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Bald Eagle Barn Wood preserving the past, reclaiming for the future

By Donna Sullivan, Editor

Tiny slivers of aged paint, clinging tenaciously to faded, weathered wood... boards losing a decades-long battle with gravity; once a centerpiece of all the activities of the farm, now hanging on for dear life, an eyesore or maybe even a danger. While many may be destined for destruction by heavy equipment or fire, others find new life as their wood is salvaged and their stories preserved when repurposed in other projects. Old barns – with all their character and history – are the foundation of Bald Eagle Barn Wood in Lecompton.

Starting a business was not necessarily what Darin Christman had in mind. In 2011 a cancer diagnosis led him to quit his job while undergoing treatment. That winter he decided to build a man cave in his garage, using wood from a small barn he'd found on the edge of Perry Lake. When it became known that he'd taken down a barn, someone else contacted him about one they wanted torn down. He and his crew have been tearing down old barns and farmhouses and reclaiming the wood ever since.

Darin's son Tyler joined the business after graduating from Washburn University in 2015, taking on the responsibility of marketing and social media. He also helps with organizing the lumber, nail pulling and clean-up of the wood.

"We do everything by hand," Tyler said, describing the process. "The first thing we're going to do is go in with a Sawzall and strip all the wood we can. When it gets unstable, we pull it over. It falls in on itself so you don't lose a lot of wood. If you have a ten-foot board, it might become two five-foot boards."

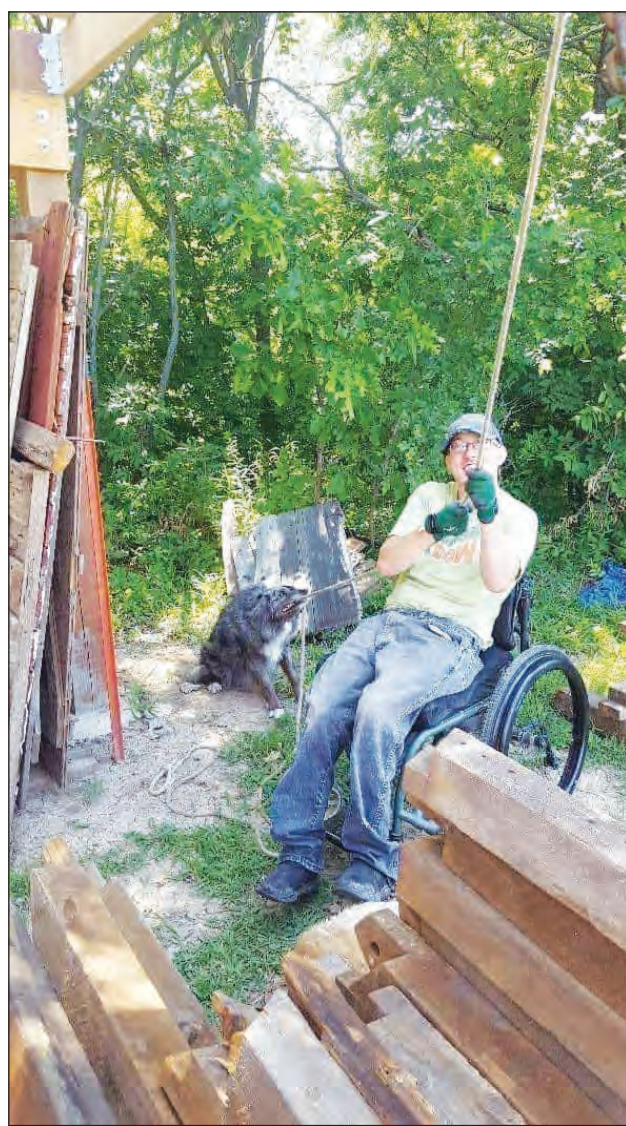
Tyler relates that a full-sized barn, if they worked on it every day straight through, would take about two weeks to bring down, including cleaning up the site with their skid loader, burning whatever they can't use and putting what's left in a dumpster to haul off. "We've gotten pretty good at it over the years," he continued. "Definitely gotten a lot faster and learned a lot of tricks. Being able to get it down while saving the lumber takes a little bit of knowledge and finesse."

"They all come down a little different and don't always go as planned," said Tyler. "You get into the occasional hornet's nest, and you definitely have to have your tetanus shot. Stepping on a nail is kind of a rite of passage – that's kind of a joke at Bald Eagle Barn Wood."

The business is run from the Christman home. They started with just a garage for storing the wood, then added a lean-to off the garage to house more lumber. Now they have another big shop building with a lean-to and also stack wood outside. "We have thousands and thousands of square feet of lumber," Tyler said. Their typical customer is a DIYer working on a project, but they also have peo-



Darin Christman didn't set out to start a business, but after tearing down a barn to build a man cave in his garage, he discovered there is a demand for both the tearing down of old barns, and the wood it generates.



In a wheelchair all his life due to cerebral palsy, Tyler Christman knows that he will have to find an alternative way of doing things, but he doesn't let that stop him as he pulls nails, cleans up and organizes the wood from the structures Bald Eagle Barn Wood brings down.

ple building new homes or restoring old barns and contractors that come to them for lumber.

Bald Eagle Barn Wood is a family operation, with Tyler's uncle Todd and cousin Cameron Christman rounding out the crew, along with other part-time help at times.

Tyler said one of their most challenging projects has been a barn they took down recently in Wells-ville. "It was a big old hay barn, built in I believe 1903," he related. "There was so much lumber in that thing that it was a little overwhelming." But it wasn't the sheer volume of lumber that posed the challenge. It had tongue-in-groove siding, so the

nails had to be cut off to keep from destroying it. The history of the farm indicated there had been a blacksmith shop on site and they had forged all their own nails for the barn. "Those nails were so strong," Tyler described. "I don't know what kind of metal they used, but they kept burning up our Sawzalls. The blades wouldn't go through and we burned up the motors on five of them. They were Milwaukee saws, a good tool. We've never had anything like that happen."

With a job so manual in nature, people might be surprised to hear of the challenges Tyler has overcome to be a part of the Bald Eagle Barn Wood team. He was born with cerebral palsy and does all of his work from a wheelchair. He admits there were struggles and he had to figure out how to do everyday activities differently. "I also had to realize that even though I may do things differently, there isn't anything I can't do if I have the right mind-



The Bald Eagle Barn Wood crew is made up of, from left: Isaac Christman, Todd Christman, Tyler Christman, Cameron Christman and Darin Christman.

Courtesy photos



Cam and Todd Christman remove the boards from a structure.

set and the willingness to work hard. I learned early on in life that there will be things out of my control, but two things I can control are my attitude and my effort. If you have a good attitude and give it your all, those two things can take you a long way in life."

Whenever he gets the opportunity, Tyler is happy to share his positive outlook and story of overcoming adversity with others. He posts positive comments and stories on his Facebook page, and is open about what it's like to live with a disability. "I have created a cool community on Facebook," he said. "People tell me they feel like they know me." Recently he was invited to a middle school and high school summer reading program to share what it's like to have cerebral palsy. "They had read a book about a girl with cerebral palsy, and the teacher wanted someone to talk to them about what it was like," Tyler said. "I was able to answer any questions they had."

Why Bald Eagle?

