



Farm show this week

By Beth Gaines-Riffel, editor

Finish the chores and head for Topeka to take in the 2008 version of the Farm Show held at the Expoentre. There will be plenty to see and do during the event which starts today, Jan. 8 and runs through Thursday.

By stopping by the G&G booth, you'll have the opportunity to check out our new website as well as renew your subscription for another year at special show-only rates!

We look forward to seeing you!

Kansas communities will receive funds aimed at promoting healthy activity

Seven Kansas PRIDE communities will receive \$3,000 in grant funding to encourage healthy physical activity within their communities, said Connie Hoch, speaking for the Kansas PRIDE Program.

The Kansas PRIDE Program offered the competitive grant opportunity through its Partnerships for Healthier Kansas (PHK) Program.

The funding is designated for "Get It — Do It!" projects such as development or improvement of local walking, biking or hiking trails, educational campaigns about physical activity and health, or encouragement of inter-generational activities such as the formation of walking groups or clubs, Hoch said.

Each of the successful applicants — Stafford; Kinsley; Melvern; Portis; Basehor; Olsburg, and Glasco — is enrolled in the Kansas PRIDE Program. Pride is a volunteer-based statewide community development program administered by the

Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas State University Research and Extension.

Suggested projects include developing a walking trail between a school and community park in Basehor, and a collaborative biking and hiking project for the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge in Stafford.

Grant projects will be implemented by community PRIDE volunteers in 2008, Hoch said.

More information about Kansas PRIDE, Inc. and potential benefits for communities is available at county and district K-State Research and Extension offices and on the PRIDE website, www.kansasprideprogram.ksu.edu.

Interested persons can also call Dan Kahl or Connie Hoch, PRIDE representatives at K-State Research and Extension (785) 532-5840 or Jeanne Stinson at the Kansas Department of Commerce (785) 296-3487.

Rural Clay County small business owner makes best of bad weather

By Beth Gaines-Riffel, Editor

When the ice and snow storms of December hit the region and plunged entire communities into darkness, it was an inconvenience at the least. Families learned how to cope with lack of lights and turned to generators and emergency shelters to survive.

But what about the businesses that were looking forward to a festive shopping season to bring the year-end tally to the positive side of the ledger? It was a tough go, to say the least, for many small, specialty gift shops located in out-of-the-way villages. The Blackberry Mercantile in Oak Hill was no exception.

But Meg Perry, a native of Connecticut, via California, has learned to face challenges and difficulties head-on.

"I was lying in bed wondering what I could do," she explained recently from her small shop on the main street of the little community in Clay County. "I had taken pictures of the ice for cards, and I thought 'T-shirts!'"

A few phone calls to her local suppliers later and she had picked out the photographs that would grace the front of her "Survivor" tees.

She's hoping that the sales of these unique garments will help offset the losses that the shop experienced because of the inclement weather.



Meg Perry, owner and operator of Blackberry Mercantile in Oak Hill, pauses in front of her quaint gift shop after scooping another round of snow from in front of her shop. The combination of creative expression and need for more salable merchandise in spite of a dismal holiday season led her to create the Ice Storm Survivor t-shirt that she modeled.

Challenges almost seem welcome to the enthusiastic shopkeeper who focuses on locally made items for her inventory. You won't find any "made in China" labels on any of her products.

"I'm real particular," she said about the source of her goods. Many of the items, including handmade aprons,

bags, soaps, wall hangings and other botanical products, were either made by Perry or consigned by other individuals who live around the region.

Perry recognizes the challenges of business owners who live in small towns, but believe that it can be a benefit rather than a detriment. She

was exceptionally pleased when last fall they held their first ever "Middle of Nowhere" craft fair that was well-attended. "People couldn't believe that the main street was completely full of cars!" The community is planning for another new event — an early summer craft fair.

Farmers face difficult planting decisions as economics come into play

ST. LOUIS (AP) — On his central Illinois farm, Kyle Winklemann has a quandary — for farmers, certainly an enviable one.

Corn took up about two-thirds of the 27-year-old grower's 1,800 acres last year, with soybeans taking up much of the rest. Winklemann made out well with both. Corn fetched lofty prices, driven at least in part by ethanol production reliant on it, while soybeans are commanding prices not seen in decades.

Come this spring, many farmers may be beckoned back to the beans, although Winklemann still isn't sure what he'll do. It's a matter of economics: With prices of soybeans narrowing the gap with corn recently, there's better profit potential in beans because they're cheaper to grow than corn.

That's not to say corn is a laggard; the grain recently has fetched \$4 a bushel or more. So what's a farmer to do?

"The markets are so volatile, no one knows what

they're going to do," Winklemann said from his farm near Tallula, just northwest of Springfield, Ill.

When it comes to what to plant, "we'll make that decision when it comes around," he says, noting that choices may be influenced by such factors as the lofty costs of fertilizer and fuel.

For now, he says, "I don't really know."

A shift from corn to beans may be inevitable, given the context. U.S. farmers harvested a record 13.1 billion bushels of corn this fall on nearly 93 million acres planted, in many cases cutting their soybean acreage for corn's sake to take advantage of high prices fed by demand for ethanol, the corn-based fuel additive.

Now, many observers see U.S. farmers moving 4 million to 6 million of those corn acres back into soybeans to take advantage of prices that have soared for that commodity, lately beyond \$11 a bushel — a price not seen since the early 1970s.

"Last year, there was a clear economic signal that the market wanted more corn acres, and farmers responded in a big way," said Randy

"The markets are so volatile, no one knows what they're going to do,"

— Kyle Winklemann

Winter, an Illinois State University professor of agricultural economics. "As we sit here today, that message is a lot more fuzzy."

Citing a late November survey of some 750 growers, Farm Futures magazine estimates that farmers are planning to plant 88 million acres of corn next spring, down about 5 million from this year. Acreage of soybeans should be about 69.5 million, up nearly 6 million acres, the magazine forecasts.

To Darrel Good, a University of Illinois market specialist, guessing what farmers will do with their acres is foolhardy.

"I don't think there's any basis for knowing that at this point," he said. "Farmers at the margin will make up their minds late. To make

specific forecasts right now, I think, borders on the insane."

"We know there's a fair amount of flexibility, right up to the last minute," he added. "I'm just trying to understand how people can make acreage forecasts right now. Because those are not set in concrete."

Other things, including a farmer's desire for balance, are far more certain.

Growers generally, for example, like to rotate their acreage, growing soybeans one year and corn on that acreage the next to keep pests, weeds and diseases from getting too much of a foothold on any certain crop.

Planting consecutive crops on the same land also can crimp yields.

But in many cases last spring, farmers tempted by higher corn prices went with that crop again, dropping soybeans out of the rotation.

Now, costs of what farmers call "inputs" — the items that go into producing a crop — have risen sharply, helping make the decision of whether to bring soybeans back to the rotation easier for many growers.

An example: Corn craves nutrients such as nitrogen, though costs of nitrogen fertilizer — and anhydrous ammonia, the most common form of that fertilizer — have skyrocketed, making soybeans potentially more lucrative.

A recent University of Illinois study that took in such expenses as seed, fertilizer, chemicals, fuel, labor and machinery repair projected the cost of growing corn was \$330 an acre. The cost for soybeans? Only about \$200 an acre.

Throw in the lofty price

of soybeans — lately fetching \$10 to \$11 a bushel compared to the \$6.50 to \$7 price a year ago — and the potential returns can be hard to ignore.

Still, there's demand for both crops. U.S. inventories

Continued on page 3

Guest Editorial

The cell phone: friend or foe?

In the 1960s and 1970s, a major communications giant used the slogan, "Reach out and touch someone" — so we did. We did not, however, telephone our loved ones from every restaurant, shopping mall, and automobile. We were frugal with our long-distance minutes, too, and delighted when friends and family spent their nickel to phone us.

What did we do before cell phones? We waited for family to arrive home to have a conversation. We waited until they reached their destination while traveling to hear that they had arrived safely. And we learned patience.

Patience is not required if you own a cell phone. Convenience has replaced it. Forget an item on your shopping list? Call someone who is still out and about. Despite this convenience, there are drawbacks.

Several weeks ago, my sister answered her cell phone and heard loud moaning and crying. She

was frightened because the caller was her daughter, and there was no response to shouting out her name. Then the phone went dead. My friend finally reached the daughter, who denied placing a call. The mystery was solved when the daughter, a registered nurse, realized she had recently been in the room of a patient who was experiencing considerable pain. The cell phone in her pocket must have pressed against the bedside and accidentally dialed her mother's number.

As my nephew, a teacher in California, showed his students the film "Saving Private Ryan," known for its authentic depiction of World War II, he heard a commotion outside. Peering through the blinds that had been drawn to darken the room, he found himself looking at a contingent of SWAT officers in full gear with weapons drawn. The reason for this potentially catastrophic event turned out to be a student's cell

phone, which had inadvertently dialed home. The mother answered and heard gunfire and yelling. She became terrified and dialed 911.

These accidental calls are not uncommon. It has happened to us on several occasions. I've been told that there is a locking feature that prevents this from happening in phones without flip-top covers, but I have yet to figure out how it works.

