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STAR 50

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ON THE COVER

Refer your clients, employees and co-workers to a fully digitized version of *The Kansas City Star's* annual STAR 50 report on the state of business in the Kansas City region -- eastern Kansas and western Missouri. This version includes all charts, graphics and advertisements.

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Updated 2003

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Let's call this a retelling of Aesop's fable of "The Tortoise and the Hare" -- corporate style. Great Plains Energy Inc., the parent of Kansas City Power & Light Co., has reaped a return of 13 percent for the last year while the company reported 2002 net income of \$126 million.

INSIDE STAR 50



More than two years into what for many still feels like a recession, it's time to let go of those fading memories of boom times. But things will get better. Eventually.

In the year since the 2002 Star 50 section was published, The Kansas City Star reported on layoff notices that put more than 12,000 area residents out of work. And that's just the announced mass layoffs.

DST Systems chief executive Thomas A. McDonnell won the pay sweepstakes thanks to \$10 million in gains he realized last year by exercising stock options.

STAR 50: THE RANKINGS

Kansas City-based Aquila Inc., one of the highest-ranking companies on last year's Star 50, fell off the list this year. So did eight other firms.

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Anger, pain and a sense of desperation drove Bonita Mickens 10 years ago to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of Greater Kansas City.

Kansas City small businesses were on an economic roller coaster in 2002, with record highs and record lows, stability one month and crashes the next, according to area experts.

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DST Systems chief executive Thomas A. McDonnell won the pay sweepstakes thanks to \$10 million in gains he realized last year by exercising stock options.

This edition of Star 50, the 13th produced by The Kansas City Star, provides a comprehensive overview of the region's leading businesses by ranking their performances.

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STAR 50: THE COMPANIES

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Each company profile includes vital statistics and information summarizing last year's performance of the Kansas City area's top 50 companies.

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Kansas City Star books and merchandise

A Kansas City real estate resource

A publication for the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

A Newspaper in Education program

The Star's wedding magazine

The official visitor's guide to Kansas City