It would be natural to assume the name Bald

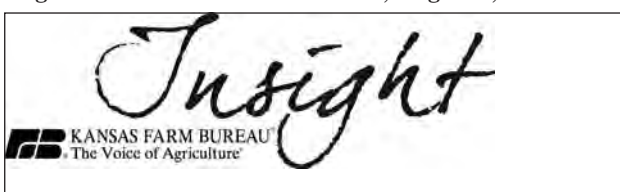
Eagle Barn Wood is a nod to our national symbol of freedom, but that's not the whole story. Lecompton was originally established as Bald Eagle, but was renamed to honor the Chief Justice of the territorial supreme court, Samuel D. Lecompte from Maryland. So, the business name is a

tribute to the town's history, just as the reclamation and repurposing of the wood helps to preserve the history witnessed by the old barns and structures.

"We see the whole process, then get to see what's done with the wood afterward. That's really cool to me," Tyler reflected.



Darin, Cameron and Isaac Christman secure a load of barn wood for transport.



Kids In the Country

By Greg Doering,
Kansas Farm Bureau

Tent camping in July in Kansas usually isn't on my list of ways to spend a weekend. Yet I recently found myself slowly sinking into an air mattress with a clear view of the stars through a thin mesh canopy, which served as my only protection from the elements. Somehow this ill-advised excursion actually worked out with an overnight low in the mid-60s.

Officially the event was a family reunion of sorts with a couple of cousins and a brother at the family ranch. Kids ranging from high school to elementary school were included, of course. Camping simply offered proximity but the real reason we gathered at the ranch was for the amenities like fishing, four-wheeling, swimming, splashing through creeks, catching crawdads and plinking targets.

If you're seeing a bunch of middle-aged men attempting to relive their childhoods while introducing their city-slicker kids to a distorted view

of what country living is like, you've pretty much got the picture. Everyone ended with the same number of fingers and toes they started with. The kids had a fantastic time, as did the old folks who always seemed a step or two behind for some reason.

Outside of sleeping in a tent, we weren't exactly roughing it. My brother obtained a large, enclosed trailer to make transporting all the four-wheelers, kayaks and other fun things easier. It also meant we had plenty of room for provisions, no matter how practical they were.

Our campsite was on a small patch of lawn, and we arranged our tents in an arc around a small circle of rocks that marked the makeshift cook station and firepit. About 20 yards away was a large barn with electricity and a refrigerator. We still spent a small fortune on ice, which we lugged around in an assortment of coolers.

Amongst all the activity there was a noticeable absence of cell phones among both parents and kids. Other than grabbing

the occasional picture or checking the time, everyone found plenty of other distractions to hold their attention.

When the sun went down, everyone pulled their chairs closer to the fire and the focus of conversation ranged from the old folks rehashing the past to the kids wanting to know more about their grandparents, great-grandparents and the ranch in general as coyotes howled in the distance. Everyone stayed up just late enough for the moon to set and clouds to break so we could see a star-filled sky with traces of the Milky Way visible in the background.

For a little over 24 hours nothing existed outside of our little group. There were no important calls or emails to respond to. No ball games to attend or other responsibilities to worry about. All of us were, briefly, just kids in the country, until we had to load the trailer and head back to reality. But that has its advantages as well. Like a regular mattress, air conditioning and indoor plumbing.

"Insight" is a weekly column published by Kansas Farm Bureau, the state's largest farm organization whose mission is to strengthen agriculture and the lives of Kansans through advocacy, education and service.

Cost-share program available for conservation practices

Producers and landowners who install enduring conservation practices may qualify to receive financial assistance for these projects through a voluntary cost-share program. The FY 2024 state cost share program for conservation practices is under way to encourage projects that improve water quality and quan-

ty. Funding is provided by the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation (KDA-DOC) through appropriation from the State Water Plan Fund and the program is administered by Conservation Districts across the state.

Landowners and producers with natural resource concerns on their

property are encouraged to visit their local Conservation District office to discuss the possibility of receiving state financial assistance. Along with the annual funding, additional funding is available this year to landowners and producers interested in eligible water resources practices such as irrigation water management,

nutrient management, planting cover crops, livestock water supplies, cross fencing, and abandoned well plugging.

Landowners and producers who are approved for the program will be notified of the practice(s) approval and the estimated amount of cost-share that will be provided. Projects started or completed prior to being approved for funding by individual districts and KDA-DOC are not eligible for these funds.

Applications for cost share funds must be made through local Conservation Districts; please contact your district office for details about funding eligibility. For application assistance along with more information concerning state cost share programs and other available services, please contact your local conservation district office; a directory of Conservation Districts can be found at agriculture.ks.gov/ConservationDistricts.

production and animal agriculture. Her father is a very dedicated carnivore and if her mother ever decided to give up meat, she'd starve to death, since getting my kids to eat vegetables is one of my greatest motherhood failures.

Still, kids can be so easily influenced at this age. So, I tried to impart some wisdom without coming across as preachy or lecturing. I reminded her that those in livestock production also love animals and take the very best care of them they can every single day; that providing food is the purpose for which some animals were created and it's our job to be good stewards of that resource.

The one thing I wish I would have said is something my youngest daughter has related to me several times lately, and that is, two things can be true at the same time. In this case, you can love animals and still eat meat.

We talked about how becoming a vegetarian is a personal choice that people are free to make, and they shouldn't be made to feel disrespected for it. Nor should they try to shame others into making the same choice or disrespect them when they don't.

Thus ended that conversation and we were on to other topics – the books she's reading, the sports she's playing, and oh... we had burgers and chicken strips for lunch. Atta girl. Bless her carnivorous little heart.

"A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new."
— Albert Einstein



It has been blazing hot outside and as of the writing of this column, no relief is in sight. Is it miserable? Without a doubt, it is tough to take, and it is dangerous. It is hard on all of us that have no choice but to be out in it, but it is part of the occupational dangers of being in agriculture, so we hunch our backs and lean into it. On the flip side, it does make for good haying weather as long as the AC in the tractor holds up.

Recently I was asked about my attitude towards climate change. I admit that I am a skeptic of sorts. I have no doubt that the climate is changing, since the dawn of time our climate has changed, and it is not going to stop. What I am skeptical of is just how much we humans affect that change. I am even more skeptical that agriculture is a big part of any role man may have in climate change. I am also open for someone to prove to me otherwise, I just have seen nothing yet that has swayed my opinion.

I find it amusing that the climate change proponents are pointing to this summer as evidence. Yes, it has been hot and even historically hot in places. We are told July is the hottest month ever in the known history of the world. Okay, where is the measurement taken and how? I watch the weather closely every night and one of the things I observe is the record highs and lows. The year 1980 had a lot of record-high temperatures in it. I was not very old that year, but it did make a lasting impression on me. I remember it being miserable. We did not have air conditioning in our house and yet somehow, we survived.

I also see a lot of record highs from 1936. It was the heart of the Dust Bowl and I have trouble believing that the average high temperature did not beat the current hot spell we are on now. I was told that the measuring of the hottest month only went back about fifty years because of technology. That makes me even more skeptical, if that is true, because that is such a small slice of the history of our planet.

Okay, I am skeptical but that does not mean we shouldn't be trying to do better when it comes to protecting our environment. I wholeheartedly agree

with that, to a point. When it comes to agriculture, I would argue that we are doing our part. Advances in the way we raise and grow food has made us both more efficient and environmentally sound. The way we farm is drastically different than it was even twenty years ago. We are growing more food while protecting our air, water, and soil. The bottom line is that this world needs the United States to produce as much food as we can in the future. American farmer and ranchers have always embraced new technology and are constantly looking for ways to improve what we do. I truly believe that those wanting to malign agriculture in terms of environment are barking up the wrong tree.