Reports of erratic driving by those talking on the phone while speeding down freeways are numerous, but who of us would deprive anyone of a device that could save lives in summoning help after an accident? Likewise, while personal use of cell phones in the workplace is attributable to hundreds of unproductive hours, are we not comforted that those in the Twin Towers or on the hijacked airplanes had that one last conversation with their families on a grim September day in 2001?

For every device that comes along, the tendency for misuse or abuse follows. We see more of it with cell phones because they seem to have multiplied like Star Trek's tribbles, and are often as annoying. The solution will not be found in banning the instrument or even legislating its appropriate use. Responsibility is learned, not legislated.

People will go on doing what they are doing if they are emotionally rewarded. Odd as it may seem, some folks with a cell phone on their ear admit that they are not talking to anyone. They just feel that they look connected and important by doing so. If prestige is attached, people will continue to reach out and touch someone, even if only in pretense. But can't we be courteous about it?

Annette McDaniel is a former elementary teacher, former accountant, and sometime poet and writer, who lives in Edgerton.



Over the Barn Gate

By Beth Gaines-Riffel

The year is off and running. I think I had a blank calendar for all of about five minutes and then, as if by magic, the squares of January were filled.

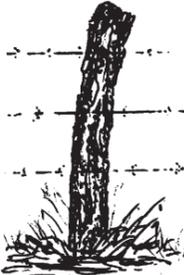
I only hope that the weather straightens out. I've had about as much of the ice and snow that I can tolerate. With the full schedule of meetings and events to cover, I can only hope that the month flies by. Because as each day of January passes by means that spring is one day closer.

It was almost ironic that when the postman arrived with the mail on Jan. 2, the first gardening and poultry catalog of the season was included in the delivery. Flipping through the pages for a few minutes while the football game was on helped me to forget that the wind chill outside my door was sub-zero!

There is something about perusing the pages of red-ripe tomatoes and other crispy veggies that gives a person hope ... not to mention makes you hungry! It is also a bit of a disappointment too, because after your appetite has been whetted the grocery-store offerings just don't cut it!

And, while on a shopping note, remember to support those locally owned shops, stores and dining spots as much as you can during the coming months. Many business owners planned on December being a big month for them, and with the bad weather that came during the heart of the shopping season, many are wondering if they'll be able to survive another season.

Just something to think about. I'll chat with you next week, "Over the Barn Gate!"



The Learning Post

By Gordon Morrison
Concordia Rancher and
Former Agriculture Educator

The Book Peddlers

As I sit here looking out the window to see the earth still robed in a five-inch layer of white snow that has been on the ground for several weeks, I see that the snow sparrows have arrived with their dark grey upper feathers and their whitish lower belly feathers. Each one looks like a soft fluffball that is actually enjoying the cold and snow. They do not appear to have a worry in the world as they flit from one roost to another in search of food. Their meager food source is becoming more scarce in all the snow-covered terrain. It looks like I need to refill the bird feeder.

Yesterday May put up the 2008 calendar with its big squares for writing in events and appointments to help keep us organized and on schedule. Looking at that new calendar reminds me that I have been writing this column for about sixteen years. Putting 102 of those articles into a book has made me look back over my past and realize how my life has been enriched with a great many experiences. The book itself is becoming one of my best experiences.

A big decision in printing the book was the number of books to have printed. We decided to go with a thousand copies. We picked the books up right at Thanksgiving time and began to realize they would have to be distributed to retail outlets in order to sell the majority of them. So, we filled the jeep with gas and loaded boxes of books into the back and headed out. We had to find out who would be willing to partner with us in getting these books exposed to potential buyers before Christmas and in time for gift buying. In two week's time, we had been in every town, big and little, within a radius of 90 miles of Concordia. The books were displayed in gift and book stores, farm supply stores, western and leather shops, pharmacies, grocery stores, antique shops, and wherever we thought they would catch the eye of shoppers.

One of our greatest joys was in going to the mail box and receiving orders from readers who were requesting one or more books (one

order was for nine books), which were shipped by mail. Often a letter of encouragement was included with the order.

A few days before Christmas, a trip into the area of Marion, Cottonwood Falls, and Emporia was climaxed with a book signing in Council Grove. It was good to be back in the town where I grew up and also taught vocational ag for 14 years. I signed books for nine of my former students. Several of them came in together, greeting me with big smiles, and we had a great time reminiscing. Now they are men in their 50s and 60s, and they still had that spark of mischief in their eyes as they recalled some of their pranks at school. I learned from them that the most useful subjects I taught in vocational ag were the shop classes and the training in FFA in leadership and public speaking. We distributed about eighty books in the Council Grove area.

While we have not checked with all the shops where books were consigned since just before Christmas, in looking at the Sales and Consignment Record Book, we are pleased with the results. Close to 450 books have been sold, and we have given away one hundred copies to our relatives, close associates and friends. Most of the other books are out on consignment, but we have kept enough here to be able to fill orders that come directly to us.

We are scheduled to be at the Grass & Grain booth with books available at the Topeka Farm Show in the Expo centre on January 9 from the hours of 2:30 to 4:30 that Wednesday afternoon.

As Frank Buchman would say, thanks for partnering with us — all of you who are helping sell the books, you who are buying them, and you who are reading and enjoying them. Thank you, partners.

The book *Views from the Learning Post* can be ordered from Gordon Morrison, 1268 Key Road, Concordia, KS 66901 or may be available in a store near you. For information, call 785-243-3833.



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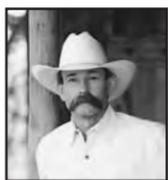
— Mark Victor Hansen

COW POKES®

By Ace Reid



"But Mr. Banker, if you wanted to borrow my hoss, I wouldn't ask you a bunch of questions and make you sign a paper!"



BAXTER BLACK

ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

NFR Las Vegas 2007

Hunter S. Thompson, in his book *Fear And Loathing in Las Vegas* said, "Circus Circus (a big casino in Las Vegas) is what the world would be like if the Third Reich had won!"

Las Vegas is the equivalent of endlessly switching the cable channel on your television anytime between midnight and 2:00 am!

Las Vegas has changed rodeo. It has been a great host to the National Rodeo Finals (NFR) since 1985, literally launching rodeo into orbit somewhere between Haley's Comet and Dancing with the Stars! It has also drug us middle-aged and

cial Security veterans, who have the most money to spend on Dodge pickups and fancy Justin boots and make up the vast majority of repeat NFR ticket buyers, into the whirlwind world of show business.

Each performance at the NFR begins like the 4th of July and roars non-stop, leaving the audience spellbound, breathless and deaf. When it is over you feel like you've ridden or roped every wild domestic animal that ran, circled or crashed into the arena! It exhausts you. Watching rodeo is not like watching baseball or

golf. There are no pensive, thoughtful moments as the steer wrestler ponders the angle of the horns. There are no no-hitters, no left fielders dozing off. Rodeo is more like hockey played with hambones and a whale bladder! Or tennis played with an orchestra and paint gun balls!

But the umbilicus, the lifeline that holds baby boomers and seniors to the sport and gets them through the roller coaster hyperspace of the Thomas and Mack Arena, is the intimate moment we watch when each competitor puts all they've got on the line. Man touches beast, leather touches hair, silver touches hide. The noise and lights, the fireworks and carnival atmosphere fade into the rafters as we, in our minds, nod our head, throw our rope, rock and fire, turn the barrel, take our dallies and land on our feet right there beside them ... to the applause of the adoring

crowd. That's what brings us back.

That and the remembrance of our youthful attempts, of horses we've known, of friends we've rode with. We see Billy Etbauer, our Mickey Mantle, Walt Woodward, our Nolan Ryan, Trevor Brazile, our Tiger Woods, and Taos Muncy our LeBron James.

We support rodeo because it is ours, no matter how it changes. If it takes Las Vegas to make it a major sport, we welcome it, glitz and all.

But we gray-haired fans from America's Outback, where we still punch cows

and team rope on Thursday night, appreciate the animals and contestants at the NFR on a much deeper level. One man, one horse, one bovine. We know how it feels, how hard it is, and

how good the contestants have to be to get there. They represent the best of what we stand for, for all the world to see. Sometimes it sends chills down my spine. Viva Las Vegas!

Planting decisions difficult

Continued from page 1

of soybeans, adequate last year to weather the pullback in acreage, will need to be replenished next year. And Good says U.S. corn exports are expected to stay strong as Chinese exports continue declining, helping keep corn prices robust.

"The market has to say, 'OK, how much corn do we need and what price of corn does it take to get that many acres?'" considering the

input costs, Good said. "That judgment will be unfolding over the next several months."

Maybe not for John Olson.

For some time now, the 46-year-old grower near the central Illinois town of New Berlin has split his some 1,300 acres evenly between corn and soybeans. And he's not expecting that to change "by chasing prices back and forth and wearing myself out."

"I kind of fall into the category of boring," he said. "I hadn't chased corn prices last year, and I'm not chasing the soybean prices this year. I'm keeping my rotation the same."

"My fear is being on the wrong side of it and guessing wrong," he shrugs, finding price speculation not his cup of tea. "I have a tendency just to be a little more conservative. Call it stuck in the mud, but I do it how it's worked."

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2008 Kansas Hay and Grazing Conference

The Kansas Hay and Grazing Conference will be held on

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2008

at the Kansas Farm Bureau building, 2627 KFB Plaza, Manhattan, KS

This is a public conference for anyone interested in livestock grazing, hay production/utilization or buying/selling of Kansas grass and hay products.

