



Chamber Visions – January 2011

Did You Know?

Did you know that the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce maintains a rental listing of available homes and apartments in the area? The list also includes apartment houses and other resources to utilize in your search for a place to live. If you have a home or apartment you would like to list, please feel free to add it to our list. You do not have to be a member of the Chamber of Commerce to be included in the listing and there is no fee. The listing is updated several times each week. The rental list can be picked up at our new location in the Keystone Business Center, 402 Norris Avenue, Suite 203, or we can e-mail it to you. Our telephone number is 345-3200 and the e-mail address is: info@aboutmccook.com

It's Baaack!.....Coffee Connection That Is!

The New Year will find Chamber members and their guests looking forward to the upcoming Coffee Connection. The first coffee of 2011 will be held at the Norris Home, 706 Norris Avenue on January 19, beginning at 7:30 AM and wrapping up around 9:00 AM. The gathering is very informal with guests coming and going as their schedule allows. This is yet another great opportunity to network and to learn about other businesses in town and the surrounding area. Be sure to mark your calendar to attend. The Coffee Connection will be a quarterly event in 2011.

Chamber Annual Banquet on Near Horizon

The 86th Annual Chamber Banquet is fast approaching with February 5 as the selected date for the much anticipated event. The committee has selected "The Heart of Nebraska...McCook" as its theme and is busy working out all of the details for the meal, the décor and the fundraiser auction. The banquet will be held at the Republican River Valley Event Center this year with social hour beginning at 6:00. Dinner tickets are available for \$25 each or a corporate table of eight may be reserved for \$250. Reserved private table seating for eight is also available for \$225. Tickets and/or table reservations may be obtained through the Chamber office or the individual board members.

2011 Home Show Set for February 18-20

Linda Frank, Home Show Coordinator for the Chamber, is looking forward to filling the Army Reserve Center on Airport Road with a wide variety of booths yet another year. Vendors have signed up for booths at a near record pace and the home-based business section is already full. Pam Harsh, Chamber Director, would like to encourage Chamber members to take advantage of this opportunity to market their businesses. "We offer a huge discount on booth fees as a benefit to their Chamber membership. The Home Show discount is taken directly off the top their dues." For more information on the Home Show, please contact Linda Frank at 345-5400 or 340-7714 or call the Chamber at 345-3200. You can also e-mail the Chamber at info@aboutmccook.com.

“All I Want For Christmas” Drawing Held at Keystone

A packed house was on hand for the “All I Want For Christmas” Chamber of Commerce retail promotional drawing held at the Keystone Business Center on Thursday, December 23. Santa Claus drew the nineteen winners as well as the lucky winner, Jeff Smith, McCook, for the grand prize 60” Mitsubishi television. The television was sponsored by AmFirst Bank, First Central Bank, McCook Daily Gazette and McCook National Bank. Santa was assisted by McCook Cordials, Annette Wagner and Denise Volquardsen. Below is a list of the winners:

Automotive Sales & Service – Bill Irwin
Barnett’s Do It Center – Robin Reh
Brown’s Shoe Fit – Melissa White
Cowboy Up Tack – Jennifer Maris
D & S Hardware – Fred Kennedy
Eakes OP – Shirley Alberts
Garrison’s – Gale Slattery
Hershberger Music Company – Charlie Coleman
Longnecker Jewelry – Sandra Kehler
McCell U.S. Cellular – Dillon Breinig, Cooper Breinig
McCook Carpets Plus – Penny Johnson
New Life Christian Book Store – Roger Tinkham
Peterson Jewelers – Diane Pollman
Samway Floor Covering & Furniture – Sherri Stang
Schmick’s Market – Heather Harris
Sehnert’s Bakery & Bieroc Café – Yannis Helm
The Sports Shoppe – Mike Vontz, Tracy Peckham
Tri-State Spas – Janet Smith
VK Electronics – Vickie Melroy

Outstanding Entries in Annual Parade

The KFNF Christmas Lights Parade took place on Saturday, December 4 at 5:30 p.m. The parade entries gathered at Norris Park for the lighting of the park and the Norris Avenue islands and then proceeded south on Norris Avenue to A Street. The festive entries delighted a large crowd of spectators along the route.

KFNF of High Plains Radio Group sponsored business awards providing KFNF advertising packages for the winning business entries as follows:

1st place - \$700.00 First Central Bank
2nd place - \$500.00 GreenTurf Lawncare
3rd place - \$300.00 New Life Christian Bookstore



First Central Bank



GreenTurf Lawncare



New Life Christian Bookstore

The Chamber Salutes.....

all those who helped the Chamber bring Christmas to McCook in 2010! The season began with the “Ladies Night Out” promotion on December 2 and was officially kicked off in the usual fashion with the KFNF Christmas Lights Parade on December 4. The list of helpers is long and includes the following:

The **Work Ethic Camp offenders** for setting up Santa Claus Lane and the lighting of the trees on the Norris Avenue Islands.

