Professor Jim Thompson is retiring after three decades of teaching at Highland Community College.

By ALLEN SEIFERT
News-Press/Gazette Staff Writer

HIGHLAND, Kan. — Twenty-six years ago, Jim Thompson decided it was time to make a career decision.

He was a 37-year-old farmer with a family of four, the skill of a tinker, an interest in chemistry and a voracious appetite for the printed word.

"I just decided I wouldn't make it as a farmer," he says tersely. So autumn found him as a freshman at Peru State College, studying science, particularly chemistry.

Later this spring, Thompson will hang up his laboratory frock for the last time. After 22 years as an instructor at Highland Community College, he'll finally have time to read some of those books he's wanted to read all these years.

"I graduated from Peru State then I taught four years at Humboldt, Neb., before I learned about this job," he says. "I've enjoyed it. I'll stay here, but I'll finally get to do some reading."

Summoned to Highland from Humboldt, Thompson found his teaching quarters tucked away in the dusty basement of the college Administration Building. The lab needed upgrading. There was little order.

So he used his skill as a tinker to construct — at a fraction of the cost — much laboratory equipment. A stirrer he constructed, for example, cost the college only $3. A similar stirrer if purchased from a factory would have cost five times that.

"Twenty-two years is enough," says the man who has served under four college presidents. Seven years ago, his laboratory was moved to the spacious new science and mathematics building, which he says has been a boon to his classes.

There have been other changes.

"Back when I started at Highland, the areas of chemistry and physics were almost for men only. Now we have as many women as men," he says.

Twenty-two years ago, would-be engineers were beating down the doors of his laboratory.

"Hardly anybody wants to be an engineer these days — maybe 5 percent of the people who take my classes. I don't know why there's been such a decline. There's much more interest now in the health-related sciences," he says.

If college officials ask him, Thompson says, he'll be available to be a fill-in teacher.

"I suppose I'll miss it (teaching)" he says, "But I still like to tinker with electronics and I like photography. I've never been bored. I don't figure I will be after I retire."
Crude oil production down in '87

Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. — Production of crude oil declined 12.3 percent during 1987 while natural gas production rose 1.5 percent last year, the Kansas Corporation Commission reported today.

It was the third straight year that oil production has dropped in the state, the RCC said.

It also reported that declarations of intent to drill for oil and gas jumped 17 percent last year as the price of oil improved in mid-year before slipping back and companies began gearing up for increased drilling for gas in the Hugoton field.

"How much of a recovery Kansas exploration and development experiences will depend in large part on actions taken elsewhere," a RCC statement said. "OPEC's production policies will remain a key to crude oil prices."

OPEC is the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The crude oil price was $15.50 a barrel last February in Kansas, rose to a 1987 high of $49.50 in July and has now fallen back to $15.50.

Crude production in Kansas fell from 87 million barrels in 1986 to 58.2 million barrels last year, a drop of 23.7 percent. The 1987 figure matched the previous low in 1976.

Gas production rose from 452 billion cubic feet in 1986 to 459 billion cubic feet, up 1.5 percent.

The commission authorized initial drilling in the Hugoton field in 1986 — allowing producers to double their drilling back in the field — but said that decision had little effect on 1987 production since companies were just starting to drill the new wells.

Monday was Jayhawks Day

Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. — Gov. Mike Hayden declared Monday "Kansas Jayhawks Basketball Day" in honor of KU's appearance in the NCAA championship game against the Oklahoma Sooners.

Hayden urged Kansans to join him in congratulating the Jayhawk program.

Hayden and Oklahoma Gov. Henry Bellmon also agreed to a wager on the KU-OU title game: a case of Kansas strip steaks and a turkey on Hayden's part against a case of Oklahoma beef put up by Bellmon.

Hayden won the turkey from North Carolina Gov. James G. Martin when KU defeated Duke in Saturday's semifinal game.
Highland students, from left, Holly Lucas, Merideth Harness and Beth Molleker with their inventions in front of the them and their advertising placards behind them.

Young inventors gear products to need

Doniphan County students gird for Invention Convention

HIGHLAND, Kan. — Necessity is still the mother of invention.

Holly Lucas, age almost 11, became severely frustrated when the youngest for whom she babysits kept spitting out his pacifier.

