

Source: Dave Hartnett 785-532-6615, dchart@k-state.edu
Photos available. Contact media@k-state.edu or 785-532-6415.
News release prepared by: Stephanie Jacques, 785-532-0101

Monday, Oct. 6, 2008

K-STATE KONZA PRAIRIE BARN UNDERGOES RENOVATION

MANHATTAN — Surrounded by rolling hills of tallgrass prairie near Manhattan is an old 10,000 square foot limestone barn, rich with historic value and over the past 35 years, ecological importance.

The barn, built in 1910 as part of the Dewey Ranch, was recently renovated into a conference center and meeting facility for Kansas State University's Konza Prairie Biological Station.

Konza Prairie, managed by the K-State Division of Biology, unveiled the first stage of the barn's renovation at the Sept. 26 dedication for the Cortelyou Lecture Hall. The Cortelyou family is a key contributor to the renovation. Their donation of \$300,000, in honor of the late John Van Zandt Cortelyou, a K-State faculty member from 1904 to 1934, is the largest single donation to Konza since its original acquisition.

Rushton Gardner Cortelyou, son of John Van Zandt Cortelyou, willed the funds to K-State upon his death in 2004 to honor his father's name at K-State. However, it was Rushton Cortelyou's interest in nature, especially birding, which led to the gift coming to Konza. His two daughters, Carol Cortelyou and Helen Cortelyou Linger, along with her husband, Jim Linger, and a cousin, Alice Rushton, represented the Cortelyou family at the dedication.

"As part of the Konza Prairie Biological Station, we always had the desire to maintain the historical characteristics of the buildings while at the same time modernize and equip them for functional use as modern scientific facilities," said Dave Hartnett, university distinguished professor of biology and past director of Konza Prairie.

The cost of the barn's first phase was more than \$700,000. Additional funding came from the National Science Foundation, K-State's College of Arts and Sciences, the Division of Biology and the university. The Kansas State University Foundation is currently seeking funding for the next stage of the barn's renovation, which will be on the second floor.

"The barn now provides a large lecture/meeting hall for conferences, smaller rooms for workshops and a great room for educational displays. The second floor will provide research space for sample storage, a computing facility and a library," Hartnett said.

Ken Ebert of Ebert Mayo Design Group, [Manhattan](#), and Kent Francis of Francis Construction Inc., [Rossville](#), worked together on the renovation and to preserve the barn's rustic character and special features, such as the original limestone exterior walls and cottonwood interior structure. Various photos of grassland birds taken by Loren "Bub" Blake and framed in the old barn's wood have been donated in the memory of Rushton Cortelyou's

wife, Margaret Manley Cortelyou, and hang on the walls of the barn's great room.

"We would like to thank the Cortelyou family for their generous contribution, allowing this building to become the central hub of grassland science and education in the United States," Hartnett said.

Konza Prairie was developed as an ecological research site in 1971 and is located on 8,600 acres of native tallgrass prairie preserve jointly owned by the Nature Conservancy and K-State. The station is dedicated to a three-fold mission of long term ecological research, education and prairie conservation. Currently the station is host to more than 130 registered research projects by more than 150 scientists from all over the world.

#