

## **NewsLetter**

Business and Economy

www.gbedinc.com

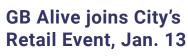
#### **Business and Economy**

January 2024 | Issue No. 21



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Explore Great Bend is kicking off 2024 with a collaborative retail event! Kicking off at 10 am at the Crest Theater

## ABCC's advancing toward opening

Progress continues with Bright Beginnings, ABCC's 1st Childcare center in Barton County. Learn about the wait list for childcare spots, and jobs that are available.



## Entrepreneurial Mindset classes begin Jan. 10th

GBED is teaming up with NetWork Kansas to bring the "Entrepreneurial Mindset" classes, register TODAY!

**Annual Report** 



GB Chamber of Commerce celebrated the 50 year milestone with a ribbon cutting in October!

Doonan Specialized Trailer LLC
Mike Ruddle, Vice President of Operations
36 NE Highway 156, Bldg. B
P.O. Box 1988

Great Bend, KS 67530-1988

620-792-6222

mruddle@doonan.com

PHONE: 800-734-0608

http://www.doonan.com/

Find them on:

**Facebook** 

## **Hours of Operation:**

5:00AM - 5:30PM Monday through Friday

## Doonan Specialized Trailers

Designers and Builders of Specialized Trailers in Barton County for 50 years

Late 2023, we spoke with Mike Ruddle, VP of Operations about Doonan Specialized Trailers about the company doing business in Barton County for five decades.

#### Tell us about you and the business:

I'm a senior operations executive with a diverse background in various manufacturing environments. Experienced in challenging and fast paced atmospheres, with an emphasis in safety, metric driven quality enhancements, process improvements and operational efficiencies that result in sales growth and reducing overall cost for the business. Experienced in leading multi company projects, the ability to be a culture change agent, supporting



Congratulations to staying power and building trailers from the ground up!

and leading cross functional teams and organizational structures.

Doonan Trailer Corporation was started by Wendell Doonan in August 1973. Operations began in an outdated service station in downtown Great Bend, Kansas. In August 1974 Doonan Trailer Corporation moved to its current facility at the junction of U.S. Highways 56 and 156, east of Great Bend.

The product line originally consisted of 21' hopper bottom grain trailers that were marketed as "doubles". At this time over 1300 of these trailers have been manufactured and sold since 1973. Over time additional hopper configurations were designed, and since the mid-70's nearly every grain hopper configuration from 21' single hoppers, to 48' triple hopper tri-axles has been built.

In 1982, due to the boom in the regional oil field industry, Doonan Trailer Corporation began building a variety of products including oil field floats, water tanks, pressurized vessels, and firefighting equipment.

In September 1993, Doonan Trailer Corporation began production of platform trailers. Over the years Doonan Trailer Corporation found its niche by producing highly specialized steel drop deck trailers from 42' to 57' in length. In 2001 Doonan Trailer Corporation expanded its product line by adding a combination aluminum/steel drop deck trailer with tare weights as low as 9400#.

Since moving into its current facility in 1974, product changes and production volumes have commanded five enlargements to its main building and the addition of three separate buildings. The main manufacturing facilities encompass 72,000 square feet, while the parts storage makes up 7,200, and

the administrative offices are housed in 3,200 square feet. These facilities reside on approximately 15 acres.

September 22, 2006 marked the end of an era for Doonan Trailer Corporation. Wendell Doonan, who started the business in 1973, sold the Company's assets to a newly formed company, "Doonan Specialized Trailer, LLC".

The new Company is in a niche market of highly specialized platform trailers, and its product lines include custom flatbed and drop decks, oilfield trailers, boat trailers, extendibles, and double drops.

Hours of Operation

are 5:00AM – 5:30PM Monday through Friday. We offer our employees a flex schedule that allows them to take off during the week for appointments or when they have life commitments. With the hours of operations, this allows them to still get their allotted hours during the week within our hours of operations.

## Why did Doonans choose to locate in Barton County?

Doonan has been a part of the Great Bend community for over 50 years. A testament to that is, Great Bend and the surrounding areas have a tremendous work force with hard working people that has allowed the business to grow over the years.

## Entrepreneurship Resources with Great Bend Economic Development

Entrepreneurs are the key to success in rural communities. If you have interest in creating a business, reach out to us today for help with business planning, financial analysis and access to start up loan funding. Great Bend Economic Development partners with many experts in the entrepreneurship field to bring you all the resources you need to get started successfully.







