



Chamber Visions – October 2010

Did You Know?

Did you know that Heritage Days will be observing its 40th anniversary next year? Even though this year's celebration is over, planning for 2011 will begin in February. At that time, the Heritage Days Committee will be looking to make the 2011 celebration even more special. We would appreciate your input on theme ideas, activities and other ways to mark the anniversary. Please contact the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce at 402 Norris Avenue, Suite 203 (in the Keystone Business Center) or you can call 308-345-3200. Our e-mail address is info@aboutmccook.com.

Chamber Moves to Keystone Business Center

Did you know that the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce moved to the Keystone Business Center? In fact, our phone started ringing in our new location on Monday, August 30. You'll find us on the second floor in Suite 203. We are easy to find so be certain to come see us anytime through the business week from 8:00-5:00. The Keystone Business Center grand opening was held on Friday, September 24, with a number of dignitaries including Governor Dave Heineman and Senator Ben Nelson. The open house was held on Saturday, September 25, with a report of approximately 500 in attendance. The Chamber is pleased to be a part of making history in McCook as the renovated Keystone Hotel comes to life once again and becomes a hub of activity in our community.

“Educator Welcome” Brunch Well Attended

Members of the Chamber Education Committee joined new area teachers and their administrators for the brunch hosted by WalMart with a total of 23 in attendance. The meeting room was decorated in the festive colors of fall and guests were treated to a full buffet of breakfast entrees. In addition, everyone received a gift from Chamber member businesses in appreciation for the work they do with sculpting our future through the mentoring and molding of our kids. Sponsor businesses include: AmFirst Bank, N.A., Barnett's Do-It Center, Brown's Shoe Fit, Chief Restaurant and Bredeaux Pizza, Country Floral and Design, D & S Hardware, Eakes Office Plus, First Central Bank, Garrison's/McCook Lettering, Gateway Realty, Horizon Bank, Janssen-Kool Honda, Knowlen & Yates, Lincoln Federal Savings Bank, Longnecker Jewelry, McCook National Bank, Peterson Jewelers, Pizza Hut/KFC/Taco Bell, Sara Lee/Old Home, Taste of Texas BBQ, The Buckle, Top Office, U-Save Pharmacy and Medical Supply, Unique Boutique, VK Electronics, Wells Fargo Bank and Willow Creek Meats.

39th Annual Heritage Days Celebrated

The McCook Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to have facilitated the Heritage Days Committee in bringing the 39th annual celebration to our community. This year's event was blessed with sunshine and comfortable temperatures so numbers in attendance were quite possibly record-breaking. The celebration kicked off with the annual mixer hosted by McCook National Bank on Wednesday evening followed by a series of activities and events through Sunday afternoon. There was something for all age groups and interest areas ranging from the Norris Foundation Prayer Breakfast, the Evangelical Free Church service in the park, the parade, the quilt shows, the food, the arts and crafts fair, the car show, the FFA Petting Zoo to the Heritage Senior Center activities and Fox Theater programs. On Saturday kids, and adults alike, were invited to participate in fun games designed by the McCook Christian Church to mimic the popular television game show,

“Minute to Win It”. Musical entertainment in the bandshell was well-received as families enjoyed the talents of local artists. The hard work of City Staff to improve Norris Park over the past several years was evident as people enjoyed the park benches, the trees, the lush lawn, the sculpture and the playground. The committee will hold a wrap-up meeting sometime in October and begin planning for the 40th annual celebration in February.

Special Honorees Revealed



(L to R) Honor Family – Jan and Gene Mahon presented by Terri Shipshock



Grand Marshal – Jon Burkey



Parade Marshal - Rich Barnett

Each year we honor individuals during Heritage Days for their contributions to our area or to the world at large. The Honor Family recognition was presented to Gene and Jan Mahon. The Mahons have been long time residents of Southwest Nebraska and McCook. Jan has been employed at Frenchman Valley Coop for 23 years. Gene has made a career of protecting people in Southwest Nebraska through his position as the Red Willow County Sheriff. They are proud of our community and are thankful that they had the opportunity to raise their family here.

