

# Meriden/Ozawkie Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Announcements/Updates

**Chamber Board Elections** are scheduled for November. After a search for interested and willing candidates, the board is again presenting the names of incumbents Pat Happer, Diane Shaw, and Chuck Wilson for ratification by the chamber. The secretary will send a ratification ballot by email within the next few weeks.

**The 2016 Trunk or Treat** will be held on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, at Countryside Square, Meriden, from 3:45 to 5:00 PM. Participating businesses are encouraged to arrive by 3:15 PM. Response has been positive and several hundred students are expected.

**The Fall Chamber of Commerce Pancake Feed** was held at the Jeff West Elementary School on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. Chairperson Chuck Wilson announced that the chamber served 389 guests and received \$2,117 in contributions after expenses. Chuck reminded the chamber that this event funds annual chamber college scholarships for Jeff West graduates. The chamber expressed their deep appreciation for Chuck's continuing leadership of this community-building event.

**Meriden Fall Festival & Street Dance** – Tim Benyshek reported that this year's festival went well, with good vendor turnout and a steady stream of participants all day long. Plans are already underway for next year. The festival will continue to be scheduled for the third Saturday in September each year.

The Chamber's "Watermelon Seed-Spitting Competition" was one part of a successful day. The winners were announced as follows:

Age 5 to 10:	Tanner Zwycart	Distance 17 ft
Age 11 to 18:	Garrett Sayles	Distance 19 ft
Age 19 to 65:	Daniel Pickerell	Distance 26 ft
Age 66 & up:	Steve Clasphill	Distance 21.9 ft

**Taste of Elegance** – DeDee Skaggs reported that, as part of this year's well-attended festivities, the 2016 Carole Hendrix Memorial Nursing Scholarship were announced. Faith Wildeman and Trista Gish, both of Valley Falls and both enrolled at Washburn School of Nursing, were each awarded \$500. Other highlights included the awarding of three cash prizes from the "Arm's Length Raffle"—prizes of \$100, \$250, and \$500 each!

**County Economic Development** – In the interest of time, Director Brittany Chaplin delayed her report until next month, but will be bringing an in-depth report at that time. Brittany did note that Jefferson County would be hosting this year's NE Kansas Officials Meeting and invited area businesses to consider donating door prizes for the event.

## Special Guest

**Blake Bomhoff, owner/operator of Meriden Gun Shop**, was present with an informative presentation on his own background, the development of his business, and current regulations and concerns impacting gun ownership and personal safety. Blake has been in business for the past ten years, selling firearms and firearms accessories, doing firearms repairs, and providing education and training, including concealed carry classes and private firearms instruction.

Blake is a former infantryman with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne division and classified by the government as a tactics and weapons expert. He is a member of the International Association of Close Combat Professionals and thoroughly trained in hand-to-hand combat. Blake does personal awareness training and security assessments, and is also a Class III weapons dealer.

Blake queried the chamber on his “number one gun safety rule”: “Never point a firearm at anything you’re not willing to destroy.” Blake then added three more—always keep your finger off the trigger until you’re ready to fire, always keep firearms stored safely away from unauthorized users, and always know what’s beyond your target. You are responsible for the ultimate resting place of any projectile fired from your gun.

Kansas is a “2<sup>nd</sup> amendment-friendly” state. A concealed carry permit requires an eight-hour class outlined by the Kansas Attorney General’s office. The class includes 2 hours on the laws pertaining to concealed carry in Kansas, and all the rest of the course is based on the NRA’s basic practical pistol course for beginners, including information on revolvers and semi-automatics, parts functioning, ammunition identification, cleaning, maintenance, security, the use of deadly force, and more. Of note, under current law, if you are licensed for concealed carry by the state of Kansas and are involved in a shooting for which the state is unable to bring criminal charges, the state will not allow a civil suit to be brought as a result of that shooting, either.

Future desires include an indoor shooting range and digital training capabilities that train without the use of live ammo. For more information about any of the products or services Blake offers, he may be reached at (785) 484-3006.

## Next Meeting

**The Chamber meets again** at noon at the Gambino’s “community room” on Thurs, Nov 17<sup>th</sup>.