

# Years of cooking for family and harvest pay off

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

A Goodland woman's years of cooking for her family and harvesters and in 4-H competitions as a youngster have paid off. She now has a recipe published in Taste of Home Books' "The Best of Country Cooking 2004."

Lois Sieck's Peanut Ice Cream Pie was selected by the publishers after winning a contest and being published in Country Woman magazine. Sieck said it previously had won a ribbon at the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair.

She said she got the recipe from a farm paper many years ago. She said she entered it in the fair years

ago and won the pie show with it.

When Country Woman had its contest, she said, only recipes that had already won somewhere could be entered.

She had a winner but needed to include more. Any recipe you submit to a contest, she said, has to be more than just the recipe.

Detailed instructions are needed, she said, because people from the magazine try it.

The recipe was runner-up in the contest, Sieck said, and ran in the magazine with a big picture.

"It looked just like when I make it," she said, "so the instructions must have been followable."

Sieck said she received a trophy,

a cookie jar that said "Country Woman" on it.

Sieck said she didn't enter anything to be chosen for the book. They picked recipes from five national magazines and printed the best.

The other four magazines are Country, Country EXTRA, Reminisce and Reminisce EXTRA.

When she got the notice that she had won, Sieck said, she didn't know what it was for.

"They sent the book and a press release," she said. "At first, I thought someone was trying to sell me something."

But she decided she should read the release.

Though the book refers to the recipe as "quick and easy," Sieck said, the pie requires a bit of a knack.

The ice cream can't be too runny, she said, but if it's too hard, it will tear the crust.

The pie was not her first cooking competition.

"I was in 4-H, of course," she said, "but this is the first time I entered in a recipe contest."

Sieck said she competed in foods in 4-H and got a lot of champion ribbons, but that was many years ago.

"I joined when I was nine or 10," she said. "I'm 65 now."

That doesn't mean she's lost her touch. Having one recipe in a magazine and a book isn't the end. She's entered another Country Woman contest, though it won't be released until July.

Sieck has practiced her craft on her family. The widow of Ray Sieck, she raised four children,

Tony (Rhonda) Sieck of Goodland, Kristi (Gary) Clabo of Tulsa, Okla., Karma (Greg) Kierns of Colorado Springs and Todd Sieck, who died in an accident.

She said she lived on a farm and cooked a lot of big meals.

"I had a lot of practice with my family," she said, "and hired help at harvest."

Not that she minded.

"I love to cook," Sieck said.

Besides providing practice, Sieck's family has been instrumental in getting the information about her victory out.

"I didn't know whether it (the press release) was worth taking to the newspaper," Sieck said, "but my daughter-in-law told me, 'If you don't take it in, I will.'"

Here is the recipe:

**Peanut Ice Cream Pie**

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs (about 24 squares)

1/4 cup sugar

1/3 cup butter, softened

1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened

1/2 cup light corn syrup

1/3 cup chunky peanut butter

2/3 cup dry roasted peanuts

In a bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, sugar and butter; press onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 9-inch pie plate.

Spoon half of the ice cream into the crust.

In a small bowl, combine the corn syrup and peanut butter; spoon half over ice cream.

Sprinkle with half of the peanuts. Repeat layers. Freeze until firm.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

## Mental health needs up

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County commissioners talked about increasing the budget for the regional High Plains Mental Health Center after hearing an update on operations at their meeting last Tuesday.

The commissioners discussed the budget for mental health after the presentation, and agreed to try to raise it from \$30,000 to \$40,000 next year. The money comes from the special health services sales tax.

Walt Hill, executive director of the regional agency, which serves all of northwest Kansas., told the commissioners the organization handled about 5,000 clients last year. Sherman County saw a jump of about 8 percent in cases, from 269 to 310 in the year.

Accompanying Hill were Mary Pat Bowman, executive director of Golden West Community Center and president of the High Plains advisory board, and Tracy Hillmer, director of the Goodland clinic.

Hill said with the cuts in state budget, the agency has been increasing fees. Last year, fees made up 49 percent (\$3.8 million) of total income and state aid had fallen

to 7 percent (\$556,426). The counties provide another 7 percent (\$556,184) and the federal government provides 31 percent (\$2.4 million) through the Mental Health Reform programs.

He said the county shared has remained pretty constant, with a slight increase over the past three years. Hill asked that the commissioners maintain their contribution in next year's budget.

To give them an idea of where they fit in the 20-county region, Hill handed out a breakdown of the budget by county and by population. Sherman County ranked near the bottom, below other counties of similar size. The state average per person is \$7.86 while the High Plains area averages \$5, he said.