I also believe that the environmental groups have, to some extent, been hijacked by other activist groups. The most notable is the influence of animal rights groups. Animal agriculture is not to blame for any climate change but groups that would have meat taken off our tables have worked their propaganda and agenda into the climate change narrative. It's not about climate change, it is about taking meat off the menu.

I also do not think that we in agriculture can hide from this discussion. We need to be at the table, listening, telling our story, and working to do even better. I think there are a lot of other areas that can do more to protect our soil, air and water, agriculture is the focus because there are fewer of us and that makes us an easier target. Common sense needs to prevail, and the rest of the world needs to understand the facts around agriculture and realize how good we are.

The bottom line is that we do need to protect the fragile world around us, and we can all do better. It is a hot summer in places and that is to be expected, it is after all July and August. We should not panic and make drastic changes too quickly that will have unintended consequences. I pray that level heads will take the lead and we can work on making our world a better place for now and for the future. In the meantime, it is hot so try to be safe and drink lots of water, those are two things I can vouch for certain.



Grandma life for me tends to involve a pretty good amount of wind-shield time with the kids as I shuttle them around or we go on adventures. Generally, the conversation stays light-hearted and fun as they catch me up on all that is happening in their lives. Every once in a while, though, usually when I am least expecting it and caught completely off-guard, a more serious topic will arise. Last week I was driving two of my Iowa granddaughters halfway home to meet their mother after they'd spent a week in Kansas. As the five-year-old sang songs in the backseat, her ten-year-old sister, who was sitting in the front seat, dropped this little gem smack dab in the middle of a chat about our favorite foods and what we should have for lunch.

"My friend is a vegetarian," she said. "She has been since she was five."

"Oh, really," I said. "What made her decide to do that?"

"She loves animals," was her reply.

Tread lightly, Grandma, tread lightly...

"Well, I won't ever criticize someone for making that choice," I told her. "But it is important to realize that even if someone does choose to eat meat, it doesn't mean they don't love animals."

"Yeah, I know," she said. Fortunately, even though her home is in the city now, she did live out in the country and had goats, chickens and cattle when she was younger. Plus, she's spent enough time with her Kansas cousins to have a pretty good grasp of the realities of food



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Make hay while the sun shines... and donate it to the rodeo

For the past 50 years, the Sleichter family has provided the hay for the bucking horses and bulls at the Wild Bill Hickok Rodeo in Abilene.

It started in the 1970s with Jack Sleichter, who was heavily involved in the Central Kansas Free Fair and volunteered in many ways, including as swine show superintendent.

Then it continued with Jack's son Jerry and Jerry's children Jay and Jeff and daughter Jill, and now it continues with the next generation.

In July, when the hay is ready, Jeff and Jay head to

the field to mow hay, then let it dry, bale it, and bring it home.

Then when the bucking horses and bulls arrive at the rodeo grounds in Abilene, he and his family bring in bales for the animals to have good quality hay to eat.

Fair week is a busy one for the Sleichters. Jeff remembers showing cattle and hogs as a youth, and he and Meredith's kids Riley and Jackie showed.

Cutting hay has to be strategically planned; if it rains on the hay when it's mown, the moisture lessens its quality, so Jeff

tries to mow hay when there's no chance of rain.

Quality hay for the horses and cattle is important, Jeff said. "There's always that little tension. You don't want to put a bunch of hay down (to dry) and then get a rain shower, and have hay that isn't just right."

The animals need quality feed, and Jeff takes pride in caring for the animals while they're in Abilene. "You want to make sure you do it right. There's a responsibility to take good care of them while they're here."

It takes between 250

and 350 bales, all small square bales weighing about 70 lbs. each, to feed the approximately 100 head of bulls and horses.

It's a treat for the Sleichter family when they bring in the hay bales, because they get to see the rodeo animals. "As a little kid, it was a big deal to see the bulls and the broncs," Jeff said. He and Jay make sure their kids have a chance to go along. "We'd make sure the kids went along when we took the first load of hay in, so they could see the rodeo stock up close."

The family takes in a

few nights of the rodeo, which Jeff enjoys. "It's been fun to watch the rodeo change and grow and improve over the years," he said. "That's always been exciting to see the developments that have taken place."

No one knows when Jack began providing hay; Jeff thinks it could be more than 50 years ago.

It's an honor for the Sleichter family to provide the hay.

"It was important to my granddad and dad," Jeff said. "It's important to us, so we continue to do it."

Jay and his wife Linda

live in Clay Center. They have five children; daughters Katie, Maggie, Laine, and Natalie, and son John.

Sister Jill Sleichter Deines lives in Manhattan with her husband Derek and their children Raychel and Bryce.

This year's Abilene rodeo takes place August 1-4 at 7:30 p.m. each night at the Central Kansas Free Fairgrounds. Tickets are \$10 through July 31; on August 1, they go to \$13. Children's tickets are \$7 for ages 4-10. For more information, visit WildBill-HickokRodeo.com

Global 'polycrisis' disproportionately hurts smallholders, report says

Global shocks over the past few years have created an unprecedented "polycrisis" that has disproportionately hurt small-scale farmers and people living in food-deficit countries, according to a new report commissioned by Farm Journal Foundation.

The COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts including the Russia-Ukraine war, and climate change have created far-reaching impacts across global food systems, affecting food, fertilizer, feed, fuel, and financing available to producers, according to the report by Dr. Jessica Fanzo, professor of climate and the director of the Food for Humanity Initiative at Columbia University's Climate School. The resulting polycrisis has left humanity vulnerable to future "black swan" moments that could have even more severe and far-reaching consequences for global food supplies.

"Recent global shocks have affected everyone on the planet, but small-scale producers and people living in low-income countries have arguably suffered the most," Dr. Fanzo said. "The polycrisis has had huge and continuing implications for global food and nutrition security. Already, millions of smallholder farmers and their families were teetering on the edge of survival due to long-term structural challenges, and this polycrisis has pushed countless into disaster."

About 258 million people around the world were experiencing acute, crisis-level food insecurity by mid-2022, significantly higher than before the pandemic, according to data cited in the report. The Russia-Ukraine war has had a significant impact on global food security because the two countries are major crop producers and suppliers of fertilizer. Trade bottlenecks, compounded by the war and the pandemic, have added to the crisis, along with extreme weather events around the world.

The U.S., through its whole-of-government Feed the Future initiative, has an important role to play in enabling farmers and food systems in

developing countries to better withstand shocks. Supporting global food and nutrition security is in America's best interest both from an economic and national security standpoint. Studies show that U.S. investment in international agricultural development, research, and innovation benefits both developing countries and U.S. producers and consumers, far exceeding its costs.

To alleviate global food insecurity and malnutrition, the U.S. should invest more in international

agricultural research and innovation, which can help developing countries address their own unique challenges and shore up local food systems to better withstand shocks. In particular, more research is needed across six areas: climate change adaptation and mitigation, soil health and nutrient management, crop diversity and nutrition, access to markets and finance, supply chain infrastructure, and local capacity building.

"The series of crises over the past few years should serve as a wake-up

call that more investment is needed in agricultural R&D, to ensure that farmers and our global food system are equipped to better withstand shocks,"

said Katie Lee, vice president for government affairs at Farm Journal Foundation. "Investments in agricultural innovation benefit smallholder farm-

ers in developing countries, as well as farmers and producers right here at home, helping ensure safe and affordable food supplies for all."