He'd spit the pacifier on the floor. It would roll under a piece of furniture. Then it was up to Holly to find the rubber-nipped security toy when the baby grew fussy again.

"I got tired of it," says Holly.

So she invented the pacifier cube.

The pacifier cube is a cube of soft, rubber-like material with a small opening at one end. The baby can easily grab it and chew on it. The cube is designed to fit comfortably in the baby's mouth, and the rubber-nipped opening helps to keep the pacifier from rolling away.

"I like how it works," says Holly.

The pacifier cube is just one of many inventions created by the students at the Doniphan County Invention Convention. The convention is designed to promote creativity and problem-solving skills among students.

Doniphan County students competed against students from other schools in the area, showcasing their inventions in categories such as originality, usefulness in addressing real needs, workability of the invention and the clarity with which the presentation about the invention is made.

On the evening of the convention, students will set up their displays in the RGIC library at 7 p.m., and the public is invited to inspect the inventions beginning at 7:30. Inventor Mark Dahl will deliver a brief speech at 7:45. Winners will be announced at 8.

"Everyone has been so helpful with this," said Dahl. "Including all the Doniphan County students."
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“I got tired of it,” says Holly.

So she invented the pacifier. It’s a little more than a string which can be pinned to a piece of the youngster’s wearing apparel. The other end of the string is tied securely to the pacifier. The pacifier can be spit out, but it can’t be lost.

Holly’s pacifier will be but one of the inventions to be officially unveiled at Doniphan County’s first annual Invention Convention scheduled at Highland Community College Nov. 17.

All of the inventions are the works of members of gifted programs at five Doniphan county schools. Winners will be selected in the combined third and fourth grades, in the fifth grade and in the sixth grade. The grand prize winner earns a trip to the national contest in Washington, D.C., in December.

“We will have a panel of seven judges who will determine the winners on the basis of originality, usefulness in addressing real needs, the workability of the invention and the clarity with which the presentation about the invention is made,” said Mrs. Teilla Gilcrest, instructor in the gifted program.

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“Everyone has been so helpful with this,” said Gilcrest, “including all the Doniphan county banks which contributed our prizes.”

“All I have asked of the inventors is that the invention fill a need,” she said.

“So it was a matter of necessity that Kimberly Huss, a Trox sixth grader, came up with what she calls her “paper caper” protector.

“I have a little brother, Jonathan, who’s three, and he keeps unraveling the toilet tissue. Every time we turn our backs he unrolls the toilet tissue,” she says.

She invented a toilet tissue roll cover.

Text by Allen Seifert, staff writer; staff photos by Ival Lawhon Jr.

Educational maverick runs unique Vermont school

ANDOVER, Vt. — The children at East Hill Farm and School rise every morning at 6 and spend their days milking cows, tending vegetable gardens, and helping produce 85 percent of the food and energy their school consumes while also keeping up with reading, writing and arithmetic.

They learn mechanical engineering by helping keep the farm’s John Deere tractor running, meteorology by trying to read the weather in the western sky. Each student is required to play a musical instrument. Some in the school have learning disabilities. Some graduates have gone on to Yale and Dartmouth.

Compounding East Hill’s incongruities is its headmaster, Dick Bliss. Despite his lack of certification in special education, he has taught students from other states who seek special help.

Their enrollment in his school has prompted legal wrangles, and yet East Hill has won praise from Vermont education officials.

“The school works because of the individual attention the kids get,” said Donna McCafferty, chief of educational resources for the state education department.

Francess Macrue, the mother of a seven-year-old who enrolled at East Hill after being a problem student elsewhere, had another explanation: “It’s the idea of teaching kids to be self-reliant, to have success and be responsible for themselves.

“If they don’t go out and milk the cows and work hard in the garden, then they don’t get to eat, or their meals are pretty bad. That’s part of learning.”

Bliss himself stated his educational philosophy succinctly: “If this can work, it’s worth. Everything else follows from that.”

Please see School/Page 4C
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**THE Past Is Prologue**

Davis Cites Lessons of History

Sharon Engler

"American History is my most challenging class," stated Wayne Davis. History repeats itself, therefore, studying it helps us understand the events of our present and the effect on the future.

