

Out-of-the-Past Photos



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Out of the Past

Reprinted from the files of The Valley Falls Vindicator — Compiled by Aubrey Weishaar and Holly Allen

167 years ago ... 1858

It is true that our town holds out great inducements to persons of great and small means. The man of little means can now procure eligible building lots to which good title can be had at from 15 to 75 dollars each and on very reasonable terms. The lots are 50 feet front and 150 feet rear. The man of large means can invest his money in lots, in farming lands, in buildings or loan it on good security at remunerative rates of interest.

The spring and winter wheat of Jefferson County looks extremely well. If this be a fair show, no country in the world can beat Kansas in that kind of grain. Between this and Leavenworth, as well as in this vicinity, are many fine fields of wheat, well set, rank and green as a leek. The farmers have done themselves honor putting in so bountifully this and other crops. They have settled the long vexed question whether Kansas is or is not a wheat growing country.

Many of our farmers are also trying out another experiment — the planting of sugar cane sorghum. We believe this will also be successful and our sweet loving appetites will be gratified in two years at most.

Go on ye lovers of Free State, and good living — you will soon have enough and to spare.

The Grasshopper is published every Saturday morning by S. Ward Smith with office in the Butts and Fradenburgh's building on Sycamore Street, one door south of the Cataract House. J.A. Cody is Editor and Proprietor. Terms — one copy one year \$1.50, sing copy, 5 cents.

115 years ago ... 1910

The annual good old summertime announcement is in order: The hum of the threshing machine is heard in the land, and it sounds mighty good.

65 years ago ... July 20, 1960

1960 Advert:

DX TIPS
Mel — Speck

It's a safe bet that proper "care" would have kept the car WELL a lot longer. Getting the habit of letting us check your gas, oil, battery water and tires gives longer life to cars.

DX ROCKET Service
BROADWAY
Where customers send their friends

43

Jefferson County 4-H members will entertain business people in the county at a chicken dinner July 27 at 7 p.m. at the fairgrounds in Valley Falls.

The county's 423 members will be the hosts, expressing in this way their appreciation for the support given to them by the county's business people throughout the year.

Meriden residents have been eloquent in their appreciation for the help given to them by Valley Falls following the May 19 tornado.

Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus May of Ozawkie announce the engagement of their daughter, Darlene, to Larry Gene Knudsen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Pat Knudsen of Ozawkie.

Both Miss May and Mr. Knudsen are graduates of Ozawkie High School.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reichart have chosen the name Craig Steven for their 8 pounds, 10½ ounce son born July 8 at the hospital in Winchester.

More than 200 Boy Scouts of the Hickory Point district will join more than three million members of the Boy Scouts of America this week as they hold their Jubilee camporee at Camp Jayhawk near Ozawkie.

The scouts will set up their tents at Camp Jayhawk, Friday afternoon. After dinner and cleanup there will be night orientation tests followed by taps.

Quentin Hurst, Dick Reichart, and Truitt Smith will go to the national Jamboree at Colorado Springs, following the weekend at Camp Jayhawk.

At the Rio Theatre — Friday — Saturday: "Saga of Hemp Brown" Rory Calhoun, plus "The Mysterians" From behind the moon they came, to evade (sic) the earth! Sunday: "Operation Petticoat" Cary Grant, Tony Curtis.

50 years ago ... July 10, 1975

Valley Falls Housing Authority Chairman Joe Weishaar introduced the formal ribbon cutting ceremony at Sunset Haven's open house July 4. Speaker Fred Mann and Mayor Paul Hurst did the honors while new resident, Mrs. Frances Huffman and Mrs. Gracie Kientz held the ribbon.

Keith Jackson was elected president of the Valley Falls Board of Education July 1 and his first item of business was the high school student policy. John Reschke attended his first meeting as a voting member, replacing Ed Riedel.

The State Grange will sponsor Bicentennial Festival Day Sunday at the Grange Center at Lake Perry. Events will start at 10:30 a.m. and continue all day, with proceeds going to the Grange's Anne Sullivan fund for the deaf.