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

Annette Reilly, Abilene, Wins Weekly Grass & Grain Recipe Contest & Prize

Winner Annette Reilly, Abilene: "It's prolific summer squash time and they do seem to flood the garden! I prefer them at about 6 inches in length at the tender stage. Having already gotten tired of the usual recipes, I decided to throw together something different. I'm calling it Pan-fried Summer Squash Hash!"

PAN-FRIED SUMMER SQUASH HASH

2 cups diced summer squash
1 egg, beaten
1/4 cup cornmeal
1/4 cup flour
1/4 cup diced onion
2-3 tablespoons cooking oil to start (adding more as it cooks)
Salt & pepper to taste
1/4 cup diced green pepper, optional

Dice squash to 1/4- to 1/2-inch size leaving on tender skins for color. Beat egg in large bowl then add squash and toss to coat. Sprinkle on cornmeal and flour alternately to coat. Add chopped onion (and diced pepper if using). Toss. Heat oil in a skillet (cast iron works so well). Add squash mixture. Cover and cook until brown on bottom, about 5 to 10 minutes on medium-low heat. Stir to bring browned side up. Cook another 5 to 10 minutes until bottom is crispy. Serve warm. Salt and pepper to taste. Makes about 4-6 servings.

NOTE: One could also spoon mixture onto a oiled griddle, flatten slightly and flip once to brown both sides. I used bacon drippings and it was amazing! Hope you enjoy the recipe!

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:
PEACH COBBLER
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup sugar
2/3 cup milk
1 cup flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup water
1 cup sugar
3 cups fresh peaches, peeled & sliced
Cream the 2 tablespoons of butter and 1/2 cup sug-

ar; add milk. Add the flour and baking powder. Bring the water to a boil then add the 1 cup sugar and cook until sugar is dissolved. Spread the butter mixture into a 9-by-15-inch pan. Cover with peaches. Pour the syrup mixture over top. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes until golden brown.

Donna Geritz, Atchison:
CREAMY CHICKEN ENCHILADAS
1 1/2 cups shredded cheese
1/4 cup cilantro (optional)
(12) 6-inch flour tortillas
1 1/2 cups salsa (any kind)
2 1/2 cups shredded & cooked chicken
10 3/4-ounce can cream of chicken soup
1 cup sour cream, divided
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease or spray a large baking dish. Combine chicken, soup, half of sour cream, half of cheese and half of cilantro. Spoon 1/4 cup onto each tortilla and roll up and place seam side down in dish. Top with salsa and remaining cheese. Cover with foil and bake 15 minutes. Remove foil and bake an additional 10 minutes. Top with sour cream and cilantro.

Kimberly Edwards, Stillwater, Oklahoma:
SKILLET ZUCCHINI CASSEROLE

2 zucchini, sliced (unpeeled)
4 tomatoes, peeled
1 large onion
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
3 slices bacon, cooked & crumbled
1/4 pound Velveeta cheese
Chop vegetables. Cook over medium heat and let form its own liquid. Cook until tender. Add bacon, cheese, salt and pepper. Cook until heated through.

Jackie Doud, Topeka:
TOMATO SALAD
3 medium cucumbers, peeled & sliced 1/4-inch thick

1 medium onion, sliced into rings
3 medium tomatoes, cut into wedges
1/2 cup vinegar
1/4 cup sugar
1 cup water
Place cucumbers, onion and tomatoes in a bowl. Combine the vinegar, sugar and water and pour over the vegetables. Let set in refrigerator to marinate.

Kellee George, Shawnee:

SMOKED PEA SALAD
10-ounce package frozen peas, thawed
1/4 cup diced onion
1/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup shredded mozzarella
1/4 cup chopped smoked almonds
1/2 cup mayonnaise
Mix all together and let chill in refrigerator at least 3 hours.

Rose Edwards, Stillwater, Oklahoma:
CARROT CASSEROLE
4 cups sliced carrots
1 medium sliced onion
1/4 cup oleo, melted
1 cup Velveeta cheese, sliced thin
Ritz crackers (for topping)
In a small amount of water boil carrots until half done. Drain and place in casserole dish. Layer with onions, melted oleo and cheese. Cover with crushed Ritz crackers. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes or until tests done.



It's Our Choice

By Lou Ann Thomas

"We don't have any choice," my friend, Jared, said in the middle of our discussion about what we humans can do to help heal and ease stress on our planet. With this summer's extreme heat and other weather phenomenon occurring, it is growing less and less disputable that Climate Change is real. It also appears to be developing more quickly than we anticipated.

Jared blamed big business. I countered that if we didn't keep purchasing the products, big business wouldn't be so big. "We have no choice but to continue to consume things. We have to keep putting gas in our cars," Jared countered to my flimsy reasoning.

Our discussion had landed on what we can do as living and breathing consumers to reverse this frightening trend. Jared's take on Climate Change left me speechless. After all, at 35, Jared was one of the people to whom I was hoping to leave a healthier planet.

No choice? Don't we always have choices? We may not like our choices, or we may choose to ignore them, but they exist. We don't have to keep putting gas in our cars. We can choose cycling, walking or public transportation. Of course, living in the country does limit our options for alternatives to driving, but we can still choose gas-efficient vehicles or even an electric model.

There are always options and small changes can create large benefits. There is rarely a time when we aren't having to choose one thing over another. In fact, many times I feel overwhelmed by all the choices in front of me. Take grocery shopping. There is an entire aisle filled with

laundry detergent in my local grocery store. It's necessary since there are over 40 different brands of cleaner. That's not counting generic and store brands or the number of scents and special properties of each. Are any of these products really better than the others? Some might be a little more efficient, but why do we need so many variations, especially in scent? And why are lemons good when purchasing detergent and polish, but not when buying automobiles or other large appliances?

There can be so many choices in front of us that it creates a brain jam. Why even jam requires some analytical study before purchasing. Should we buy sugar-free jam or all fruit? Do you want jam that comes in the traditional glass jars, a plastic bottle or is squeezable? There really isn't any item inside a grocery store that doesn't require some discrimination of choice. Water? What size bottle? And do you want pure spring water, water with extra electrolytes, flavored or enhanced in some other way? Bread? Gluten-free? Whole wheat? Low carb?

So, I agree with my friend Jared that we appear born to consume and aren't likely to stop any time soon. But I respectfully disagree about not having choices in what and how we consume. A small change of choices, like using a refillable water container instead of buying bottled water, parking in the middle of our errands and walking to each one may at least buy us some time.

I don't believe our issue is in not having a choice. Rather, that we keep making poor ones.

Check out Lou Ann's blog at: <https://louannthomas.blog>

Cantaloupe, Watermelon, Honeydew...Oh My! Expert Shares Perfect Time To Harvest Melons

By Maddy Rohr, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN — Harvesting melons at the perfect time is crucial to the best eating experience. Melons will have the highest sugar content if allowed to ripen fully on the vine, Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini said.

Cantaloupe

"When cantaloupes are ready for harvest they will easily separate from the vine," Domenghini said.

If melon is ripe, Domenghini said by putting pressure on the fruit where the vine attaches, the fruit will slip off with a dip-shaped depression in the fruit. Twisting the stem to force separation indicates the melon is not ready.

"Additionally, the skin

of the (ripe) melon should begin to show yellowing, instead of solid green during immaturity," Domenghini said. "A ripe cantaloupe should have a musky fragrance and the end of the fruit opposite where the vine is attached should be soft."

Domenghini said cantaloupe can be stored in a refrigerator for two weeks.

