

# Agritourism can educate city youth

From the desk of Cathy Domsch

Agritourism is the intersection of agriculture and tourism.

"Agritourism is when the public visits a working farm, ranch, winery or any agricultural operation or active agricultural heritage site for enjoyment, outdoor recreation, activities, education, shopping, dining or lodging," according to *Growing Agritourism in Kansas: A Starter Manual for Farmers and Ranchers*.

Why agritourism? Families that live in the city want to get away from it all and relax. Adults remember visiting grandpa and grandma's farm and want their children to experience what they did; helping coral steers, hunt and fish, feed the baby goats, pick sweet corn and pumpkins. Do children raised in the city experience rainbows, clear starry nights, and the sound of coyotes? No, but they can on your farm.

People will pay to play in the country! Watching a wheat har-

vest, branding steers, ride a horse over the countryside, take a wagon ride, hunting, fishing, picking a pumpkin, eating roasted corn, the list is endless. What can you offer a family from the city? A haunted hayride during Halloween? Chores on the farm? Fresh produce from your garden?

Agritourism can increase your revenues on your farm or ranch during this time of decreased production and fluctuating commodity prices. Mothers can stay at home with their children by being involved in the agritourism activities and operations. By opening your farm or ranch to the public, a direct relationship can be developed, increasing the knowledge and support of the importance of family farms.

For more information on agritourism, contact Cathy Domsch at the Bird City Century II Development Foundation office at (785) 734-2556.

# Brand inspector finishes his career

By Karen Krien

He said he enjoyed it but, after 35 years, Marv Zwegardt, St. Francis, is retiring from his duties as livestock brand inspector.

Mr. Zwegardt started in 1970, replacing Raymond Leitner of Herndon. He had a 7-month trail before he was officially deemed as a brand inspector.

He had a huge book full of brands and who they belonged to and attended six livestock sales each week. He had a full schedule going from St. Francis, to Atwood, Hoxie, Norton, Oberlin and Oakley. At that time, there were 16 sale barns west of LaCrosse and Hays which used brand inspectors. Today, there are only eight. There are only five or six brand inspectors in this area.

Some of the sale barns have closed down and others have choose not to have brand inspections.

Mr. Zwegardt said the brand inspector is to arrive at the sale barn early in the day and stay until the sale is over in case they need to give brand clearances. He said that by the time he left Norton, it was late and then he drove back home making the day last into the next morning.

While he said he has met some might nice people, he has, on the other hand, met some not-so-nice bulls and cows. He learned early on to never trust an animal. He has been knocked down and could crawl a fence really fast when an animal was right behind him. However, he said he was never seriously hurt on the job.

Mr. Zwegardt said a rancher

can buy a brand for \$45 and it will be good for 5 years and renew it.

He used to have a sign in his pickup which read, "Trust everybody but, brand your calves." He thinks that it is a good idea to brand calves, not because someone is so apt to steal them but, occasionally they will get mixed in with the neighbor's herd and, if there isn't a brand, the owner has just lost a calf.

Brand inspectors are employed by the Kansas Animal Health Department. Several things have changed since he joined on as a brand inspector.

"At first we were furnished a vehicle then they did away with it. Mr. Zwegardt said he is probably going to miss the people because he said he has met a lot of nice people and they have helped him a lot.

Just the other day, he was given a letter from Claude Le Gall, France, which had been sent to Jerry Fortin, Oberlin sale barn. Mr. Le Gall had been in Oberlin in 1971 and had taken pictures at the auction. He said the sale was the "highlight" of their journey across the country. He had sent a photo of Mr. Zwegardt, noting that it must have been about 34 years ago. (The photo is the one used with this article.)

Mr. Zwegardt said he is looking forward to retirement and to not having to put up with the cold weather and standing on cement all day long. He is looking at playing a little golf.

"Just take it easy for a while!" he said.

