



TAKE FIVE TO MEET CHAMBER MEMBER

Kansas Public Media Center

What service/product do you provide? Our mission is: "Using all available media, bringing Kansas communities together by creating and presenting independent programs and services that inform, educate, enlighten, and enrich the public and provide civil discourse essential to democracy in Kansas."

Since the start of the pandemic, we've found funding to help the Depot in Bennington turn into a live-streaming venue for musicians, storytellers, poets, and other live performers. (see photo) We've been a partner with the Kansas Leadership Center in the Kansas Beats the Virus program which has helped groups and organizations meet the challenges of the pandemic and to encourage people to get vaccinated. We have several documentaries planned that we believe highlight good things done in Salina. However, these require some funding to pay for time and equipment. So, we've written several grants and continue to search for grants that will help us meet our mission.

When did you start your business and why? We started Kansas Public Media Center because we wanted a new and more agile nonprofit in the Salina/Saline County media sector. For example, we wanted to expand beyond the region, where appropriate, while staying true to our roots. Most of us were formerly associated with Access TV of Salina (now Salina Media Connection) and we wanted to move in a different direction.

Anything else you would like the community to know?

We do not have an office per se because in the new media world, as many of you already know, brick and mortar spaces aren't always necessary. Instead of renting or purchasing space we have embraced mobility, lowering our overhead, allowing us to do more for less. While we have expensive video cameras, since we're streaming to Facebook, we use refurbished iPhones that connect wirelessly to an iPad. Software allows us to stream via the chosen equipment, on the fly. We even have a "Wiral" system, a cabled mechanism that runs back and forth remotely while holding the iPhone. These steps to lower overhead and great flexibility allow the board to choose projects we want to take on.



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What is something that no one knows about you?

What many people may not know about me personally is that I spent the first 28 years of my adult life as a professional musician (rock bands) in Kansas City. When I moved to Salina I kind of gave it up. Well, I'm back! I am the bass player with Don Wagner and Friends.

Tell us a memorable experience that you have had in your business: When we wrote the grant from the Creative Arts Industries Commission, we did so for equipment that I barely understood. I understood the concept of using iPhones to live stream but had never seen it. I knew that we would have to live-stream, so I had to learn that system from scratch, along with a complex digital lighting system.

Why is being a Salina Area Chamber of Commerce member important?

In my many years of advocacy one thing I've learned - sometimes the hard way - is that if you want to be part of the conversation and not just stand outside and shout, you need to be at the table. I have not always agreed with the Chamber but as a former college-level American Government teacher, I also know that America is self-governing. With the colonization of America, we developed an ethos that said, "We can govern ourselves, thank you very much!" And that notion of self-governance goes all the way down to just about any group in our society. In other words, if you're at the table, not only can you be part of the conversation, but you will have a chance to affect the direction of the organization. Of course, I am only one voice, but I do have a voice. If I'm not a member, I do not. Being part of the Chamber connects KPMC with other businesses and organizations in the community, which is nothing but good.



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