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Effort targets needs of small communities

LEHIGH (AP) — As night falls and the glow of Christmas illuminates the quietness of their Main Street, Ruth Coyle credits a small town's wish and a core of volunteers for delivering the holiday spirit.

Their town doesn't have a school or even a church, only a grain elevator, half a dozen businesses and a post office. But for a second year, the decorations on the street light poles are all up and working.

"They're so pretty after all the years of darkness," Coyle said.

In the spirit of supporting small towns, Marci Penner at the Kansas Sampler Foundation, has launched a 2010 New Year's Wish List for communities with a population of 2,000 or less, that asks the question: "What is the one thing your city needs?"

Responses may be e-

mailed to marci@kansasampler.org.

She'll post the wishes on the Kansas Sampler Foundation's website, www.kansasampler.org, not to grant them but to network with other communities. It's a way to create an exchange that shares the expertise of communities that have successfully completed projects with other communities hoping to launch a project — and will offer resource information as well.

Three years ago, knowing their community (population 215, with 76 children), had no money to buy decorations, Coyle posted a few e-mails to people she knew asking for help. Did they know of a city that might have some hand-me-down decorations?

She credited Penner for posting Lehigh's Christmas

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The holiday spirit is often on display as homes and businesses decorate for Christmas. From the spectacular to the simple, everyone wants to bear glad tidings and to wish everyone a "Merry Christmas!" But, as the style of lights and the displays become more complex, the true meaning of the season remains. This beautiful nativity was on display on main street in Hanover.

Network provides information, hopes to help recover stolen property

By **Beth Gaines-Riffel**,
Editor

If Travis Clinesmith had his way, in a perfect world, there would be no need for the Agriculture, Livestock Information Network (A.L.I.N.). But, it's not a perfect world, and there is a need. Although December might be the season for giving — there doesn't seem to be a season for theft.

A.L.I.N. was launched in February of 2009. A Yates Center native and farmboy, Clinesmith came up with the concept of the network to assist producers with the recovery of stolen property.

"It will only work as good as the network," Clinesmith explained.

The concept of the network is simple. Once a producer has had equipment or



Officer Travis Clinesmith with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's community policing unit checks the Agriculture, Livestock Information Network information flow, adding new recipients to receive updates about stolen goods. The idea behind the program is to get as many "eyes" as possible out looking for items that may have been stolen as quickly as possible.

property stolen and filed the appropriate reports with the local authorities, they can submit the information to A.L.I.N. Once submitted, Clinesmith, who acts as a clearinghouse, making sure that the alert is legitimate and not falsely accusing individuals, will then distribute the information to the network.

The network is comprised of other producers and ag businesses and alerts others over a larger geographic region to be on the lookout for the property in case that it might be sighted going down the road.

"It puts a lot more eyes

out there," Clinesmith explained.

Another aspect of the network is the opportunity for others who might have noticed suspicious activity in the area where a theft occurred to provide that information which might help provide a solid lead in the case.

A.L.I.N. is operated through the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Community Policing Unit — primarily Clinesmith.

"It doesn't have any funding," Clinesmith said.

And that is really the beauty and ease of the program — that is more a

source of information — which can result in cases being solved.

A.L.I.N. is open to anyone — but should be of particular interest to ag producers, cooperatives and construction crews.

To participate in the network, one needs only to send an email to alin@sedgwick.gov. Clinesmith then adds the email to the distribution list. When anything is submitted the participants receive an email with the details of the crime that has been committed.

"We can have crime happening in one area, say the north part of the county. The

thieves can then move quickly to the south end of the county. It helps if people know what is going on."

Agriculture and construction thefts are tempting because they often occur in remote areas and the goods stolen are often easy to sell. The tough economic conditions has provided a climate where more crime is occurring.

Clinesmith added that there isn't any regularly scheduled notifications — only when items are submitted.

"We may go awhile without sending out anything and then have two or three things to send out," he explained.

Even though the network is approaching its first anniversary it has yet to be credited with the recovery of stolen property, but that doesn't discourage the young officer.

"We'll get something," he said.

At the current time there are A.L.I.N. participants in about 10 different counties. He's hoping that number climbs, with someday hopefully having someone in every county in Kansas.

He is quick to point out that A.L.I.N. is no replacement for 9-1-1 and if a theft has occurred the first call should be made to the local authorities.

When reporting a crime, the following information should be provided to have the greatest opportunity to retrieve the property.

When the crime occurred. What was stolen, the color, brand and year. More

specific information such as tag numbers, serial numbers and VINs also increase the odds of goods being recovered.

Clinesmith noted that any particularly identifying marks are helpful.

"If it has a distinctive dent or scrap of paint is often very useful."

The sheriff's office also suggests having a photo file of equipment that can be used to publicize the theft is helpful.

Because of the mobile nature of equipment — such as skid steers, ATVs, trailers and tools, stolen goods can travel from county to county and even out of state in a matter of hours.

"Ag producers are an easy target for thieves because they have a lot of equipment sitting around and there are less people around to watch it," he said.

Clinesmith added that if network producers see a piece of equipment going down the road, being identified by say, a tag number, they should not approach the individuals, but rather call 9-1-1 and report what they are witnessing.

While he's yet to be able to point to A.L.I.N. as the reason stolen property was recovered, he knows that it will someday.

Until then, he encourages people to sign up for the network, secure valuables as best as possible by locking them up and pulling their keys whenever possible and being observant.

"The best way is to prevent crime in the first place."

Guest Editorial

OSU and the HSUS new BFFs

By Jody Donohue

Oklahoma State University (OSU) has received a lot of attention out in the blog world. Positive attention from animal rights activists and negative attention from the ag community.

The university cancelled an anthrax research project that appeared to have been blessed by all levels including being funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The study would have created an animal model of anthrax infection in baboons.

OSU isn't giving much detail about why they cancelled the study. But there are lots of people jumping to conclusions based on some circumstantial evidence. And the university is issuing some fishy statements like: "OSU is focused on enhancing and expanding its existing research strengths including our ongoing programs in bioterrorism research. The proposed work would have distracted from those efforts."

How does doing research distract rather than enhance the reputation of the college? How is proving to the NIH that your institution is unreliable a good thing?

Regarding the cancelled program, OSU released a statement through spokesman Gary Shutt saying, "this research was not in the best interest of the university. The testing of lethal pathogens on primates would be a new area for OSU that is controversial and is outside our current research programs."

What's controversial about not wanting to be a victim of anthrax? Who could be against anthrax research that could protect both human and animal populations?

The only thing controversial — to animal activists — is research on a primate.

There's no smoking gun yet, but there is lots of conjecture in the blog world about

OSU bowing to the demands of a donor whose family has given over \$450 million to the college and who also happens to be an animal activist. That donor is reported to be Madeline Pickens — Mrs. T. Boone Pickens.

Let's say that OSU did bow to activists. They may have preserved some donor money for the university, but what did it cost?

- Activists get some real traction here in the Midwest
- It fuels the fire for other activists to bully colleges and foundations into submissions because these tactics have been proven work
- It prevents humans from benefiting from this kind of research.
- OSU gets a reputation as a fickle research partner

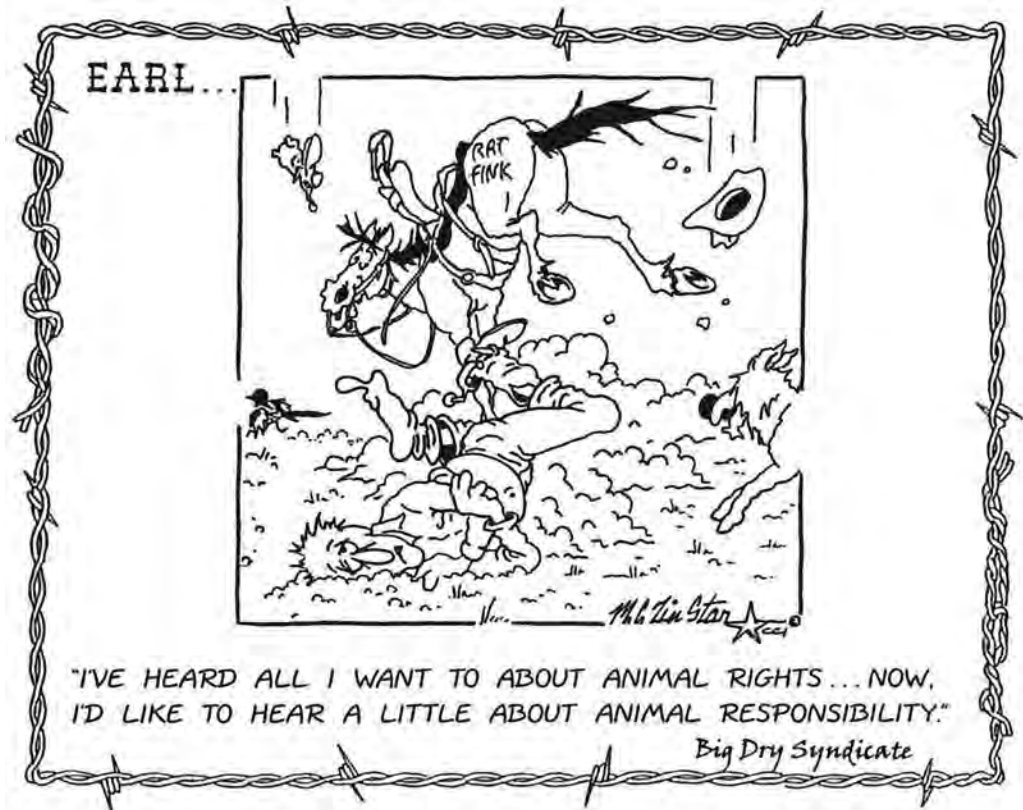
That's a very high price to pay. Now the plot thickens.

