

Research reactor upgraded to 1.2 megawatts

A power upgrade that will make K-State's nuclear reactor the fifth highest-powered university reactor in the country is expanding the possibilities for researchers who work in areas like radiation detector testing, radiography and trace element analysis.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved an upgrade to the output of K-State's TRIGA reactor from 250 kilowatts to 1.25 Megawatts. The reactor's primary function is to generate neutrons for experiments. University researchers use the reactor for diverse projects, from developing bomb-detection equipment to aid in homeland security and testing new types of radiation detectors developed by the K-State SMART laboratories, to analyzing the chemical composition of Stone Age tools.

The increase in power will provide more intense radiation for researchers studying imaging like that used in health care, said Mike Whaley, who manages K-State's reactor. The added power also improves detection of trace elements and creates opportunities to study such topics as how radiation might convert cellulose to ethanol.

Grocery store summit to gather rural solutions

Continuing a mission to preserve and even restore small towns' vitality, the Center for Engagement and Community Development at Kansas State University has organized a summit for owners of rural grocery stores.

"We expect to hear from owners and others about the challenges they face, as well as how they've addressed them," said David Procter, center director. The summit also is an opportunity for elected officials, economic development workers, food distributors and university researchers to meet face to face and exchange ideas.

The June 1 summit, to be 1:30-4:30 p.m. in Inman, grew out of the surveys and in-depth interviews the center has completed as part of its Rural Grocery Store Initiative.

Common concerns include growing distribution fees, shrinking sales and commuting customers.

Registration for the free event must be completed by May 15 and can be done online at <http://www.ruralgrocery.org/events/>

points of pride

Koreans view BRI as biocontainment model

A delegation of academics, politicians and engineers associated with Seoul National University were in Manhattan recently to bolster research relationships in agricultural sciences and learn about how K-State's Biosecurity Research Institute was built.

The South Korean university is using the BRI as a model for biocontainment facilities to be built on a new agricultural biotechnology campus. Eun Woo Park, agriculture and life sciences dean at the Seoul institution, led the 12-member delegation.

"I wanted to give the engineers an opportunity to learn about the concepts, technology and operational considerations behind biocontainment research facilities," Park said. "The engineers were very impressed with the facilities."

on campus May 8-21

May 10

Salina commencement

10 a.m., Kansas Highway Patrol Training Center Administration Building J, 2025 East Iron Ave., Salina.

May 13

Advising 'Webinar'

NACADA Webinar, "Making Career Advising Integral to Academic Advising," 1-2:30 p.m., Flint Hills Room, K-State Student Union. Presented by Ken Hughey, K-State, and Joanne Damminger, Rowan University.

May 16

Beach kids workshop

Participants will visit the "More Than Words" exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution and make their own journals to write in and illustrate. For children 6 and older. Cost is \$5 and reservations are required, 532-7718. 2-4 p.m., Beach Museum of Art.

May 16

Manhattan commencement

1 p.m. in Bramlage Coliseum for the Graduate School, and at 3:30



The faculty brass quintet (Paul Hunt, trombone; Craig Parker and Paul Mueller, trumpet; Jackie Kerstetter, horn; and Steve Maxwell, tuba) will perform at 7:30 p.m. May 8 in All Faiths Chapel. The concert will include works by Charles Ives, Petr Eben, Gyorgy Ranki and the Pulitzer-winning composer George Walker. (Photo by Dan Donnert, K-State Photo Services)

p.m. in McCain Auditorium for the College of Veterinary Medicine.

May 17

Manhattan commencement

* College of Arts and Sciences, 8:30 a.m., Bramlage Coliseum.
* College of Architecture, Planning and Design, 10 a.m., McCain

Auditorium.
* College of Education, 11 a.m., Bramlage Coliseum.
* College of Business Administration, 12:30 p.m., Bramlage.
* College of Agriculture, 2:15 p.m., Bramlage.
* College of Human Ecology, 4:15 p.m., Bramlage.
* College of Engineering, 6:15 p.m., Bramlage.

A man of many automata, continued

ger" is turned, the heartbeat is off-kilter.