Red Willow Aviation for making certain that Santa was able to fly in to the airport on December 4 to greet the kids with their wish lists.

Jim Beebe, aka Santa Claus, for enjoying his role so much every Saturday.

The **MCC Baseball team players** and **Ron Maris**, City of McCook, for assisting with the lighting ceremony.

The **High Plains Radio Group** for sponsoring and providing prizes for the parade.

The **Fire Department** for providing Santa with a ride in the parade, as well as, all of the other businesses, organizations and individuals who entered the parade.

McCook Rotary and **Interact** for serving hot chocolate during the parade.

The **Cappella Nova** Brass Quartet (Lonnie Weyeneth, Donnie McCorkle, Paul Wood, and JoAnn Wendelin) for playing Christmas music on the streets in downtown McCook during Ladies Night Out and at the Keystone before the Christmas Drawing.

The **Keystone Business Center** for allowing Santa to set up his headquarters in the lobby each Saturday.

McCook Cordials, **Annette Wagner** and **Denise Volquardsen**, for their assistance with the Christmas drawing.

Christmas Moments



Santa Scenes - Santa shared some very special moments with the little ones both at the airport and at his headquarters in the Keystone.

Nearly a dozen animated dolls, discovered in a storage unit during the Chamber's move to the Keystone Business Center last summer, were a highlight of the Christmas season bringing back fond memories for many. In the 1980's the dolls and a Christmas "castle" were purchase by the Chamber of Commerce. The wintry Christmas display was set up in the City Auditorium for a few years before the "castle" was damaged while in storage. The dolls were in remarkably good condition especially considering that they were subjected to extreme temperatures in the storage unit for so many years. With the help of Dizzy Dollars member, Annie Oakley, and her husband Cliff, the dolls were cleaned and repaired as needed. Duane Tappe freshened their wooden bases with a new coat of paint. They were, once again, ready to delight young and old alike. As seen in the adjacent photos, the animated dolls capture the attention of one of the little people who came to see Santa in his workshop at the Keystone.



Tea for Two



Little People

The Chamber Visions is the official publication of the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce, published monthly throughout the year at 402 Norris Ave., Suite 203, McCook, NE 69001. The Chamber accepts no responsibility for editorial content submitted to Chamber Visions.

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS

Great Plains Communications Leap into Social Media

2010 was a big year for Great Plains Communications. It saw the company celebrate its 100th Anniversary. During the summer months, there was a series of customer appreciation events that featured BBQ's across the state, including McCook, and tailgating events for Chadron State College and Arnold/Callaway High School.

In addition to tasty food, guests were also able to view a specially produced 100th Anniversary video, traveling timeline storyboards featuring 100 years of history and the company's centennial book. The book, titled *Great Plains Communications Centennial 1910-2010: Today's Legacy, Tomorrow's Promise*, was written by founder E.C. Hunt's great grandson Casey Hunt-Garrigan and was the culmination of two years' work.

In early 2011, Great Plains Communications will be providing the clarity of high-definition (HD) cable services to McCook. Customers will have access to HD channels including popular choices such as HGTV, ESPN and the Disney Channel. Local stations including ABC, CBS and FOX affiliates as well as premium channels are also available in HD. DVR (Digital Video Recorder) service, which allows the user to pause, rewind and record live TV, is also available with HD service.

Offering HD service in McCook is part of a larger plan to bring HD quality cable to rural cities in Nebraska and includes use of a new state-of-the-art fiber-based IP transport system. Motorola field engineers will be testing network-connectivity mid-January. Beta testing will follow shortly after these tests are completed.

This year, Great Plains Communications took the leap into social media. You can now find them on Facebook, where customers are provided with up-to-date information on contests, promotions and events around the state. The company is also on twitter under the username: @GPC_Updates and on YouTube.com as GreatPlainsComm. All of these sites together allow Great Plains Communications to engage with customers on a direct level.

The company also launched a blog titled GPC-Flash, which features articles about a wide range of topics including internet safety, small business advice and community matters. In 2011, the blog will also include tutorials to help customers do everything from program their remotes, use their DVR and set-top boxes, and manage their account with eBill. The first set of tutorials is expected to be available in early January.