#### Why do you like to do business in Barton County?

Barton County is a great place to do business and there's a great labor pool of hard working people in the area to hire from.

Barton County has low operating cost for businesses that are well below the national average which makes your overall business more profitable. Another advantage of having a business in Barton County is its centrally located in the United States.

## Anything else you'd like to share about the business?

Doonan is in a constant state of growth and we are always looking for hard working, dedicated team members to join our team. Current job seekers can apply within or online.



## **Development**

## **Attention Manufacturers!**

Did you know there are funds available to assist in your expansion projects? Get in touch with us today to find out how to take advantage of the State's incentive programs for manufacturing. Whether you're expanding machinery, building space, capital improvements in general, hiring new employees or

re-training existing ones, there are programs that are in place to help you and we're here to help make it happen!

Check out the list of all Kansas
Business Incentives **here** and get in
contact with us at <u>director@gbedinc.</u>
com if you feel like you might qualify.

## **Focus Areas**

## Follow along on our journey

We are elated with the momentum gained and plan to continue to capitalize on the current progress and continue pushing forward on many ground breaking projects.

If you are interested in *investing* in GBED projects, we would be happy to keep you updated on any specific categories of interest. The upcoming project categories that we will be seeking funding for are as follows:

- \* Housing
- \* Childcare
- \* Entrepreneurship
- \* Apprenticeships

Anything you want to see in these newsletters that was not included? Please reach out to <u>marketing@gbedinc.com</u> with your feedback.





### **Great Bend Alive**

## Beat the Winter Blues with a fun GB Alive addition

The City of GB's First Retail Event of the Year has "snowballed" with the help of GB Alive!

Explore Great Bend is kicking off 2024 with a collaborative event on January 13th! Cozy up to unbeatable deals inside participating stores and join Great Bend Alive for a Snowball Drop of discounts, deals, and prizes.

Snowballs will be dropping at 10:15 am inside the iconic Crest Theater. Each snowball will be numbered 1-300, and shoppers can redeem up to three snowballs per person for exclusive discounts, deals, gift cards, and prizes. The Crest Theater will further play host to a Pop-Up Shop, featuring vendors from outside the downtown area and home-based businesses.

Following the Snowball Drop, the festivities continue with Trolley rides, Hot Cocoa stops (at the Crest Theater and Equity Bank on Main Street), and a shopping galore downtown. Shoppers are encouraged to share their finds and experiences on social media using #GBAlive.

Beat the Winter Blues with this winter wonderland of savings, fostering community spirit and supporting local businesses. Join us, Jan. 13th from 10 am to 2 pm, for a day of festivities, shopping, and community engagement! Thank you to our Great Bend Alive Events Committee

and the City of Great Bend for making this GREAT way to Beat the Winter Blues! Check out Explore Great Bend's Facebook event for more details.





### Childcare

# Waitlist, Job Postings, and Construction all Underway at Bright Beginnings, ABCC's First Childcare Center

GBED's answer to the childcare crisis is still underway with completion on the horizon

ABCC's eagerly anticipated childcare center, Bright Beginnings, nears completion. Families across the county are eagerly awaiting its spring 2024 opening.

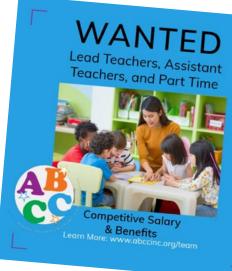
Bright Beginnings is set to make a significant impact on childcare in Barton County, offering innovative programs and activities. One standout feature is the Watch Me Grow system, allowing parents to monitor their children in real-time through an app. The center's chosen curriculum, High Scope, tailored for infants/toddlers and preschoolers, promises a high-quality educational experience. Click the image below to join the

Beyond its educational offerings, Bright Beginnings distinguishes itself by prioritizing its staff. Kelsie Baxter, Bright

Beginning's Site Director, proudly announces aboveaverage pay, benefits, and ongoing education for all team members. The commitment to excellence extends to the hiring process, with plans to bring in 11 staff members across lead teacher, assistant teacher. and part-time positions. An apprenticeship program for part-time staff emphasizes growth and mentorship. Job descriptions and details can be found on the ABCC website, promising a nurturing work environment that aligns with the center's values of communication, trust, respect, and ongoing education, as well

as offering competitive wages and benefits.