"I wanted to make a statement about the over-consumption that seems to be characteristic of current American

culture," Holcombe said. Holcombe has created about 40 automata since 2002.

Since he began creating automata, Holcombe has noticed that his life has improved.

"I find that I get crabby if I'm not doing this," he said. "It keeps me busy and keeps my mind sharp. Creativity is an outlet, and we all need a creative outlet." ♦♦

opportunities

Classified

* A list of employment opportunities is posted at <http://www.k-state.edu/hr/>
* A recording of classified job opportunities is available 24 hours a day on the Employment Information Line, 532-6271.
* For additional information, call 532-6277 or visit the Division of Human Resources at 103 Edwards Hall. Applications are accepted 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Unclassified

* A complete listing of vacancies can be seen at <http://www.k-state.edu/affact/>
* For additional information, call the office of affirmative action at 532-6220 or visit 214 Anderson Hall.

Wildcats, continued

nology Acquisition and Commercialization. Glasscock received a bachelor's degree in English from K-State. From 1990 to 2003 he represented the 62nd District and was the speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives from 2001 to 2003.

* Dan Deines, professor of accounting, for the College of Business Administration. Deines is dedicated to recruiting students into accounting careers. He has developed and implemented a recruitment program aimed at counteracting negative stereotypes among high school students about the field of accounting.

* Robert Shannon, superintendent for USD 383 Manhattan-Ogden, for the College of Education. Shannon, who earned his doctorate in educational administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has been a school administrator since 1978. He joined the Manhattan-Ogden district in 2005.

* Stephen Morris, president of the Kansas Senate, for the College of Engineering. Morris, whose first term in the Senate was 1993, chairs the interstate cooperation committee and the joint committee on legislative coordi-

nation. In addition to the agriculture and ways and means committees, he serves on the state building construction committee.

* Debra W. Stewart for the Graduate School. Stewart has been president of the the Council of Graduate Schools since 2000; before that she was vice chancellor and dean of the graduate school at North Carolina State University.

* Evan Grier, president of the College of Human Ecology alumni board, for the college. Grier, of Manhattan, is a 2002 K-State graduate and the owner, with wife Andrea, of Harry's restaurant.

* Bill Meredith, director of the School of Family Studies and Human Services, for K-State at Salina. Meredith, a native of Lincoln, is a specialist in issues of family violence, family relationships in Asian cultures, and adolescence. He joined K-State in 1999.

* Billy Collins, former poet laureate of the United States, will read three poems for the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Dan Thomson, assistant professor of clinical sciences and the Jones Professor of Production Medicine, will address the graduates. ♦♦

k-statement

For Kansas State University faculty and staff

May 8, 2008 Vol. 30, No. 20

Wildcats to take on the world

More than 2,900 students will participate in commencement ceremonies in Manhattan and Salina this month. ★ The class of 2008 is the 141st to graduate from K-State since

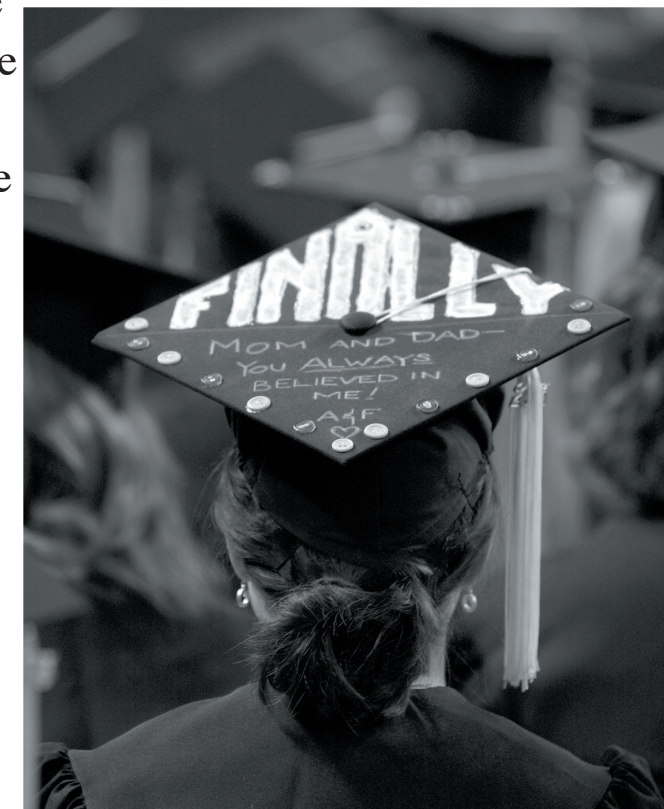
the first class graduated in 1867.

