

Chamber banquet to feature barn program, election

By **KIMBERLY BRANDT**

Stories from the barn, pictures of barns in Decatur County and sirloin steak will all be offered at the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce annual banquet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 17, at The Gateway.

Chamber manager Glenva Nichols has been working for months, finding older barns to photograph for display at the banquet. The pictures have been on display in the chamber office.

There are some red ones, some brown and all of them tell a story of the old farm days.

The program, "Stories From the Barn" will be given by Joyce Thierer, who has a doctorate from Kansas State University in history. She is a member of the "Ride into History" historic performance touring troupe and also a teacher of history at Emporia State University.

The program is sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council, a state agency which pro-

motes understanding of the history, traditions and ideas that helped shape the lives and communities in Kansas.

Mrs. Nichols said one of the best parts about the talk Mrs. Thierer does is that she gets the audience involved.

Dinner will start at 6:30 p.m. for the banquet, with sirloin steak cooked by The Gateway staff. Mrs. Nichols said so far there have been 11 reservations made.

Chamber elections will be held at the banquet, with four seats open on the board. Members going off are Mick Glaze, Dave Stapp and Peg Smith. Mrs. Nichols said another person resigned early in their term and still hasn't been replaced. Members who will stay on the board are Doug Brown, Judy Cathcart, Sara Seller and LaMoine Wolfram.

Candidates to choose from to fill the four vacant seats are Carrie Morford, Marilyn

Noone, Clay Parker, Kelly Wasson, Derek Riner, Karla Jones and Sandra Herl.

Reservations for the banquet need to be sent or called into the chamber office by Monday. The number is 475-3441.

The banquet costs \$12.50 a person. Mrs. Nichols said this is also a good time to pay chamber dues for the year. Dues are \$125 for the chamber and \$75 for the Oberlin Business Alliance.

Businesses to offer snackfest

The Oberlin Business Alliance will host a "progressive snacks" event from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 30, at downtown businesses.

Similar to a progressive dinner, where people go to different homes for each course, the businesses will each have different types of snacks for people.

The alliance decided on Monday to do the progressive snacks for their fifth Wednesday celebration this month. Everyone is welcome to come to town and get treats while looking around the businesses.

With Monday's lunch meeting being the first of the new year, alliance members selected new quarter committee chairs. For the first quarter, they suggested Karen Metcalf of the Dresser, who was not at the meeting; second quarter Clay Parker of Sappa Valley Saddle Shop, who also was not at the meeting, and Rusty Addleman of Addleman Drug; for the third quarter, Connie Grafel of The Gateway and Judy Cathcart of Sappa Valley Youth Ranch said they would do it; and for the fourth quarter, Gary Anderson of the LandMark Inn, Joe Stanley of Stanley Hardware and Gary Walter of The Bank, who was not at the meeting.

Members suggested Laurie Wasson of Prairie Petals to lead the group for the year but she was not there. Mr. Stanley said he would talk to her about it.

Alliance members looked over the past year and promotions they had done. Mr. Stanley asked members how they felt the holiday season and advertising had gone.

Mr. Addleman said the group keeps trying different things to get people into the stores, but the weekend openings and three nights the stores were open late didn't do anything. He said that his sales wouldn't have even paid for the electricity.

Mr. Stanley said maybe the three night openings weren't advertised the way they should have been.

Kurt Vollertsen of Ward Drug agreed, saying the evenings were slow. Sunday business was better than the nights, said Mr. Anderson.

The drawings were scattered well, said Mr. Stanley, and the crowds were good. There was a good mixture of drawings people had to be there for and not be present for. Mr. Anderson said that people asked him why registration wasn't held at the drawings that a person had to be present for.

Although they discussed what to do next year, no decisions were made.

The alliance agreed to talk about some kind of membership mixer and maybe doing something for the regional wrestling tournament in February.

In other business, members:

- Talked about the chamber banquet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 17, at The Gateway.

- Heard that they need to provide a mission statement and information about the group for the chamber web site, which they have a link off of.



LOADING UP THE GROCERIES, Joe Stanley prepared to take this year's donations from Stanley Hardware to the food bank at the United Church. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Food drive loads up a successful year

Although the annual food drive at Stanley Hardware got off to a slow start, 28 items more than the goal of 2,000 were carted off to the Decatur County Food Pantry last week.

The drive started after Christmas and ended last Wednesday, when employees at the store boxed up the items and took them to the United Church for the food bank.

In the beginning, owner Joe Stanley said he had heard that food drive numbers were down across the county and

he wasn't shocked when in the first week his drive only brought in 30 items. As always, these were placed in the front window. In the second week, 370 items were brought in and each week after that the numbers rose until last Wednesday, when 2,028 items adorned the display window.

Mr. Stanley said he wanted to thank each person who donated food or other nonperishable items for the drive. He said he looks forward to meeting the goal again next year.

Six juveniles appear by phone in attack at ranch

Six juveniles involved in the alleged gang rape at Sappa Valley Youth Ranch made their first court appearance Monday afternoon over the telephone from various juvenile facilities throughout the state.

On Dec. 14, Oberlin police received a call that there had been an alleged gang rape at the ranch where six of the boys ganged up on one juvenile. The young man who said he was attacked was taken to the hospital that night and the six other youth were taken to WaKeeney, where there is a juvenile detention center.

Monday, Jason Freeman, 15, who is in at St. Francis Academy in Salina; Joe Casteal, 16, who is at WaKeeney; Greg

Robertson, 16, who is in Girard; Aaron Rakoci, 16, at WaKeeney; Mark Swank Jr., 16, at Girard; and Jesse Pollard, 17 at WaKeeney, were read their charges over the phone.

The charges are aggravated criminal sodomy, a level two personal felony, and aggravated kidnapping, a level one personal felony.

Judge John Bremer explained what the charges meant and told the boys if they were found guilty on the charge of aggravated sodomy, that they could each spend 493 months in prison, which is around 41 years, and pay a fine up to \$300,000. If found guilty of aggravated kidnapping, the youths could each spend 653 months in prison, a little

over 54 years, and or pay a fine up to \$300,000.

Each of the youths was told they had

a right to a lawyer appointed to represent them. None of the six entered a plea during the first appearance.

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Van offers rides to Hays two days a week

The Community Access Rural Express (CARE) van is still serving northwest Kansas, according to Ron Straight of Hays.

The van comes through Oberlin from St. Francis around 7 a.m. on Monday and Thursday and passengers may ride the van along U.S. 36 to Phillipsburg, then on to Hays. It returns to Oberlin

around 5:15 p.m. To reserve a seat on the van, call (888) 227-3695.

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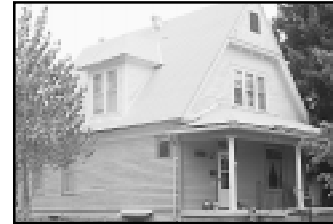
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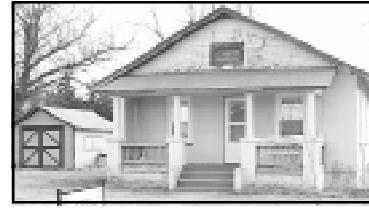


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