Watermelon

Watermelons are ready to harvest when the underside of the fruit changes from green-white to yellow. The melon will appear more dull, rather than glossy green, Domenghini said.

"The tendril attaching the fruit to the vine will turn black when the fruit reaches maturity," Domenghini adds.

To harvest, separate the

fruit from the vine by cutting the tendril, but leave about two inches still attached to the fruit. Store freshly harvested watermelons at room temperature for one week or in 50-60 degrees Fahrenheit for two to three weeks.

Honeydew

"Honeydew melons do not easily pull away from the stem when ripe," Domenghini said.

Instead, she recommends relying on the change in color of the fruit from pale green to light yellow; the softening spot on the fruit opposite from where the vine attaches; and the aroma coming from the fruit.

"Honeydews can be stored for two weeks at 50 F," Domenghini said.

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State's De-

partment of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Domenghini at cdom@ksu.edu, or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

Links used in this story: K-State Horticulture Newsletter, <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

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MSD

Garden Produce Perfect For Canning

Holly Miner, Nutrition, Food Safety and Health Agent, Wildcat Extension District

Home gardeners and their families may enjoy the fruits of their labors in the summertime and long into the year by canning their bounty. Putting away that plentiful produce is easy if a few basic steps are followed.

Prepare by checking canning equipment. Waterbath canners should be free of rust or major dents. Jars should be checked for cracks or chips and should be washed and clean to use. Ring bands should be free of rust and dents. Washing ring bands and thoroughly drying them will help eliminate rust. While canning jars and ring bands can be used from year-to-year, flats should only be used once.

Pressure canner gaskets and safety plugs should be elastic and checked to fit properly in the gasket trough. Dial gauge pressure canners should be checked yearly for accuracy to assure food is processed to destroy the toxin producing botulism bacteria.

Free pressure canner testing is available through the Wildcat District offices in Independence, Girard, and Altamont. Pressure canner brands that can be tested include Presto, National, Maid of Honor, Magic Seal and Sears. Pressure

canners should have a flat bottom if used on an electric stove and very few shallow pits on the inside. Check the vent to assure it is clear of any debris and make sure handles are secure and tight.

When canning foods, use recipes from recommended resources such as the National Center for Home Food Preservation, USDA Complete Guide to Home Food Preservation or your local Extension Office resources including the KSRE Rapid Response Center at <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu>. Food being canned should be at peak quality. Vegetables should be peeled to eliminate skin bacteria and free of all blemishes. Do not can produce from dead vines or vines with frostbite.

Allow processed jars to cool in an isolated area for 12-24 hours without being moved around. After this amount of time is up, double check that the lids sealed properly. If all jars are sealed, remove, wash, and dry the ring bands. Label the jars with the name of the food and date canned. Store jars in a cool dry area away from hot and cold fluctuation. For example, not in a mechanical room or next to the furnace unit. Canned foods should be used in one year for best quality and to allow room for next year's garden bounty.

Waterbath and pressure

canning methods of food preservation are available for adults and youth over age of 14 to learn in hands-on classes offered by the Wildcat District.

Classes will be held as follows:

- August 22 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Independence Community College Fab Food Lab

- August 24 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the First National Bank in Fredonia 4-H Learning Center at Old Iron

Classes are open to adults and older youth. Due to grant funding, the class fee has been reduced to \$15 per participant. Please pre-register at www.bit.ly/Wildcatpay or by calling 620-331-2690 at least one week in advance to the class date.

Additional opportunities include:

- August 29 at the Independence Public Library starting at 6 p.m. This class is FREE, and will focus on storage, drying and freezing, (not hands-on).

- September 5 at Youth Community Garden in Parsons starting at 4:30 p.m. This class will focus on drying.

For more information about canning, nutrition, food safety or health, or if you would like a specific program in your area, contact Holly Miner at haminer@ksu.edu or call 620-331-2690.

5% Acidity Vinegar Is

Key To Safe Canning

By Caitlin Mellendorf, Nutrition and Wellness Educator, University of Illinois Extension

URBANA, Ill. — There's a long list of home canned foods that use vinegar as an ingredient, including salsa, pickled vegetables, barbecue sauce, and preserved fruits like apple butter and cantaloupe pickles, as well as canned tomatoes as an acidifier. The vinegar increases acidity, thus lowering pH, helping these foods reach a safe pH for boiling water bath canning.

Recipes from the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning and the National Center for Home Food Preservation are tested using vinegar diluted to 5%. Home canners and Cooperative Extensions office around the U.S. are sharing observations of vinegar with different levels of acidity being sold in stores.

University of Illinois Extension urges home canners to buy vinegar with 5% acidity for continued safe canning. If you have used diluted vinegar of 4% acidity or less in home canning, throw out those canned foods. If you have canned using less than 5% acidity vinegar and it has been less than 24 hours, move those jars to a refrigerator, as these foods are not considered safe to store at room temperature.

The National Center for Home Food Preservation strongly advises against using vinegar with acidity levels of less than 5%, as it may not be sufficiently strong to ensure the safety of the canned products. The center also urges home canners to remember to check the vinegar label for its acidity level.

For information on home preserving, including canning, freezing, drying, and fermenting, visit extension.illinois.edu/food/food-preservation or contact a local extension office.

SOURCE: National Center for Home Food Preservation, University Georgia Extension



By Kelsey Pagel

Crazy Busy

Well, my wisdom teeth are gone. The word I would use to describe the experience would not be "stellar." But they are gone and I'm mostly recovered. Tomorrow, at the time of writing, will be two weeks from surgery. I'm mostly back to eating whatever I want. It was a rough week after surgery, but we're done and I won't have to do it ever again.

On the farm front, things are still crazy busy, as they always will be. As long as I'm married to Matt, things will always be crazy busy on the farm front. Sometimes he looks too hard for things to do. It's during these really stressful seasons that I question what we're doing.

Balance is a fun word that is thrown around a lot in the world. The older I get, the more I'm convinced, nobody ever has it completely figured out. We get in a routine, of a sort, in one season, then the seasons change, and a new routine has to be figured out.

There is never enough time for everything. Farm work will never be done, dark nights are too few and far between, the house is rarely clean, dishes stack up and laundry sits in baskets. Maybe it's just mine, but marriage is hard. When you have two different humans with different priorities, different thoughts, different love languages, there's bound to be friction.

We're approaching our ten-year anniversary this fall, which makes me reflective of our marriage and what we've done and where we're going. Matt and I have very different goals and dreams for our lives. We chose to get married and love each other through all the things. It takes two people choosing every day, sometimes multiple times a day, that they are committed to each other. Love is a verb,

not a noun. It takes action to work. You cannot change somebody else. You cannot force them to care.

For me, in the difficult moments, I remind myself that I'm married to a good-hearted man. I think most people want to do good and want to be happy. Sometimes life gets in the way of that. A to-do list that will never get done and different ways to unwind cause stress. Often I don't feel love the way I need it, but that doesn't mean that he doesn't love me.

As with everything, communication, communication. Give and take and knowing it will never be equal. It's hard for me, to tell Matt no. To tell him that I need time in the house when there is work to be done outside. Does the world stop turning if the laundry sits in the baskets? Nope. But on the flip side, does the world stop turning if the hay doesn't get hauled four days after it's baled. Also nope. But I hear all you farmers saying, there is the possibility of future yield deficits if it sits there too long. I hear you! I am a farmer's daughter, a farmer's wife and farmer myself. I understand time-sensitive things.