Commencement for K-State at Salina will be Saturday, May 10, at the Kansas Highway Patrol Training Center Administration Building J, 2025 East Iron Ave., Salina.

Ceremonies in Manhattan Friday, May 16, will be at 1 p.m. in Bramlage Coliseum for the Graduate School, and at 3:30 p.m. in McCain Auditorium for the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Ceremonies, all in Manhattan, Saturday, May 17:

* College of Arts and Sciences, 8:30 a.m., Bramlage Coliseum.
* College of Architecture, Planning and Design, 10 a.m., McCain Auditorium.
* College of Education, 11 a.m., Bramlage Coliseum.
* College of Business Administration, 12:30 p.m., Bramlage.
* College of Agriculture, 2:15 p.m., Bramlage.
* College of Human Ecol-



A relieved graduate puts her feelings in writing during the 2005 commencement ceremony in Bramlage Coliseum. (Photo by Dan Donnert, K-State Photo Services)

ogy, 4:15 p.m., Bramlage.

* College of Engineering, 6:15 p.m., Bramlage.

Degrees to be presented include more than 2,280 bachelor's degrees; more than 420 master's degrees and 50

Videotapes of the ceremonies may be ordered through the K-State Student Union Bookstore, 1-800-KSU-CATS or 785-532-6583. Tapes must be paid for at the time of purchase. For distance education students unable to attend their on-campus ceremony, a virtual commencement ceremony is available at <http://www.dce.ksu.edu/commencement/>

Commencement speakers, by college, include:

* U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback for the College of Agriculture. Brownback, born in Parker, was student body president at K-State. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1994. In 1996 he was elected to succeed Bob Dole in the Senate.

* Constance Ramos, designer and host of HGTV's "Color Correction," for the College of Architecture, Planning and Design. Ramos, born in Kansas City, Mo., is an alum of K-State's architecture program. In addition to creating design work, Ramos has been an actor and a host of TV's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

* Kent Glasscock for the College of Arts and Sciences. Glasscock, Manhattan, is president of the National Institute for Strategic Tech-

Presidential Awards recognize teaching, advising, leadership, undergraduate research

The spring Presidential Awards honor outstanding teaching, advising and administrative skills.

Receiving the Presidential Awards for Teaching Excellence are David R. Brown, a graduate teaching assistant in economics; David Lehman, an instructor of marketing; Charles Sanders, an associate professor of history; and Michael Wesch, an assistant professor of anthropology.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising recipient is Daralyn Gordon Arata, the university's pre-law adviser.

Bradley Kramer, professor and head of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering, is receiving the Presidential Award for Outstanding Department Head.

"These Presidential Awards acknowledge the truth that any great university owes its reputation to the creativity, dedication and excellence of its faculty members," said Jon Wefald, K-State president.

"K-State also welcomes the many contributions undergraduates make to research," Wefald said, "and our faculty members are known for encouraging those efforts."

Michael Reppert, senior in chemistry, is the recipient of the Presidential Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Student in Research.

Gary W. Conrad, university distinguished professor of biology, has won the Presidential Distinguished Faculty Award for the Mentoring of Undergraduate Students in Research.

Continued on back

Kuester is first Trenary Chair

Daniel Kuester, an assistant professor of economics, has been named the first Trenary Chair in Economics.

The Trenary Chair is believed to be the only economics chair in the country devoted to the teaching of economics, said Lloyd Thomas, head of K-State's department of economics. It is named for Roger Trenary, a longtime teacher of undergraduate economics courses at K-State from 1977 to 2006. In that time, Trenary taught about 24,000 students.

Trenary was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, in 2003 and died in February 2007.