Activities include horseshoeing demonstrations, fiddling contest, a display of antique cars, a quilting demonstration, pony rides, a country store, a horseshoe pitching contest, craft show and games, races and contest.

35 years ago ... July 12, 1990

A Valley Falls farmer was

injured Monday morning when he became entangled with a power takeoff shaft on an H Farmall tractor.

Mel Langston, 66, suffered a crushed left ankle and was taken to Stormont-Vail Regional Hospital, Topeka, by Valley Falls emergency medical technicians and Jefferson County Ambulance personnel provided aid.

USD 343 taxpayers will see an increase of 4.97 mills for schools on their tax statement following action by the Perry school board Monday night.

The six board members present unanimously approved the next budget for publication, with a public hearing date set for the Aug. 13 board meeting.

God's Storehouse is \$400 richer in supplies for the poor thanks to the efforts of Meriden Scout James Gerety, 15.

The gift is the result of a community service project Gerety conducted on behalf of the needy to become an Eagle scout.

The Mullers said the gift was particularly appreciated at this time of year when donations are down. The storehouse serves mostly the working poor or anyone in need of food. It is currently helping from 25 to 45 Jefferson County families a month.

Primitive Methods

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20 years ago ... July 14, 2005

Ozawkie Township clerk and former fire chief Jack McNary stands on vacant land on Ozawkie's Main Street where he has hopes a new fire station will soon be built.

A garden tractor pull has been added to the line-up for this weekend's threshing show at Meriden.

The annual event, sponsored by the Meriden Antique Engine and Threshers' Association, will be held June 15 through 17. Although this will be the 29th year for the show, it is the first year the event has included a garden tractor pull.

Adela Timmons, 18, Lawrence, has opened a dance studio for the summer in conjunction with World of Wellness, a fitness center on Broadway in Valley Falls. World of Wellness is run by Timmons' sister and brother-in-law, Gracia and Derek Stone.

She plans on saving the money she earns through the summer dance classes to help her attend graduate school one day.

The Women's Auxiliary to the Graham-Herbers Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post No. 3084, Valley Falls, received the second-place award in the veterans' 2004-2005 Partners in Services Program for their efforts in Buddy Poppy sales. They were also the recipients of the Best All-Around Buddy Poppy Award.

County . . .

Unightly properties

In other business, County Counselor-designate Jonathan Ehrlich updated the commissioners on the effort to hold property owners accountable for alleged violations of the county's zoning regulations, telling them that the Office of the County Attorney had filed charges against "five or six" individuals. He then went on to say that more such cases were "coming" as the county attempts to get unsightly properties cleaned up and brought into compliance with the regulations.

Metzger used the opportunity to report that Planner II Erin George had spent "a ton of time" gathering the information the County Attorney's Office needed in order to take the various property owners to court. He then thanked the office for the assistance it had provided on behalf of his office.

Tax complaint

Having secured a slot on the agenda for the meeting, Donna Huffman, 122 Vista View, Ozawkie, spent roughly 20 minutes complaining about the property taxes on her four-bedroom split-level house with a greenhouse nearby and, to a lesser extent, the taxes on the Union Block buildings in Oskaloosa she owns. Those buildings are located at 301 and 303 Jefferson Street.

Huffman, who said she also owns some rental properties in Oskaloosa, told Christy, Malm and Walbridge that she was "shocked" by the most recent tax bill she received from the county. She said she had anticipated there would be an increase from last year of somewhere

(Continued from page 3)

between \$3,000 and \$4,000 but that her bill went up by more than \$8,000.

Huffman, an attorney by trade, also told the commissioners that she felt like "some retaliation" was involved in the determination of her tax bill and went on to remark that "the animosity from this courthouse against me is legendary."

According to her, on one occasion she filed an appeal with the Office of the County Appraiser protesting her taxes and her taxes were "immediately doubled." She didn't say what year that supposedly happened.

At one point Huffman accused the county of "randomly changing the record," but what she was specifically referring to wasn't exactly clear.