I guess the moral of this column is: I don't like surgeries, upcoming anniversaries make me reflective of the past, present and future, balance is a joke, marriage is hard and farming is stressful. But life is about choices. By not making an active choice, you are still making choices. Ending on a positive note, the time we take our annual vacation is approaching, so I'm excited about time away, time with Matt focusing solely on me and time for rejuvenation. Until next time, grace and patience.

Kelsey Pagel is a Kansas farmer. She grew up on a cow/calf and row crop operation and married into another. Kelsey and her Forever (Matt) farm and ranch with his family where they are living their dream and loving most of the moments. She can be found on IG & FB @teampagel.

Planning Ahead For Quick And Nutritious Meals

Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Agent, River Valley Extension District

Cook Once, Eat Twice.

Doing so saves time and provides greater variety in the foods you eat, which means less boredom and more nutrition. Here are some ideas for how to do so:

1. **Cook, drain and freeze ground beef.** The crumbled ground beef can be added quickly to casseroles, spaghetti sauce, pizza, or soups.

2. **Cook chicken breasts.** Boiling them might be the quickest method but you could also bake or grill them. Serve with rice and a vegetable or in a salad. Shredded chicken can be used in quesadillas or burritos.

3. **Cook a roast in the oven or slow-cooker.** Serve with potatoes and carrots, make hot beef sandwiches, barbecue beef sandwiches, or beef and noodles.

4. **Roast a turkey.** Make a turkey, cheese and broccoli casserole. Make turkey noodle soup. Prepare turkey sandwiches for lunch or an omelet with turkey and vegetables for breakfast.

5. **Make a large batch of rice.** Use in rice-based casseroles or fried rice. Make rice pudding. Rice can also be frozen. A small amount of liquid may need to be added when rice is reheated.

6. **Cook macaroni for macaroni and cheese one night.** Use the extra noodles and add a can of tuna for tuna and noodles. Macaroni should be drained but not rinsed if it will be used immediately. Rinse

macaroni if it is to be used cold or if it is to be saved for another meal. Adding 1-2 teaspoons of oil to cooked pasta will help keep it from sticking together.

7. **Hard-cooked eggs** can be eaten alone, in a salad, or as deviled eggs.

8. **Extra baked or boiled potatoes** can be cut up and used to make potato salad. They can also be cut into cubes and heated in a skillet with a little butter or margarine and Parmesan cheese. Mashed potatoes can be mixed with cheese, onion flakes, and light sour cream and heated in the oven.

Practice Food Safety When Cooking Once and Eating Twice

- Separate out and quickly refrigerate or freeze the portions to be served for other meals.

- Refrigerate the extra food in shallow containers to cool it quickly. Slices of meat should be piled no deeper than two inches. Loosely cover the food until it is cooled and then cover it tightly.

- Use refrigerated food within 3-4 days. Freeze the

extra food for longer storage. Defrost frozen food in the refrigerator or microwave. Cook or eat food immediately if it is defrosted in the microwave.

This article has been adapted from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

If you are a busy family, a busy young professional, or work in the field during harvest, or if you would simply like to learn more about how to serve meals more quickly, please join us at our Simple Meals for Busy Families program.

This program will be held on Thursday, August 24 at the Family Life Center in Clay Center. The program fee is \$10. A meal will be served. Children are welcome. There is a fenced-in playground just off the meeting space and highchairs are available.

Please sign up in advance so we have an accurate count when purchasing food, please call the Clay County Extension Office at 785-632-5335. Questions can be directed to Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Agent at 785-243-8185.

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by Kirk Sours

Hidalgo (Part One)

Somehow I found myself on a bus heading up the King's Highway toward an ancient canyon city called Petra. In Jordan. Yes, the Hashemite Kingdom perched on the northwestern end of the Arabian Peninsula. No, it wasn't a dream, but it was quite surreal, and the experience of a lifetime.

I was privileged to spend two weeks in Israel several years ago, and this little jaunt of a day trip

was a very memorable part of that trip. We had a 12-hour visa and left the security check point in Aqaba a couple hours prior, about 6:45 a.m. by the time we cleared security. Driving along the main highway eastward into the desert, the sights were just as you can imagine. Weathered Toyota and Mercedes pickup trucks with four or five men riding in the back, going to work sites, I sup-

posed. Across miles of the flat, low desert plain the mountains of Wadi Rum thrust upward like giant heaps of camel dung, unlike any mountain range in the States, with the most similar geological comparison that I've seen being the Wichita Mountains in Oklahoma, which appear as the Creator dumped huge buckets of boulders onto the prairie. As you get closer, you can see huge black veins of iron running every direction within the mountains. At one point I saw a dwarfed freight train running along the base of a mountain toward the port city of Aqaba on the Red Sea, from whence we had come. The backdrop of that train in the shadow of the mountain, with the Bedouin encampments and the roving camels in the foreground along

this single, busy highway was all encompassing for a history loving student of Biblical and Quranic interests. Wadi Rum has been the location of many films, including *Lawrence of Arabia*, *The Martian*, and *Rogue One*. It is a ghostly desolate landscape away from civilization points, and it truly looks alien to planet Earth.

As we left Highway 47 and headed north up the King's Highway, one of the oldest trade routes known to man, the emptiness of the desert became more apparent from the stony heights. There was one stop, a way station perched on top of a bald plateau, that provided everything a weary traveler or a curious tourist could need. The "restrooms" were in the basement of the establishment, and I was quite sure the ladies side probably had more of a facility than the hole in the cement floor on the gents side. After perusing the shop, I bought a bottle of water and a Coke and

Grass & Grain, August 1, 2023

Page 7

stepped outside to have a look around. The water was hauled in by truck to an ancient truck tanker body perched on concrete pillars, providing the grey water needs. There were several wild-looking mongrel dogs that hung around yapping at the clientele hoping to get a scrap of something thrown their way. As I walked around the lower end of the building, I saw the small stream of water flowing out of the building and off the mountain top, not having to guess what that was. It was the only place I saw to stop between Aqaba and Wadi Musa at Petra.

Petra is the most famous attraction in the entire country, located in a remote valley basin in the Shara Mountains, south of the Dead Sea and east of the Jordan Valley. One of the "Seven Wonders of the World" it was featured in an Indiana Jones movie, "The Last Crusade," particularly the "building" known as "The Treasury." In fact, until that movie,

it was relatively unknown. The ancient temple, like the rest of the city, was carved into the colorful sandstone walls of a deep canyon, and the natural colors of the rock are as fascinating as the architecture of the Nabataeans who carved it out. The massive cisterns built by damming up the large crevices and side canyons to collect seasonal rains, served the aqueduct systems they used for irrigation as well as drinking. The narrow passageways into the main canyon facilitated an easily defendable, self-sustaining fortress city that protected its inhabitants from any conquering force. Economics may have been its demise as trade routes changed and by the mid 6th Century it had become a 'ghost town.' Today, it is a staple of Jordan's tourism industry. (To be continued)

Kirk Sours is a ranch manager and columnist in northeast Kansas. Email him at: sours.kirk@yahoo.com

Sen. Marshall introduces legislation aiming to improve communication between EPA and USDA

U.S. Sen. Roger Marshall, M.D. introduced the USDA Communication Regarding Oversight of Pesticides (CROP) Act of 2023, which would ensure that the USDA Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP) has a meaningful voice in the regulation of pesticides and bolsters OPMP's coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

While OPMP provides feedback to the EPA on the safe use of pesticides, EPA is not required to respond to OPMP's guidance. Marshall has recently exposed a pattern of the EPA ignoring OPMP expertise. This bill fixes the problem by giving OPMP more latitude to provide feedback and by requiring EPA to publicly respond.