OSU President Burns Hargis has reportedly received a letter from Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO of Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) congratulating him on his wise decision.

It ends "(The HSUS) would be interested in discussing other measures that the university might take to further align it with progressive concerns regarding animal protection ... whether in connection with animal experimentation or other facets of university life that intersect with humane values, such as food service and human/animal studies courses."

What universe are we living in when an agricultural college gets a fan letter from the HSUS? What university will be the next to bow to activist demands?

Get additional details on this topic at Donohue's website www.agropinion.com.



Over the Barn Gate

By Beth Gaines-Riffel

When this paper his the mailboxes, Christmas will be only hours away. At this writing, I'm hearing some prognostication that there is a chance for a white Christmas. Could there be anything better?

As long as it's not bitter cold, I could be very happy with a dusting of white to reflect some of the beautiful lighted scenes. I had put a query out to some of my friends that I'm connected to via Facebook asking about lighted displays that might be worthy of shooting for the paper. I wasn't disappointed with their suggestions.

After long consideration, I decided that the little burg of Hanover would be my destination of choice for the outing — hearing of how the Bruna family really had an impressive display. And that they did. My eyes could scarcely take in all the visions in lights that filled their yard, surrounding their home as visitors slowly drove around the circular drive while Elvis crooned "Here comes Santa Claus." It was spectacular.

I flashed back to my college days when one of the highlights of the season was going on a "lights cruise" when I probably should have been studying for a final.

But, you may be saying,

that's not what appeared on the front page! You are right.

While I thought I was going to come home with one shot, instead, I had a decision to make.

There were no less than four or five homes that had photo-worthy displays. It always amazes me as to how some communities and even certain neighborhoods can be gold mines for Christmas lights — while others are more subdued. I've often wondered why that is so. Do homeowners succumb to "peer pressure" when neighbors hang the lights and so other join in?

But that aside, I was

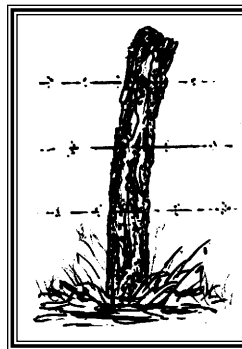
moved by the nativity — displaying the true message of Christmas — simply, quietly, beautifully with a blanket of snow.

As much as I love the Christmas season for the real reason — sometimes the commercialization of it all makes me a little crazy.

I hope in the coming days this week you can step back from the "business" of it all and enjoy the things that mean the most.

Family, friends, good food and the knowledge that His birthday really is cause for a fantastic celebration.

That's all for now. I'll chat with you next week, "Over the Barn Gate!"



The Learning Post

By Gordon Morrison
Concordia Rancher and
Former Agriculture Educator

When my car blew up

On one occasion back in the 1960s, my family and I were driving home from a pre-Christmas family visit in western Kansas when suddenly we heard a sinister-sounding knock in the car's engine. The sound was undeniable and serious because we were still more than a hundred miles from home. As it got louder, I knew I had to stop right then and there.

In the near distance, we could see what looked like a dead town. I walked the short distance to a garage, the only surviving place of business. I was greeted by an older mechanic. He listened to my hard-luck story and then assured me that he could repair whatever was ailing our car. He was most congenial and gracious, offering to drive us home.

As we traveled homeward, my strained visit with him was interrupted by thoughts of despair and questioning. How deep was the repair bill going to bite into our Christmas budget? Will this older shade tree mechanic be up to the challenge of a newer car? By the time we arrived home, we had become well acquainted. He was full of encouragement and assurances, whereas I was full of doubt and thoughts of "Why me, Lord?" I tried to pay him for his gas expense but he said "Don't worry about it, I enjoyed our visit." At least our family of five was home, and we could get by for a few days without a car.

Several days later, he called to say the car was ready. A friend drove

me out to pick it up. The mechanic wanted me to start the car and test it out. With apprehension, I stepped on the starter. It started up easily and without any extra noises, but I was wondering how long it would run before developing another knock.

Then he invited me into his office to go over the bill. He brushed off a chair, cleared off a corner of the dilapidated antique desk, and offered me a seat. To my surprise, the bill were well-written, clear, and complete in detail. He went through it line by line. At the bottom of the bill was listed the hours he had worked, hourly wage, and the total. It was all extremely fair, maybe too fair.

I got out my checkbook and filled it out. He seemed to want to talk so I listened. He was so appreciative of my business. He said, "I believe this job was an answer to my prayer. Taxes were due and without a good-sized job, Christmas would be dismal." Apparently, business had been slow. I looked into the older man's eyes to see moisture. Then I had to blink to clear my eyes, for it was then I realized I had had a part in God's scheme of things. It was no coincidence.

What a God we have who hears our prayers and can cause a car to blow up at just the right spot and at just the right time. Writing that check was most gratifying to me, and the car ran well for years. God works in wondrous and often unexpected ways.

COW POKES®

By Ace Reid



"Well, they got charities for everything else!"



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Small towns coming together to provide for residents

Continued from page 1

wish on the Kansas Sampler we site.

Cities much larger than Lehigh responded. Within days, a caravan of delivery pickups, trucks and trailers loaded with used decorations headed for the Marion County town.

A collection of garlands, lights and more filled a borrowed garage and storage shed. All they needed were plug-ins, brackets and elbow grease, Coyle said. "The bank chipped in and gave us a donation to help with wiring the poles."

A contingent of volunteers mounted the decorations on the weekend after Thanksgiving. This year they doubled up the lights on their tree-shaped ornaments and made them even more remarkable.

"Our little town looks so festive, not as big as the big towns but we don't need to, we have our own decorations," she said. "You just have to jump out there and give it the 'Gung ho, if you want get something done in a small town.'"

Like the loaves and fishes, Lehigh shared its abundance of decorations with

four other communities. They sold the few remaining pieces and set that money aside to update bulbs and wiring.

Small town projects require volunteers, Coyle said, and she has her own way of garnering them.

She has posted notes on the community bulletin board that asked for help to clean up and paint, or in this case, wire and mount decorations.

"When you arm-twist, people generally say, 'No, I just don't have time,'" Coyle said. "What I did was to call and say 'You, you and you, need to be at City Hall by 5:15 p.m.'"

Setting the time carries the message people are needed and they will show up, she said.

In addressing the wishes for small towns, Terry Woodbury, Public Square Kansas, hopes for a return of new young leaders who want to return to their home communities, to reinvest, work together and produce a vision.

"Money isn't really the problem, the problem is leadership and a community not believing in itself," Woodbury said.

The Wish List will share information on the reality of wishing for a grocery store or a library. It's important to know early on that the minimum amount for a wholesale grocery truck stop is \$15,000 a week in purchases, Penner said. And while some might think a small-town library couldn't have a

collection of, say, the New York Times best sellers, that might be what a reader who purchases those books would like to pass down.

She suggested the importance of establishing a community foundation to help with wealth retention after an older couple die and their property passes on to adult children who live out of town.

Another source of money lies in school alumni who have gone into the world, are successful in business and willing donors to hometown projects.

"Communities can get inspired," Penner said. "Things are happening. It's not by magic. There are

people behind every idea, thinking beyond the traditional."

At Kansas State University, Dan Kahl, extension coordinator for the PRIDE program, assists grass roots volunteer groups to organize, assess and identify priorities, and then he helps them find resources.

"Often the secret is just asking," he said. "In a kind way, recognize skills and talent."

Among small community projects in process or that have been completed in south-central and south-west Kansas, Penner named the following:

Restoration of the Marion railroad depot, now a library, financed in part with

a Kansas Department of Transportation grant.

California sisters in Ramona who moved back to the town of their parents' childhood, restored houses they rent for family reunions or bed and breakfasts. They also purchased the bank and converted it into a museum with memorabilia donations.

Movie theater restorations in Lucas, Kinsley, Larned, Anthony and Pretty Prairie.

Henderson House complex in Stafford, three Victorian houses and a church restored by native son Clare Moore marketed as a retreat center for special interest groups and a bed and breakfast for hunters.

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WINNER
Joyce Jandera
Hanover

“These cookies sound complicated, but they aren’t. They are well worth it. They are a favorite at our house at Christmas. Enjoy!”



IRISH CREAM MINT COOKIES

2 1/2 cups old-fashioned or quick oatmeal
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
2 cups butter or margarine (I use half and half)
2 cups brown sugar
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs
1/2 cup Irish Cream (liqueur)
2 teaspoons vanilla
24 ounces mint flavored chocolate chips (2 packages)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place oats in blender and blend until like flour. Mix oats, flour, baking powder, soda and salt. Beat butter, sugars in large bowl until fluffy. Beat in eggs, liqueur and vanilla. Gradually add the flour mixture. Stir chips. Chill 15 to 20 minutes, if very soft. Drop onto baking sheets 2 inches apart. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until cookies look dry on top and edges are light brown. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Remove and cool. Makes 96 cookies.