This conference is jointly sponsored by the Kansas Forage and Grassland Council and K-State Research and Extension.

• Registration: 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
• Cost: \$40* pre-registration, \$60 at the door

• To Register: Return the attached registration form, call 620-431-1530 (Karen) or kwalters@oznet.ksu.edu by Friday, Jan. 11, 2008.

Keynote Speaker Educational Displays Commercial Exhibitors

Breakout Sessions Include (will have the opportunity to attend three)

- Financial and Transitional Planning
- Hay Hauling and Trucking Regulations • Weed and Brush Control
- Improved Alfalfa Traits • Annual Forages
- Grazing Steers in the Flint Hills
- Using Distillers By-Products on Grass • Marketing Organic Hay
- Forage Trends in Feedlot Rations • Efficiency in Feeding Hay
- Liability in the Hay Business • Using Inoculates and Preservatives

*This year your registration fee will include:

- 1) 2008 membership in the Kansas Forage and Grassland Council
- 2) Conference lunch and breaks
- 3) Conference proceedings
- 4) 2008 KFGC Discount Coupon Book

Keynote Speaker: R. L. Dalrymple, long-time Forage Management Agronomist with the Nobel Foundation, Ardmore, Oklahoma.

R.L. developed Red River and Quick-N-Big crabgrass varieties and he was the principle researcher in developing crabgrass production systems. Now retired, he still produces these varieties in his family seed business that markets into twenty-five states. R.L. will discuss crabgrass as a forage and livestock grazing management tool.

Registration — Please reply no later than January 11, 2008 • Pre-registration \$40.00 — At the door \$60.00
Registration includes proceedings, noon meal, breaks, 2008 KFGC membership and coupon book

Please print: Use additional sheets if necessary.

Name _____	Name _____
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Clip registration form and mail along with your check made payable to KFGC to: Gary Kilgore, 308 West 14th, Chanute, KS 66720 • 620-431-1530 kwalters@oznet.ksu.edu
Please contact us (620-431-1530) at least four days prior to this event if accommodations are needed for persons with disabilities.

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REAL ESTATE AUCTION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24 — 10:00 AM

To be held at the American Legion Club, 506 Washington St. in CONCORDIA, KS.

160 ACRES CLOUD COUNTY CROPLAND

LOCATION OF REAL ESTATE: Four miles North & 1/2 mi. East (on Wagon Road) of Concordia, Ks.:

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The NW 1/4 of 10-5-3 West of the 6th P.M., Cloud County, Ks.:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: A tract of approx. 160 acres, slightly rolling, terraced cropland w/145.85 A. tillable, terraced cropland which is all planted to wheat. There are approx. 9.12 A. waterways & waste.

BASE ACRES: 120.6 A. wheat; 26.5A milo.

2007 FSA PAYMENTS: \$2,330.00

REAL ESTATE TAXES: \$1,223.36;

POSSESSION: On all land planted to wheat (all of cropland) after 2008 wheat harvest on all other land day of auction.

TERMS: 20% of purchase price down on day of auction, balance due in the form of certified funds upon delivery of clear and merchantable title, on or before February 29, 2008. Title insurance will be used and paid 1/2 by sellers and 1/2 by purchaser. Sellers will pay 2007 and all prior years taxes. Purchaser will receive land lords share (40%) of the 2008 & FSA payment and will pay land-lords share of related expenses. (145.9 A. planted to wheat).

NOTE: This is good productive land in a good area, look it over, make your financial arrangements and plan to attend the auction.

All statements made at the auction will take precedence over all advertising material. Larry Lagasse Auction & Real Estate represents the sellers as agents.

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GRASS & GRAIN Our Daily Bread

***** By G&G Area Cooks *****

Mary Hedberg, Clifton, Wins Recipe Contest & Prize From Grass & Grain

Winner Mary Hedberg, Clifton: "A very good friend gave this recipe to me. We had it with our coffee. She has passed away but I remember her always when I eat this cake. My friends at work, my family, neighbors and at gatherings, all say it's special. I agree! For those that have the recipe say they can't make it the way I do. Thanks for letting me share it with you."

HEATH BRICKLE COFFEE CAKE

- 1/4-pound oleo
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 cup buttermilk or sour milk
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup butterbrickle chips
- Topping:**
- 1/2 cup mixture
- 1/2 cup butterbrickle chips
- 1/4 cup pecans, chopped

Blend the flour, butter and the sugars. Take out 1/2 cup of mixture for the topping. To the rest add the buttermilk, soda, egg and vanilla and 1/2 cup butterbrickle chips. Blend well. Pour into a greased and floured 10-by-14-inch pan. For the topping, mix remaining butterbrickle chips with 1/4 cup chopped pecans and the 1/2 cup mixture. Sprinkle over top of the batter. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 30 minutes.

- Zona Homeier, Wilson:
- SWEDISH BLINTZES**
- (2) 1-pound loaves sandwich bread
- (2) 8-ounce packages cream cheese
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 to 2 sticks oleo, melted
- Sugar & cinnamon mixture (1 1/2 cups sugar + 2 tablespoons cinnamon)

Mix 1 cup sugar, cream cheese and egg yolks; set aside. Remove crust from bread. Roll bread with rolling pin and spread with cream cheese mixture. Roll

up like jelly roll. Dip in melted butter then in sugar-cinnamon mixture. Bake on cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Can be frozen before baking and taken out and baked a few at a time.

Sandy Hill, Eskridge: "Cookies with a kick!"

- SPICY CRINKLES**
- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cardamom
- 2 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sugar

- 1/4 cup brown sugar
 - 1/2 cup shortening
 - 1 egg
 - 2 teaspoons rum flavoring
 - 1/2 cup flaked coconut
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine flour, baking soda, cardamom, cinnamon and salt; set aside. Cream sugar, brown sugar, shortening, egg and rum flavoring. Blend flour mixture with creamed mixture. Stir in coconut. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until golden brown. Makes 48.

Another one from Sandy Hill:

- RUM BALLS**
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1/2 cup light rum
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- 2 1/2 cups crushed vanilla wafers
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- Sugar

Combine unsweetened cocoa powder and confectioner's sugar. Combine rum and corn syrup. Add to dry ingredients. Stir in vanilla wafer crumbs and pecans. Roll into 1-inch balls. Roll in sugar to taste. Makes 3 to 4 dozen.

A couple from Mary Rogers, Topeka:

- SESAME PEANUT DIP**
 - 16-ounce container sour cream
 - 1.2-ounce envelope Good Seasons Asian sesame salad dressing & recipe mix
 - 1/2 cup dry roasted unsalted peanuts, chopped
- Mix ingredients until well blended. Use with fresh vegetables.

- MUSHROOM PUFFS**
- 4 ounces cream cheese, cubed

- 4-ounce can mushroom stems & pieces, drained
 - 1 tablespoon chopped onion
 - 1/8 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
 - 1 tube crescent roll dough
- In a food processor combine cream cheese, mushrooms, onion and hot pepper sauce; cover and process until blended. Unroll dough and separate into four rectangles. Press perforations to seal. Spread mushroom mixture over dough. Roll up jelly roll style starting with a long side. Cut each roll into five slices and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes or until puffed and golden brown.

The final two are from Millie Conger, Tecumseh:

- ORANGE SCONES WITH ORANGE BUTTER**
- 2 cups flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1/2 cup chopped mandarin orange segments, drained
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Orange Butter:**
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 tablespoons orange marmalade

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease cookie sheet with shortening. In a bowl mix flour, 3 tablespoons sugar, baking powder and orange peel. With fork or pastry blender, cut in 1/3 cup butter until coarse crumbs. Add orange segments, milk and egg. With fork, stir just until mixture leaves sides of bowl and soft dough forms. Turn dough out onto floured surface. Knead lightly 10 times. On cookie sheet, roll

or pat dough into 6-inch circle. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon sugar. Cut into 8 wedges, separate slightly. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. In a small bowl beat 1/2 cup butter until fluffy; stir in marmalade. Serve with warm scones.

- *****
 - BREAKFAST BAKE**
 - 8 slices bread
 - 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided
 - 4 green onions, chopped, divided
 - 7 slices bacon, cooked, drained & chopped
 - 2 large tomatoes, thinly sliced
 - 6 eggs
 - 3 cups milk
 - 1 tablespoon dijon mustard
 - 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- Arrange half of bread slices on work surface.

Sprinkle with half each of cheese and onions; sprinkle with bacon and top with remaining bread slices. Cut each sandwich in half, crosswise. Arrange sandwich halves, overlapping, alternating with tomato slices in greased 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Beat eggs, milk, mustard and Worcestershire sauce with wire whisk until well blended. Pour over ingredients in baking dish. Cover and refrigerate at least 6 hours or up to 24 hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove cover from baking dish and sprinkle casserole with remaining 3/4 cup cheese and remaining green onions. Bake 50 minutes to 1 hour or until center is set. Remove from oven. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting into pieces to serve.

