

Modern cowboys rescue public notice historic Kansas cabin

By Ron Wilson

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"Home on the Range" is considered the world's best known cowboy song. So, just as the cowboy good guys of yesteryear would rescue someone in the old western movies, it is appropriate that a group of modern cowboys is coming together to rescue the historic Home on the Range cabin in rural Kansas.

Last week we learned about this historic cabin which still stands on its original site in Smith County. It was the home of Dr. Brewster Higley, who wrote the poem which would become the world-famous song, "Home on the Range." Higley's homestead was west of Smith Center and north of the rural community of Athol, population 51 people. Now, that's rural.

The cabin was owned for years by the Rust family, who protected the original structure from destruction or relocation. The family set up a living trust with 200 acres of surrounding farmland, the income from which goes to support the cabin. Rusts' nieces and nephews now serve as trustees.

El Dean Holthus is one of those trustees. He said the trustees are committed to restoring the cabin and maintaining it in its original location. Yet the years have taken their toll on the old stone and log cabin. The foundation is crumbling and the roof needs replacing. The trustees are seeking a cost sharing

grant from the Heritage Trust Fund of the Kansas Historical Society to restore the cabin. To qualify, however, requires a \$20,000 match.

Beccy Tanner, a writer for the Wichita Eagle, wrote about the challenges facing the "Home on the Range" cabin. That caught the eye of Orin Friesen, a cowboy singer who manages the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon Supper near Wichita.

"Home on the Range" is the most famous state song of all, and one of the most famous songs, period," Orin said. "When we performed in China, we sang part of 'Home on the Range' in Mandarin, and many in the audience sang along." Now, that's world famous. In one recent period, the cabin guest register showed visitors from 32 states and four foreign countries.

"We wanted to help save this historic structure," Orin said. The trustees and the Prairie Rose agreed to pursue a grass-roots effort.

"During World War II, kids would save scrap metal to help the war effort," Orin said. "I thought it would be great to involve kids in saving the cabin."

"We've been asked many times why we just don't go to some corporation for funding," El Dean Holthus said. "That would have been easier, but the cabin has always been family-owned and we wanted to get lots of individuals involved. If some kid donates part of his allowance, he can tell his children and grandchildren that he helped save the Home on the Range."

So schoolchildren started donating their funds. Then cowboy singer Michael Martin Murphey got involved. He volunteered to perform at a benefit concert at the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon Supper. When it was all done, some \$27,000 had been raised from the concert, benefit auction, and donations.

One auction item was a Kansas City Chiefs souvenir donated by the Voice of the Chiefs, Mitch Holthus. Does that last name sound familiar? Yes, Mitch is the son of El Dean and Kathy Holthus.

Most of the funds raised were generated by the concert, but what touched me the most was the handwritten letter from a third grader which said: "Here's a dollar. Please save the cabin."

"That was as important to that child as the thousand dollar donations were from our larger contributors," El Dean said. Thanks to this grass-roots effort, a grant application will be submitted in fall 2011.

"July 4, 2012 would be the 140th anniversary of the construction of the cabin," El Dean said.

"We hope to have a celebration at that time and then start reconstruction."

The cowboys are coming to the rescue again, just like in those shows of yesteryear. We commend Orin Friesen, Michael Martin Murphey, and all those involved with the Home on the Range cabin for making a difference in saving this historic structure.

I know these are the good guys.

matters of record

Sherman County Bastille

The following people were booked into the Sherman County Bastille:

May 8: Manuel Hernandez, 69, Goodland, arrested by city police on warrant for failure to appear.

May 9: Jennifer Arnold, 30, Goodland, arrested by city police for battery.

April Sheppard, 52, Goodland, arrested by city police for battery.

Virgil Baumfalk, 50, Goodland, arrested by city police for driving

under influence and transporting open container.

May 11: Tessie Adams, 32, Goodland, arrested by city police for domestic battery.

Tessie Venzke, 32, Goodland, arrested by city police for domestic battery.

May 12: Anthony Tupper, 26, Goodland arrested by sheriff's deputy on arrest and detail for probation violation.

May 16: Brad Cramer, 41, Goodland, arrested by sheriff's deputy

on arrest and detain for probation violation.

May 18: Robert Rutherford-Zimmerman, 20, Goodland, arrested by sheriff's deputy for theft.

Justin Forell, 20, Goodland, arrested by sheriff's deputy for theft.

May 19: Larry Wing, 46, Leoti, arrested by Wallace County Sheriff's Office for driving under influence times four, and driving while a habitual violator.

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Lots Three (3) and Four (4) in Block Seventy (70) in THE ORIGINAL TOWN OF GOODLAND, Sherman County, Kansas, according to the recorded plat thereof, commonly known as 407 West 12th Street, Goodland, KS 67735 (the "Property")

to satisfy the judgment in the above-entitled case. The sale is to be made without appraisal and subject to the redemption period as provided by law, and further subject to the approval of the Court. For more information, visit www.Southlaw.com <http://www.southlaw.com>

Kevin Butts, Sheriff
Sherman County, Kansas

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SHERMAN COUNTY, KANSAS CIVIL DEPARTMENT

Bankwest of Kansas Plaintiff,

vs.

Miranda S. Pena and Juan Pena, Jr., et al. Defendants.

Case No. 11CV12
Court Number:
Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 60

Notice Of Sale

Under and by virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me by the Clerk of the District Court of Sherman County, Kansas, the undersigned Sheriff of Sherman County, Kansas, will offer for sale at public auction and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand, at the Front Door of the Courthouse at Goodland, Sherman County, Kansas, on July 26, 2011, at 10:00 AM, the following real estate:

Lots Ten (10) and Eleven (11),

Block One (1), in THE AUER AND SHIMEALL ADDITION to the City of Goodland, Sherman County, Kansas, according to the recorded plat thereof, commonly known as 416 West 9th, Goodland, KS 67735 (the "Property")

to satisfy the judgment in the above-entitled case. The sale is to be made without appraisal and subject to the redemption period as provided by law, and further subject to the approval of the Court. For more information, visit www.Southlaw.com <http://www.southlaw.com>

Kevin Butts, Sheriff
Sherman County, Kansas

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UPCOMING EVENTS in Kansas

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Free festival featuring 7 bands on 2 stages, food vendors, a family-fun area and more! Larry Norvell Band Shell, Manhattan City Park (785) 532-6571, k-state.edu/upc

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Blues, BBQ & Bargains
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