The Grand Marshal for the 39th Annual Heritage Celebration was Jon Burkey. Jon and his wife Pat have made many contributions of time and talents to Southwest Nebraska over the years. The 2010 Parade Marshal, Rich Barnett, is a person known to most everyone in our community as a ‘nearly famous’ radio broadcaster. He has touched many lives and we are certainly blessed to have enjoyed his work over the years. From a court of nine finalists, the Heritage Days Royalty judges team were challenged to select our royalty for the festivities. Kim Holthus and Emily Wood, Seniors at McCook High School, were chosen as Queen and Princess respectively.



(L to R) Royal Court –Caitlyn Wudtke, Emily Wood, Jordan Pick, Keldon Osterman, Ashley Noltensmeyer, Kim Holthus, Hailey Esch, Amberette Burkey



(L to R) Princess – Emily Wood, Queen – Kim Holthus

Heritage Days Parade Winners:

Antique Farm Machinery



Bob Tiller

Community Organization



McCook Christian Church

Large Business



Hillcrest Nursing Home

Small Business



AmFirst Bank

Small Youth Group



The Shoe Shine Group

Large Youth Group



McCook FFA

Governor's Award



Lifetime Eye Care

Not Pictured:

Antique Car –
John & Pam Herron

Classic Car –
William Teter

Equestrian –
Janssen Auto Group

Heritage Days Band Scores:

Superior: McCook High School and Perkins County High School

Excellent: Medicine Valley Jr./Sr. High School

Good: Wauneta-Palisade Jr./Sr. High School

The Chamber Salutes.....

the Heritage Days Committee and all those responsible for making the celebration a huge success. There are over 200 people involved in making all of the plans become realities. We wish to thank everyone for whatever part they played in bringing the community together. It truly takes the entire community!

Wagner/CTE Roofing Mixer Scheduled

Jay Hancock of CTE Roofing has joined with Chris Wagner, Wagner Auto Group, to host the annual mixer at Wagner Chevrolet, 201 East B Street, on October 13 beginning at 5:30 p.m. and winding down at 7:00 p.m. Chamber members and their guests are invited to attend. This is a great opportunity to network with business associates and at the same time enjoy great food and beverages. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend!

State Chamber Delegates Coming to McCook

Members of the Nebraska State Chamber will meet for the annual legislative forum breakfast on Thursday, October 21, at the Chief Restaurant beginning at 7:30 a.m. State Chamber representatives will be on hand to share what issues have been addressed in 2010 and what 2011 will bring to Nebraska. Following a brief presentation, they will entertain questions from those in attendance. Chamber members are invited to attend. RSVP's are necessary no later than Thursday, October 14. Please contact the Chamber at 345-3200 or info@aboutmccook.com for more information.

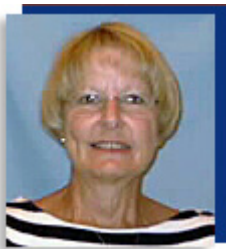
Witches, Ghosts, Goblins and Superheroes Will Parade Downtown

While shopping downtown McCook on Saturday morning, October 30, you may have a few close encounters with witches, ghosts, goblins and superheroes as the annual McCook Daily Gazette/McCook Area Chamber of Commerce Halloween parade winds through the downtown shopping district beginning at 10:00 a.m. The parade is open to children of all ages accompanied by an adult. There are approximately 300 youngsters who participate each year. There is also a pumpkin decorating contest with prizes awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place..

Chamber businesses not located on the parade route are invited to send a representative to some location on the route to distribute treats to the little ones. This is a great opportunity to provide a community service and promote your business at the same time. If you would like to participate, please contact the Chamber at 345-3200 or info@aboutmccook.com.

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.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Oh My Gosh or OMG if you are texting.... has it been a full month since my last letter? The time has flown by and a lot has happened since then. On September 22nd I attended the McCook National Bank mixer that traditionally kicks-off Heritage Days. As usual, it was a great event with delicious food prepared and served by the McCook National Bank staff. A big thank you is in order to MNB for hosting and to all who were involved in the planning.

As in past years the evening's festivities included announcing the Parade Marshal, Grand Marshal, the Honor Family and Royalty. I was privileged to be a part of their recognition ceremony and want to personally congratulate Rich Barnett, Jon Burkey, Jan and Gene Mahon and Princess Emily Wood and Queen Kim Holthus. I am sure the selection was difficult as there are so many deserving people in our community.