"Roger had all the qualities of a great teacher," Thomas said. "He was very bright — a quick study. He had a vibrancy and vitality seldom equaled."

Like Trenary, Kuester is regarded as an engaging and caring teacher.

"Dan is totally devoted to undergraduate teaching," Thomas said. "He deals with more than 700 students each year, and does so with enthusiasm and joy."

Kuester received his undergraduate degree in 1994 from Drury University in Springfield, Mo., and a Ph.D. in economics in 2000 from the University of Missouri. He taught at the University of Arkansas before joining K-State.

Targeted Excellence grants announced

Three research programs focused on improving the lives of Kansans were selected for grants from the university's Targeted Excellence program.

M. Duane Nellis, provost and senior vice president, announced the awards, which are in their fifth year.

"This ongoing strategic investment in the university's existing and emerging strengths is transforming our research capabilities and facilitating the interaction of faculty members and students from all across campus," Nellis said. The Targeted Excellence program is a competitive initiative that supports and enhances cooperative, interdisciplinary programs that show promise of elevating K-State's stature as a top 10 land-grant institution.

From 25 pre-proposals, 12 were chosen to submit full proposals and, of those, three were selected for funding. Individual awards range from \$515,000 to \$850,000 over a three-year period. Funded proposals include:

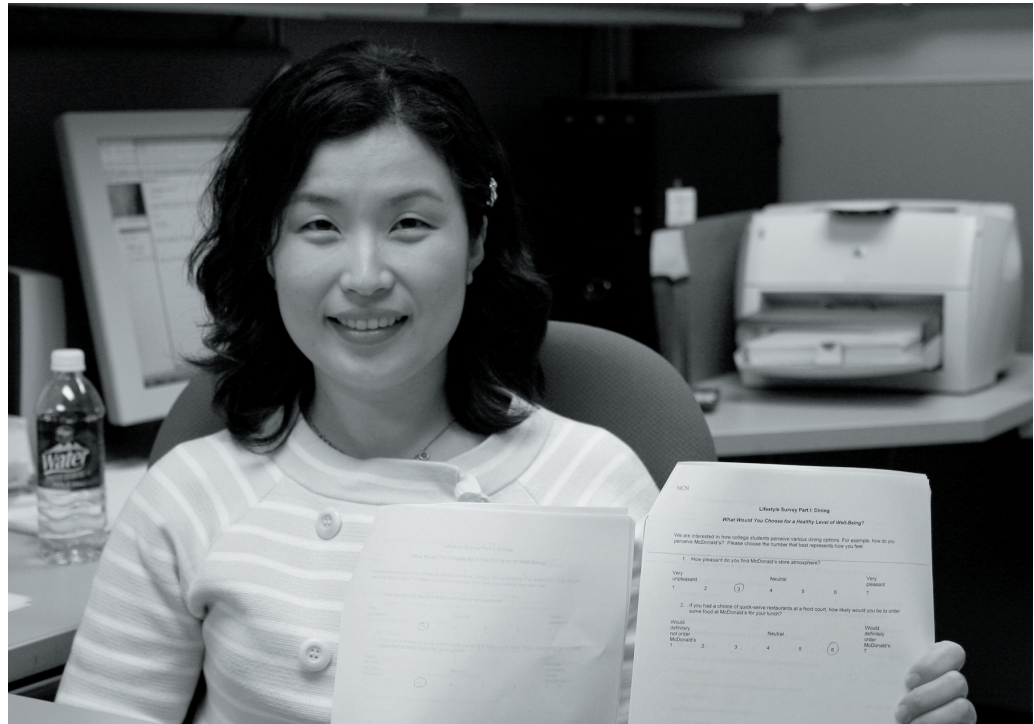
- * Advancing Genomics at K-State: Ultra-High Throughput DNA Sequencing, \$850,000, with Eduard Akhunov, Bikram Gill, Frank White, Karen Garrett, James Nelson, Susan Brown, Loretta Johnson, Michael Herman, Jianming Yu, and Sanjeev Narayanan, Ludek Zurek and Doina Caragea as co-principal investigators.

