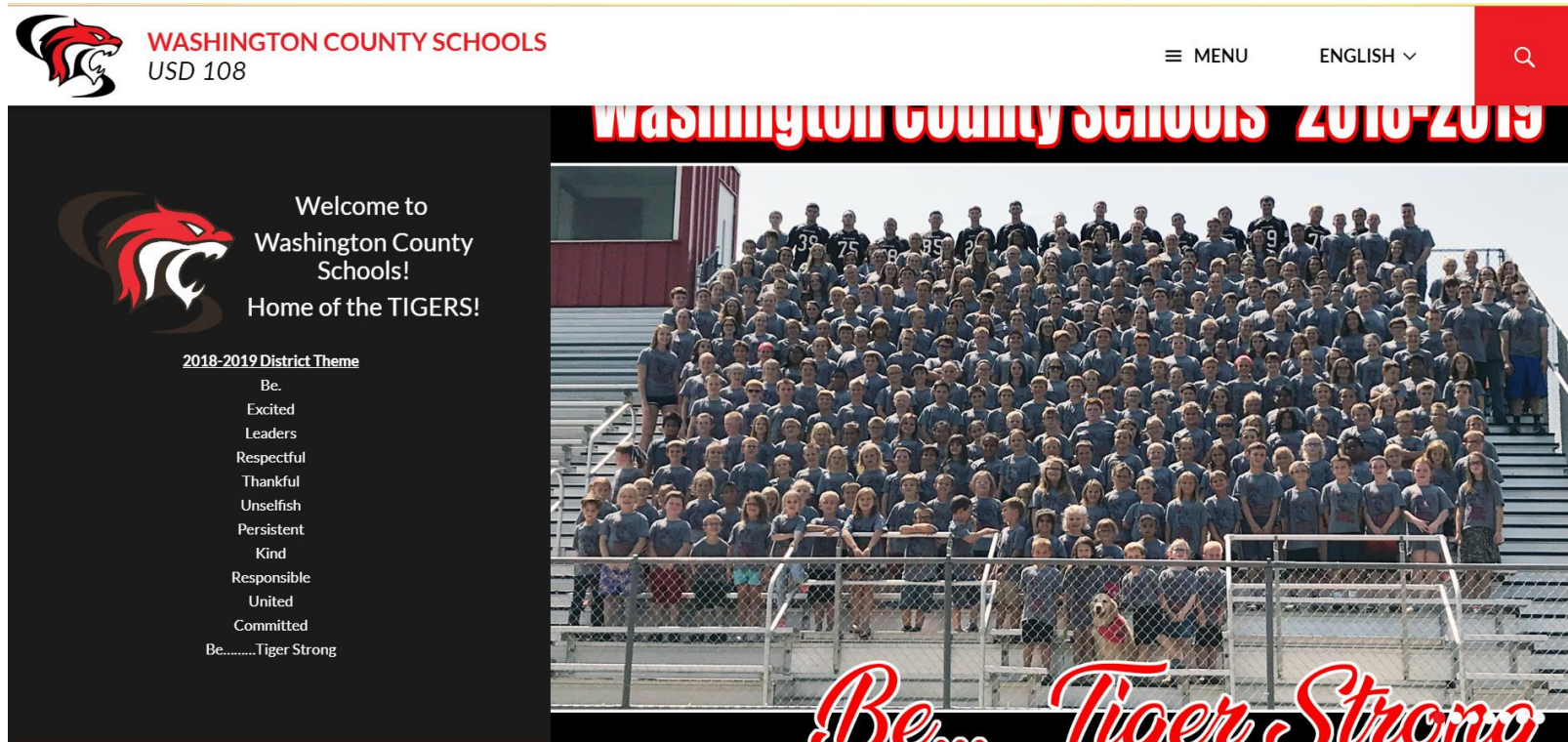
- Love that the Vocational school and Head Start were all in the same vicinity for easy access for parents with multiple age children drop off and pick up.







- I searched the school's website. It seems very family-oriented and appealing. Lots to offer their community in the way of vocational, educational, and even with sports.