This legislation is being co-sponsored by senators Hyde-Smith (R-MS) Wicker (R-MS) and led in the House by Rep. Arrington (R-TX-19). "For our producers to work efficiently and be good stewards of their land and environment, it is vital they have access to safe and effective pesticides," said Marshall. "The EPA's work reviewing new and existing pesticides and giving strict guidelines to our nation's producers is critical but should not operate autonomously of the important work that the OPMP is doing. OPMP has a role in this process and is only interested in helping the EPA issue guidance that uses the best science and research available. Our legislation makes sure the OPMP is not being sidelined and has a voice in this regulation process."

"The USDA CROP Act would bring the best science and transparency to the pesticide review process so our agriculture industry can continue delivering high-quality products to Americans," said Wicker.

"The EPA consistently

turns a blind eye to agricultural recommendations from agricultural specialists at the USDA, and such regulatory arrogance ends up harming farmers and their ability to produce the food and fiber on which we all rely," said Hyde-Smith. "This smart legislation simply tries to ensure interagency cooperation between the EPA and USDA when developing rules governing pesticides and their use."

"The EPA's neglect of the USDA OPMP guidance unduly punishes and creates uncertainty for West Texas farmers and ranchers who are trying to keep consistent the practices of their family industries and small businesses. The OPMP provides necessary information pertaining to the viability of the EPA's pesticide approval process and without the OPMP's advice, agricultural producers will be negatively affected not only in Texas, but throughout the country," said Arrington. "Our legislation ensures that the EPA ceases their continual, well-documented, ignoring of OPMP expertise, and creates a cohesive, streamlined, regulatory approval process for pesticide products."

"CLA appreciates Senator Marshall's work to improve the coordination between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is imperative that the agencies work together to help ensure the most up to date, scientifically-sound data is available when pesticide registration decisions are made. This Act provides the opportunity for USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy to be engaged and heard in the pesticide registration process. This will assist both the EPA's scientists and better represent the farmers and ranchers around the country who use these

products," said Chris Novak, president and CEO of CropLife America.

"Growers deserve a predictable regulatory system and to be assured that federal agencies are communicating product uses, benefits and risk mitigation practices growers already have in place," said Craig Meeker, chairman of National Sorghum Producers. "Too often EPA moves forward with overly conservative assumptions without fully considering the input of USDA and the growers who use the products. This bill represents a significant step toward addressing this perennial problem."

"The American farmer needs access to critical crop protection tools to continue to sustainably feed and fuel the world. The important work that EPA does to ensure these products do not impact human health or the environment must be based on proven science. We hope that EPA coordinating more closely with the experts at USDA in the registration and rulemaking processes will result in better outcomes for farmers and consumers alike," commented Kaleb Little, CEO, Kansas Soybean Association.

"Kansas farmers have been leaders in adopting conservation practices such as reduced and no-till farming, that reduce soil erosion and runoff as much as 75%, while greatly reducing fuel and labor costs," Josh Roe, CEO, Kansas Corn Growers Association, stated. These practices are only possible if they have access to crop protection products. We appreciate any efforts that will hold the EPA accountable to following sound science that allow producers to continue to adopt these conservation practices."

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Kansas Leopold Conservation Award finalists selected

Four finalists have been selected for the 2023 Kansas Leopold Conservation Award.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the prestigious award recognizes farmers, ranchers, forestland owners, and other landowners who inspire others with their dedication to land, water, and wildlife resources in their care.

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 27 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In Kansas the award is presented annually by Sand County Foundation, American Farmland Trust, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts and Ranchland Trust of Kansas.

The Kansas Leopold



The Flickner family of Wichita

Conservation Award will be presented at the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts' 79th Annual Convention in Wichita in November. The award recipient will receive \$10,000

and a crystal award.

The finalists are:

Ray and Susan Flickner of Wichita. The Flickner family farms in McPherson, Hodgeman, Dickinson and Norton counties. They installed sub-surface drip irrigation technology to become more efficient with water and nutrient applications on crops. They experiment with cover crops to improve water infiltration and suppress weeds. Their Flickner Innovation Farm is a collaboration of university, industry, and agency partners where new methods to improve soil health and conserve water are demonstrated.

Kevin Karr Family of Emporia. The Karr family raises crops and hogs in Lyon County. To reduce soil erosion, Kevin began using no-till practices in the 1980s. He credits no-till with enhancing wildlife habitat and reducing his fuel use, while building better soil structure. Weeds are naturally suppressed by planting cover crops of rye, while beneficial insects are attracted to flowering cover crops. The combination of no-till and cover crops has bolstered the farm's resilience to drought.

Janus Farms of Cherryvale. Dr. Phil Eastep has improved wildlife habitat and biodiversity on his Montgomery County farmland with prescribed burning, rotationally grazing beef cattle, and removing invasive species such as cedar and sumac. To pre-

vent erosion and promote soil health he has planted more than 125,000 trees and constructed a riverbank stabilization project. He has hosted botanical and endangered wildlife studies at his farm, and established pollinator habitat of native flowering plants.

Glenn and Barbara Walker of Brookville. The Walkers are improving soil health, wildlife habitat and water distribution on their properties in Ellsworth, Lincoln, Rice, Russell and Saline counties. By using rotational grazing to feed their beef cattle, they are also managing grassland to improve habitat for greater prairie chickens, turkeys and deer. Their investment in removing invasive red cedar trees improves water resources. Several of their properties are enrolled in the Kansas Walk-in Hunting program.

The first Kansas Leopold Conservation Award recipient was selected in 2015. The 2022 recipient was Michael Thompson of Alma.

The Leopold Conservation Award in Kansas is made possible thanks to the generous support of American Farmland Trust, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts,

who are committed to conservation on their land," said Dan Meyerhoff, KACD executive director. "We are proud to partner with Sand County Foundation and the Ranchland Trust of Kansas to give these families the recognition they deserve."

"Ranchland Trust of Kansas is proud to be part of recognizing Kansas ranchers and farmers for their stewardship of their land," said Barth Crouch, Ranchland Trust of Kansas Chairman. "All of the finalists are deserving of the award which is really recognition of their management efforts and sacrifice to bring their land to its highest potential."

"These award finalists

REAL ESTATE AUCTION

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2023 - 10:00 AM

AUCTION LOCATION: 215 S. Harvest St, LUCAS, KANSAS (East of Grain Elevator)



This is a nice 4.4 acres located just outside the city limits of Lucas. There is a nice 3 bedroom home and a nice shop/barn with other sheds on the property. The property has city water and sewer and is within 10 miles of Wilson Lake. Central air/heat, fireplace and 1 bath.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: S34, T11, R11W, ACRES 4.4, BEG. 845'N SWC SE1/4 NW1/4 TH N345' SELY690' S170' W660' TO POB LESS R/W.

Legal Description of Lots in City Limits: LOTS LUCAS ORIGINAL TOWN, S34, T11, R11W, BLOCK 9, LOT 1, 2 & 3, SECTION 34 TOWNSHIP 11 RANGE 11W.

TERMS: 10% down day of sale & the balance due on or before September 19, 2023.

POSSESSION: On closing date. This property is to be sold AS IS. All inspections and financial arrangements are to be done before auction.

TAXES: \$1,161.54. Taxes for 2022 and all prior year's to be paid by seller. Taxes for 2023 to be prorated to date of closing.

TITLE INSURANCE: Title Insurance will be used 1/2 to be paid by seller and 1/2 by the purchaser.