Hill said because of state cuts, the mental health board was asking Ellis and Trego counties to restore their contributions to the level they had in 1999.

A chart Hill handed out shows that Sherman County taxpayers pay about 8 percent of the total cost for handling clients in the county. Sherman County handles about 7.5 percent of the total regional caseload. Hill said the client fees are

helping, but it is important to keep the county money to keep door open.

He said the organization has been using teleconferences to reduce travel costs, and they have a new "respite center" in Hays.

He said about 25 percent of the clients are children, but there is a growing number of older clients because of the retirement age and he sees this as a growth area.

He said they expect to see a shift of population, especially along I-70, with an increase in the older population.

Bowman and Hillmer said the Goodland clinic can provide critical incident debriefing, and that this is a free service to emergency, law enforcement people and schools. Hillmer said she has been training for this service.

Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Kevin Rasure told Hill they had not heard any complaints about the service at the Goodland clinic, and that it was good to see it well staffed.

Later, the commissioners agreed they could try to increase the budget from \$30,000 to \$40,000 next year. That will be part of the budget discussions in July and August.

## Council approves budget, purchase

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The Sherman County Economic Development Council approved a draft budget Tuesday to be presented to the county for next year, and purchased a copier to replace one at the office that was not working.

The council approved a budget for \$178,000 for next year that includes money for a strategic planning program, marketing and staff labor costs of \$70,000 for the director and the office secretary. That is an increase of about \$20,000 and some of the money is carryover from the first year when the council was getting organized.

"If we don't budget it, we can't spend it," said council member Harlan House. "We don't have to spend everything, but this is a guide that allows us to spend the money if it is needed."

Council member Steve West agreed, and said the budget includes a line item for donations. He said money donated by businesses could form a fund to help new businesses

with small grants.

"We received about \$3,700 our first year," he said, "and I think there are several businesses who would be willing to contribute if they knew the money was being used to help new businesses."

"We would need to develop a policy about what the money could be used for and a procedure for handing it out. I think it would be a good way to show our support of businesses in our community."

Council Treasurer Kim Bohme said the budget shows a line item of \$9,000 for this. She agreed that a policy needs to be developed before any money is given out.

The budget increases the fund for marketing up to \$30,000, but West said this was to give them room if there is some need for a major effort next year. The budget committee cut the travel and entertainment items, and increased the contract item to be able to pay for a strategic planning program.

The budget will be presented to the county and the city commissions as they do their budgeting for

next year. The council has received \$50,000 from the county and \$50,000 from the city for its first two years, and the council is asking for that same next year.

Rhonda Sieck, office secretary, and Kyle Gordon had gone to the two office supply stores to compare prices and service for a new copier.

The bids were taken on identical Sharpe copiers. The price from High Plains Office was \$999, and \$1,004 from Topside Office. The bid from High Plains, which included on-site service, was recommended by Sieck.

The council unanimously approved purchasing the copier from High Plains.

The council went into executive session for 30 minutes to discuss personnel.

When they returned to open session, House made a motion to add money to the budget to cover a possible raise for the director and the secretary. The motion passed.

The next meeting will be 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 20, in the basement of Western State Bank.



First graders from Patty Thompson's class at West Elementary sang patriotic songs as part

of the Flag Day ceremony Monday.

Photo by Bobbie Jo Lee / The Goodland Star-News

## ‘Grand Old Flag’ honored on its day

Flag Day was honored Monday at West Elementary School in a ceremony with drew about 50 people. Each one received a small American flag from the Goodland Elks Lodge.

The Brownies and Girl Scouts presented and retired the colors. Hannah Blake's rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" preceded a ceremony by the Elks' officers.

Maria Rodriguez of Goodland and Sheena Sexson of Weskan, Elks Americanism Essay Winners, read their work.

The Elks "Tribute to the Flag" was given by Walt Linthacum, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Ron Barkley, Elks Americanism chairman, presented an American flag that had been flown over the nation's capitol to Janet Davis, a teacher at West. Assisted by Girl Scouts, Barkley and Davis hoisted the flag on West's pole.

The Flag Day address was given by Patty Thompson, another West teacher, after six of her first grade students sang patriotic songs. The celebration ended with Blake singing "It's a Grand Old Flag."

### corrections

An article on the Ennis/Handy House in the Friday, June 11, edition of The Goodland Star-News listed the properties in Sherman County on the state and national registers. The Ruleton School was not listed in the article but was added to the state registry in August. This was a reporting error.

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