Shirley Deiser, Kanopolis: “Good for Thanksgiving and Christmas. If you have any left over they reheat well.”

STUFFING BALLS

8 cups bread crumbs
2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
2 teaspoons dried sage
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
4 cups celery with leaves, chopped
2 onions, chopped
1/2 cup butter
1 cup chicken broth

Toss together bread crumbs and seasonings in a large bowl; set aside. In a skillet over medium heat saute celery and onions in butter for 5 minutes until tender. Add broth to skillet.

Simmer for several minutes. Pour over crumb mixture and toss to moisten. Form 1/2 cupfuls into balls and place in a greased 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Bake covered at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes. Serves 8 to 10.

Jackie Meuli, Hope:
CHOCOLATE BONBONS
18 Oreo cookies
1 1/2 cups pecans, toasted
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 tablespoon light-colored corn syrup
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
12-ounce package milk chocolate or semisweet chocolate chips
1 tablespoon shortening

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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

In large food processor bowl combine cookies and 3/4 cup of nuts, pulse until cookies are crushed. Add orange juice, corn syrup, and cocoa powder, process until combined. Add remaining nuts, pulse until coarsely chopped. Line a large baking sheet with wax paper. Shape cookie mixture into 1-inch balls. Place on baking sheet and freeze for 30 minutes. In a small saucepan, combine chocolate chips and shortening. Cook and stir over medium-low heat just until melted. Remove from heat. Dip cookie balls into chocolate. Return to baking sheet. Loosely cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until chocolate is set. Yield: 20 bonbons. Store in covered container; can be refrigerated or frozen.

Marjorie Gray, Peabody:
GRAHAM CRACKER DESSERT

Crust:
14 graham crackers, crushed
3 tablespoons oleo or butter, melted
3 tablespoons brown sugar

Custard:
2 egg yolks
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup sugar
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon Knox gelatin
1/4 cup cold water
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 egg whites (beaten until stiff)

2 to 2 1/2 cups whipped topping

Mix together crust ingredients and reserve 1/2 to 3/4 cup for top. Spread rest in

bottom of a 9-inch pan, pressing firmly. Beat egg yolks, milk, sugar and salt together and cook until like custard and coats a silver spoon. Dissolve gelatin, cold water and vanilla together. Have ready to add to cooked custard. Stir in well then cool. Mix together egg whites and whipped topping, folding gently. Add custard when cool. Pour over prepared crust. Sprinkle reserved crumbs over top. Cover and refrigerate 3 to 4 hours or overnight.

Florene Ringler, Emporia:
CRANBERRY SALAD
2 cups cranberries
3/4 cup diced celery
3/4 cup red Tokay grapes, cut in half or quarters
1/2 cup cold water
Mayonnaise
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1 tablespoon plain Knox gelatin

Wash cranberries; cover with cold water, cook until tender. Add sugar and cook 5 minutes. Soften gelatin in cold water. Add gelatin to cranberries and stir until dissolved. Chill until partially set. Add celery, nuts and grapes. Mix thoroughly. Chill until firm, in molds or dish. Unmold. Serve on crisp lettuce with mayonnaise. Makes 6 servings.

Jane Dressman, Frankfort: “I came up with this recipe by combining two of my favorite things: pumpkin cheesecake and gingersnap

cookies. These delicious little treats are a hit every time.”

MINI PUMPKIN CHEESECAKES

1/2 cup margarine
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup shortening
2 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 1/4 teaspoons ginger
1/2 cup molasses
1 1/2 teaspoons cloves
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
4 cups flour

Cream together margarine, shortening and sugar. Beat in molasses and eggs, set aside. In another bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Gradually mix flour mixture into creamed ingredients until dough is smooth. Press about a tablespoon of dough onto the bottom and up the sides of a well greased mini muffin pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 10-12 minutes, or until done. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, reshape the puffed cookie cups. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Geneva Siefker, McPherson:
SPICED RUSSIAN TEA
2 cups Tang
1 pkg. lemonade, unsweetened
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Mix all ingredients well

and use 2 heaping teaspoons to a cup of boiling water.

Note: If you prefer a stronger taste, use more mix.

Sharon Henning, Glasco:
LEMON SHEET CAKE
1 package lemon cake mix
4 eggs
21-ounce can lemon pie filling

Frosting:
3-ounce package softened cream cheese
1/2 cup butter, softened (do not melt butter)
2 cups powdered sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla

Beat lemon cake mix and eggs together. Add pie filling and beat well. Put in a cake pan (11 x 15 inches). Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. For frosting, beat cream cheese, butter, sugar and vanilla together and mix well.

Jan Schoshke, Brookville:
CARAMEL APPLE SALAD
1 can crushed pineapple (20 ounces or 2 - 8 ounces)
1 small box instant sugar-free, fat-free butterscotch pudding
8-ounce carton lite whipped topping, thawed
4 apples (I use 2 red and 2 green), cut into bite-size pieces

Put crushed pineapple and apples into a bowl. In another bowl mix whipped topping and pudding. When thoroughly mixed add to the pineapple and apples. Chill.

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**“Our Daily Bread”
Holiday Bonus Drawing Winners**

All G&G Area Cooks who sent recipes for the holiday contests were entered in a special drawing. The four cooks whose names were drawn will each receive \$35. They are:

Shirley Deiser
Kanopolis, KS

Helen Aurand
Belleville, KS

Barbara Bausch
Mayetta, KS

Rita Stehno
Munden, KS

A big THANK YOU to all who shared their favorite recipes with G&G Cooks during this holiday season!

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Nov. 24 through Dec. 22

In observance of the holiday season, Grass & Grain will award the weekly winners \$35 in addition to the prize gift.

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BONUS DRAWING

Second chance to win! The names of all contestants will be entered in a drawing from which four names will be chosen. Each of these four contestants will receive \$35. Winners announced IN THIS ISSUE!

The winner each week is selected from the recipes printed.

Send us your favorite recipe. It may be a main dish, leftover, salad, side dish, dessert, or what-have-you.

1. Check your recipe carefully to make certain all ingredients are accurate and instructions are clear.

2. Be sure your name, address and phone number are on the entry. Please include a street address with your recipe entries. A post office box number is not sufficient for prize delivery. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.

3. Send it to: Woman’s Page Editor, Grass & Grain, Box 1009, Manhattan, KS 66505.
OR e-mail at: agpress2@agpress.com

2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Fred Engler, El Dorado:
"A special treat for kids."

PLUMP GINGERBREAD MEN

3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup butter-flavored shortening
3/4 cup dark brown sugar
1/4 cup molasses
1/4 cup light corn syrup
1 beaten egg

Mix together thoroughly the flour, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, soda and salt in a large bowl. In another bowl beat butter and brown sugar together until fluffy. Add molasses, corn syrup and egg and beat in until well mixed. Beat in flour mixture and press dough into a flat rectangle and wrap in plastic wrap. Put in refrigerator overnight. In the morning, pull enough dough from large lump of dough to make one gingerbread man and work with hands until flexible enough to roll out without cracking. Roll out directly on ungreased cookie sheet if sheet is rimless. If sheet has rim, roll out on waxed paper slightly larger than one gingerbread man. Cut into gingerbread man shapes with 5-inch cutter and trim excess. If using waxed paper, flip over upside down on ungreased cookie sheet and peel off paper. Continue until cookie sheet is full. Probably only 3 to 4 per sheet. Bake in preheated oven about 8 to 10 minutes at 350 degrees. Let cool completely, about 10 minutes, then stack in piles on flat surface. When all gingerbread men are baked, put filling below on one gingerbread man, then cover with another.

Filling:
7-oz. jar marshmallow creme
1/4 cup butter-flavored shortening, softened
4 ounces (1/2 package) cream cheese, softened
1 teaspoon lemon extract
1 tablespoon lemon zest

When gingerbread men are filled, decorate with confectioner's icing. Makes about 6 to 7 filled gingerbread men.

Edith Penner, Hillsboro: CHOCOLATE RIPPLE DIVINITY

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 egg whites
1 teaspoon vanilla
6-ounce package chocolate chips (I use milk chocolate)
Combine sugar, water, syrup and salt. Cook over low heat, stir until sugar is completely dissolved. Cook, without stirring, to hard-ball stage, 252 degrees on the candy thermometer. Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry. Pour hot syrup slowly over egg whites, beating constantly. Add vanilla, beat until mixture loses some of its shine and holds its shape. Quickly fold in chocolate pieces, stirring only enough to melt some of the chips. Drop from tip of spoon onto buttered paper. Can also be poured into a butter dish.

Marla Gillmore, Moundridge:

POPPY SEED CAKE

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup ground poppyseed
2 eggs
1/2 cup buttermilk
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon soda
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup boiling water

Mix sugar, shortening, and poppyseed. Cream together. Add eggs and butter-milk and mix together. Sift flour and soda into mixture; blend. Add hot water and vanilla. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes in greased and floured cake pan.