2010 also marked the launch of Great Plains Communications' "do the BUNDLE" campaign, which featured iconic 70's era music and themes. The campaign has been considered quite a success picking up several awards and is seeing great feedback from customers. The award-winning campaign included an interactive video contest that saw residents from across the state "doing the BUNDLE" with first place winner, Alan Reicks of Elgin, taking home a brand new iPad. If you want to see the videos, visit www.gpcom.com/dothebundle.

For more information about getting HD cable services, customers should call the Customer Response Center at 1-888-343-8014.

Heather Nasif
Communications Specialist

Marr Insurance Agency, Service Since 1959

Marr Insurance Agency was founded by Stan Marr in 1959. Stan only knew one person when he moved to McCook with his wife, Sharon, from York, Nebraska. He built his business by going door-to-door introducing himself where he met a lot of people who became his clients as well as his friends.

Marr Insurance provides insurance and annuities through its main company which is AVIVA. AVIVA is the world's fifth largest insurance group with over \$60 billion in assets under management and more than \$65 billion in sales.

Marr Insurance also provides disability income and long term care plans. They also can help you with your retirement planning with IRA's, SEPP's, 401k's as well as Mutual Funds.

Upon Stan's retirement in 1998, the business was passed on to his son, Steve, who started in the insurance business in 1978. Dawn Kinne has been the Office Manager since 2007. Marr Insurance Agency provides a free no obligation review of your current insurance. Call us at 345-3160 or toll free at 800-952-4525 to set up your appointment.

Steve Marr

Mid-Plains Center for Enterprise Introduces New Account Manager

Hi, my name is Lena (Kolbet) Koebel. I am excited to have recently joined the Mid-Plains Community College team as an Area Account Manager with the Mid-Plains Center for Enterprise.

My office is located at the Keystone Business Center and much of my time will be spent working with businesses and communities on their educational needs. I am a native of Culbertson. I attended the University of Nebraska in Kearney. Since graduation I have worked in leadership positions with two high-end retail businesses with responsibilities including management, budgeting, training, recruiting, marketing, and sales. My husband Jake works for McCook Public Power District. We reside in the Culbertson area.

My role as an account manager is focused on working with area businesses to meet their personnel development needs, working with communities to meet their educational needs in support of economic development, and working with entrepreneur training at the Keystone Business Center in McCook. The account manager works closely with the programming, marketing, and operations staff at Mid-Plains Community College to deliver quality training and education. All of this fits into the Mid-Plains Center for Enterprise mission of supporting economic development, business development, and personal development with quality learning opportunities.

Listed are a few of the upcoming classes that we are offering in 2011.

Lead Based Safety

Thursday January 20th, 2011

8:00 am-5:00 pm

Cost: \$ 125.00

Keystone Business Center

Making Marketing Work

Tuesday & Wednesday, March 8, 9

6pm-9pm

Cost: \$ 59.00

Keystone Business Center

Letters That Convey a Professional Message

Friday, March 4, 2011

12:00pm 1:00 pm MST

Please note Mountain Time

Cost: \$10.00

Please bring a sack lunch

McCook Community College

Walsh-Brady Rm 226

Lena Koebel

GUEST EDITOR

I would like to personally invite everyone to Community Hospital's grand opening and ribbon cutting of the facility master plan phase 1 project featuring Community Hospital's 25-bed new patient wing. The event is Sunday, January 9, 2011 at 2 p.m. at 1301 East H Street.

The program will be held in a spacious tent with heating and flooring, located just south of the new patient wing. Parking is available in the front hospital parking lot and on H Street. Refreshments will be served. Tours of the new patient wing will follow the program.

We hope you are able to attend this event to discover how advanced technologies and design assure patient comfort, privacy and excellent care.

Phase 1

We are very proud to present the completed Phase 1 of our Facility Master Plan Project: a new 25,000 square foot, 25-bed all-private room, patient wing offering optimum comfort, privacy and care through advanced technologies and design.

The patient rooms are beautifully decorated and strategically designed to promote optimal patient comfort, and assist the nursing staff in providing excellent care. The new facility is designed to incorporate the three zones of care – patient, caregiver, and family zones. The layout will improve our ability to provide quality, efficient, and patient and family-centered care. Each includes amenities such as a flat-screen interactive HDTV, wireless Internet access and a sofa that opens to a bed for visiting family members.

The new patient wing also houses two spacious and well-equipped labor and delivery rooms including an advanced infant security system at the north end of the wing. At the south end of the wing are two hospice/isolation rooms near a family visiting area with a beautiful stone fireplace and floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook a new healing garden.