# Childcare

- I didn't see any daycare advertised (Child Care Aware contact online though), but I did see Head Start. Looked like a nice and large facility with a nice play area.
- Childcare listings are available at City Hall.



## Faith/Religion

- Good mix of different churches. Looked like all the buildings are active and the signage was good.
- The Catholic Church was the most impressive church. Parishioners were cleaning the yard and visible active working on their structure the day we were there. It was a beautiful sight to see them taking so much pride in their church.











## **Civic/Non-Profit**

- I didn't evidence of non-profits.
- KSDS Assistance Dogs campus is most impressive.
- I was very impressed with all the different informational bulletin boards that I saw around town. There are informational pamphlets at the health department, library, and at City Hall. That was something that makes me want to find out more about the city and things to do there.
- I would like to see what programs are available to kids in the area outside of school. 4-H? Recreation Program? Scouts?
- Friendly Corners was very active.











## Public Infrastructure

- Appears Washington is doing a great job keeping their community maintained. When we were leaving town, I noticed the public works area. It was nice that you couldn't see it in town; it made the community look seamless.



- Looked like some sidewalks could be added for kids leaving school, noticed several areas where kids would have to walk in the road.
- I did not notice lighting.
- There is one three-day citywide clean up, with pick up services in front of house. If there is a bad storm in the city, they will do branch pick up.





# City Hall

- Very helpful.



# Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Law enforcement is contracted through the county and there is an officer available 24/7.





# Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Washington has a volunteer fire department.



www.kinsurance.org/otherservices/iso.php

Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

**Kansas Insurance Commissioner**

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

### 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 telecommunications, 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

**The Department**

- > Auto/Home
- > Health/Life
- > Insurance Fraud & Education
- > Agent/Agency Services
- > Company Services
- > Other Services

# Library

- Library seemed maintained and orderly. There was nice landscaping along the sidewalk.





# City Parks

- The park is not close to homes, but NICE.
- The park wasn't easily found.





- Might be cool to have the munchkin mayor house co-located.





- So many nice pavilions for family reunions and gatherings! Are rental fees posted? I might take my family this summer.



- Nice pool and splash park, nice that it is co-located.
- Too bad the kids have to cross the highway to get there.







“I thought I saw a jail, but I think it was just a historic building with bars on the windows?”

## Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Highway 36 Treasure Hunt, with a car show and sidewalk sales and such.
- There is a Fall Festival in Washington and the county fair is there yearly.
- Maybe add a tab on your website for popular town events?
- Saw the Farmer's Market, but no posted hours or day. That might be good on the website!





## **Natural or manmade features that can draw people?**

- Highway 36 treasure hunt.
- if Marcon pies could have a little dining area where you could stop and get a slice of pie and cup of coffee while visiting it would make a great little day trip!

**What didn't they talk about?**





## Visitor's Center

- Did not see a visitor's center, but I'm sure if the City Hall was open I would have gone in and gotten the info. Brad was a wonderful, welcoming source of info!



## What would bring you back?

- I would like to come back to Washington during its Highway 36 treasure hunt.
- Pie and Munchkin land.
- There's a brewery, campgrounds, bowling alley with a grill, two motels, a bar and grill, florist, Kier's Thriftway Market, Casey's and Short Stop for gas, fuel, and convenience stores, two pharmacies, two banks, service dog school, and a Dollar General.



## Most Positive Observations!

- Washington is a very charming community.
- The community is working to make it visibly appealing, the businesses are plenty, and the people are hospitable.
- I will return to visit; I would like to see more of their city and walk around yet again. Washington is a very cute small town. I enjoyed my 4-5 hours there and look forward to returning.

## **Biggest Obstacles/Challenges**

- Junky business on the south entrance doesn't reveal Washington's overall condition
- There are some homes in which paint, yard work, and de-cluttering would improve the community as a whole.
- No lunch restaurant was open when I visited.



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

- A lovely community. I do not believe it can be compared to Wakefield on any level as we can't offer the businesses, health care options, or even the childcare facilities such as Head Start. This community is much more comparable to Clay Center.