Noel L. Miller, Maple Hill:
"Here is a nice recipe for the holidays. It is a 20-minute or less recipe. Enjoy."

ZIPPY

SHRIMP SPREAD

(2) 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
1 teaspoon seasoned salt
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
12-ounce bottle seafood cocktail sauce
1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
(2) 6-ounce cans tiny shrimp, rinsed & drained
Minced parsley
Assorted crackers

In a small bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Beat in seasoned salt, Worcestershire sauce and onion powder. Spread onto a 13-inch platter. Combine seafood sauce and horseradish; spread over cream cheese layer. Sprinkle with shrimp and chopped parsley. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour. Serve with crackers. Yields 3 1/2 cups.

Carol Kohake, Seneca: "I tried this old recipe today and was really pleased with it."

SODA CRACKER CANDY

35 to 40 soda crackers
1 cup butter
1 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 cups chocolate chips
1 1/2 cups chopped walnuts
Line a 15-by-10-inch jelly roll pan with foil and spray

with cooking spray. Place crackers in rows on pan. In a saucepan melt butter and add brown sugar. Bring to a boil, stirring continuously. Boil 3 minutes. Pour over crackers and spread evenly. Bake at 350 degrees for 5 minutes. Turn oven off. Remove from oven and sprinkle with chocolate chips and walnuts. Return to oven for 3 to 5 minutes. Remove and use a greased spatula to press walnuts into chocolate. Cut while warm into 1-inch pieces.

Mona Jean Newbury, Junction City:

APPLE CRISP

1 tablespoon flour
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
4 cups sliced apples (3-4 pounds)
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup oatmeal
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
3/4 cup flour
3/4 cup butter, melted
Cream

Mix flour, sugar, salt, cinnamon and apples and put in a shallow baking dish. Mix the brown sugar, oatmeal, baking powder and flour then add melted butter. Spoon over apple mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve with cream (optional).

Lucille Wohler, Clay Center:

CHICKEN CASSEROLE

1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of potato soup
1 cup milk
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/8 teaspoon pepper
4 cups cooked mixed vegetables
2 cups cubed cooked chicken

4 cups herb seasoned stuffing

Combine all but stuffing. Mix well. Put in baking dish and top with stuffing. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes until stuffing is browned.

Julia Bergman, Seneca:
"Potatoes are great to eat as is, or you can serve with gravy."

GARLIC

MASHED POTATOES

1 head of garlic
1 tablespoon olive oil
5 pounds potatoes
1 stick butter
1 cup sour cream
4 ounces cream cheese
Milk to moisten
1 tablespoon parsley flakes
Salt & pepper to taste
Garlic powder to taste

Wrap in aluminum foil 1 head of garlic drizzled with the olive oil. Bake in foil pack at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Peel potatoes, cube and boil in water until tender. Drain potatoes and transfer to mixer. Start mixing with 1 stick of butter to start breaking up the potatoes. Add milk little by little to moisten. Cut either the top or the bottom off of the head of garlic and squeeze out the roasted garlic. Add the garlic to the potato mixture. Mix in the sour cream, cream cheese, parsley, salt and pepper. If you feel that the potatoes need more garlic flavor, sprinkle in desired amount of garlic powder.

Janet Jehle, Baldwin City: "For people on the run!"

EZ BBQ BEEF

3-4 pound chuck roast
Water
1 bay leaf
1 cup barbecue sauce
1 cup ketchup
2 capfuls liquid smoke

3 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons mustard
Garlic salt
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup chopped onions

Cook roast on high in crock-pot for 8 to 10 hours. Cover roast with water and add 1 bay leaf. Shred meat and place back in crock-pot with 1/2 cup juice. Then add barbecue sauce, ketchup, liquid smoke, brown sugar, mustard, salt, Worcestershire sauce and onions. Cook on high for 2 hours.

Melissa Aubert, Topeka:
"A perfect potluck Christmas soup that everyone is going to be asking you for the recipe."

CHILI CHICKEN

3 whole cooked chicken breast, cooked, boned & skinned, chopped into 1-inch pieces
12 corn tortillas, cut into 1-inch squares
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup chopped onions
12-ounce can chili without beans
1/2 can of chicken broth
1 can chiles
1 teaspoon salt
1/2-pound sharp cheddar cheese, shredded or cubed
1/2-pound Monterey jack cheese, shredded or cubed
Divide all ingredients into thirds as you make 3 layers using part of each ingredient. Leave some cheese for topping. Bake at 350 degrees covered for 30 minutes then uncovered for 30 to 35 minutes. To cook in the crock-pot, combine all ingredients and cook on high for 2 hours or on low for 4 hours or until cheese is melted and bubbly.

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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Carole Monahan, Westmoreland:

LUSCIOUS FOUR LAYER PUMPKIN CAKE

1 package yellow cake mix (2 layer size)
15-oz. can pumpkin, divided
1/2 cup milk
1/3 cup vegetable oil
4 large eggs
1 1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice, divided
8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 cup powdered sugar
8-ounce tub whipped topping, thawed
1/3 cup caramel topping
1/2 cup pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans. Beat cake mix, 1 cup of the pumpkin, milk, oil, eggs and 1 teaspoon of the pumpkin pie spice in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Pour into prepared pans. Bake 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center come out clean. Cool completely on wire racks. Meanwhile beat cream cheese in small bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until creamy. Add powdered sugar, remaining pumpkin and remaining 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice, mix well. Stir in whipped topping. Remove cake layers from pans, cut each layer horizontally into half with a serrated knife. Stack the layers on a serving plate, spreading the cream cheese mixture between the layers. Do not frost the top layer. Drizzle with

caramel topping and pecans. Store in refrigerator.

Shelly Bargmann, Bremen: "This is a great side dish for holiday gatherings."

LOADED BAKED POTATO CASSEROLE

5-pound bag baking potatoes
8-oz. container sour cream
1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup real bacon bits
1/2 cup butter, melted
1-ounce envelope ranch dressing mix

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Scrub potatoes, bake for 1 hour or until cooked through. Let potatoes cool, peel and cut into chunks. Lower oven temperature to 350 degrees. In large bowl, combine sour cream, mayonnaise, onion, bacon bits, butter and ranch dressing mix. Add potatoes and toss gently to combine. Spoon into a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Bake 40 to 45 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.

Karen Saner, Burns: "To make whole wheat kernels, put 2 cups clean wheat kernels to 4 cups water in a crock-pot. If your crock-pot is big enough you can double the recipe. Cover and cook on low approximately 6 hours. Stir once during the first hour of cooking. Refrigerate or freeze. Ready to use in the following recipes."

WHEAT/CORN CASSEROLE

4 cups frozen corn, (I used home-grown)

2 tablespoons butter
1 medium green pepper, seeded & diced (add onion if you like instead of green pepper)
2 cups cooked wheat kernels
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup milk
4-ounce jar sliced, drained pimentos, optional
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

In a skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter. Add green pepper; cook 2 minutes. Stir in corn. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until corn is tender-crisp. Pour into large bowl. Gently stir in remaining ingredients. Spread in greased 12-by-8-by-2-inch baking dish. Bake at 325 degrees for 35 minutes or until casserole is bubbly. Makes 12 servings.

CHICKEN SALAD SUPREME WITH WHEAT KERNELS

4 chicken breasts, cooked
1 cup celery, diced
1/4 cup onion
1 can mandarin oranges, drained
2 apples, diced
1 cup cooked wheat kernels
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 tablespoon mustard
1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup pickle relish
1 cup slivered almonds, toasted

Dice chicken breasts. Toss chicken, celery, onion, oranges, apple and wheat. Combine curry, mustard, and pickle relish with mayon-

naise, stirring until well blended. Fold into chicken salad. Add a little cream or additional mayonnaise until salad is as moist as you desire. Salt to taste. Chill until serving. Serve on a lettuce-lined glass serving bowl. Top with almonds.

Sandra Norris, Abilene: "If anyone in your family is a diabetic and can't use regular brown sugar use Splenda brown sugar."

SPICED PUMPKIN PIE

2 eggs
1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust
2/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
15-ounce can pumpkin
12-ounce can evaporated milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Beat eggs in a large bowl. Brush rim of crust with 2 teaspoons beaten egg. Add brown sugar and next 6 ingredients (brown sugar through pumpkin) to eggs at medium speed until blended. Gradually beat in milk, pour into unbaked crust. Bake 40 minutes or until custard is set. Cool on a wire rack. Serves 8.

Martha Melcher, Herington:

POTATO SOUP WHAM
2 large potatoes, peeled & quartered

2 tablespoons onion, chopped
1/2 cup sliced celery
1/2 cup ham, cut in small pieces
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups milk
1/2 cup Velveeta cheese or 5 to 6 slices of cheese

Boil potatoes, onion, celery, ham and salt with 2 cups water until done. Add milk and cheese and let come to a boil. Salt to taste.

Joann Bollier, Minneapolis:

SWEET & SOUR CHICKEN

1 package Lipton onion soup
8 ounces Russian or Catalina dressing
8 ounces apricot preserves
Dash of Accent
Chicken pieces of choice

Place chicken in casserole. Mix together other ingredients to make a sauce and pour over chicken. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Ruby Hesting, Esbon: "This is a good meat to slice and add to your Christmas meat and cheese plate."