As Barton County eagerly anticipates the opening of Bright Beginnings, the center stands



as a beacon of warmth and growth for the community's youngest members. With a focus on innovation, quality education, and a supportive staff culture, Bright Beginnings is poised to become a cherished resource for families seeking a nurturing environment for their children.



## Bright Beginnings by ABCC, Inc.

## Join the Waitlist

Learn about our center and secure your child's spot here.



#### **Great Bend Alive**

## Main Street, What does that mean?

Great Bend Alive is Great Bend Economic Development's downtown arm. Great Bend Alive is also a Kansas Main Street and Main Street America.



As a Main Street organization, the focus is on four main areas: Development, Design,

Preservation, and



Promotion/Events. Great Bend Alive is known for Fridays on Forest, while this has been our biggest success to date, we have committees in place to give equal focus to our other areas as well.

Be sure to follow Great Bend Alive on social media (click the links below) for upcoming events, opportunities to volunteer, sponsor events, or get involved in new ways!

#### What is a Kansas Main Street?

Kansas Main Street Organizations are a selfhelp, technical assistance program that targets revitalization and preservation of downtown districts through the development of a comprehensive strategy.

Main Street America™ leads a movement committed to strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.



#WEAREMAINSTREET

## For the latest updates follow Great Bend Alive on:

Facebook



Instagram



TikTok



GBEDinc.com/mainstreet



# MEET OUR PRESIDENT



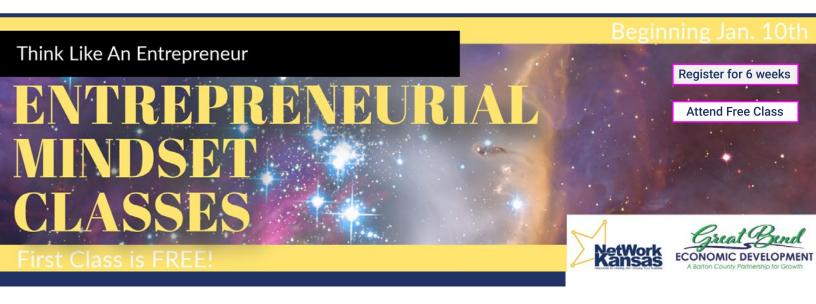
Sara Arnberger is a native of Great Bend, Kansas and located back to the area to pursue the opportunities with economic development. Sara comes to Great Bend Economic Development with a bachelors degree from Friends University and close to 10 years of experience in management and customer service. Her experience combined with her passion for the area is sure to spur new growth.

## COMMS DIRECTOR

marketing@gbedinc.com



Communications Director, Lee Ann June, is a longtime local with a love for community. She is excited to join forces with GBED to promote and grow Barton County. Bringing a comprehensive set of skills that are valuable to the organization, she sharpened her skills in marketing, planning, and communication at the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, and now is delighted to contribute her talents to GBED's efforts. Mother of two, former business owner/instructor, and creative; she brings a unique perspective to this position. Motivated by GBED's momentum, Lee Ann is invested in seeing the Great Bend area thrive.



## **Entrepreneurship**

## **GBED offers** First Class for Free

Great Bend Economic Development (GBED) is thrilled to announce that the first class of the "Entrepreneurial Mindset" series, will be offered free of charge on January 10th. This initiative aims to encourage individuals interested in entrepreneurship to

test-drive the class, providing a valuable opportunity to experience the content and atmosphere firsthand.

Participants attending the free trial class on January 10th will not only have the chance to explore the exciting world of entrepreneurial thinking but will also enjoy complimentary dinner as part of the experience. GBED

is eager to welcome prospective entrepreneurs, business enthusiasts, and anyone curious about the entrepreneurial mindset.

If attendees find the class valuable and wish to continue their journey with the Entrepreneurial Mindset Class, GBED will seamlessly guide them through

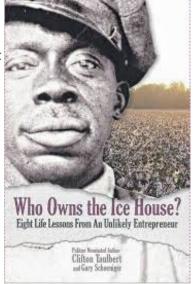
the online setup process, and payment details will be addressed at that time. This innovative approach allows participants to make an informed decision about their commitment after experiencing the class firsthand.