AGENCY DISCLOSURE: Hansen Auction and Realty and its agents are and will be acting as seller's broker.

For prior viewing or inspections, contact KEVIN MEITLER, LISTING AGENT, 785-420-0605.

SELLER: LUANNA MAES

Real Estate Auction Conducted by:

HANSEN AUCTION & REALTY Luke Hansen, Broker
Kenneth L. Meitler, Real Estate Salesperson



The Karr family of Emporia



Janus Farms of Cherryvale



Glenn and Barbara Walker of Brookville



August 18-20, 2023

Emporia, Kansas

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<p>Friday, August 18, 2023</p> <p>6:00-7:00 a.m. Sale Barn WIBW Live Radio Broadcast</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Sale Barn Live Stocker Show</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Bowyer Building Beef Producers Seminar w/Lunch</p> <p>6:00 p.m. Bowyer Building Ranch Feed</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Fairgrounds Arena Ranch Rodeo</p>	<p>Saturday, August 19, 2023</p> <p>8:30 registration and 9:00 Cornhole tournament at Bowyer Building Lyon County Fairgrounds</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Free Hamburger Feed</p> <p>5:30 p.m. Awards Banquet</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Steak Dinner</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Tim Moffett, Comedian, Entertainment</p> <p>9:00-11:30 p.m. Steve Kile Band, Dance at Bowyer Building</p>
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Sunday, August 20, 2023

8:30 a.m. Emporia Municipal Golf Course Golf Tournament

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS NOW! Friday Evening: \$20 Adults; \$5 Children 10 & Under
Saturday Evening: \$40 (Advance Tickets Only, Dance Included)

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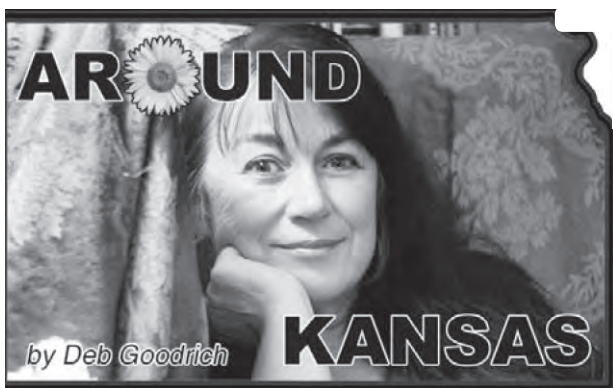
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Folks driving along Highway 24 between Cawker City and Downs are stopping on the shoulder to take photos – and who could blame them?

There is obviously something going on, besides the construction of a “new” Victorian cottage-style house. In addition to all the vehicles and pop-up tents there are wagons and horses and folks garbed in 19th Century clothes.

Why, they must be making a movie!

The town of Downs in Osborne County has risen to the task of turning their beloved story into a film.

Making a film is the most collaborative of creative pursuits. It requires writers, directors, actors, camera and sound crew, publicists, agents, musicians.

It also requires lunch ladies.

Just as an army moves on its stomach, so does a production company. Providing breakfast, lunch, and supper for what amounts to an entire community of folks is no easy

task. Not easy, but certainly delicious thanks to Dianna Meyers, Kelly Meyer, and Amy Schmitt.

These ladies have smiled and sliced and baked and served and washed dishes and made special meals as needed.

As one of our stars commented, she felt like she had been adopted and that her mom has been packing lunches!

Besides the actual nourishment, the feeling of being cared for and looked after while away from home is

worth far more than we can express, and we are more than grateful for the lunch ladies.

Next week, we will talk about the thousands of volunteer hours that have actually gone into the house. That is a whole other story!

Deb Goodrich is a producer on *Sod and Stubble* and the host of *Around Kansas*. She is the Garvey Texas Foundation Historian in Residence at the Fort Wallace Museum and the chair of the Santa Fe Trail 200. Contact her at author.debgoodrich@gmail.com.

Farm Bill draft expected by mid-September

According to an article published by *Drovers* the 2023 Farm Bill is set to be drafted for markup in mid-September. The bill will not likely include further work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beyond those stated in the recently approved debt ceiling bill. House Ag Committee Chairman G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.) envisions SNAP as a workforce development program and prefers using incentives to shape participants' shopping habits.

Despite farm bill challenges, Thompson aims to achieve as many approving votes as possible from both parties. Further, he's ensuring new representatives are familiar with the bill's complexities before the vote to avoid misunderstandings and flare-ups on the House floor.

The committee says they plan to have a mid-September draft after the August recess. Thompson acknowledged that Congress would likely need to extend the existing farm bill due to delays caused by unrelated legislation. This marks his first explicit ad-

mittance that legislators will miss the imminent deadline, as some of the authorizations from the 2018 Farm Bill are set to expire by the end of September.

As his previous comments signaled, Thompson's prediction seems to stem from assessing the Senate's progress, being further behind in drafting its version of the farm bill than the House.

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USDA introduces geospatial data product to show crop rotation patterns

The U.S. Department of Agriculture unveiled a geospatial product called Crop Sequence Boundaries (CSB) that offers public access to national-scale visual crop rotation data for the first time. The new tool was developed by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Economic Research Service (ERS), two of the department's statistical scientific research agencies.

CSB is a cutting-edge map of agricultural fields that provides crop acreage estimates and historical planting decisions across the contiguous United States. The open-source product uses satellite imagery and other public data to allow users to analyze planted U.S. commodities, enhancing not only agricultural science and research, but providing producers an innovative resource to help make farming decisions.

“CSB gives farmers a chance to look at area farmland and see how remote sensing is capturing planting decisions,” said NASS administrator Hubert Hamer. “Farmers will be able to use eight years of historical crop rotations to enhance their farm records or look at the management history of land that they might have recently started operating. They can also look at how their planting decisions compare in their regions.”

New farmers or farmers considering renting land could also use CSB to decide which crop to plant based on past rotations, such as corn to soy, and researchers can conduct analyses at the field level, such as studying conservation practices for a particular field. The tool fills a gap between existing data sources, offering a more comprehensive

picture and data in one place that is not provided by most other field level products.

CSB incorporates technological advances in satellite imagery and high-performance cloud computing with Google Earth Engine. It is one of several tools that NASS and its partners have developed over the years to support agricultural analyses and to make data more accessible and valuable to the public.

Kevin Hunt, a senior geographer at NASS, said having a representative field to predict crop planting and acreage for the upcoming season based on common historical crop rotations is beneficial as a supplement to producer-supplied data. ERS economist Maria

Bowman noted that ERS is using the product to study changes in farm management practices, such as tillage or cover cropping, over time. This will help USDA agencies understand the impacts of conservation programs that provide financial support for these practices.

This product represents an automated and repeatable method for estimating fields from public data. “For researchers, CSB is useful because many farm decisions are made at the field level,” said ERS Administrator Dr. Spiro Stefanou. “CSB represents an advancement in agricultural research by using high performance cloud computing to promote competitiveness by making information on planting

decisions more accessible to everyone.”

The CSB data sets for 2015 to 2022 are available for download and can be viewed at the state and county-level using an interactive map.

This new tool supports strategies outlined in USDA's recently released Science and Research Strategy, including improving and expanding new tools for understanding crop production to supplement other USDA spatial tools like COMET – Planner Global. USDA science is envisioning new ways to look at old challenges and everyday decisions to support our nation's farmers and ranchers.

For NASS data and access to CSB and other geospatial resources, visit www.nass.usda.gov.

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