BEEF BOLOGNA

3 pounds hamburger
3 tablespoons Morton Tenderquick
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 1/2 to 3 teaspoons Wright's smoke
1 cup water

Mix together and make into 3 rolls. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 24 hours. Unwrap and put on a rack and bake for 1 hour to 1 1/4 hours at 300 degrees.

Lois Lahodny, Belleville: "This sounds like a good cookie for Christmas."

WHITE CHOCOLATE CANDY CANE DROPS

8 ounces white baking chocolate with cocoa butter, chopped
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2/3 cup finely crushed peppermint candy canes or peppermint candies

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper; set aside. In a small saucepan cook and stir half of the white chocolate (4 ounces) over low heat until melted. Cool slightly. In a large bowl beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder and salt. Beat until combined, scraping side of bowl occasionally. Beat in eggs and vanilla until combined. Beat in melted white chocolate. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Using a wooden spoon, stir in any remaining flour, the remaining 4 ounces of unmelted white chocolate, and crushed candy canes or candies. Bake on prepared cookie sheets for about 8 minutes. Makes approximately 50 cookies.

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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Karen Walburn, Ottawa:
**LAYERED
CHRISTMAS SALAD**
6-ounce box raspberry gela-
tin

6-ounce box lime gelatin
3-ounce box lemon gelatin
5 cups boiling water
2 cups cold water
1 cup miniature marshmallows
8 ounces cream cheese
8 ounces whipped topping
20-ounce can crushed
pineapple, drained

Bring water to boil. In 3 separate bowls, dissolve raspberry and lime gelatin in 2 cups boiling water each. Dissolve lemon gelatin in 1 cup boiling water. To raspberry gelatin, add 1 cup cold water, or enough ice cubes to equal 1 cup. Pour into 9-by-13-inch glass pan and set in refrigerator until firm. Set lime gelatin aside. To lemon gelatin, add miniature marshmallows and stir until dissolved (or at least nearly dissolved). Beat in softened cream cheese, then fold in whipped topping and drained pineapple. Spread on top of firm raspberry gelatin. Add 1 cup cold water, or enough ice cubes to equal 1 cup to lime gelatin. Refrigerate until slightly firm. Spread on top of lemon gelatin layer. Refrigerate overnight. Cut in squares.

Note: For Thanksgiving, use orange gelatin in place of raspberry and apricot gelatin in place of the lime. For 4th of July, use blueberry gelatin in place of the lime.

Emily Schneider, Otis:
SNOWMAN "SIPPER"
1 individual packet instant
hot chocolate mix
3 Hershey Kisses
10-15 miniature marshmal-
lows

1 candy cane
Put items in a Christmas
mug and wrap in cellophane.
Attach poem and tie on mug
with curly ribbon.

POEM
Was told you've been real
good this year
Always glad to hear it
With freezing weather draw-
ing near
You'll need to warm the spir-
it
So here's a little Snowman
sip. Complete with stirring
stick

Add hot water, sip it slow
It's sure to do the trick!

Mrs. Carl A. Rowley, Es-
kridge: "I have used cherry
gelatin and chopped
maraschino cherries or lime
gelatin with nuts for a more
Christmasy color but really
like the delicate lemon fla-
vor and white color."

DIABETIC DIVINITY
1 1/2 cups Xylitol
2 tablespoons corn syrup
1/4 cup hot water
2 egg whites
1 package lemon sugar-free
gelatin
1/2 cup nuts

Combine Xylitol, corn
syrup and hot water and cook
to hard ball stage. Mean-
while, beat egg whites until
foamy and add lemon gela-
tin. Beat until soft peaks
form. Slowly beat in the hot
syrup to stiff peaks. This
may take a while. Add nuts
and drop by spoonfuls onto
waxed paper and let set in a
cool place to dry.

Marcia Gyhra, Burchard,
Neb.:
BACON 'N EGG LASAGNA
1 pound bacon
1 medium onion
1/3 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper
4 cups milk
12 lasagna noodles, cooked &
drained
12 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
2 cups shredded Swiss cheese
1/3 cup parmesan cheese
Brown bacon until crisp.
Drain and reserve 1/3 cup
drippings. Sauté onion in
drippings. Stir in flour, salt
and pepper. Gradually stir in
milk. Bring to a boil. Cook 2
minutes. Spread 1/3 in bot-
tom of pans. Layer with 4
noodles, 1/3 of eggs, bacon
and Swiss cheese. Repeat
layers twice. Sprinkle with
parmesan cheese. Bake at
350 degrees for 40 to 45 min-
utes until bubbly. Let stand
10 minutes before serving.

Kay Spoo, Frankfort:
"This recipe is low calorie,
low sodium, low cholesterol,
low saturated fat, high potas-
sium, heart healthy and irre-
sistible."

**OVEN FRIED POTATOES
& SWEET POTATOES**
1 pound all-purpose potatoes,
preferably Yukon Gold (2-4
medium), scrubbed
1 pound sweet potatoes
(about 2 small), scrubbed
1 tablespoon extra-virgin
olive oil
1/4 teaspoon paprika
Salt & freshly ground pepper
to taste

Position rack in upper
third of oven; preheat to 450
degree. Coat a baking sheet
with cooking spray. Cut each
potato lengthwise in 8
wedges. Cut sweet potatoes
into wedges about the same
size. Place potatoes and
sweet potatoes in large bowl
and toss with oil, paprika,
salt and pepper. Spread the
potatoes and sweet potatoes
on the prepared baking sheet
and roast for 20 minutes.

Loosen and turn; roast until
golden brown, 10-15 minutes
longer. Serve immediately.

Ethel Baumgartner, Sa-
betha:

**ORANGE COTTAGE
CHEESE GELATIN SALAD**
1 small package orange gela-
tin (I use sugar-free)
1 cup water
8-oz. can crushed pineapple
12 ounces cottage cheese
8 ounces sugar-free whipped
topping

Dissolve gelatin in 1 cup
boiling water. Add pineapple
(undrained), cottage cheese
and whipped topping that
has been softened to room
temperature. Chill until set.

Donna Bettenbrock,
Geneseo: "I am sending you
a delicious, easy to prepare
soup recipe. This is a change
in flavor; good for anytime.

Good with sandwiches or a
salad during the holidays or
anytime."

SOUTHWEST SOUP
3 bacon strips, fried crisp
1 small onion, finely
chopped

1 garlic clove, minced or gar-
lic powder
(2) 14 1/2-ounce cans beef
broth
10-ounce can diced tomatoes
with green chiles
Salt, optional
Black pepper

(2) 15 1/2-ounce cans black-
eyed peas, drained &
rinsed
Cook bacon, drain and cut
into small pieces. Sauté
onion and garlic in bacon
drippings until tender. Stir
in broth, tomatoes and sea-
sonings. Bring to a boil. Stir
in peas and bacon and heat
through.

Sabra Shirrell, Tecum-
seh:

WILD RICE DISH
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup uncooked wild rice
1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms
2 medium green onions,
thinly sliced (1/4 cup)
2 1/2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup real bacon bits

Melt butter in a 10-inch
non-stick skillet over medi-
um heat. Cook wild rice,
mushrooms and onions in
butter, about 3 minutes, stir-
ring occasionally, until
onions are tender. Stir in
water, salt and pepper. Heat
to boiling, stirring occasion-
ally then reduce heat. Cover
and simmer 40 to 50 minutes
or until rice is tender; drain
if necessary. Stir in bacon
bits.

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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Eileen Patrick, Lindsborg: "I've tried several similar recipes but this one is our favorite."

HOLIDAY BRUNCH CASSEROLE
4 cups frozen shredded hash-brown potatoes
1-pound bulk sausage, cooked & drained
1/2-pound bacon, cooked & crumbled
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, divided
1 green onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, chopped (optional)
1 cup reduced-fat biscuit/baking mix
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 eggs
3 cups milk

In a large bowl combine hashbrowns, sausage, bacon, green pepper, onion and 1 cup cheese. Transfer to a greased 9-by-13-inch baking dish. In another bowl whisk the biscuit mix, salt, eggs and milk; pour over above mixture. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Bake, uncovered, at 375 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. Serves 12.

Note: My favorite sausage is Jimmy Dean or Braums.

Rita Dawson, Lebo:
WHOLE WHEAT ANGEL FOOD CAKE
3/4 cup whole wheat flour
1/4 cup cornstarch
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, divided
12 large egg whites
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Sift together whole wheat flour, cornstarch and 3/4 cup of granulated sugar in a small bowl; set aside. In a

mixing bowl beat egg whites, salt and cream of tartar until whites stand in peaks. Gradually add the remaining 3/4 cup of sugar and vanilla extract. Sprinkle one-third of the flour mixture over the beaten egg whites and fold in carefully. Repeat this one-third at a time until flour mixture is thoroughly folded into egg whites. Lightly spoon or pour batter into ungreased angel food cake pan. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes. Invert pan to cool. Serves 16.

Note: All utensils and bowls should be grease-free. Plastic tends to retain oils.
Nutrition Information (per slice): 120 calories, 3 g protein, trace of fat, 24 g carbohydrates, 132 mg sodium, 58 mg potassium, 0 cholesterol.