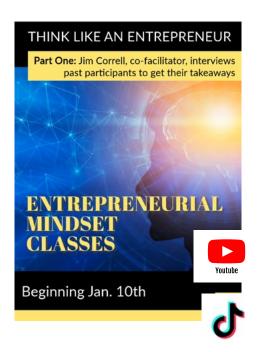
The weekly classes, led by co-facilitators Jim Correll and Shelly Peacock, promise engaging discussions, video content exploration, and an insightful dive into the pages of "Who Owns the Ice House?"—a book highlighting the inspiring entrepreneurial journey of Clifton Taulbert. Local entrepreneurs will also share their experiences, offering real-world perspectives

on the challenges and triumphs of entrepreneurship.

GBED remains committed to fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, providing individuals with the tools and mindset necessary for success in business and daily life. As an added incentive, participants who attend at least 5 sessions will receive a 50% refund if they choose to register for the full course.

For more information on the free trial class, including registration details and schedule, please contact GBED Staff at 620-796-2407 or via email at marketing@ gbedinc.com. Online registration is available at <a href="https://www.gbedinc.com/event-details/entrepreneurial-mindset">www.gbedinc.com/event-details/entrepreneurial-mindset</a>. To sign up for the free class, fill out this short form: https://forms.monday.com/forms/







## **Entrepreneurship**

# **IGNITE** begins new year with more resources for entrepreneurs

Great Bend Economic Development has launched year two for the IGNITE Rural Business competition, inviting entrepreneurs and startups to establish a business in Barton County. The initiative aims to empower and support innovative ventures by providing tools, resources, classes, intensives and investment. This competition, part of ongoing efforts in Barton County, fosters creativity and impactful entrepreneurship.

Participants stand to gain business exposure, mentorship from local professionals, and the chance to win significant cash prizes. Partnering with NetworkKansas and the Small Business Development Center, the IGNITE committee uses Venture Dash for contestant submissions and progress tracking. Both organizations offer mentorship and support in developing business plans.

The competition unfolds in several rounds, starting with material

submissions via the Venture Dash platform on the GBED website or igniteks.com. The live IGNITE Finale event October 10, 2024 will feature the top contestants. Startups (less than 5 years old, 10 or fewer employees) are eligible, and applicants must be 18 years or older. The application deadline is June 15, 2024, with rules and applications available at www.igniteks.

#### com.

Join the IGNITE Rural Business competition for a chance to showcase innovation, creativity, and long-term business viability. The IGNITE Committee is also looking for business mentors and sponsors. If you or your business is interested, please reach out to GBED staff at 620-796-2407 or via email at marketing@gbedinc.com.









## Chamber/CVB/Eco Devo Unite for Collaborative Meeting and AskGBK

The Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, Great Bend Economic Development, and the City of Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau are thrilled to announce a collaborative meeting aimed at fostering synergy and collective growth within the community.

The meeting was held among staff members on Dec. 13th at the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce to explore innovative ways to enhance the vibrancy and prosperity of Great Bend. The meeting was a platform for open dialogue, idea exchange, and planning for the new ASK GBK rollout. ASK GBK is the newest service introduced to Great Bend and its surrounding communities, aiming to elevate customer service standards through collaborative efforts to deliver accurate and timely answers to the inquiries of our residents and visitors.

"We believe that by joining forces, we can leverage our collective strengths to propel Great Bend to new heights," said Megan Barfield, President of the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce. "This collaborative effort is a testament to our commitment to the growth and well-being of our community."

The meeting aimed to establish a foundation for ongoing collaboration, ensuring that the combined efforts of the Chamber, Economic Development, and Convention & Visitors Bureau continue to positively impact the economic landscape and quality of life in Great Bend.

"We recognize the power of collaboration in driving economic success and community development," stated Sara Arnberger, President of Great Bend Economic Development. "This meeting is a significant step towards harnessing that power for the benefit of our residents, businesses, and visitors."

This trio of organizations will continue meeting to share key takeaways and outline the next steps in the collaborative journey. "I just love the effort, time and commitment we are giving to each other, and this ASK GBK process – it's just one more way we can provide the best customer service in Great Bend!" stated Christina Hayes, Convention & Visitor Bureau Director & Community Coordinator.

