

Meriden/Ozawkie Area Chamber of Commerce  
Chamber Meeting Minutes – February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Special Guest

**Carol Wilson** introduced the chamber to the fundamental concepts of “Centered Riding.” Centered Riding involves attention to “centering, breathing, ‘soft eyes,’ and balance” and was developed originally to improve the balance and effectiveness of the equine rider. Carol made the case that these principles are beneficial not just for effective horsemanship but also as practical skills for everyday life.

Carol is past president of Centered Riding, Inc., a Level 3 Centered Riding Instructor & Clinician, and a Guild Certified Advanced TTEAM Practitioner. She has used her corporate background in communications and her skills in training others in these techniques to build a business that keeps her busy teaching events hosted locally at Hidden Acres Farm and by invitation at multiple events across the nation.

Announcements and Updates

**January “After Hours” report** – Chamber president Scott Stanley thanked everyone who was able to attend the January 2017 Chamber “After Hours” event at Ernest-Spencer Metals. He also expressed the chamber’s appreciation to Neal Spencer and his crew for a great job of hosting us. Scott reported that the “Chamber Gift Certificates” winner (a name was drawn from every new or renewed member for 2017) was Kansas Broadband. Kansas Broadband, in turn, generously donated their gift certificates to God’s Storehouse!

**Spring Pancake Feed** – Pancake Feed chairperson Chuck Wilson reminded the chamber about this spring’s pancake feed, set for Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, from 7 to 11 AM, at the Jeff West Elementary School. Proceeds from the pancake feed fund the Chamber’s scholarship fund, which provides up to four \$500 scholarships each year to qualified Jeff West graduates. Chuck reminded members of what a great opportunity the pancake feed provides to interact with members of the community and other chamber members.

**Membership Renewals** – Chamber president Scott Stanley reported that the prompt renewal incentive served the chamber well. As of Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, membership dues have been received from 48 members, including 4 new members: Lake Ridge Estates HOA, Just 4 Hair (Ozawkie), Cotton O’Neil (Meriden), and the City of Ozawkie. Questions regarding membership applications or renewals can be directed to any Chamber board member.

**“Welcome to Meriden” Sign Landscaping announced** – At the request of the chamber board, JWMS instructor Steve Buss and several of his students have offered a proposal for landscaping the area surrounding both “Welcome to Meriden” signs the Chamber installed several years ago. Work will begin soon and planting will be done in April, with watering maintained long enough to get the plantings established for summer.

Alexa Surritt brought a recommendation for improvements to the lighting of the signs. Given normal wear and tear and the improvements in lighting technology since the

signs were installed, the recommendations, Lexie recommended replacing the wiring, the light itself, and the current battery with a hybrid deep-cycle battery will cost approximately \$500 per light. After discussion, a motion was made by Chuck Wilson and seconded by Jim McGrath to make the improvements subject to formal ratification by the board. Motion carried.

**Chamber Gift Certificates** – Scott also reminded the Chamber that any gift certificates received can be redeemed by bringing them to a chamber meeting or mailing the certificate to the Meriden-Ozawkie Area Chamber of Commerce at PO Box 175, Meriden, KS, 66512.

**Community Easter Egg Hunt** –Meriden Pride will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM, at the Meriden City Park. As we've done in previous years, the Chamber will be providing bicycles for each "age division" planned for at the egg hunt as prizes. Participants are strongly urged to arrive early.

**County Commissioner Wayne Ledbetter** – Wayne Ledbetter apologized for not being present for the January "After Hours" due to illness. The chamber agreed that was something better kept to himself. He also noted that the new county phone system (including new numbers) has been implemented. The few glitches that have occurred are being ironed out.

Wayne asked the chamber members be thinking again about the possible development of tax incentives for new business development. Wayne will look for the opportunity to develop the conversation further at a future chamber meeting.

**Economic Development** – In the absence of Director Brittany Chaplin, Michelle Carter was pleased to announce a new appointment to the EDC board—Taylor Norris, with King Construction of Oskaloosa. Michelle also reported on an upcoming survey from the housing committee—encouraging chamber members to not only complete the survey when available, but to encourage others to do so, as well. Michelle noted a successful January event hosted by the food council (with 45 food-producers present) and a follow-up meeting is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup>.

Michelle also announced a business workshop on "Utilizing Social Media" scheduled for Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, from 6 – 8:00 PM at The Barn Bed and Breakfast in Valley Falls. Registration details will be forthcoming shortly.

**Jefferson County Friends of Hospice** – DeDee noted that the date has already been set for this year's "Taste of Elegance" event. Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Perry-Lecompton High School.

## Upcoming Meetings

Chamber – Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> – Gambino's Community Room – Meriden  
Special Guest: David Jenson with AgMax Crop Insurance