- * Aircraft Cabin Environmental Security, \$640,000, with Mohammad Hosni, Byron Jones, Helmut Hirt and Andrew Smith as co-principal investigators.

- * Enhancing Excellence in Grassland Ecology: a Center for Basic Grassland research at K-State, \$515,000, with Anthony Joern and David Hartnett as co-principal investigators.



Daniel Kuester



Youngmi Lee and her intentionally hard-to-read survey (on the left).

The value of doubt

Marketing professor sees opportunity in uncertainty

Creating doubt in consumers' minds doesn't sound like a branding opportunity. But research by Youngmi Lee, an assistant professor of marketing, suggests that consumers are less likely to hold onto existing ideas about a brand if they're made to feel a sense of difficulty thinking about it, especially when time-pressured.

Lee said it's the same thing that happens at a busy fast-food restaurant.

If you feel pressure to make a decision because of the huge line behind you, anything that makes you feel that you don't understand the brand — a new menu or logo or a change in packaging — may prompt you to choose your meal based on whatever information you have, including in-store advertising telling you the menu

item is "new" or "fresh."

Lee's research was conducted with Sharon Shavitt, a professor in business administration at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The two studied consumer perceptions about the healthfulness of foods offered at McDonald's. Their research appears in the Journal of Marketing Research.

"McDonald's is not perceived as being healthy, but they're trying hard to change that perception," Lee said.

Lee set out to study how brands like McDonald's that have an established identity can motivate consumers to listen to new information. She hypothesized that consumers don't listen to marketing claims because they think they already know the brand.

"I hypothesized that if I

made them doubt their level of understanding, they'd be more motivated to listen to new information," Lee said.

Lee had consumers take a survey that included a question about how likely they would be to order from the "wide variety" available at McDonald's. Some of the consumers who took the survey were given one with blurry print, to create doubt about their understanding of McDonald's.

"When working with blurry print, or especially when they felt time pressure, people are more motivated to have some closure," Lee said. "They try to seize on any information, like 'wide variety.' In a normal, familiar setting, they don't pay attention to marketing."

noteworthy

Family studies and human services

John P. Murray and Ann D. Murray co-authored "Television: Uses and Effects" in the Encyclopedia of Infant and Early Childhood Development, 2008, Academic Press.

Geology

Iris Totten presented "Using Geologic Time Inquiry-Based Activities to Enhance Student Learning in the Introductory Geoscience Labs," National Association of Research in Science Teaching annual conference, March 30-April 2, Baltimore.

Libraries

Roger Adams presented "Eat, Drink & Be Neelix, or, How to Cook a Targ," Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association annual meeting, March 20, San Francisco.

Jamene Brooks-Kieffer presented "Why Unlock Your Link Resolver's 'Black Box'?" The Answer Lies In Your Strategic Plan," Electronic Resources & Libraries, March 20, Atlanta.

Dale Askey and Brooks-Kieffer presented "Fast, Cheap & Easy: DIY Library 2.0 Services," Kansas Library Conference 2008, April 9, Wichita.

Danielle Theiss-White, Askey and Jason Coleman presented "An Introduction to Libstats," Kansas City Metropolitan Library Informa-

tion Network, April 1, Kansas City, Mo.

Elisabeth Pankl presented "Romance and the Brutality of Desire: The Fiction of Louise Erdrich," Death, Murder, and Mayhem: Stories of Violence and Healing on the Plains, The 34th Interdisciplinary Great Plains Studies Symposium, April 17, Omaha, Neb.

Theiss-White and colleagues presented "Learning to Lead: An Online Collaborative Model Developed at the 2007 MPLA Leadership Institute," Association of College and Research Libraries/Library Administration and Management Association Joint Spring Virtual Institute, April 29-30, online.

Tara Baillargeon, Mohan Ramaswamy and Char Simser published "Uncovering eReference Books: Adapting MARC to Generate Browseable eReference Lists," Library Philosophy and Practice, March 2008.

Physics

Anh-Thu Le, Chii Lin and student published "Retrieval of Interatomic Separations of Molecules from Laser-Induced High-Order Harmonic Spectra," Journal of Physics B: Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics, Vol. 41, 2008.