Thucydides, the great Greek historian of the fifth century B.C., held that accurate knowledge of past events helps us grasp the shape of things to come. History, as Thucydides saw it, is both scientific and practical. It presents an objective, exact account of events and their causes, and in so doing it prepares statesmen and students for dealing with the future. His main assumption was that, since human nature is unchangeable, the course of future events will more or less follow a pattern exhibited in past events.

It is not mere good fortune or fate that gave Rome her mastery of the world, but training, discipline and a set purpose to attain that end. Present day politicians and students could learn from this how to act in a similar manner.

The educated mind is not an almanac, a memorized machine, or a trackdown of misplaced and empty phrases. It is an organism that understands relationships between facts and ideas, and between the past and the present. In history we attempt to grasp relationships, to see how one set of concepts relates to another, and to comprehend their proper order of value—and their relevance to the life of the person possessing such knowledge.

We are the sum of all our yesterdays. A 1777 patriot's epic in a New England churchyard reads, "My son, that which I beseech you to, you must earn now if you would keep it. Only a knowledge of American history can befall the story of the birth and development of our nation and its consequences. It is obviously impossible for us to preserve what we have if we have no knowledge of what we are preserving.

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**Teacher can help in Doniphan County, MO.**

By ALLEN SEIFERT

Stull Water

HIGHLAND, Kan. — Arlyn Parrish is helping to grow teachers in Doniphan County, the same area where she was educated over 40 years ago. Parrish, now 70, was one of the first teachers in the area to work with children who had hearing impairments.

**President focuses on housing assistance.**

By LEIGH FORCHER

Stull Water

The president explained he has the potential of the country’s largest office space but will wait until he has enough of the country’s infrastructure built before moving spaces. He said he has no plans to move before the end of the year.

Garrett Rice, general manager of the city’s largest office space, said the facility downtown will be moved to the new James Street building. The old location will be used for retail.

The city gave $60,000 from a community block grant, said McChenny.

"Without that commitment we wouldn’t be here. This has been a long time in the making from the ground up, and we are ready for the future," he said.

"The community has built this structure," he said. "And it is our responsibility to make sure this structure is sustained for future generations."

"This is a project that we are excited about," he said. "And it will help to provide a place for people to work and live in our community."

**Atchison embarks on three building projects.**

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**Heat damage to crop yield not yet seen as irreversible.**

By DOUG HITCHCOCK

Damage to farmers’ crops from the current extreme heat and lack of rain is not serious enough at this time to reduce yields, Kansas and Missouri agricultural authorities said.

Most area corn crops are well in the growing season, despite the heat and lack of rain in the pollination stage. Soybeans are also nearing the harvest stage and the potential yield may not be affected.

Both crops need water more than ever, especially when the weather continues to be unusually hot and dry for prolonged periods. However, the potential yield may not be affected, Michael Turner, St. Louis corn grower, said.

Turner said area farmers say they are not seeing any major damage or losses.

Bob Rudolph, extension agronomist for Kansas State, said the heat is causing quite a bit of stress on crops and stock is being taken out of the area.

He added that serious damage has not yet been done.

"It has really good prospects, despite the limited amount of moisture," he said. "But the crops are going to be OK." Rudolph said he saw signs of water losses in the Kansas Crop Reporting Service, Topeka, Kan., said that corn losses in the state are down compared to the state’s average.

"The heaviest losses are in the northwestern counties and parts of the state," he said.

Northwestern Kansas also has seen a lot of rain this summer, but it hasn’t been enough to save the crops.

"Water shortage is not critical for soybeans than for corn," he said. "Beans can be dry without much rainfall, but corn requires a lot of water to develop properly.

The two businesses will buy social services to provide housing assistance for the residents who are in need.

The Atchison County Community Foundation will support the new building project.

"Our experience in these buildings not only provides readily available housing but also for senior citizens to get together," the developer continued. "These will serve as a place for our residents to think outside the box and come up with new ideas that will help our community thrive."

"Atchison currently has a high demand for housing and the construction of a new building will fill the need," said McChenny.

"Four units of the new complex will be designated for the handicapped. The apartments are simply a living unit and have no other features. The state will give credit for themselves, said McChenny."

"The ribbon cutting ceremony in LFM Park will be held on May 20th and it will be a beautiful day," he said. "We will be able to celebrate this momentous occasion."