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New Rules Of Thumb For Flu And Colds

With cold and flu season comes time-honored traditions for relief and prevention. But the fact that those instructions have been around for decades doesn't mean they're effective. Here is some current advice from health experts on your best bets in fighting colds and the flu:

Don't sneeze into your hands. Generations of parents and teachers have told children to cover their mouths and noses when they sneeze or cough. The rule still applies, but now we are being taught to aim into our elbows or sleeves. It's hoped that sneezing into the elbow will prevent the further spread of germs, for children and adults alike.

Keep your hands clean. Keeping your hands clean is crucial to avoid getting sick, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, colds and flu are viral, not bacterial, so antibacterial soap doesn't help fight the illnesses. These soaps can actually be harmful, because environmental bacteria could become resistant. Washing your hands successfully may take longer than you're used to; the CDC recommends rubbing your hands for 20 seconds, about the length of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

One recent study found that American adults, especially men, don't wash their hands enough after using the bathroom. Researchers for the American Society for Microbiology found that one-third of men didn't bother to wash at all after using the bathroom, while 12 percent of women didn't. No access to soap and water? Hand sanitizers also help kill germs. An added bonus: During winter, when you wash your hands frequently, the alcohol gels can be a lot gentler on your hands.

Don't overload on vitamins once you're sick. Scientific research on the effectiveness of herbal remedies and vitamin supplements has drawn conflicting conclusions. The therapeutic value of zinc lozenges has yet to be proven, but zinc nasal gel may have a positive effect. And, after previous studies had concluded that echinacea was not an effective cold remedy, new research has come along to muddy the waters. A study from

the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy found that the herb decreased the odds of developing a cold by 58 percent and reduced the duration by about a day and a half. Nevertheless, once your nose is already stuffed, taking vitamin supplements is probably a waste of money. And if you want to take a supplement to fight colds and flu before they start, don't overdo it. Mega-doses of vitamins really have not been shown to help, and they can be harmful.

Take it easy on the treadmill. Contrary to rumors, you cannot sweat out a cold, experts say. In fact, too much sweating can dehydrate you at a time when you need extra fluids anyway. Still, you don't need to eliminate all physical activity. Pay attention to what your body is telling you. You don't have to stay in bed if you feel up to taking a walk or doing some moderate exercise.

Don't overdo it with cold remedies. Phenylephrine is the ingredient in nasal decongestant, which some people take to clear up a stuffy nose. But the medication won't cut short your

about with a cold or the flu. Taking it orally can cause jitteriness, rapid heartbeat, or sleeplessness. On the other hand, nasal sprays can dry up a runny nose and will probably cause fewer side effects — but don't use them for more than three or four days.

Eat what feels good — hot or cold. Foods' enticing smells make you want to eat them, so it's no wonder you might lose your appetite when you have a cold and your nose is stuffy. The old standby, hot soup, can open up your nasal passages and therefore improve your appetite. But you can eat other things that feel good, too.

Don't smoke. Research shows a higher incidence of flu cases in smokers compared with nonsmokers, and, worse, a higher mortality rate from the flu for smokers than nonsmokers. Smokers are predisposed to upper-respiratory infections. Their nasal passages and upper airways are somewhat inflamed just from the smoke, and smoking can delay healing once you're sick.

Source: CNN online

Enjoy Your Poinsettia All Year

By Heather Duarte

Poinsettias have filled shops and homes around the country for the past month or so. Common for gift-giving and decorating, the colorful bracts (leaves that attract pollinators) are sure to put you in the Christmas spirit. But poinsettias should not be seen as merely a seasonal decoration. With proper care, they can be enjoyed year-round in your home or summer garden.

When your poinsettia is at home, keep it in a location that receives bright, indirect light for at least six hours a day. For proper care, wait for the soil to be dry to the touch between waterings, and resist fertilizing when the plant is blooming. Finally, avoid subjecting your poinsettia to temperature extremes. If you are comfortable, so is your poinsettia. Continue caring for your poinsettia, following these guidelines, until the end of the holiday season.

Like many of us, poinsettias need a rest after the holidays. During the winter, water and fertilize weekly. By March or April, cut the poinsettia back to six or eight inches to stimulate new growth. If you would like to keep your poinsettia in a container, early spring is a great time to repot it.

Good drainage is very important, so keep this in mind when choosing a new container. If you decide to keep the plant indoors, continue to care for the plant based on the above guidelines (You may have to water more than once a week, but continue to wait for the plant to dry out between waterings).

If you would like to plant your poinsettia outside, wait until the danger of frost has passed and night temperatures remain above 50 degrees. Choose a location with lots of indirect sunlight. Remember, as with any plant, it is important to water and fertilize the plant regularly for it to thrive. If you plan on bringing the plant indoors for next year's holidays, it may be easier to keep it in a container instead of putting it in the ground. If you do decide to plant it in the ground, plan on transferring it to a container in September (Poinsettias are sensitive to cold weather, frost, and rain, so outside placement during the winter should be avoided).

Whether your poinsettia is in the garden or in a container, pruning is required to keep it small and full. This can be accomplished through a technique called "pinching." A pinch removes about one inch of new growth from the plant. Pinch your poinsettia twice during the year. The first pinch should occur in early July, the second in mid to late August. Avoid pinching your plant any later than Sept. 1 if you plan on forcing it to bloom for the Christmas season. Bring your

poinsettia indoors after this second pinch.

Bringing your plant into bloom for the Christmas season takes some extra work, but the results can be rewarding.

Poinsettias are short-day plants. This means they require long nights (a set number of hours of complete darkness) to bloom. To bring your poinsettia into bloom, place the plant in total darkness for 12 to 14 hours each night for about 10 weeks. Total darkness is key to your success. To do this, put the plant inside a closet or box. Remember to return your plant to a bright, indirect-sunlight location during the day.

Late September or early October is a good time to initiate this process so your plants will be in bloom for the holiday season. After the 10 weeks have passed, discontinue the night treatments and water regularly. The bracts should change into a colorful display for the holiday season.

Then you can grab a cup of egg nog, sit back, and enjoy the result of all this year's hard work.

Heather Duarte is a horticulturist with Ryan Lawn & Tree. Thanks to Duarte and The Kansas City Gardener for permission to use this article.

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See last week's Grass & Grain for complete listing.

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Feds to mail census forms to America's farmers and ranchers

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The crush of Christmas cards and holiday packages clogging up the mail should be dwindling down this week, just in time for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to send out 2007 census forms to millions of farmers and ranchers across America.

The forms will be mailed Friday and they should hit mailboxes next week.

Federal officials want to check "the heartbeat of agriculture" so it's imperative that farmers and ranchers fill out their forms, said Jim Brueggen, head of the New Mexico field office of the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

"Bottom line is if they want to have a voice in their future, here it is. It is that report," he said. "Complete it, get it in and get your message in there."

The agriculture census is taken every five years, and the data collected

plays a key role in the development of the farm bill and other federal policy. It also can spur changes in the market place and impact the business decisions of farmers and ranchers themselves.

Brueggen has spent many days away from home this fall trying to get the word out about the census to as many New Mexico farmers and ranchers as possible. He spent a couple days this month at a statewide stockmen's convention here, putting on a presentation and handing out pamphlets.

His counterparts in other states have been busy with similar efforts.

The census looks at everything from production numbers for 2007 and the age of a farmer's equipment to whether farmers and ranchers are having to hold down second jobs.

"What is their situation? If they're struggling, what are the issues that need to be addressed,"

said Brueggen, who has worked for the agency for more than three decades and has seen the agriculture industry change over the years.

The USDA says the census is the responsibility of every farmer and rancher, regardless of the size or type of their operation. The agency considers a farm or ranch any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products would normally be produced and sold during the census year.

The last census, in 2002, has been criticized by some for undercounting minorities, including American Indians. Reser-

vations, for example, were historically reported as single entities for agricultural production. As a result, Brueggen said thousands of farms and ranches weren't counted.

He said the agency has been working with tribes to get a more accurate count this time.

Brueggen has visited the Navajo Nation, the country's largest Indian reservation, to promote the census, and workers have been trained to traverse the reservation to help with the count.

He also is working with a Hispanic agriculture organization in southern New Mexico to ensure that

Hispanics take part in the census.

"We are trying to make sure we get everyone included," he said. "And this is an effort all across the United States."

Audie Greycar, a spokesman for the Navajo Nation's Division of Community Development, said the tribe's chapters will help census workers locate the many farmers and ranchers who operate on the sprawling reservation, which spans parts of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah.

Greycar estimated there are tens of thousands of Navajos who grow

crops and raise livestock to some degree.

"That's why they want to do a more detailed count so that really when it comes down to funding agencies at the national level, they'll see that it's not just one giant commodity," Greycar said.

Both he and Brueggen acknowledged that agriculture producers are hesitant about providing information about their operations, especially to the government. But under the law, the information they provide remains confidential and is only used for statistical purposes.

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Beaver microbrewery becomes regional spot for beer connoisseurs

BEAVER (AP) — With just 30 people calling it home, Beaver, isn't on most maps.

It's not even incorporated.

Horses eat hay from a fenced-in area on the town's Main Street, catty-corner from the bank, which closed a few years ago. There used to be a gas station, but it shut down as well.

Yet folks come from across Kansas and out-of-state to the likes of a town that hit its prime decades ago.

They walk into the metal building that sits in the shadow of the grain elevator. They hoist pint-sized glasses of coppery liquid brewed here weekly.

This is Mo's Place Grill and BrewPub, the state's smallest microbrewery.