Kellee Rogers, Topeka:
CRANBERRY ORANGE CHEX MIX
3 cups Corn Chex
3 cups Rice Chex
3 cups Wheat Chex
1 cup sliced almonds
1/4 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
1/2 cup dried cranberries
Heat oven to 300 degrees. Mix cereals and almonds in a large bowl; set aside. Microwave butter, brown sugar and juice concentrate in a 1-cup microwave measuring cup uncovered on high 30 seconds; stir. Pour butter mixture over cereal mixture, stirring until evenly coated. Pour into large roasting pan. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes, stirring after 15 minutes. Stir in cranberries and cool. Store in air-tight container or plastic food storage bags. Use whatever combination of cereals you like as long as it equals 9 cups.

Mary Rogers, Topeka:
BRIE CHEESE & APRICOTS
1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
Dash salt
8-ounce round Brie cheese
In a small saucepan combine the apricots, brown sugar, water, vinegar and salt; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook and stir until slightly thickened; remove from heat. Remove rind from top of cheese. Place in ungreased oven-proof serving dish. Spread apricot mixture over cheese. Bake uncovered at 400 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes or until the cheese is softened. Serve with crackers.

Lynn Burgess, Lyons:
MORAVIAN SUGAR CAKE
2 cakes yeast
1 cup lukewarm water
1 cup hot mashed potatoes
1 cup sugar
1 cup melted butter
2 eggs
1 tablespoon salt
Flour
Butter
1 lb. brown sugar cinnamon
About 7 p.m. dissolve yeast in lukewarm water and let sit for 5 minutes. In a large mixing bowl combine mashed potatoes, yeast mixture, sugar, melted butter, eggs, salt and enough flour to make a stiff dough. Dough should pull off spoon, leaving it almost clean. Cover and let rise overnight. Next morning put in 8-by-8-inch pans, spreading dough to about 3/4-inch thick. Let rise again, about 1 1/2 hours, or until puffy. With thumb, make rows of holes about 2 inches apart. Fill holes with butter and some brown sugar. Sprinkle cake with cinnamon. Bake at 400 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Sandy Hill, Eskridge: "Here's an old-fashioned classic that really says Christmas. It tastes like German chocolate cake."

SUGARPLUM PUDDING CAKE

1/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
3/4 cup flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
3/4 cup buttermilk
3/4 cup chopped pitted dried plums
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
Coconut Topping:
2 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons buttermilk
1/2 cup flaked coconut
1/4 teaspoon vanilla

In a small mixing bowl cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon and nutmeg; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk. Beat just until combined. Fold in plums and walnuts. Transfer to a 9-by-5-by-3-inch loaf pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. In a small saucepan melt butter; stir in sugar and buttermilk. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, simmer uncovered, for 1 minute. Stir in coconut and vanilla. Immediately spread topping over cake when removed from the oven. Serve warm. Yield: 6 servings.

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:
RED HOT SUGAR COOKIES
2 3/4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup butter
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla
Red hot cinnamon candies

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a small bowl sift flour, baking soda and baking powder; set aside. In another bowl beat butter with mixer on high for 30 seconds. Add sugar and beat until combined. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in as much flour mixture as you can with mixer then stir in remaining flour mixture. Roll dough onto lightly floured surface and cut out shapes. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Lightly press in candies. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until golden. Cool on cookie sheet for 2 minutes then cool on racks.

Fred Engler, El Dorado:
"A good holiday treat!"

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CUSTARD PIE

9-inch unbaked pie crust
2 cups eggnog
3 beaten eggs
2 tablespoons brandy or rum (optional)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/3 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Topping:

1 cup whipping cream
3 tablespoons confectioner's sugar
1 teaspoon brandy, rum or vanilla extract
Nutmeg for dusting

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prick holes in bottom of pie crust and bake 15 minutes to partially cook. To make filling, beat eggnog, beaten eggs, brandy (if using) and vanilla in a large bowl. Add sugar and nutmeg; mix well. Pour into pie shell. Bake 25 minutes then cover with foil and bake 35 to 40 minutes longer until knife inserted in center comes out clean. For topping, beat

whipping cream until soft peaks form. Garnish pie with whipped cream and sprinkle with nutmeg. Serves 8.

Eileen Patrick, Lindsay:

COUNTRY COFFEE CAKE

1 cup butter, softened (no substitutes)
1 3/4 cups sugar
4 eggs
3 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 can cherry pie filling
Glaze:
1 cup powdered sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla
Little milk

Cream together butter and sugar. Add eggs and mix well. Add dry ingredients. Batter will be stiff. Spread on ungreased jelly roll pan with sides. Put can of pie filling on top, spreading evenly. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes or until tests done with toothpick. When cool, mix glaze ingredients together and pour over cooled cake.

Karen Saner, Burns:
**SUGAR COATED
PARTY MIX**

2 cups Cheerios
6 cups Chex
5-6 cups popped popcorn
1 cup raisins
1 cup salted peanuts

Mix above ingredients. Then boil for 3 minutes:

1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup brown sugar substitute
1/4 cup light syrup
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt

Pour over dry ingredients. Bake 30 minutes at 250 degrees. Stir at 15 minutes. Break apart and spread out to cool.





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2009 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Marla Gillmore, Moundridge:

RAISIN BROWN SUGAR PUDDING
1 cup white sugar
1 cup flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/8 teaspoon salt
Combine above and add:
1/2 cup milk
1 cup raisins
Topping:
2 cups boiling water
1 cup brown sugar
Pour topping over batter that has been placed in a baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees until the batter is firm.

Jane Dressman, Frankfort

PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE
8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 cup canned pumpkin
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
2 1/2 cups whipped topping
In a mixer, beat cream cheese, pumpkin, sugar and pumpkin pie spice until well blended. Gently stir in 2 1/2 cups of the whipped topping. Spoon into ginger-snaps cookie crusts. Refrigerate 2 hours before serving.

Shirley Deiser, Kanopolis: "No messy sticky cleanup. Just toss away the bag."

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
4 sweet potatoes, peeled & thinly sliced
1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
1/4 cup oleo, sliced
2 tablespoons maple flavoring pancake syrup
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
Shake flour in a large oven roasting bag. Arrange bag in a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Toss sweet potatoes with remaining ingredients to blend. Arrange in an even layer in bag. Close bag with tie provided. Cut 1/2-inch slits in top and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Florene Ringler, Emporia:

DATE BARS
3 eggs, beaten
1 cup sugar
1 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup dates, chopped
1 cup nuts, chopped
Cut dates and nuts in small pieces. Stir dry ingredients and add dates and

nuts. Beat eggs well. Add sugar. Then add egg and sugar mixture to dry ingredients. Spread 1/2-inch thick in a well greased 8-by-8-inch pan. Bake 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees. When cool, cut into 1 1/2- to 2-inch bars. When cool, roll in powdered sugar. Makes 30 bars.

Sabra Shirrell, Tecumseh:

PEA CASSEROLE
8-ounce container sliced baby bella mushrooms
1 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup milk
1 cup heavy whipping cream
2 cups fontina cheese or Gouda
1 cup grated parmesan cheese
(2) 16-ounce bags frozen green peas, thawed & drained
6-ounce can French fried onions
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a Dutch oven melt butter over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onions and

garlic; cook for 5 to 6 minutes or until tender. Stir in flour, sugar, salt, pepper and nutmeg; cook stirring constantly for 2 minutes. Gradually stir in milk and cream. Cook, stirring constantly for 6 to 8 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add cheeses, stirring until melted and smooth. Add peas, stirring to combine. Spoon mixture into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and bake for 30 minutes. Top evenly with fried onions and bake for 5 minutes.

Kellee Rogers, Topeka:
BUFFET HAM & PINEAPPLE POT PIES

1/2 cup finely chopped cooked ham
1/2 cup finely shredded Swiss cheese
1/2 cup well-drained canned crushed pineapple
1 tablespoon finely chopped green onion
1/2 teaspoon ground mustard
Double crust pie crust
1 egg
Heat oven to 450 degrees. In a small bowl mix ham, cheese, pineapple, onion and mustard. For each crust cut (8) 3-inch rounds and (8) 2-inch rounds, rerolling crusts if necessary. Press 3-

inch rounds in bottoms and up sides of 16 ungreased mini muffin cups so edges of crusts extend slightly over sides of cups. Spoon about 1 rounded tablespoon ham mixture into each crust-lined cup. Brush edges of crust lightly with beaten egg. Cut small vent in each 2-inch pie crust round. Place 1 round over filling in each cup, press edges, together, pushing toward cup so crust does not extend over sides. Brush tops with beaten egg. Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until crust is deep golden brown. Remove from muffin cups. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:

PRALINE CREAM PUFFS
Cream Puffs:
1 cup water
1/2 cup butter
1 cup flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 eggs
Pecan Sauce:
1/2 cup butter
1 1/4 cups brown sugar
1/4 cup corn syrup
1/2 cup whipping cream
1 cup chopped pecans
Filling:

1 quart vanilla or butter pecan ice cream

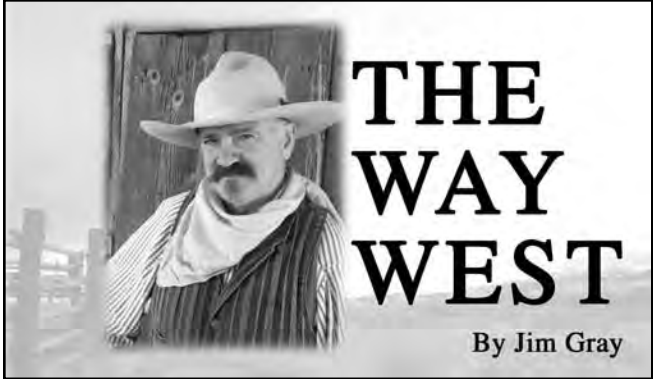
Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease cookie sheets with shortening. In saucepan, heat water and 1/2 cup butter to boiling over medium heat. Stir in flour and salt, cook stirring constantly until mixture leaves side of pan in smooth ball. Remove from heat. Beat in 1 egg at a time until mixture is smooth and glossy. Do not overbeat. Spoon 12 mounds of dough 3 inches apart onto cookie sheet. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown. Prick puffs with sharp knife to allow steam to escape. Remove from cookie sheets and cool completely. To make sauce, in a saucepan melt 1/2 cup butter. Stir in brown sugar and corn syrup. Heat to boiling and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Gradually stir in whipping cream and return to boiling. Remove from heat and stir in pecans. Keep warm. To serve, place each puff on serving plate, slice in half horizontally. Spoon about 1/2 cup ice cream into bottom half of puff. Replace top half of puff and drizzle with sauce.

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John Wesley Hardin Hunts a Killer

The name John Wesley Hardin is legendary. Hardin's guns were said to be two of the fastest in the West. By the time he was eighteen years old he had killed seven men and in the spring of 1871 was on the run from Texas law for killing a Waco, Texas, City Marshal. Kansas looked pretty inviting at the time so Hardin hired on to an outfit owned by Columbus Carroll and Jake Johnson to cowboy a herd of Texas longhorns on the Chisholm Trail.

California adventurer, O. W. Wheeler is credited for opening the trail from Texas to Abilene in 1867. He annually placed several herds on

the trail. One of those herds was camped south of Abilene near a point where the Santa Fe Trail crosses the North Cottonwood River. Billy Cohron was trail boss for the herd.

According to the July 13, 1871, Abilene Chronicle, while the men were resting in camp a Mexican gunman identified as Bideno, "Slipped up behind Cohron and shot him in the back, inflicting a wound from which he died shortly afterwards."

John Wesley Hardin was with the Columbus Carroll trail herd camped nearby and evidently rode into Abilene following the shooting. Hardin claimed that wealthy

cattlemen urged him to follow Cohron's murderer. Early the next day Hardin and another drover, Jim Rogers left Abilene on the trail of the killer. The two cowboy vigilantes rode hard, reaching Newton 50 miles to the south. At Newton the "posse" picked up the dead drover's brother, John Cohran, and a friend, Hugh Anderson. The men continued into the night, traveling another 50 miles to reach Wichita around 11 p.m. After 100 miles in the saddle the posse was satisfied to rest in the comforts of town until dawn. The next morning they arrived around 10 a.m. at Cow House, a trading post on the Ninnescah River. The determined cowboys learned that the fugitive, Bideno had changed horses only an hour ahead of them. By noon, the

cowboys rode into the trail town of Sumner City, northwest of present-day Wellington. They discovered that Bideno had unsaddled, asking for a restaurant. John Cohran and Jim Rogers took one side of the street while Hardin and Anderson took the other. Hardin and Anderson discovered Bideno sitting at a table in the dining room of the Southwestern Hotel. Pulling pistols, the cowboys entered the room. Hardin confronted Bideno with, "I am after you to surrender." Bideno went for his gun as Hardin fired, the bullet struck Bideno in the forehead. John Cohran rushed in, too late to personally avenge his brother's death. "I just want to shoot my brother's murderer one time. Is he dead?" Hardin assured Cohran that Bideno was dead. All there was left to do

was to take his wide brimmed sombrero as a trophy.

On their return Hardin and the boys stopped once again at Newton's infamous red light district known as Hide Park. According to Hardin his outfit "took in the town in good style. . . . The policemen tried to hold us down, but they all resigned — I reckon." Newspaper accounts did not mention Hardin by name but reported that Texans shot Perry Tuttle's dance house full of holes, chasing Tuttle out of town and finally forcing the girls "to stretch themselves at full length upon the prairie." Upon his return to Abilene Hardin was welcomed as a hero. Residents pressed money into his hand and the wealthy cattlemen who had urged him to catch Bideno "made up a purse

and gave me \$600." Hardin was a killer, but in his own eyes every one of his killings was justified. One man in Abilene knew what it was like to kill in a face to face fight. Wild Bill Hickok was marshal of the town and was charged with keeping the peace. He may have seen the justice in Hardin's work, but law and order was the name of the game in Hickok's Abilene. When confronted for wearing his guns, Hardin warned Hickok that he meant no harm in Abilene but that he would not disarm. Hickok was fast, as fast as any man alive, but there was no need for bloodshed. Hardin claimed Hickok allowed him to keep his weapons as long as his friends disarmed. They all had a drink, Hardin's friends left town and the peace was preserved, at least until

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the night Hardin shot through the wall of a hotel and fled town in his pajamas. He knew for certain that Hickok was coming and this time his pistols would be blazing. That’s just the way it was . . . on The Way West.

“The Cowboy,” Jim Gray is author of *Desperate Seed: Ellsworth Kansas on the Violent Frontier* and also publishes *Kansas Cowboy*, *Old West history from a Kansas perspective*.

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Young stockmen encouraged to apply to Beef Leaders Institute

The American Angus Association® will host its third annual Beef Leaders Institute (BLI) June 2-4, 2010. Applications are now being accepted for the event and are due March 1.

Limited to 20 participants, BLI is designed for Association members 25-45 years old to provide insight into all beef industry segments while enhancing their knowledge of the Association and strengthening leadership skills.

BLI includes three days of tours, including a beef harvesting and packing facility, retailer, fabricator, feedlots and other industry segments, including the Association.

“Beef Leaders Institute started as an outlet for the Association and Angus Foundation to educate our younger members about all segments of the beef industry, and we have seen it become that, but also has evolved into an awesome networking and leadership opportunity for many enthusiastic producers,” says Shelia Stannard, Association director of activities and events. “Many of the first two years’ alumni are active in their state

Project to verify effectiveness of high tunnels

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan today announced a new pilot project under the ‘Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food’ initiative for farmers to establish high tunnels — also known as hoop houses — to increase the availability of locally grown produce in a conservation-friendly way. Merrigan and other Obama administration officials highlighted opportunities available for producers in a video posted on USDA’s YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07vtMJgp0no>, which shows high

tunnels recently installed in the White House garden.

“There is great potential for high tunnels to expand the availability of healthy, locally-grown crops — a win for producers and consumers,” said Merrigan. “This pilot project is going to give us real-world information that farmers all over the country can use to decide if they want to add high tunnels to their operations. We know that these fixtures can help producers extend their growing season and hopefully add to their bottom line.”

The 3-year, 38-state study will verify if high tunnels are effective in reducing pesticide use, keeping vital nutrients in the soil, extending the growing season, increasing yields, and providing other benefits to growers.

Made of ribs of plastic or metal pipe covered with a layer of plastic sheeting, high tunnels are easy to build, maintain and move. High tunnels are used year-round in parts of the country, providing steady incomes to farmers — a significant advantage to owners of small farms, limited-

resource farmers and organic producers.

USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide financial assistance for the project through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the EQIP Organic Initiative, and the Agricultural Management Assistance program. NRCS will fund one high tunnel per farm. High tunnels in the study can cover as much as 5 percent of 1 acre. Participating states and territories are Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut,

Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Pacific Islands, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

To sign up or learn more about EQIP assistance for high tunnel projects, contact a local NRCS office.

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By Val Farmer

Rural Life

How urban and rural values differ

What makes rural, rural? What is unique about living in a rural community? What changes are taking place that affect the quality of rural living?

The density of population and the relative isolation from other people have a distinct effect on the way people view life and the values they espouse.

Density of population doesn't mean more social interactions. In fact the smallest and most remote rural communities have the most social interactions. A

"dense" social network means that people in the social network are friends, related, know each other and interact regularly. In terms of quantity of social interactions, rural isolation is a myth.

In another sense, rural isolation is not a myth. It is precisely because of the closeness of the social network that rural people generally confide in fewer people about important matters. Friendly doesn't necessarily mean open.

Community and individ-

ual values. The rural value system is primarily communitarian and relational. These values are found primarily in peasant villages, agricultural communities, ethnic neighborhoods or tribal communities. The dimensions of being rooted in a particular place and having continuous life-long relationships with kin and friends underpin the psychology and sociology of these communities.

The dominant value system in the cities is that of individualism. These values flourish in western, industrial, mobile societies where capitalism, material well-being and career identity form the bedrock of personal endeavor. These values are embedded in the economy, schools, media and other institutions. These messages are taught, articulated and advertised.