Which brings me to my next comment....Have you ever stopped to think of the tremendous amount of talent we have in this area? I am not naming names because I will surely leave someone out and that is never the intent. I am thinking of all the people, young and old who have innate talent to sing, play an instrument, perform on stage or create visual art. I am also thinking of the numbers of volunteers I have had the pleasure to work with who bring great ideas to the table in order to make something happen. Do you realize that doesn't happen in every community?

As I write I am remembering what Pam Harsh said at the mixer about how many people came forward to help her so that the event ran smoothly. To coin a phrase, “It takes a community”. I know I often describe McCook as a Norman Rockwell community. I hope no one takes offense. I mean it as the highest level compliment.

Norman Rockwell is best known for his paintings of wholesome family activities. I think he would have found a great deal of inspiration had he spent time in McCook. What better place to find a variety of family activities as subjects for his art? He would have enjoyed families with their children playing in our parks or cheering on our athletes at a Friday night football game. He would have been moved by the acts of patriotism evidenced by the pride we show for our military heroes. And, he would have had many subjects to choose from of family members sharing “Life’s Shining Moments”.

I know on Saturday morning as I stood by the flag pole and watched the floats, dignitaries and high school bands go by, I couldn’t help but think of another often used phrase....”what a wonderful world”.

Terri Shipshock

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS

Aflac District Office Open in McCook

Hi, my name is Greg Litz and I am the District Manager with Aflac. Many of you know the Aflac name but still there are many people who don’t know what we do. That is why I am here.

Many people know two things about Aflac. One, we have a duck and two, we are some type of insurance. Aflac is known as supplemental insurance or insurance for daily living. Aflac is around to help with out of pocket expenses one may incur with an accident or illness. Aflac pays cash back directly to the policyholder. Aflac is a real difference maker. Our policy benefits can be used not only to help pick up the leftover medical expenses, but also to help with out of pocket costs, including travel expenses to and from treatment, food and lodging while away, and child care. Our policy benefits can also help with a loss of income.

Meeting financial obligations while recuperating is difficult enough, especially if you cannot earn a paycheck. In dual income households, the consequences can be magnified if the healthy spouse is forced to leave work for the recovering spouse. With all of these financial obligations and needs, where will you get the money? The answer is Aflac. We’re there to help provide critical financial resources at the moment you need it most.

We are now here to provide the kind of local service you deserve. Rami Packard has taken the difficult role of the office manager and has our office open Monday – Thursday from 9 am – 3 pm. Our office is located at 802 West B Street, Suite 105. We look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Greg Litz

GUEST EDITOR

In August, the HTC Charitable Pillar sponsored “Donor Appreciation Week”. The following article appeared in the McCook Daily Gazette and I feel it is well worth repeating.

From the very beginning, the YMCA has been an organization developed and maintained by donations of time, energy, material, talent and financial resources.

In 1917, a number of civic minded men, led by B.M. Frees, saw the need for a YMCA in our community. Eventually, their work resulted in a charter being granted for our YMCA. Since that time, the gauntlet has been passed from generation to generation to make sure that their vision would continue.

With only a small paid staff, the YMCA would not exist or be able to fulfill its mission without the hundreds of volunteers that donate thousands of hours a year. The range of services include coaching a youth sport team, to volunteers coming together to assemble a slide for the swimming pool, to the Board room where a group of members come together to set policy and oversee the operation of the YMCA.

Recently, a group of members concerned about the continued operation of the swimming pools at the YMCA came together and in a few short months raised over \$425,000. These funds were used to upgrade the swimming pool area, including a much needed air handling unit, new lighting, a new filter system, a new paint scheme and a new Vortex slide. Through their efforts, a special long term fund was established that will help defer future costs associated with the operation of the aquatic facility.

Over the years, the YMCA has been blessed to be remembered in several substantial estates. These endowed gifts have enabled the YMCA to have some of the lowest membership rates in Nebraska. The interest from these endowments has been used to keep the facility in tip top condition.