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

- Munchkin Land, my turkey and cheese sandwich from the gas station, I would love to stop and have a beer at the brewery. What a nice atmosphere – I wished I could have a sandwich there. Wish so much to have been able to eat at Mayberry's. Looks like it was such a nice main street when the businesses were up and running.



## ***Thank our leadership team:***

- *Christe Dusin*
- *Rebecca Frerking*
- *Lydia Hiesterman*
- *Kylie Mintzmyer*
- *Chris Pannbacker*
- *Roxanne Schottel*
- *Caroline Scoville*
- *Lauren Simmons*

## **Set Next Steps:**

- Which group will lead the discussion?

Contact me if you need resources or have questions:

**Nancy Daniels**

**Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension**

**785.410.6352**

**[nkdaniels@ksu.edu](mailto: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

### Contact

**Nancy Daniels**

[nkdaniels@ksu.edu](mailto:nkdaniels@ksu.edu)

to participate.

### 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](mailto: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.

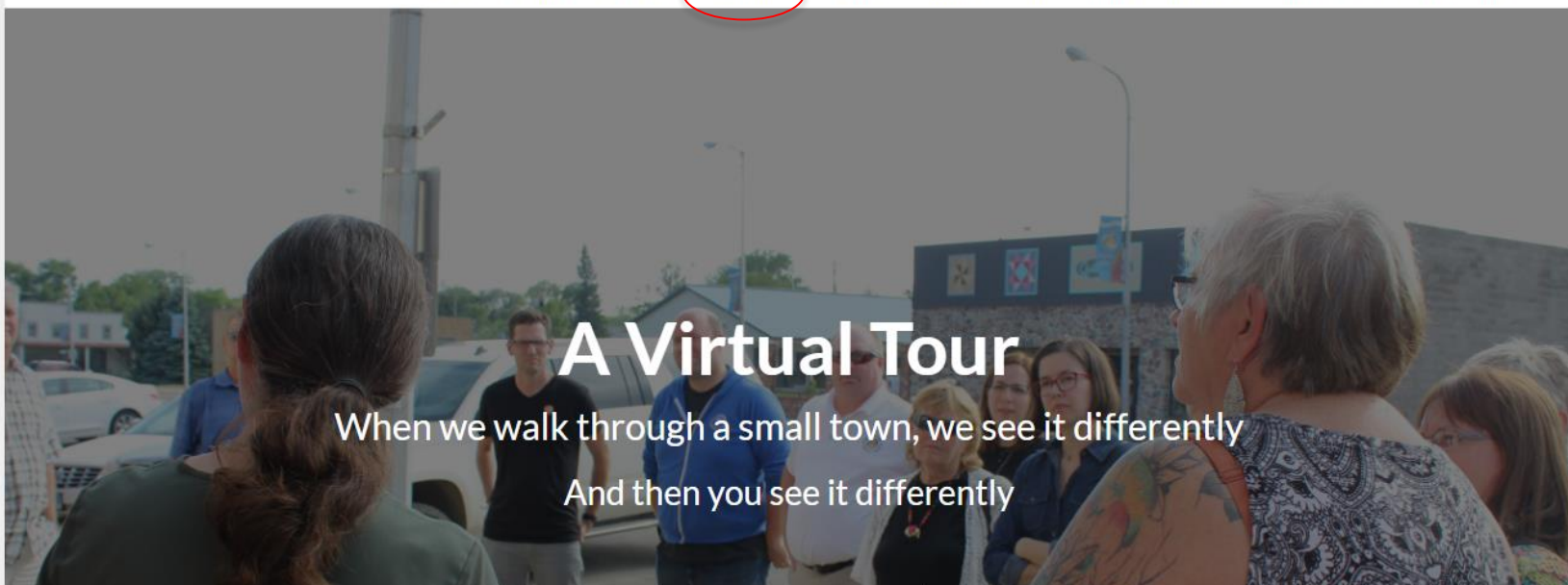


## Resources I like:

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

**SAVEYOUR**.town

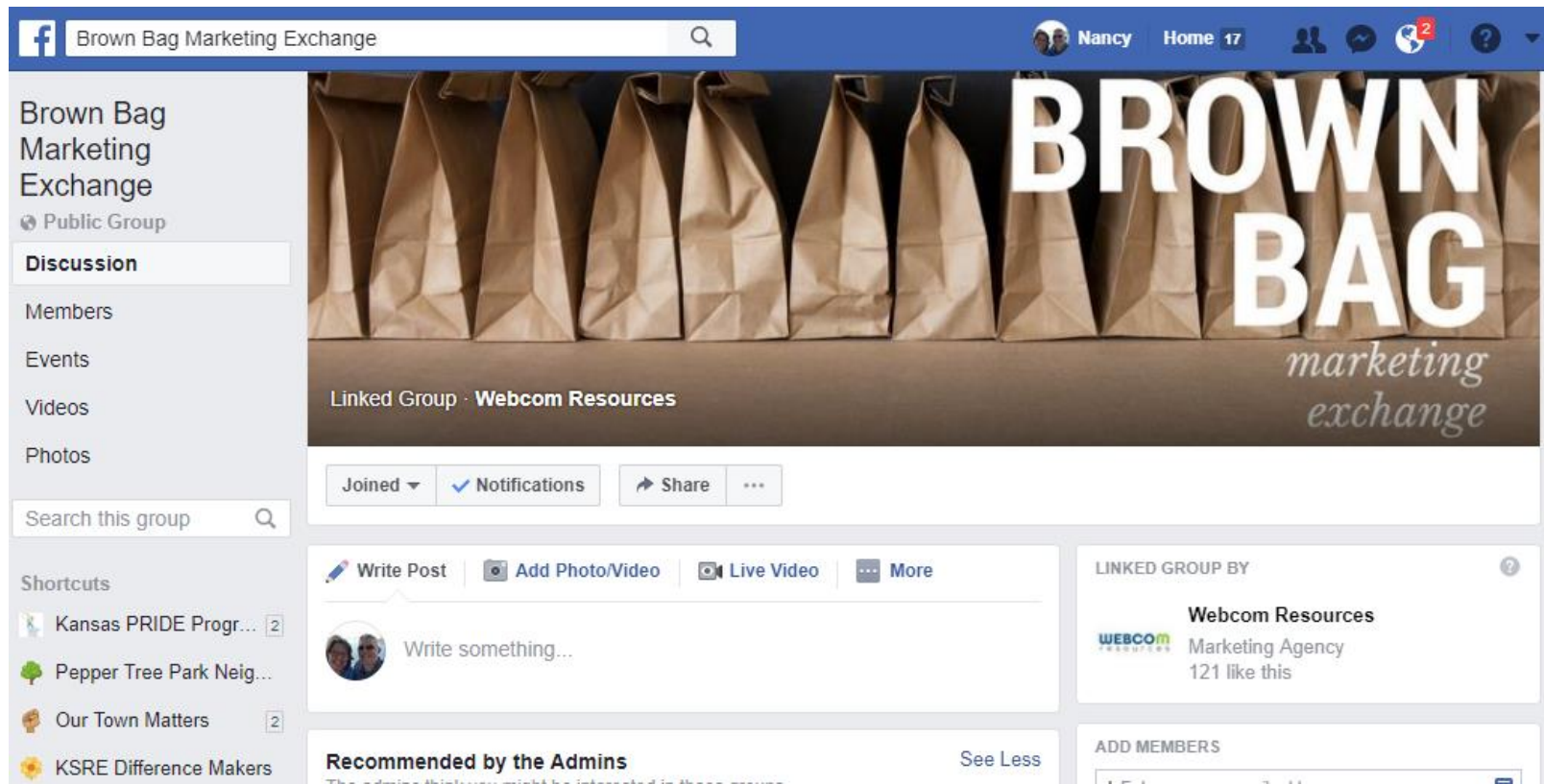
[HOME](#) [ABOUT DEB & BECKY](#) [WEBINARS](#) [TOOLKITS](#) [WORK WITH US](#) [I DON'T HAVE TIME!](#) [CONTACT](#) [MEMBERS LOGIN](#)



### 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!
- 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=ZOIMRJ-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](mailto:nkdaniels@ksu.edu)*