Jim Dunn, St. Francis, will be the new brand inspector from this area.



35 YEARS AGO, Marv Zwegardt was photographed inspecting cattle at Oberlin.



## Advertise your interest in agriculture by using a special license tag

Up and down Kansas highways, a special tag highlighting Kansas Agriculture can be seen. These tags are available at the Cheyenne County Treasurer's office.

To get one of the tags, people need to send a \$25 yearly donation to the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. In return, the supporters then present the official certificate and a once-every-five-years specialty charge to the county treasurer in exchange for the Agri-Tag. Currently one in five Kansas children, rural and urban, will grow up to be professionally employed in agriculture-related jobs, according to the Kansas State Department of Agriculture.

In 2000, Kansas was the leading producer of wheat, sorghum and beef production. Kansas was also ranked in the top five for many other areas of production.

"It is important to the future of the Kansas economy that students learn about where their food and clothing come from," said Barbara Oplinger, administrator of Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom has many programs to reach today's youth concerning agriculture literacy. Among those programs are graduate credit courses for teachers with some scholarships, agriculture resources for teachers, a postcard art contest for children kindergarten through sixth grade and school assemblies.

"As Secretary of Agriculture, I see fewer and fewer people with an agriculture background and a natural understanding of agriculture and what it contributes to our state and world," said Adrian Polansky, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture. "Producers who support the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom's efforts to connect

classrooms to agriculture are investing in the future of Kansas agriculture and our children."

Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom depends on public and private funding to provide all their programs to students and teachers throughout Kansas. However, a large fund-raiser for the program is being threatened. The Agri-Tag license plate program needs 300 more tags on the road by July 2006 or the state of Kansas will discontinue the program.

For more information on Agri-Tag, Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, to become a member or other programs, call toll free 12-866-759-8031 or visit [www.ksagclassroom.org](http://www.ksagclassroom.org).

### Facts

- The ancient Egyptians slept on pillows made of stone.
- The wood stork, also known as the wood ibis, is the only true stork native to the United States.
- The first holes-in-one scored by both a father and son in the same game of golf were shot by Charles H. Calhoun Sr. and Jr. on August 24, 1932.
- Prior to Cornelius Vanderbilt's donation of \$1 million in 1873 Vanderbilt University was known as Central University.

## McDonald News

By Cheryl Wilkinson

It was a beautiful Sunday evening for the talent show at the McDonald Gazebo. A nice crowd enjoyed the evening with visiting and watching a variety of talents performed by many talented individuals. A treat of ice cream and cake finished off the evening, along with a shower of rain.

Ray and Marlene Johnson were visitors of Ted and Dixie Bethell of McCook Saturday. They helped their great-granddaughter, Reigan Bethell, celebrated her first birthday.

Amelia Banister and Karlyne Atchinson attended a birthday dinner for Jim Banister at Tammy and Wade Carmichael's home in Bird City on Sunday.

Kent Banister and Amelia Banister visited Amelia's sister, Viola and Irene Kehlbeck on Sunday at the Good Samaritan Village in St. Francis.

On Friday, Kenny and Phyllis Wilkinson met Larry and Andrew Wilkinson and Stephen Netherthon of Wichita for lunch in Colby.

Eleanor and Shirley Swihart drove to Chicago and spent last week with Ben Swihart, Eleanor's grandson.

Rod, Lisa and Josh Johnson were Sunday dinner guests of Kenny and Phyllis Wilkinson.

On Tuesday, Ray and Marlene Johnson attended the 86th birthday celebration for Louis Moreland of Goodland.

Shalyn Harris of McCook was a guest of her grandparents, Cheryl and Greg Wilkinson last week. On Friday, Shalyn and Cheryl went to Colby, to see Lori and Lakin Denny.

Laddie Kacirek is a patient at the Swedish Hospital in Denver. Vera and their children, Susie Sabatka and Dave and Becky Kacirek, are there with him as he recuperates.