Phase 2

With the completion of Phase 1, we are looking forward to beginning Phase 2 of our Facility Master Plan Project, to be finished in the summer of 2012. Phase 2 will connect the new patient wing with 26,000 square feet of space housing a new surgery wing, spacious pharmacy, dedicated outpatient area

for patient receiving injections and infusions, a large community and staff meeting room for wellness programs, and a beautiful healing garden.

The state-of-the-art surgery wing will be located between the labor and delivery and ER areas, and it will offer:

- Private pre- and post-surgery rooms
- Three larger technologically advanced operating suites
- A departmental layout that allows for a 4th operating suite in the future
- Communication system for surgeons in adjoining surgery suites
- Two fully functional endoscopy suites

With these additions to our facilities and the remodeling that will occur after Phase 2 to the current surgery area and to the current radiology department, we will greatly enhance our ability to treat patients throughout our region of Southwest Nebraska and Northwest Kansas now and into the future. These facility improvements have helped us to make tremendous strides toward achieving our Vision: "To lead the region as a Healthcare Team by exceeding patient expectations through the advancement of quality medical services."

Through these efforts and planning for the future we are confident that we will continue to progress toward our vision so that no matter where you are in the region "We're Your Community Hospital."

James P. Ulrich, Jr., Community Hospital President & CEO

RETAIL DETAILS

New Life Christian Book Store Joins the Chamber

New Life Christian Book Store is a new member of the Chamber. We purchased New Life in mid March of this year. My husband, Rick and I are long time area residents. We also own and operate Wilcox Well Drilling. Our employees include our daughter Alison, my sister Gloria Tinkham, who has her gourmet loose leaf teas and tea ware in the store as well. Part time employees include Clara Dunn, Lisa Kilpatrick and Sarah Jenkins.

We feature inspirational gifts, art, music and books. Of course we have many bibles to choose from and devotionals. Special orders and gift wrapping are available and always welcome. Churches, clergy and libraries receive a 10% discount. We can provide Sunday school, VBS and bible study material. New Life Christian Book Store maintains the top ten, bestselling books and CD's. We are located at 212 Norris Ave in McCook. Business hours are Monday-Saturday 9:30-5:30.

Lisa Wilcox

MEMBER NEWS

1st Quarter Honor Business Named

The McCook Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that the first quarter Honor Business Award recipient is **VK Electronics**. Linda Taylor and Trevor Taylor have always made exceptional efforts both as a business and on a personal level to be involved in the community and in the Chamber. It is our pleasure to recognize their tireless contributions by awarding them the Honor Business selection for the first quarter of 2011. The presentation of the award will be made on January 11 at 10:30 AM.

Welcome Aboard

The McCook Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome a new business ‘on the bricks’ to the Chamber family. **Weskamp Floral**, located at 307 Norris Avenue (inside Accents, Etc.) is owned and operated by Pat Weskamp. Pat has been a long-time resident of McCook and a familiar face in the business world. Pat is very excited about his new venture and looks forward to serving his many friends, neighbors, business acquaintances and new customers. We anticipate a great partnership with Weskamp Floral in the upcoming years.

CHAMBER STATS

Office

2010	Calls	Walk-In	Tourism Packets Mailed or Distributed	Relocation Packets Mailed	Misc. Packets Mailed
Jan	888	329	70	5	6
Feb	1,008	442	109	5	5
Mar	980	293	113	4	4
Apr	887	278	237	3	2
May	744	247	402	5	3
June	875	279	39	5	4
July	868	282	15	5	4
Aug	902	322	16	6	14
Sept	803	311	12	4	16
Oct	584	121	8	2	3
Nov	402	187	8	1	3
YTD	8,941	3,071	1,028	45	64

Website

Rolling 12 Mo Hits

Specific Website Page Total Hits

Month	Total Website Hits	Business Spotlight	Business Directory Search	Member Directory Search	Community Calendar	Chamber Calendar	Chamber Newsletter
Dec '09	3,667	241	299	119	56	103	308
Jan '10	4,814	235	437	144	50	90	357
Feb	5,418	256	719	324	57	107	310
Mar	5,859	245	587	172	67	95	462
Apr	5,433	234	462	200	53	80	406
May	4,658	180	473	128	63	83	275
June	5,218	224	635	181	64	93	277
July	4,416	205	346	96	93	107	341
Aug	3,826	180	311	173	73	105	297
Sept	4,396	215	277	96	101	142	374
Oct	3,454	170	289	89	59	95	292
Nov	3,935	214	371	190	45	95	358
Totals	55,094	2,599	5,206	1,912	781	1,195	4,057