She also claimed at one point that her taxes were "more than double" what anyone else in Ozawkie is paying in taxes.

Frustrated by the cumulative impact of the high taxes she thinks she is having to pay year after year, Huffman summed up the situation by telling the commissioners, "I'm buying my house back from the county. I won't do that."

Huffman also took the time to compare her taxes to the taxes she said former District Judge Gary Nafziger, who reportedly lives two blocks away from her, is paying. "He pays less taxes than anyone else in town," she asserted. "Our judge barely pays taxes."

According to her, over the past 20 years Nafziger has seen his taxes go up just twice and only by 6% each time at that. "I feel like there's this huge disparity," she said in comparing her taxes to the taxes the former judge is being asked to come up with.

Huffman told the commissioners that she was looking for a "reasonable refund" from the county and also wanted to see it stop "randomly changing" numbers and make more of an effort to better inform property owners regarding the valuation and taxation process. "I want my refund and I want it fast," she said. "This kind of taxation can run someone out of their home."

As County Appraiser Janet Allen, R.M.A., seated on the front row of the gallery, listened, Walbridge told Huffman, "I think we need to get some more information from our people and get back with you."

Shortly later, directing his request right at the county appraiser, Christy said, "Janet, would you let us know how you resolve this."

In response to a request for the confirmation of information stemming from Huffman's appearance before the board, Allen told the paper July 1 in an email that her office encourages property owners to review their Property Record Card, which can be found by visiting the website for her office. That can be reached by going to the county's website, www.jfcountys.com, then clicking on Government and looking for County Appraiser.

She also reported that her office sends out valuation notices every year on March 1 and that if a property owner has any questions or concerns, she and her co-workers are "more than happy" to go over the information on the notice with them.

Allen can be contacted by phone at 785-403-0000, Extension 4, or by email at this address: jallen@jfcountys.com.

Land Bank meets

After recessing the meeting so that the commissioners could meet as the directors of the Jefferson County Land Bank, Christy, Malm and Walbridge favorably received a bid on a tract of land on the northwest corner of Ferguson Road and Village Drive.

The bid had been submitted by Asa Collier, Lawrence, who was ready to shell out \$1,025 to obtain the property.

Before Collier's offer was accepted he was asked by Christy what he intended to do with the ground and replied that he wanted to erect a building on it. He then mentioned two possible uses for that building, an "arts and crafts store" (his words) and an Airbnb.

When quizzed about his timeline for making improvements to the property, Collier said he would be concentrating on cleaning up the property this year in anticipation of being in a position to have a building put up there sometime next year.

Metzger told the commissioners that the property was located within the Lakeside Village improvement district but not the subdivision itself.

The meeting was recessed for roughly five minutes to accommodate the business of the Land Bank.

Voting 3-0, the board authorized Christy to sign three Quit Claim deeds on behalf of the governing body.

The deeds conveyed Lots 6 and 16 in Block E of Lake Shore Estates from the Land Bank to Craig and Gail Cozadd, rural Ozawkie, Lot 451 at Lakeside Village from the Land Bank to Travis Logan, rural Ozawkie, and Lot 1 in Block P of Lake Ridge Estates from the Land Bank to Richard and Melissa Moon, rural Ozawkie.

Executive sessions

At the request of Metzger, the commissioners met privately with him and Ehrlich for 10 minutes under the attorney-client privilege exception to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. "Interagency issues" was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Information Technology Administrator Scott Ribordy, the commissioners met privately with him for 10 minutes for the stated purpose of discussing personnel matters relating to non-elected personnel. "Recruitment and retention" was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Christy, the commissioners ultimately met privately with Ehrlich for a total of 20 minutes under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. "Interagency issues" was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed.

At the request of Ehrlich, the commissioners met privately with him for five minutes under the attorney-client privilege exception to KOMA. "Pending litigation" was identified as being the subject that was to be discussed. County Clerk Julie Dunkle was invited to remain in the room for the closed-door conversation and did.

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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