Currently, the YMCA has begun a remodeling project that is being funded using portions of two gifts received from the estates of Lester and Helen Wolfe & Willard W. and Mildred H. Troutwine. The YMCA will be remodeling racquetball court three adding over 1,600 square feet to the facility. This new space will provide for an upgraded weight room that will be approximately one third larger than the current weight room. On the lower level there will be a new health and fitness room where various types of health and fitness classes will be held. The current weight room will be used as a multi-purpose class room.

Whether it is coming together in the early 80's to raise 1.6 million to build the current facility, or the annual Partners with Youth fund drive that provides financial support to families that need a little financial assistance to participate at the YMCA, the YMCA literally could not exist without the generous support of our community.

Michael D. Gonzales, Executive Director

RETAIL DETAILS

Sara Lee Old Home Bakery Outlet Celebrates 30 Years

The Sara Lee Old Home Bakery Outlet, located in McCook, Nebraska, celebrated its 30th anniversary August 25-28. The celebration included drawings, giveaways and food along with a ceremonial ribbon cutting attended by members of the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce. Event guests who donated school supplies to McCook-area schools were given free loaves of bread in support of their efforts.

The Sara Lee/Old Home Bakery Outlet sells Sara Lee breads, buns and cakes as well as other groceries, but Sara Lee branded whole grain breads and Sara Lee branded wide pan breads are their most popular items. Store Manager, Monica Conroy, supervises the store with its two employees, Linda Hall and Shelley Kefales. Conroy has worked for the Sara Lee outlet for six years and says she loves her job.

“Our main focus is customer service,” Conroy says. “We always go 110 percent.”

The outlet does special orders for graduations and weddings and is open Monday through Saturday, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The store is located at 1228 East B.

*Shawntina Phillips/ Communications
Sara Lee Corporation*

60th year Anniversary.....

Automotive Sales and service will be celebrating 60 years of serving southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas.

Otto Nilsson, a Swedish immigrant, started Automotive in 1950 at 414 W “B” which he built from a small shed on the alley into the building it is today, that covers ¼ of the block. He was a man committed to friendly, fair service to everyone.

In 2009, Otto handed over the ownership and control to his daughter, Annette Nilsson Irwin. Annette has made changes in updating and reorganizing Automotive inside and out like the new paint on the outside to the new showroom inside, making some of the products more visual to help serve the patrons. Annette continues to keep her father’s legacy alive throughout the store.

Stop in on October 8th from 8am-5pm to share in the festivities: \$2 Mystery balloons, WIX Hummer, free give-a-ways, cake and cookies.

Deb Cacy, Office Manager

Eakes Office Plus, Celebrating 65 Years of Business

Celebrating 65 years of business, Eakes Office Plus has everything for the office.

Whether you need standard office supplies, office furniture or digital copiers, Eakes has the brands you want at prices that fit your budget. Eakes has 3 designers on staff to help with office space planning and a complete service department to service what they sell! Don’t forget Eakes Print It Center can help with all the services you need, including black and white and full color copies, laminating and binding, shipping via UPS, and the ability to print, print from e-mail, CDs, and USB Flash drives as well as scanning to e-mail and copying CDs and DVD’s.

Also check out Eakes’ retail stores for a selection of unique gifts, as well as a large assortment of kids’ educational games and toys.

With 11 locations and over 200 employees throughout Nebraska, Eakes can help with all your office needs. Check out our website at www.eakes.com or become our facebook friend at www.facebook.com/eop to receive special offers. Conveniently located at 120 Norris Avenue in McCook, Eakes is a proud member of the McCook Chamber of Commerce.”

*Cindy Jarosz,
Retail Supervisor-Advertising Manager*

MEMBER NEWS

Fourth Quarter Honor Business Named

The Chamber Board of Directors announced that the Fourth Quarter Honor Business is **State Farm Insurance, Linda Maiden Agency**. Linda and her staff were cited for their involvement in both Chamber and community activities. The presentation of the Honor Business banner will be held on Thursday, October 7, 10:00 a.m. at the State Farm offices located at 802 West B Street, Suite 101. Join us in honoring Linda and her staff for their contributions.

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
YTD	7,955	2,763	1,012	42	58

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
Sept '09	4,762	255	495	115	94	168	362
Oct	4,522	280	310	166	66	98	444
Nov	4,002	251	412	294	54	96	408
Dec	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
Totals	56,595	2,786	5,546	2,112	790	1,225	4,247