"We were surprised when we heard they were going to open a brewery here," said Aaron Schreiber, a local rancher who stopped in for a pop on this winter day, noting that most small towns that dot this region can't even keep a restaurant open.

Owners Len and Linda Moeder, however, saw promise in the town that has

been declining steadily for decades.

It didn't matter that most of the state's dozen microbreweries lie east of Interstate 35, in cities such as Wichita and Lawrence.

Or the fact that the business would be 30 miles from population centers like Great Bend and Russell.

They opened Mo's in 1999 and obtained a microbrewery license in 2004. They've been serving hot meals and homemade beer ever since.

"You know the saying, 'if you build it, they will come,'" Len Moeder. "That's what we believe."

Yet Moeder, 61, may seem out of place on the Kansas prairie, despite the fact he grew up in the nearby town of Hoisington.

He moved to California right after high school, wanting to be far from Kansas. He never figured he'd ever be back.

"I thought I'd stay by the ocean," said Moeder, a former plant manager of a company that made everything from peanut butter to mayonnaise.

He received a degree there and had four children. He married Linda in the mid-1990s after hiring her at the plant.

These days, however, the Moeders are far from the beaches of California or the hectic lifestyle. Instead of a 45-minute drive to work on a good day, the couple just walks across the street to the bar and grill, which, by the way, is non-smoking.

"We were tired of working for corporate America and wanted to locate to a smaller community," he said.

But it was Linda Moeder's idea to come to Kansas.

"I said, 'You want to do what?'" Len Moeder said, but added he eventually took to the idea.

They discovered Beaver's bar was for sale, as well as a home.

By 1999, they were serv-

ing food from the red and gold aluminum-sided building with an ice and Coke machine out front and a Coors sign in the window.

However, he had other ambitions besides just being a grill cook.

Moeder always liked the taste of locally brewed beer.

"My wife calls me a beer snob," he said. "When I go to a restaurant and they don't have a microbrew, I'll drink a glass of water."

She gave him a homebrew kit while they were still living in California.

Why not try his concoctions in Beaver?

Brewers have to be residents for four years before they sell their product, Moeder said. By 2004, they had a state license and became a brewpub.

Today residents can try six different handcrafted brews, from Harvest Moon Wheat — a golden wheat beer — to Beaver Creek

Brown, a mildly sweet, brown ale.

His beers are unfiltered for better flavor and low in alcohol — less than 4 percent — so his customers can drink more and not get drunk.

Coors Light remains on tap for now, he said.

"This is Coors Light country," Moeder said. But even that designation is slowly changing.

This year he'll brew 40 barrels of beer — about 10 more barrels than the previous year. The Moeders even bought the closed-down bank to store their kegs.

And folks still come from far and wide to try a sample — the tiny central Kansas town becoming a destination location for pub crawlers.

Russell oil field pumper Dale Keil said he makes a stop whenever he passes through for a frosty mug of Beaver Creek Brown — his favorite.

"I always take some home," he said of refilling his beer growler.

Locals are glad they have a place to frequent, as well, said Mike Dolecheck, an area custom cutter who routinely brings his crews in for meals.

"We're glad this big-city character from California came back to the country," Dolecheck said.

So are the Moeders, who say they can't imagine being anywhere else but Beaver.

"This is a lot of fun," Moeder said. "It really is."

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Frank Lloyd Wright's only farmhouse now an inn

PLATO TOWNSHIP, Ill. (AP) — When Robert B. and Elizabeth Muirhead decided they had outgrown their 100-year-old farmhouse in 1948, they approached the famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright and convinced him to design a new farmhouse in his distinctive "Usonian" style.

More than 50 years later, after the house was almost wrecked by neglect and underwent an expensive two-year restoration, the home is known as the Muirhead Farmhouse Bed and Breakfast.

The current owners are Mike Petersdorf and Sarah Muirhead Petersdorf.

Sarah said her ancestors started farming on this site, just east of where the Cana-

dian National (formerly Illinois Central) track crosses Rohrsen Road, in the 1850s. The original farmhouse was home to several generations of Muirheads. But by the late '40s, Robert and Elizabeth had five children, including Sarah's father, Robert C.

On a lark, they went to an open house at the great architect's Wisconsin studio, Taliesin. When they told the secretary they would like to have Wright design a farmhouse for them, the famous man came out of his office and asked them to send him a letter describing exactly how their family lived and how they would like to use the house. The letter ran on for seven pages.

Perhaps Wright saw the assignment as an intriguing challenge. According to one article in an architectural magazine, the home is believed to be "the only realized Wright design for a working farm."

Before drawing his plans, Wright visited the farm, because his way of doing things centered on making every home feel like a natural part of its environment. "The home is very horizontal because it's part of a prairie," Mike notes. Its many large windows bring the outdoors in, so that sitting in the living room feels almost the same as sitting on the front lawn.

Mike noted the home includes many examples of what Wright called "com-

pression and release." Walking down a hall or entering a bedroom, a visitor feels somewhat claustrophobic because the ceiling is just inches overhead. But inside the room, the ceiling may suddenly be 2 or 3 feet higher, and the wall may be made of glass.

The furniture carries on Wright's external themes of clean lines and natural-colored wood. "Wright complained that too many of his designs had been ruined by the furniture that people brought in, so he started building in the furniture himself," Mike said.

Construction began in 1951 and was largely finished by 1952. In our era when seen-one/seen-'em-all plat houses go for \$300,000,

the Muirheads were able to finish their 3,200-square-foot home for an astonishingly cheap-sounding \$53,000. Mike said it's unclear how much of that went for Wright's design fee, but notes left by Sarah's grandparents imply he charged 9 percent of the construction cost. That would come to less than \$5,000.

Mike and Sarah were living in Minnesota, he working as manager of a humane organization and she as a magazine publisher, when the home called them back to Illinois. Sarah's brother, Charlie Muirhead, had been living there. But in 2001, he died of a heart attack at age 38. In 2003, Mike and Sarah discovered the flat roof leaking, the floors sinking

and the woodwork buckling. "We had no plans to move back, but if we hadn't, the house would not have remained in the family, and that was very important to me," Sarah said. "In fact, if we hadn't started replacing the roof that fall, this house wouldn't exist today."



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Musical Ornament, E-9253 The End is In Sight 1982, E-9258 We Are God's Workmanship 1982, E-9268 Nobody's Perfect 1982, E-9282 3 Pieces Animal On Heart Base w/Sayings 1982, 2 Metal Plates, (Silent Knight & They Follow The Star).

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Ice storm followup needed to retain woodland's value

Mother Nature's December ice storms may actually have helped High Plains timber stands in a way. They gave landowners a big head start on identifying diseased and/or weak trees.

"Even limited amounts of timber stand improvement now will make a big difference in reducing future weather-related damage," said Deborah Goard, watershed forester with the Kansas Forest Service.

Given some forethought, the cleanup also could help the great majority of woodlands start to provide a lot more in terms of wildlife habitat, human recreation and money-making log sales, she said.

Many Plains timber owners' typical approach to timber management is benign neglect.

"Ice storms provide clear proof, however, that leaving forests to make it on their own doesn't guarantee good results," Goard said. "Lack of management at any time is highly likely to support a forest's loss in both tree and land values. Neglect after a damaging storm will just accelerate the process."

Downed limbs aren't necessarily a problem if they're providing wildlife habitat, she said.

"But, what's left of each injured tree will have gaping wounds and tears.

It may have trunk cracks or internal damage," Goard warned. "One way or another, it will be under increased stress.

"Without corrective pruning or removal, that tree will be unusually vulnerable to any other problem—from drought to disease—no matter whether it comes along over the next year or two or three."

Fortunately, one of the best times to start guiding woodlands toward better outcomes is while the trees are dormant. The Kansas Forest Service recommends harvesting and pruning from January on.

Goard has produced a

series of fact sheets about the best management practices for riparian buffers—which include most High Plains woodlands. The fact sheet on timber stand improvement is available at any county or district Kansas State University Research and Extension office or on the Kansas Forest Service Web site at http://www.kansasforests.org/riparian/best_management.shtml.

KFS district and watershed foresters also will help individual landowners in identifying quality trees, selecting trees to remove, learning to prune correctly, and/or outlining a timber improvement plan.

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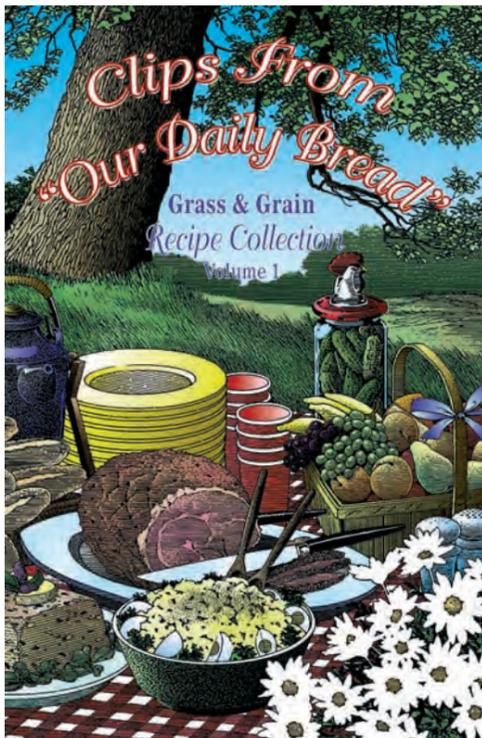


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Hey Neighbor For The Love Of Horses

By Frank J. Buchman

'Well-Rounded' Young Horsewoman Rides And Volunteers To Gain Top 4-H Award

Not only is she an outstanding horsewoman, but equally a generous volunteer for anything involving horses and people.