In the initial phase of the Ask GBK initiative, the team introduces the now available askgbk@gmail.com email



Left to Right starting at the top: Lee Ann June (Great Bend Economic Development), Jaimee Beckwith (Great Bend Chamber), Julie Mazouch (Great Bend Chamber), Sara Arnberger (Great Bend Economic Development), Megan Barfield (Great Bend Chamber), Amanda Gaddis (Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau), Savannah Kennon (City of Great Bend), Christina Hayes (City of Great Bend/Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau).

address, overseen by dedicated staff members from each participating organization. This allows residents and visitors to submit questions about any topics they may be unable to find answers to through existing resources. Moving into Phase 2, the launch of the askgbk.com website, scheduled for release by the end of January. The Great Bend community is invited to join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag #AskGBK. For more information email <code>askgbk@gmail.com</code>.



## **Entrepreneurship**

# 4th Annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge is seeking student participants and teacher champions

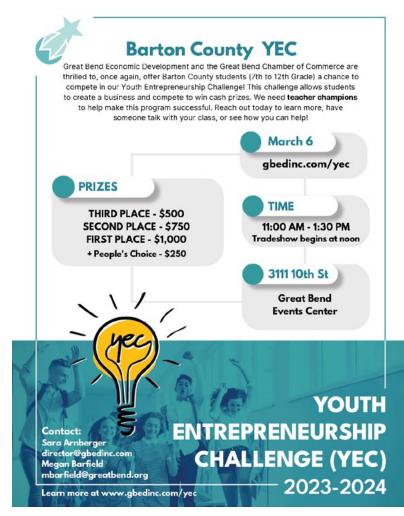
Great Bend Economic Development and the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce are excited to announce the return of the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) for Barton County students in 7th to 12th grade. This marks the 4th Annual YEC, scheduled for March 6th, 2024, providing an exceptional opportunity for students to showcase their entrepreneurial skills, present innovative business ideas, and vie for cash prizes.

Currently, the competition boasts the participation of four enthusiastic students, and the organizers are eager to encourage more Barton County students to join in this exciting venture. The success of the YEC relies not only on the students' creativity but also on the support of dedicated Teacher Champions who will mentor and guide participants throughout the entrepreneurial journey.

Lee Ann June, Communications Director at Great Bend Economic Development, underscores the profound impact of education and entrepreneurship on the future of the community. Teacher Champions will play a crucial role by collaborating with students, engaging with local businesses, and contributing to the overall entrepreneurial growth of the region. The commitment involves refining business concepts, guiding presentations, and providing mentorship to ensure students' success.

At the culmination of the challenge, participants will have the opportunity to present their innovative ideas at a tradeshow, competing for a total prize pool of \$2500. The breakdown includes \$1000 for first place, with the added bonus of advancing to the Statewide competition, \$750 for second place, \$500 for third place, and a People's Choice award of \$250, voted on by tradeshow attendees.

To learn more about the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, become a Teacher Champion, or participate as a student, please visit www.gbedinc.com/yec or reach out to Lee Ann June directly. Let's inspire and foster the next generation of entrepreneurs in Barton County!



## **Upcoming Events and Business Education**

### **Entrepreneurial Mindset Classes**

**10** JAN

Wednesday, Jan. 10 (register by Jan. 8th)

6 PM - 8 PM Cost: \$100 (attend 5 of 6 classes and receive 50% refund, Dinners and Book included)

3111 10th Street, Great Bend Events Center - GB Eco Devo offices https://www.qbedinc.com/event-details/entrepreneurial-mindset



## Dodge City - in-person Sales & Ues Tax for Construction Contractors

Tuesday, Jan. 23

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Cost: FREE

Santa Fe Depot, 101 E. Wyatt Earp Blvd.(second floor), Dodge City https://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/28235

#### Beat the Winter Blues Sales - Snowball Drop



Saturday, Jan. 13 10:00 AM (Snowball drop starts)

Crest Theater, then Shopping downtown GBK!

https://www.facebook.com/events/2675156975973901



## Business Basics in a Day - How to Start a Business

Wednesday, Jan. 23 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM Cost: \$75

RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park

https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?schID=40563

## **18**JAN

### IRS Small Business Tax Workshop

Thursday, Jan. 18
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Cost: \$45
RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?schID=40597



### Kansas Retail Sales and Compensating Use Tax

Wednesday, Jan. 31 9:00 AM - Noon Cost: \$20

RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park

https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?schID=40591



## Dodge City in-person Sales & Use Tax for Retail Businesses

Monday, Jan. 22 9:00 AM - NOON Cost: FREE

Santa Fe Depot, 101 E. Wyatt Earp Blvd.(second floor), Dodge City https://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/28234



## Kansas Sales and Compensating Use Tax for Construction Contractors

Wednesday, Jan. 31 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM Cost: \$15

RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park <a href="https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?schlD=40594">https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?schlD=40594</a>

Calendar on the www.gbedinc.com
Home Page has class descriptions & links.