## South of McDonald

By Sandy Binning

Kathy and Debbie Banister helped with the cleaning up of the fairgrounds with other 4-H'ers Friday.

The Shay grandchildren were Monday afternoon guests of Charlene Kramer.

Saturday afternoon through Sun-

day evening guests of Lynn and Rita Officer were Rita's brother and his family, Ken and Joan Dewey, and Jenny and Damien Boyer.

Additional Sunday dinner guests of Lynn and Rita Officer were Randy and Melissa Regier and children. Eunice Officer was a Sunday afternoon guest.

## Book Review

State of Fear

Michael Crichton  
In Paris, a physicist dies after performing a laboratory experiment for a beautiful visitor.

In the jungles of Malaysia, a mysterious buyer purchases deadly cavitation technology, built to his specifications.

In Vancouver, a small research submarine is leased for use in the waters off New Guinea.

And in Tokyo, an intelligence agent tries to understand what it all means.

Thus begins Michael Crichton's exciting and provocative techno-thriller *State of Fear*. Only Crichton's unique ability to blend

scientific fact with pulse-pounding fiction could bring such disparate elements to a heart-stopping conclusion.

This is Crichton's most wide-ranging thriller. *State of Fear* take the reader from the glaciers of Iceland to the volcanoes of Antarctica, from the Arizona desert to the deadly jungles of the Solomon Islands, from the streets of Paris to the beaches of Los Angeles. The novel races forward on a roller-coaster thrill ride, all the while keeping the brain in high gear. Gripping and thought-provoking, *State of Fear* is Michael Crichton at his very best.

**This 'n That for Baby**  
Baby Shower for Baby Boy of  
**Tana & Darren Dale**  
Sat., July 23 ~ 10 a.m.-Noon  
St. Joseph Catholic Church  
Bird City

Cadence is proud to announce the arrival of his little brother  
**CARTER JAMES WILKENS**  
Carter was born Feb. 12, 2005 and weighed 6 lbs. 2 ozs. and was 19 1/2 in. long. Parents are Tyrone & Amy Wilkens. Grandparents are Duane Wilkens and Julie Wilkens; Cindy & Keith Bowman, Goodland; Jim & Sandy Weber, Burlington, CO. Great-grandparents are Ellsworth Wilkens; Eunice Witman and Charlie & Eunice Weber

## Business Directory

To list your business, call 785-332-3162.

**Business Cards...**  
\*One color \*Full color  
\*Two colors \*Two sided  
\*Logos \*Pictures  
\*The options are endless in making business cards for your business.  
The new card will run in the business card directory FREE for two weeks!

**FLANDERS GUTTERING**  
"A better way to go"  
• 5 inch seamless guttering • Roofing  
• Windows • Soffit and Fascia  
FREE ESTIMATES  
**SPECIALIZING IN:**  
**CALL FOR SPRING SPECIALS!**  
785-694-2865 or 785-462-0632

**Residential & Commercial ROOFING**  
Local DURO-LAST Contractor  
**Murray Roofing**  
740 E. 4th Colby, KS 67701 785-462-6908 800-794-3204  
**FREE ESTIMATES**  
Jeff Dreiling/Sales

**WESTERN KANSAS CENTER FOR COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL DIAGNOSIS & REHABILITATION**  
460-3999 or toll free 1-866-305-3999  
Jeffrey M. Rayl, D.D.S.  
1690 W. 4th • Colby, KS

**Master Cleaners Of Hays**  
Drop off Location at  
**Donna's Gift Palace**  
World of Enchantment  
212 W. Washington • St. Francis, KS  
785-332-3300  
**Dry Cleaning & Laundry Picked Up Monday and Wednesday**  
Offering 2 Day Service

**Open House Reception**  
In Honor of  
**Dustin & Michelle Hubbard**  
Sat., July 23  
4-6 p.m.  
McDonald Federated Church Educational Building