For her talents and helpfulness, Bracey Fischer of Sharon Springs has been named the Kansas 4-H state award winner in the horse project.

"I love working with horses, and I enjoy helping others with their horses and horse-related activities," emphasized Bracey, 18-year-old daughter of Virgil and Peggy Fischer.

A USD 241 high school graduate this past spring, Bracey attends Sterling College on a volleyball scholar-

ship and is studying business. That hasn't slowed horse involvement for the 11-year Wallace County 4-H member, in the Sunflower Extension District.

"I continue to work with my horses and participated

in the state fair," she noted. "I placed first in showmanship out of 54 entries, which was a highlight of my 4-H experiences."

Involvement with horses started for Bracey when she enrolled in 4-H. "My older brother, Bailey (now 21), was showing horses, and I got my interest from him," she credited. "As I've upgraded my horses and done better, I've become more involved with everything to do with horses."

Her first horse was Buddy, a ranch gelding, but before long the show ring attracted Bracey's attention. "When I was just getting used to my horse called Rockabee, he was stricken by West Nile virus and

died," she reflected. "Our horses had been vaccinated for the disease, but it still killed mine."

That experience put Bracey to work finding out about the ailment. "I wanted others to be aware of West Nile, so I organized a clinic and a veterinarian presented information," she related. "I assisted him and also gave a radio program about vaccinations."

A Paint Horse named Rockin' On Air and called Rocky was acquired by Bracey. "He had a successful halter record but little experience in performance," she remembered. "After many hours of practicing, we are working well together. It takes lots of

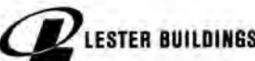
hard work."

Credit was given to her parents for their assistance. "Dad and Mom are really a big asset," Bracey applauded. "Dad is just a natural with horses and helps me with my riding, and Mom is on the ground getting everything ready."

Virgil Fischer is an industrial arts teacher, and Peggy is a professional photographer. They have a cow-calf operation. "I grew up on horses but did not show," Peggy revealed. "Virgil only used horses as a youth to work cattle, yet he has been observant of others' showing horses and has a knack with them. He does show some."

Show experience for Bracey includes both 4-H

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At the Northwest Kansas District 4-H Horse Show, Bracey Fischer of Sharon Springs rode her Paint Horse gelding to qualify for the Kansas State Fair in western horsemanship competition. Fischer is the Kansas 4-H state award winner in the horse project.

events and registered Paint Horse competitions in Kansas and Colorado. She exhibited under 17 judges in 2006 with a most enviable record.

"I show Rocky in halter and showmanship as well as western pleasure and horsemanship classes," Bracey explained. "English classes are really exciting for me too. They have been beneficial to my western riding."

She was champion in English pleasure at the state fair two years ago. Bracey rides her brother's speed-event horse, Dollar, when working for all-around titles and has collected many awards.

In her down time at shows, Bracey assists with show coordination. "I helped set up the trail course at the state fair last year," she recalled.

Her talents have made Bracey in demand to help others. "I serve as assistant county 4-H horse leader and specifically work with showmanship and trail at practices," she described. "I also give some individual lessons."

Horse show apparel that

Bracey has outgrown was given to a younger 4-H horse owner. "She was glad to have the clothing and could wear them," Bracey confirmed.

At shows, Bracey assists her fellow exhibitors in learning and executing patterns. She indicated, "I have given horse showmanship demonstrations to fair round robin competitors and provided my horse for them to use."

Verification of her congeniality with horse owners, Bracey served on the grievance committee for the northeast district 4-H horse show. "I felt privileged to do that and was ready to help settle any disputes," she commented.

Having participated in horse judging contests over a wide area, Bracey has also coordinated judging competitions. "I had an open judging contest for youth and adults at the county horse show, instructed participants about judging and helped with tabulation," she said.

Bracey has taken her horses to youth day camps. "I let them ride Rocky, and they really enjoy that," she

shared. "I also took my horses to the rest home for residents to see and pet. That brightened their day and brought back fond memories for some."

During the holidays, Bracey made horse photograph door hangers, cards and decorations for rest home and Senior Living Center residents. Bracey's photography talents follow that of her Mom, and her horse photos have won several titles.

So popular are Bracey's works that several have been sold as money-making projects. "The Kansas Paint Horse Association used one of my photographs on the cover of their directory, and it was auctioned off to fund youth activities of the American Paint Horse Association," Bracey confirmed.

Horse photo greeting cards were also mailed to

military personnel. "One soldier wrote to me that she had grown up with horses," Bracey informed. "The photos made her miss it, and she put the cards up in her room."

Educational trips have been made by Bracey to further her knowledge. "I visited several horse operations when I went to California and stopped to see the Budweiser Clydesdales," she reminisced. "My brother, Bailey, works for a cutting horse trainer in Texas, and I got to spend time there learning that business."

Presenting horse talks in competition and for public meetings, Bracey stated, "At school, I discussed horses during National 4-H Week. I also made horse posters and displayed them at the bank and the fair."

Continued on page 12

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For the Love of Horses . . .

Continued from page 11

Although there are two other siblings, brother Blake, 20, and sister Brecken, 25, Bracey and Bailey were the only ones interested in horses. "They kept us busy going to horse activities, but we enjoyed it," Peggy admitted.

A leader in her 4-H club and horse groups, Bracey is uncertain the direction of her future. "With a degree in business, there are many ways I can go," she analyzed. "I think I'll be able to say I am a well-rounded, knowledgeable adult because of being actively involved in 4-H and with horses during my youth."

Women's ag conference scheduled for Feb. 8-9 in Hutchinson

Women who have married into farm or ranch life, inherited farm land or chosen agribusiness as a career are encouraged to attend "Celebrating Ag Women," Feb. 8-9 at the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center in Hutchinson.

The women's conference provides educational opportunities in an environment that fosters understanding of agribusiness and an opportunity to meet others who are facing similar challenges, said Kristy Archuleta, conference coordinator, with Kansas State Univer-

sity Research and Extension.

Keynote speakers will address family farm management and transitions; pride in agriculture as a vocation and career, and stress management. Twenty concurrent sessions will include topics such as planning and managing a family business meeting; evaluating insurance needs, and choosing foods that con-

tribute to health and an active lifestyle. A resource fair also is scheduled.

Early-bird registration for the two-day conference is \$75 and due by Feb 1; registration after Feb. 1 is \$90.

A one-day registration is \$50. More information, including information on a limited number of scholarships, is available at www.womenmanagingthe-

farm.info and by calling 1-800-FARM-KSU or 1-866-327-6578.

A limited number of rooms are available at the conference rate (\$71). For reservations, call the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center, 1400 North Lorraine St., Hutchinson, Kan. at 1-800-669-9311 or 620-669-9311.

Support for the conference comes from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture Risk and Management Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program and state and local agencies and businesses.

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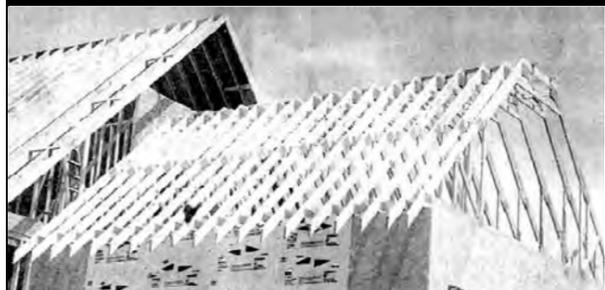
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TRACT #2: E/2 of 14-13-2E, lying South of railroad right-of-way, 157 approximate cropland acres (all in spring ground). Predominately Sutphen Class III and Detroit Class I soils. 2007 taxes were \$1,096.73 based on 158.98 taxable acres.

TRACT #3: N/2 NE/4 of 18-13-3, less road right-of-way and railroad right-of-way, 73.26 cropland acres (all in spring ground). Predominately Detroit and Muir Class I soils. No irrigation water rights sell with Tract #3. 2007 taxes were \$774.84 based on 72.0 taxable acres.

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Argentine farmers give up beef business, turn to increasingly more lucrative grains, soybeans

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentines are passionate about their beef — from cattle grazed on the sprawling pampas grasslands, it's a national staple, delivered inexpensively and received with religious fervor at Sunday barbecues nationwide.

But while Argentines are some of the world's top meat-eaters, consuming nearly 154 pounds per capita each year, soaring grain prices and export caps are driving many cattle ranchers to sell their herds and farm more lucrative crops instead. Ranchers have switched from grazing to grain on about 7.4 million acres since 2005 — a 10 percent decline in ranchland, said Pablo Adreani, an economic analyst with AgriPAC Consultores, an agricultural consultancy in Buenos Aires.

Export caps imposed by former President Nestor Kirchner as an anti-inflation measure, have flooded the local market with meat, keeping beef prices low while soybean, corn and wheat prices soar.

