



Announcements/Updates

Chamber Pancake Feed – The next Chamber Pancake Feed is slated for Saturday, October 10th, at the Jeff West Elementary School in Meriden. This bi-annual event funds (4) annually-renewable college scholarships of \$500 each to deserving graduates of Jeff West High School. Additionally, the pancake feed provides a great opportunity to interact with the community at large. To volunteer, contact Chuck Wilson—484-3711.

Halloween Trunk or Treat – This event, scheduled for Friday, October 30th, at Countryside Square in Meriden, is generally attended by upwards of 500 area elementary school students and members of their family. Chamber members are invited to be present as a business to distribute candy or other treats to participants, to volunteer for any of the behind-the-scenes tasks required to make the event successful, and/or to donate cash or other items suitable for raffle prizes. To participate, email the chamber at Meriden_Ozawkie_Chamber@yahoo.com.

Meriden Fall Festival – Because of a last-minute business obligation, Meriden Pride representative Tim Brayshek was unable to be present to report on this event. Alexa Surritt and DeDee Skaggs offered their perspective on the event as a strong foundation for future years, including a steady stream of attendees throughout the day. The Chamber provided free watermelon—a complete success—and the Jeff West Educational Foundation enjoyed the benefits of John Thelen’s BBQ generosity. The variety of activities in neighboring communities seemed to hamper attendance a bit, but along with the lessons learned in the first year’s effort, participants felt strong confidence the festival set a solid precedent for future years.

Facebook Update – In her report to the Chamber, Heather Williams noted that...

- The Chamber Facebook page has 234 “likes”! That is up 14 from last month.
- Our Spotlight Ads were for the City of Meriden (218 reached) & Country Harvest (259 reached). This week’s featured business will be the Crooked Post Winery.
- The Back-to-School contest reached 1,107 people with 41 entered into the drawing. Four different “Parents as Teachers” groups shared it. Donna Wheeler Wells’ name was drawn as the winner of the \$25 gift certificate.
- Submissions for Facebook are welcome. Send these to heatherlwilliams@live.com.

F.W. Huston Foundation Fall Fundraiser – Abby Swoyer announced that the public is invited to an evening of delicious food and delightful entertainment to be held on September 26th from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Jeff County North High School. Tickets are available for purchase in the hospital admissions office or at the door. Tickets cost \$25 for adults or \$8 for children (age 12 and under).

A Taste of Elegance – will be held at Perry High School on Saturday, October 17th. This once-a-year event hosted by the Friends of Hospice of Jefferson County raises funds in support of local hospice care. Tickets remain available for \$30 (or \$35 at the door if available). To purchase tickets, contact DeDee Skaggs at (785) 484-3322, Krystal Porter at 785-766-1828, or the Jefferson County Health Department at (785) 863-2447.

The Jeff West Education Foundation – will host a golf tournament at Lake Perry Country Club on Saturday, September 26th. A shotgun start will begin at 8:00 AM. Hole and raffle prizes from area businesses are welcomed! For more information, contact Stuart Bach or email the Chamber at Meriden_Ozawkie_Chamber@yahoo.com.

County Commissioner Wayne Ledbetter – addressed the chamber to clarify that recent changes in Jefferson County sign regulations were not a new initiative, but rather a revision (and simplification of) of long-standing regulations. Among other things, the changes accommodate recent developments like digital signage and bring county regulations into compliance with other laws regarding freedom of speech.

Wayne also noted that he had submitted a proposal to the commission for the creation of a “land bank” in Jefferson County and is hoping for action soon, and announced that the county has hired Keith Jeffers as the new Emergency Management Director

Special Guest

Brittany Chaplin
Jefferson County Director of Economic Development

Brittany Chaplin, Director of Economic Development for Jefferson County, supplied the chamber members with a copy of her most recent report highlighting developments within the Revitalization/Housing and Redevelopment Commission, the Food Council, and the “Think Local First” initiative (attached). Brittany noted that three individuals in attendance—Paula Smith with Lakeside Village, DeDee Skaggs with Denison State Bank, and Teresa Day with Day Insurance—were members of the “Think Local First” task force.

Brittany led the chamber in a wide-ranging and spirited discussion of ideas for promotion of local businesses, including ways to provide representation for two communities in Jefferson County without formal Chambers (Winchester and Nortonville), ideas for collecting and disseminating information on Jeff County businesses (particularly often overlooked home-based businesses), and ideas for promotion of business through tools like shopping festivals and business-related “scavenger hunts” that would take consumers throughout the county.

Brittany also announced an Agritourism Seminar set for Tuesday, October 13th, beginning at 5:30 PM at Colonial Acres (just south of Oskaloosa). Additionally, Brittany informed the Chamber that Jefferson County was not among those selected to establish a revolving loan fund through “Network Kansas.” Still, Brittany intends to spend the next year building relationships with “Network Kansas” and feels confident the lessons learned this year will strengthen the possibility of approval in future years.

For more information regarding any of these topics, Brittany can be reached at the office (785) 863-5262, by cell (785) 764-6609, or by email brittany@jfcoksed.com.

Upcoming Meetings

Chamber – Thursday, October 15th – Countryside Square Community Room