Psychology

Gary Brase published "Frequency Interpretation of Ambiguous Statistical Information Facilitates Bayesian Reasoning," Psychonomic Bulletin & Review, Vol. 15,

No. 2, 2008.

Brase presented "Do Pictures Promote Nested-Set or Frequency Representations in Judgments Under Uncertainty?" Oklahoma/Kansas Judgment and Decision Making Conference, April 2008, Oklahoma City.

Richard Harris and students published "The Effect of the Amount of Blood in a Violent Video Game on Aggression, Hostility and Arousal," Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Vol. 44, 2008.

Sociology, anthropology and social work

Ryan Spohn and colleagues published "Investigating Racial Disparity at the Detention Decision: The Role of Informal Control and Respectability," Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice, Vol. 5, No.2.

The following K-State faculty presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society, March 27-30, St. Louis:

Spohn and student, "Social Dynamite and Social Control: A Preliminary Examination of Cross-National Incarceration." **Spencer Wood** and colleague, "'He Was Non-Violent, But My Boys Weren't!'" The Hegemonic Myth of Non-Violence and the Construction of a Black Identity."

Frank Weyher, "Barbalet's Challenge: Max Weber on 'Rationality' and Emotions."

A man of many automata

Graphic designer creates kinetic sculpture with something to say

Bob Holcombe can find inspiration in something as simple as a mailbox.

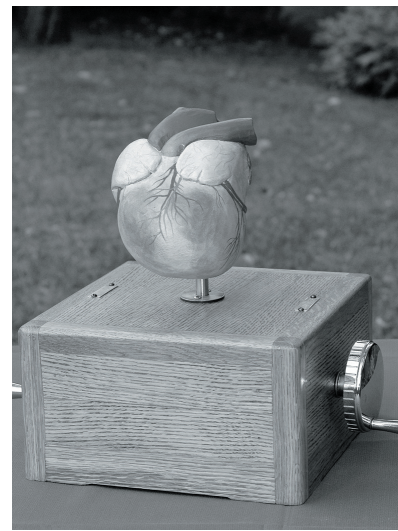
"When I drive, I tend to take old highways or back roads, and you may see a mailbox that someone has created with random objects," said Holcombe, a graphic designer for the department of communications at K-State. "Folk art is what inspires me. The artists aren't necessarily trained, but they have something to say."

When Holcombe's not making graphic design materials for K-State Research and Extension, the Louisiana native finds creative release in painting and designing automata, a type of kinetic sculpture. Automata usually employ a hand-cranked mechanism to animate a scene. Holcombe also collects and restores power tools from the 1920s and '30s.

Holcombe received a master's degree in fine arts from Illinois State in 1982, but after graduation he didn't make any art for 20 years.

After some positive life changes and finding particular inspiration from Helen Brockman, the 105-year-old Manhattan resident who is a fashion designer, retired professor and author, Holcombe began creating art again in 2002. He started painting still lifes, several of which have been displayed at the Strecker-Nelson Gallery.

"His still lifes are quite exquisite," said Jay Nelson, co-owner of the Strecker-Nelson. "They are simple, straight-forward compositions. There may be a painting of an oak leaf on an aluminum pie plate, but there is an underlying sophistication and reference to art history."



Holcombe has garnered the most attention for his automata, which are wry and whimsical, interesting and subversive.

If the pieces' statements aren't clear to every viewer, "they are evident to me," Holcombe said, "and that's what matters."

"He has a uniqueness of vision,"

Bob Holcombe's automata include "Listening and Not Listening," a comment on people's tendency to hear what they want to, and "Normal," which produces a healthy or unhealthy heartbeat, depending on which crank is turned. Some of his inspiration for forms comes from educational props of the 1930s.

Nelson said. "These pieces may seem like 'naive art,' yet it's obvious from the manner in which they are done that they are pretty sophisticated."

For one piece, "Normal," Holcombe sculpted a human heart — complete with ventricles and an aorta — and mounted it on a wooden box with cranks on either side. When the crank on the side labeled "normal" is turned, the sound is that of a healthy heart. When the crank labeled "dan-

Continued on back