The trend has driven Argentina, the world's biggest beef exporter until the 1950s, to fourth in U.S. Department of Agriculture rankings, behind Brazil, Australia and India, and the USDA predicts Argentina will fall to fifth place be-

hind Canada in the coming year.

Nowhere is the trend clearer than on the open plains of Argentina's pampas, a vast grassland where thousands of "gauchos" herded cattle like in the old Wild West. The romantic vision of ranch life remains important in Argentine culture, but the economic equations involved have changed profoundly in recent years; boosted by U.S. ethanol production and a global interest in biofuels, prices for soy, wheat, and corn have soared to record highs.

Some agricultural analysts say Argentine soybean farming is now three times more profitable than cattle ranching. Others say reliable figures on this are lacking. Nonetheless, the trend against ranching is powerful, said commodities expert Ricardo Baccarin.

"The business of soybean farming is brilliant in Argentine today," Baccarin, chief analyst at the grain brokerage Paniagricola S.A., told The Associated Press.

Half of all cultivated farmland in Argentina is dedicated to soybeans today — an explosion aided by the fact that soybeans need just eight months to reach harvest, far less than the 2-3 years needed to raise a beef herd, he said.

Soybeans also require less fertilizer — a major expense — than corn or wheat, and almost 90 percent of soybeans are exported for high prices thanks to a solid futures market and constant international demand, he said.

"Nobody who is farming soybeans is complaining," Baccarin added, noting that corn, wheat and beef are all

far more intensely regulated because they are consumed in Argentina and inflation-fighting is a top concern.

The trend pains Alfredo Guillermo Silveira, who has ranches for 22 years on a large spread where the owners finally sold their 1,000 head of cattle and planted soybeans and sorghum. As an employee, Silveira feels lost.

"It's not like it was, waking up early, caring for the animals," he reminisced. "There are practically no cows left" in his farm state Entre Rios, he added — "It's all soy."

The switch to mechanized grain farming has brought unemployment, even as land prices have nearly doubled since 2002 because of soaring demand for farmland, said Marcelo Fielder, head of economic

policy for Sociedad Rural, the country's main agricultural lobby.

Taming inflation was Kirchner's goal when he banned most beef exports last year. This year, shipments abroad were capped at 480,000 metric tons, down from nearly 700,000 tons in 2005.

Kirchner's wife, the newly elected President Cristina Fernandez, has promised to maintain a high export tax that makes out-bound beef too costly for many foreign buyers. So ranchers must keep selling 80 percent of their meat to swamped local markets where profits as well as prices are low.

The government's meas-

ures cost Argentine ranchers \$1 billion in 2006, Adreani said.

"If the government would allow a free, unrestricted market, Argentina could be the second largest world exporter of beef," Adreani said. Instead, it is now the fourth, behind Brazil, Australia and India.

Argentina's remaining ranchers are particularly frustrated to be missing out on rising global beef prices driven by the same swelling cost of grains that cattle are increasingly fed. At his white-tiled slaughterhouse at the Yaguane meat processing plant, quality control supervisor Carlos Alberto Kuida blames the government.

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Horsin' Around

By Don Coldsmith



Species Overpopulation?

We're a quarter of the way through January already, which seems impossible. It was only the other day that we were preparing for the Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year's series of holidays, wasn't it? But time flies, whether we like it or not.

A frequent topic in the news during the autumn and part of the winter, has been that of "global warming." This phenomenon has been blamed for everything that's wrong with the world, from headaches to hangnails, and the follies of the human race.

Nobody has mentioned, to any real extent, that the human race has doubled in number in only the last few decades. Could it be that we're worrying about the wrong problem? Not the misuse of our resources, but overpopulation of planet Earth.

Any species, especially mammals, have a tendency if undisturbed, to increase until the population becomes a destructive factor. I did quite a bit of research on this subject a few decades ago when I was working in the sci-

ences, rather than creative writing.

I ran across a very lengthy study involving overpopulation among mammals. A major experiment in one of the research facilities had been successfully completed. After the results were in, a large quantity of laboratory rodent food, and fifty or more "lab rats," the traditional white rats used to test the safety of new medicines, etc., were left over.

It had been decided to continue to feed these rats rather than destroy them.

Mostly, out of curiosity, apparently. What happens, when a mammalian species runs out of not food, but space? They didn't know what to expect, but there were certainly some surprises.

As space became more scarce, they began to fight over it, of course. But they also began to kill the younger generation. Mostly offspring of others, but as time went on, there were more and more instances of quarrels leading to deaths, cannibalism, and other strange, destructive behavior. Not really recognizable as a need for space, but a result of such a need.

I don't know how that all concluded, but it's worrisome to compare the directions that it was taking

with what's happening worldwide right now. We do have some areas where the human population is starving, but more, I believe, with food in plenty, but wasteful use of it. Not much effort to share the excess with the starving, I'm afraid.

Historically, several times through the ages, as population became too dense, there have been catastrophic events. Sometimes war, famine, disease ... leprosy, smallpox....

Archaeologists find evidence of highly developed civilizations on nearly every continent, and the runs of their skills in the sciences, architecture, agriculture, astronomy, medicine, yes, even flight.

What happened to these advanced cultures?

It's quite possible that enough humans developed resistance to specific diseases such as leprosy to cause the survivors to almost overlook leprosy as a major threat. The disease may have left alive only those who were born with this resistance. These produced the next generation, who carried problems of their own, of course.

The humans, like any other mammals, change with the survival of the fittest, and the whole human race changes a little bit with each generation. Hopefully, to the better. Probably that's still anybody's guess. But, Mother Nature is a strict teacher.

See you down the road.

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2-Day Public Auction

The following described property will be offered for sale at public auction at the Community Building in Leonardville, Kansas

Saturday, January 12, 11 a.m.
Wood Working Tools: turning lathe; radial saw; sander; jig saw; **Vehicles - Mowers:** 1978 Dodge Ram; Murray riding mower. **Misc. Items: Collector Items:** School Bell; milk cans; cast iron kettle; stone jar; trunks; scoop endgate; implement seats; license plates; other small items to numerous too mention.

Saturday, January 19, 11 a.m.
Misc. Items: Collector Items: Tools: Furniture: Miter saw; table saw; drill press; barb wire; steel posts; air compressor; misc. items

Terms: Cash Not responsible for accidents or theft

Art and Lillie Condray, 785-485-2591

Auctioneer Marvin L. Heck, Washington
Clerk: Heck's Auction Service

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Show Price \$349.99

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Auction Sales Scheduled

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

- January 12 — Farm machinery & misc. SW of Morganville for Fred & Mayalwilda Griffiths. Auctioneers: Kretz & Hauserman Auction Service.
- January 12 — Bus & vehicle auction at Lawrence for Lawrence Bus Co., Inc. Auctioneers: Kull Auctions & Real Estate.
- January 12 — General household & furniture at Clay Center for E.C. Finger Estate. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service LLC.
- January 12 — Real Estate at Westmoreland for Potawatowmie Co. Auctioneers: Cline Realty & Auction.
- January 12 — Woodworking tools, vehicles, mowers, collector items & misc. at Leonardville for Art & Lillie Condray. Auctioneers: Marvin L. Heck Auctions.
- January 12 — Guns, ammo, collectible knives & toys, hunting items, belt buckles, camping & fishing items, motorcycle items at Portis for Stan & Deanna Roach. Auctioneers: Wolters Auctions.
- January 12 — Furniture & appliances, Precious Moments, collectibles, tools & misc. at Junction City for Bessie McMahon Estate & others. Auctioneers: Brown Auctions & Real Estate.
- January 13 — Furniture, appliances, household, china, crystal, sterling & glassware, gold, designer jewelry, furs, clothes & accessories at Lawrence for Carol J. Smith Estate. Auctioneers D&L Auctions.
- January 17 — Tractors, combine, trucks, pickups, trailers, farm equipment, livestock equipment, other farm items at Dighton for Eugene & Ila Boone. Auctioneers: Russell Berning Auctions.
- January 17 — Tractors, combines, harvest equip., farm machinery, trucks, trailers & skidsteer loader at Milton for Fred Holder Estate. Auctioneers: Stock Auctions.
- January 18 — Farmland at Green for the Donald Osbourn Estate. Auctioneers: Raymond Bott Realty & Auction.
- January 18 — Tractors, combine, harvest equip., farm machinery, trucks & misc. at Belle Plaine for Harlan & Emma Walton. Auctioneers: Stock Auction.
- January 19 — Misc. items, collector items, tools & furniture at Leonardville for Art & Lillie Condray. Auctioneers: Marvin L. Heck Auctions.
- January 19 — Antiques, household & misc. at Cuba for Cuba Masonic Lodge. Auctioneers: Novak Brothers & Gieber.
- January 19 — Vehicle, trailer, 4 wheeler, lawn mower, tractor & machinery, livestock equip. & hay at Penalosa for Mr. & Mrs. Richard Gilchrist. Auctioneers: Giefer Auctions.
- January 19 & 20 — 2 day, antiques & collectibles at Clay Center for E.C. Finger Estate. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service LLC.
- January 22 — Real Estate at Clay Center for Alwin Trumpp Estate. Auctioneers: Kretz & Hauserman Auctions.
- January 23 — Shawnee Co. Farmland at Silver Lake for I&C Investments LLC. Auctioneers: Vern Gannon Auctions & Real Estate.
- January 24 — Real Estate at Concordia for Georgia Trost Trust. Auctioneers: Larry Lagasse Auction & Real Estate.
- January 25 — Farmland at Washington for the Evelyn Pfeiffer Estate. Auctioneers: Raymond Bott Realty & Auction.
- January 25 — Farmland at Washington for Orville Loges. Auctioneers: Raymond Bott Realty & Auction.
- January 26 — Rescheduled appreciation sale of miscellaneous & guns at Herington. Auctioneers: Bob's Auction Service.
- January 26 — Residential real estate at Wakefield for Raymond Johnson