### **Education**

## SBDC & SBA Classes

Click on the Class Name for the Link



### Startup and Start Right

Tuesday, Jan. 9 Noon: FREE

#### <u>Understanding the Corporate</u> <u>Transparency Act</u>

Tuesday, Jan. 9 10 AM: FREE

## How to Be Your Own Social Media Manager

Thursday, Jan. 11 11:00 AM: FREE

#### **Business Financial Literacy**

Thursday, Jan. 11 11:30 AM: FREE

#### Unlock Google's Top Spot in Just 1 Week: Your Ultimate Guide

Thursday, Jan. 11 6:00 PM: FREE

## State Tax for Construction Contractors

Tuesday, Jan. 16 9:00 AM: FREE

#### **State Taxes for Retailers**

Tuesday, Jan. 16 1:00 PM: FREE

#### Analytics, Social Media, Google

Wednesday, Jan. 17 1:00 PM: FREE

## What to Know When Launching a Food Business

Thursday, Jan. 18 10:00 AM: FREE

#### Social Media 101: Unpaid Sources of Social Media

Thursday, Jan. 25 9:00 AM: Free

#### Polish Your Business Idea

Saturday, Jan, 27 10:00 AM: FREE

#### Marketing and Social Media Strategy

Saturday, Jan, 27 12:45 PM: FREE

#### in-person

#### Simple Steps to Start Your Small Business

Saturday, Jan, 27 1:00 PM: FREE Wichita Public Library -Advanced Learning Library 711 W 2nd St Wichita

#### **QuickBooks for Beginners**

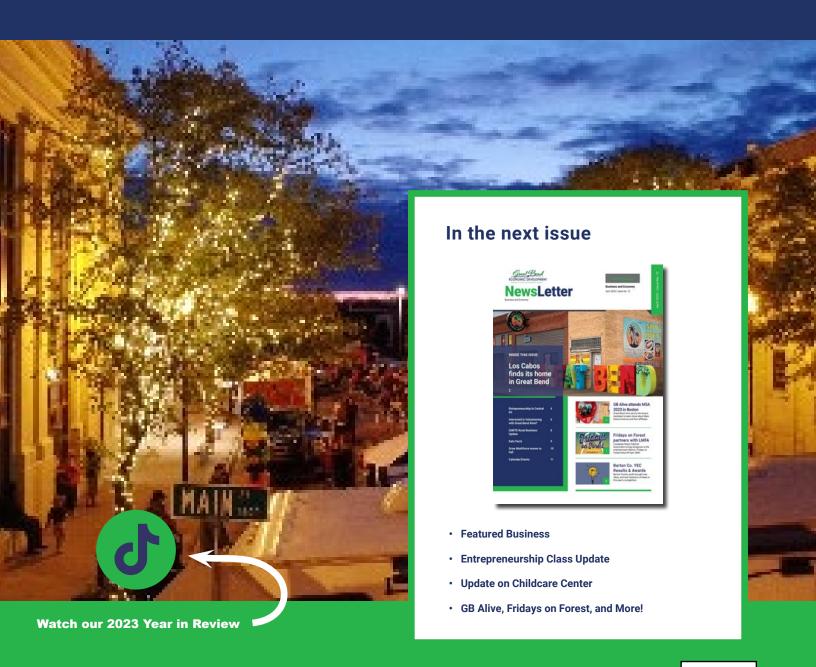
Tuesday, Feb. 20 9 AM - NOON: \$179



Thursday, Feb. 22 9:00 - 12:00 PM \$179



## "Economic growth is not an end in itself, but a means to an end - a way of improving people's lives." - Paul Krugman



## Let's keep in touch

**Great Bend Economic** Great Bend, Kansas 67530

620-796-2407









TikTok

Website