Rural people adopt these values to survive in the larger economic and social environment they find themselves. Underneath these values are the rules for surviving in a harmonious community.

Rewards in rural life. The rewards of the rural value system are belonging, emotional support, security and

predictability. One major contrast between rural and urban living is the type of emotional connections and bonds rural people have with their friends and neighbors. Another is the sense of community and community participation.

The way people relate to one another in rural communities is more personal, emotional, direct and socially supportive. People encounter each other in friendship and social roles as well as formal roles within the community. Everybody knows everybody. There is a feeling of belonging and fellowship, a feeling of genuine affection for each other. Even relationships with authority figures are softened or tempered by social constraints and niceties.

Rural people have more relationships characterized by this direct, personal style of interaction than do urban residents. The social sphere of urban dwellers is limited to a much smaller range of friends and acquaintances.

Efficiency of urban, suburban life. Social interaction patterns in cities are more impersonal, calculating, indirect, and often conflicting. People encounter each other in specialized roles and functions. This is the relational pattern of the marketplace, the workplace, the governing bodies and other organized structures of society.

However, research shows that in cities of over 100,000, or in Midwestern cities west of the Mississippi River, people choose their

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Callicrate Feedyard Mike Callicrate St. Francis, KS 785-332-3344	To Believe The spirit of the holiday gives us time to reflect on the blessings we are given and the ideals we believe in. Believe in the true meaning this holiday season offers. Believe in family, friends, neighbors, and in the way of life that producers offer the rest of the world. Believe in truth, honesty, fairness, and kindness. Believe that goodness prevails. Believe that all creatures, big and small, are created with meaning Believe that as you, as a father, son, mother, daughter, producer make a positive difference. Believe in peace on earth and good will to all This holiday season -----BELIEVE	McPherson County Feeders Allan Sents Marquette, KS 785-546-2216
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friends from a narrow range of people with similar interests and backgrounds. Their friends also would be friends in close social networks. These people create a village mentality within the midst of the big city.

In other parts of the country, there is a strong urban/rural contrast depending on whether the people in an individual's network also have close ties with each other.

Urban and rural is a matter of degree. People in cities operate at both the personal and impersonal level. They have their social network of friends and relatives for social support. However, the number of primary relationships to formal relationships is smaller than in rural communities.

Rural people also operate at both levels of formality and informality. The difference is also about how much value rural people place on relationships, social obligations, and community participation as vital and enjoyable facets of life.

Some thrive, some don't. Some people thrive on the personal dimension of rural life. They have mastered the art of being social diplomats. The abundance of personal interactions seem natural and comfortable. It is what they are used to. It is hometown. It is family. It is warm and comforting. To them, life in the city would seem cold, impersonal and devoid of caring.

Rural youth who leave rural towns may return again if they have developed a sense of comfort with the powerful social connections in their communities. Part of their identity is with their community. Those who don't return may have found the small town social atmosphere to be oppressive and controlling.

Some rural people find the amount of time and effort expended in social awareness, recognition and appreciation of each other's emotional needs are also wearing and oppressive. They welcome the anonymity of a shopping trip to the city, the privacy of their homes and respite from the intensely personal social obligations of daily life.

As life gets more complex, as new communication technologies grow, as people commute and enlarge their formal networks, as the economy and social institutions become more regional, as the boundaries of the rural community expand, the distinction between urban and rural life will continue to blur.

For more information on rural values and community life, visit Val Farmer's web-site at www.valfarmer.com.

Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his web-site.

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GRASS & GRAIN Auction Sales Scheduled

check out the on-line schedule at www.grassandgrain.com

Online Only — Forage harvesting equipment. Proxibid.com or UCSalina.com. Auctioneers: Blomquist Auction/United Country Mid West eServices.

December 23 — Tractors, combines, wheel loader & dozer, motor graders, skid loader, farm machinery, hay & livestock equip., trucks, trailers, vehicles online only (www.bigiron.com) for Big Iron. Auctioneers: Stock Auction Company.

December 29 — Ag equipment Online Only (www.purplewave.com). Auctioneers: Purple Wave Auctions.

January 1, 2010 — 25th Annual New Years Day Consignment Auction at Lyndon for Harley Gerdes.

January 1 — Guns, ammo, rods & reels, bows, trap & hunting, fishing, camping accessories at Olpe. Auctioneers: Swift-N-Sure Auctions.

January 1 — Furniture, antiques & collectibles at Tonganoxie. Auctioneers:

John Shoemaker Auction Service.

January 2 — Jewelry, antiques & collectibles, household, pictures at Abilene. Auctioneers: Reynolds, Mugler & Geist.

January 6 — Clay Co. real estate at Clay Center for Sam & Nora Goodin. Auctioneers: Landmark Real Estate, Harold Mugler.

January 19 — Forklifts, shop supplies, residential & commercial property at Sylvan Grove. Auctioneers: Omli & Associates, Inc.

January 20 — Clay Co. real estate at Clay Center for Agnes K. Scriptor Estate. Auctioneers: Landmark Real Estate, Harold Mugler.

March 6 — Machinery, equip., tractors & combine at Paxico for Duane & Diane Hund. Auctioneers: Murray Auction & Realty, Steve Murray.

March 6 — 32nd Gelbvieh Balancer & Red Angus bull sale at Pomona for Judd Ranch.

March 7 — Farm equipment

& misc. consignments at Wetmore for St. James Building Fund. Auctioneers: Local auctioneers.

March 8 — Farm sale E. of Agenda for Richard Anderson Estate. Auctioneers: Larry Lagasse Auction & Real Estate.

March 13 — 24th annual Concordia Optimist Club consignment sale at Concordia.

March 13 — Harley Gerdes consignment auction at Lyndon.

March 13 — Jewell Co. real estate at Formoso for Taylor & Edna Ruth Clark Estates. Auctioneers: Larry

Lagasse Auction & Real Estate.

May 31 — 17th annual Harley Gerdes Memorial Day consignment auction at Lyndon.

August 7 — Harley Gerdes consignment auction at Lyndon.

September 6 — 15th annual Harley Gerdes Labor Day consignment auction at Lyndon.

November 6 — Harley Gerdes consignment auction at Lyndon.

January 1, 2011 — 26th annual Harley Gerdes New Year's Day consignment auction at Lyndon.

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ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

Christmas Gift Exchange On The Farm

The week before Christmas the farmer announced to the animals that he would not be giving them the traditional cheese and sausage box. The pig was relieved. The farmers suggested instead, they should pool their names in a black rubber bucket and draw names.

"Does that include non-domesticated animals, too?" asked the armadillo.

"Yes, But only warm-blooded," was the answer.

Since not everyone had prehensile lips, the farmer

offered to do the drawing in the giant name swap. On Christmas morn the gifts were exchanged.

The buzzard had drawn the possum. He gave him a can of fluorescent paint and a backpack made of reflector tape. "That way," the buzzard explained, "The cars might see you crossing in time to swerve and miss you. And..." he continued, "if it doesn't, you'll be a lot easier for me to spot when you're flat on the highway..."

The dog presented the

cat with a coffee can full of sand and a gift certificate to be spayed. She reciprocated by giving the dog a toy flea circus. "I hope you like it" she snarled, "I bought them off a skunk!"

By some coincidence the sheep had all drawn each other, and each gave the other a picture of a sheep. Some thought it was a mirror.

The rooster thought it would be a great joke to give the mouse a piece of cheese in a trap camouflaged as a box of D-Con. Anticipating the rooster's subterfuge, the mouse had already arranged for the rooster to visit the famous poultry genealogy facility adjacent to the Campbell Chicken Noodle Soup Museum. It included a room with a stew.

There was great excitement between the goat and the mare. The goat had al-

ways envied the mare's magnificent tail, so she had the farmer clip it and the birds wove it into a beautiful hairpiece. Not sure how to wear it, the goat put it high on his poll between the horns. It made him look like a 1969 debutante at her cotillion party in Lubbock, Texas.

The cow offered to rub the coyote's back. He'd been

helping himself to the fermented punch and had lost his ability to judge weight and distance, so he accepted. He did okay till he said, "a little more to the right!" She broke his tail! It healed crooked and now when he wags it he looks like the flagman on an aircraft carrier!

At the end of the evening the farmer and his wife

were given a rousing Christmas toast from their barnyard employees. They had chipped in (pardon the pun) and bought him a book autographed by all their cloven hoofed and feathered edible animal friends entitled, "The Vegetarian Cookbook, or How to Get the Most Out of a Tuber During the Holidays!"

Group gets grant

Washington County Farm Bureau was awarded \$45,049.91 to partner with five other county Farm Bureau chapters to create farmers' markets where none exist, to identify new growers and to build a cooperative grower effort to explore new opportunities involving institutional markets, creating retail opportunities and contract grower arrangements. The five counties participating include Washington, Republic, Marshall, Cloud and Clay counties. The announcement was made by

acting Secretary of Agriculture, Josh Svaty. Kansas received \$214,055.68 as a result of a special provision in the farm bill, the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, to fund projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, which are defined as horticulture, including turf grass sod and turf grass sod seed, fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, nursery crops and floriculture.

"We're in an era where there is greater interest in locally grown products, so I'm thrilled Kansas was able to fund eight worthy projects from the grant we received," said Svaty.



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