- Trust. Auctioneers: Clay County Real Estate, Greg Kretz & Gail Hauserman, salesmen & auctioneers.
- February 2 — Household & antiques at Clay Center for area consignors. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service LLC.
- February 2 — Annual consignment at Axtell for Axtell Knights of Columbus.
- February 7 — Flint Hills Ranch at El Dorado. Auctioneers: Sundgren Auction & Realty.
- February 9 — Black Hereford Sale at Leavenworth for J&N Ranch.
- February 16 — Spring machinery auction at Clay Center. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service, LLC.
- February 16 — Farm equipment at Vermillion for John Bramhall. Auctioneers: Joe Horigan Auctions.
- February 21 — Real estate at Courtland for Ray Nelson family. Auctioneers: Larry Lagasse Auction & Real Estate.
- February 23 — Farm equipment S. of Waterville for Gene & Sandy Harding. Auctioneers: Raymond Bott, Lee Holtmeier & Luke Bott.
- February 25 — 52nd anniversary sale at Allen for Vohs Angus Farms.
- February 25 — Farm sale N. of Courtland for Dan & Shirley Sandell. Auctioneers: Larry Lagasse Auction & Real Estate.
- February 26 — The Brand That Works Production Sale at Manhattan for Mill Creek Ranch.
- March 1 — 30th Gelbvieh Balancer & Red Angus bull sale at Pomona for Judd Ranch. Managed by

- Cattlemen's Connection, Roger Gatz, Hiawatha.
- March 8 — 22nd Annual Concordia, Kansas Optimist Club consignment at Concordia. Auctioneers: Kenneth Johnson & Ronnie Lagasse.
- March 8 — Consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.
- March 22 — Farm machinery & miscellaneous SW of Clay Center for Labe Bertrand. Auctioneers: Kretz & Hauserman.
- March 29 — Farm equipment & complete dispersal S. of Clay Center for Walter & Evelyn Mugler. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service.
- March 29 — Mature cow dispersal & 42nd annual bull sale at Greeley for H&M Angus Farms.
- April 5 — Spring machinery auction at Clay Center. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service, LLC.
- May 26 — 15th annual Memorial Day consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.
- August 2 — Consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.
- September 1 — 13th annual Labor Day consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.
- September 6 — Fall machinery auction at Clay Center. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service, LLC.
- November 1 — Consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.
- November 15 — Late fall machinery auction at Clay Center. Auctioneers: Mugler Auction Service, LLC.
- January 1, 2009 — 24th annual New Year's Day consignment auction at Lyndon. Auctioneers: Harley Gerdes Auctions.

'Cover Your Acres' conference to include array of ag topics

Farmers and ranchers interested in the latest technology, methods and conservation practices to improve crop production on the High Plains can learn about those topics and more at the 2008 "Cover Your Acres Winter Conference" Jan. 22-23 in Oberlin.

The conference, which will begin with registration from 7:45-8:15 a.m., will be held at the Gateway Civic Center. It is sponsored by Kansas State University and the Northwest Kansas Crop Residue Alliance.

University and industry speakers will give presentations on an array of topics over the two-day conference including: New Corn Seed Traits for No-Till; Improving Your Success in No-Till; N Recommendations for Wheat; Outlook for Sorghum, Bioenergy, Food & Export; Grain Marketing & Revenue Protection; No-till Wheat 101; P Placement and Rate in No-till and Strip-Till; Benefits of Chloride on wheat and row crops; and What Precision Ag Can do For You.

Other sessions will include: Improving Your Success in No-till; Managing pH in No-till; Comparing Corn and Grain Sorghum Performance; The State of Fertilizer in 2008; Spray Application Technology; Soil Quality Change in No-till; Plant Stand Management; Cellulosic Ethanol; Avoiding Strip-till Mistakes; Improving Capture and Use of Water; Water Rights and Depleting Water; Spray Application Technology; and others.

Many of the sessions will run concurrently and will be repeated, so participants can attend as many sessions as possible, said Brian Olson, conference coordinator and northwest area agronomist with K-State Research and Extension.

A panel of farmers discussing the ins and outs of crop rotations is one of several highlights of the conference, Olson said.

Continuing education credits for certified crop consultants will be applied for for all of the university-based sessions except the farmer panels.

Early registration to attend one day is \$20 and for both days, \$38 to be paid by Jan. 16. After that date and at the door the registration fee to attend is \$40 for one day and \$80 for both days. For more information including registration, contact the Northwest Research and Extension Center at (785) 462-6281.



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coffee pots and 4 pans; 6 smoke stands; misc. pictures and frames; 10 gal. crock; 8 large milk glass globes; 7 large milk glass acorn lights; 3 copper boilers; suitcase; wood case of Oneida Community flatware; 3 washtubs; 2 wooden bu. baskets; 20 sets aluminum S and P; and other.

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Shaw Walker 3x2 ft. safe; metal storage cabinet; 4 drawer legal file cabinet; 75 metal folding chairs; 3 - 8 ft. folding tables; 7 - 12 ft. wood banquet tables; office desk; 2 - 50 BTU stoves NG; assort. dishes, cups, glasses, silverware; 30 cup and other coffee makers and others.

TERMS: Cash. Nothing removed until settled for. Not responsible for accidents. Lunch on grounds.

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REAL ESTATE AUCTION

**80 ACRES CLAY COUNTY
CROPLAND, HABITAT
TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008 — 10:00 AM**

Auction to be held at Clay County Courthouse in downtown CLAY CENTER, KANSAS

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: From Wakefield, Kansas, 1 mile West on Highway 82 to Sunflower Road then 2 miles South to 5th Road then 2 1/4 miles West to Northeast corner of tract or from the 15-24 intersection in Clay Center, Kansas, 13 miles South on Highway 24 to 5th Road then 2 1/2 miles East to Northwest corner of the tract.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The W1/2 of the NE1/4 of Section 15-10-3 in Gill Township, Clay County, Kansas, consisting of 80 acres more or less. There are 68.25 acres of terraced cropland and 9.97 acres of waterways with some trees and habitat to the south. Balance is road right-of-way. The soil types are all gently and moderately sloping Crete soils, which are good upland soils for this area. This farm lays good and is in a friendly and prosperous farming community. It is only 15 miles from the county seat of Clay Center, 5 miles from the lakeside community of Wakefield and approximately 25 miles from the area employment center of Junction City/Ft. Riley. Your inspection invited prior to sale.

Terms: 20% down day of sale. Balance due in 30 days or upon delivery of a merchantable title. Title insurance and escrow fees to be paid 1/2 each by seller and buyer. Seller to pay 2007 and all prior years property taxes. 2008 property taxes to be prorated to date of settlement. 2007 taxes are \$476.54. There are currently 23.4 acres of growing wheat. Chris Visser is the current tenant and the farm is sold with his rights to harvest and keep the 2008 wheat crop and all associated farm program payments. Sellers to retain the cash rent on the wheat ground. Balance of cropland is open for spring crops. New buyer to receive possession of wheat ground after harvest and balance of the farm at time of final closing. New buyer shall receive all mineral rights. Contract, deed and down payment to be escrowed at Clay County Abstract and Title Company, 509 Court St., Clay Center, KS 67432. Announcements made sale day to take precedence over printed matter. This farm will sell to the highest bidder sale day. **The auction firm is working for the seller. Not responsible for accidents.**

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Forage conference to pinpoint ways to save energy, increase profits

"Managing Forages to Increase Profits" is the theme for the 2008 Winter Grazing Conference Jan. 19 in Assaria. The topic will include ways to increase farm profitability by conserving fuel and reducing fertilizer costs during times of rising energy prices.

Gary Kilgore, emeritus agronomist with Kansas State University Research and Extension, will begin the day, discussing and answering questions about how to select the right mix of forages and manage those forages to maximize returns. He'll cover annual and perennial forages, as well as blends and crop residues. Kilgore's information will range from brush control and interseeding techniques to any other forage concern participants want him to address.

In addition, Brad Windholz will describe stockpiling forages for winter grazing on his farm near Marquette. Last win-

ter, Wincholz's animals were able to thrive without being fed hay.

The conference will be the third Saturday in January from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Assaria Lutheran Church at 124 W. 1st St. Registration to cover the conference materials and lunch is \$25 per person, due by Jan. 12th.

The conference schedule and registration information are available from Mary Howell at (785) 363-7377 (marshallcofair@networksplus.net). They're also linked to the calendar maintained by KCSAAC — the KSU-based Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops — on the Web at <http://www.kansas-sustainableag.org/calendar.htm>.

KCSAAC and the Kansas Rural Center both provide support for the winter grazing conference, which is organized each year by the Kansas Graziers Association.

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