

# Kansas farm families work from one generation to the next

TOWANDA – Jeff and Calvin Varner can’t remember a time when they didn’t want to be farmers.

To be sure, they have other interests and skills – Jeff has a head for accounting and is a self-described techie who enjoys computers and all things electronic, while Calvin is a gifted cabinetry craftsman – plus he has a wife and three daughters.

The brothers and their parents, Delbert and Pat Varner, are among the Kansas farmers who grew up on a family farm and have managed to transition the business from one generation to the next. To help keep them on track, they recently attended a “Keep the Family Farming Workshop” sponsored by K-State Research and Extension and its Farm Analyst Program.

Jeff and Calvin worked alongside their dad, Delbert, and their Uncle Ray as they were growing up on the family farm near Towanda. Now they are in a corporation with Delbert on Varner Farms, Inc. The farm is a “Century Farm,” originally started in 1902 by Jeff and Calvin’s great-grandfather.

“When the boys were little, we tried to encourage them to do different things, but they wanted to be farmers,” said the brothers’ mom, Pat. She and Delbert celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary July 24.

“There’s been no other option,” said 48-year-old Jeff about his career plan. One instructor along the way encouraged him to be an accountant. Instead, he put his skills to use handling his family’s farm finances.

“I’ve always known that I wanted to farm and build cabinetry,” said 46-year-old Calvin, who not only uses his skills around the farm, but builds and restores furniture – especially in the quieter winter months.

But it wasn’t always clear sailing, Jeff said. As he and Calvin grew to adulthood and wanted to try new ways of doing things, their uncle, who was married but had no children of his own, had difficulty relinquishing responsibilities.

In time, the brothers bought out their uncle’s share of the business and now largely run the operation.

“Money is often the biggest reason for a collapse of a family farm operation,” said Coy Allen, who, as an economist with the K-State Farm Analyst Program, has worked with the Varners.

He said the family has made the transition from one generation to the next because they work to communicate with each other and respect one another’s strengths.

Some of the hallmarks of a successful, long-lived farming operation – or any business – is understanding its financial position, managing growth and cash flow, and planning for the future, said K-State agricultural economist, LaVell Winsor. Winsor, who is also with the Farm Analyst program and a presenter at the recent workshops, said identifying who is in charge, when family members plan to retire, and goals for the business are factors that families need to consider when adding family members to the operation or passing it along to another generation.

The Varner family, which includes Calvin’s wife, Carla and their daughters, Shelby, 8, Tara, 11 and Amy 15, has worked to make sure family members are playing the roles they want to play and the roles they’re best suited for, the Farm Analyst program’s Allen said.

Jeff and Calvin have two sisters, neither of whom are involved in the farm.

# Pow Wow planned this weekend

A group of Cheyenne Indians are planning on gathering Friday through Sunday in rural south-east Rawlins County for a three day Pow Wow that will celebrate history and culture of the Plains Indians. BC Buffalo and Ginther Stables will host the group, who plan on making camp in traditional teepees set among a herd of buffalo.

While Friday and Sunday are not open to the public, the Cheyenne welcome and encourage public attendance beginning at 10 am. on Saturday. Traditional Native American goods will be available, trail rides will be given, and other activities are planned. The Pow Wow will begin with a buffalo cookout Saturday evening. The group is looking forward to sharing their culture with visitors.

To make reservations for the meal and trail ride, call (785) 322-5343 by Thursday.

A more detailed schedule of events and driving directions will be posted in the Thursday, edition of the Atwood *Square Deal* newspaper.

# Communication needed in family farms

CHANUTE – Good, ongoing communication is critical to a successful farm business – especially in situations where a family is transitioning the operation to adult children or other family members. That was a consensus of opinion that came from a survey conducted at workshops sponsored by Kansas State University.

“Communication may seem like the simplest thing, but time and again, whether we’re talking about a family business, a volunteer activity such as church or a large corporation, communication is the single biggest issue,” said LaVell Winsor, agricultural economist with K-State’s Farm Analyst Program.

Winsor, explained that a family business meeting can offer a safe environment to bring up issues that aren’t comfortable to bring up in day-to-day communication.

“Holding these meetings in a business fashion with an agenda, ground rules, and a designated facilitator can keep all on track,” said Winsor, who also recommended taking minutes in case a decision-making process will need to be reviewed.

Respect for one another’s viewpoints is important, and each person has a right to their view of the potential impacts of different decisions, she said. The difficulty, as with anything important but not urgent, is to make time for the business meetings. Although day-to-day information needs to be communicated among those family members on the farm, when discussing key estate planning issues or big-picture vision issues central to the long-term viability of the business, it’s important to discuss issues with all stakeholders – not just those on the farm.

More information about the Farm Analyst Program or other programs related to the economics of farming is available by calling the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics at (785) 532-1505 or on the Web site: [www.agmanager.info](http://www.agmanager.info).

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# Middle school years call for patience

MANHATTAN – A new school year can offer challenges and opportunities, yet parents may not realize that the middle school years may be the most troublesome.

Charles A. “Chuck” Smith, Kansas State University Research and Extension child development specialist, said the middle school years are mentally and physically challenging and, for students and their parents, often filled with anxiety and uncertainty.

Much is new, said Smith, who noted that middle school students often move to a larger building. They’re also asked to mix with students from other schools, adjust to a new class schedule and a variety of teaching styles, all while growing and developing as young adults.

Middle school students typically want to fit in, but not call attention to themselves, he said. Hormones are raging. Peer pressure is prevalent, and bullying, well, which is better? To be a victim – or a bystander, afraid to step in for fear of being the next victim?

Smith offered some tips for parents of middle schoolers:

- Be involved. Let your child know that you are interested in his or her education.
- Make an effort to meet teachers, attend school events and take advantage of opportunities for parent-teacher conferences.
- Participate in parent-teacher organizations or booster groups to learn more about the school and to meet other parents.
- Make home a welcoming place to interact with family and friends.
- Encourage children to bring their friends home for a meal or family game night.
- Be flexible. If schedules make a family dinner difficult, try breakfast or a relaxed weekend brunch to gather.
- Try not to add to the stress, badger or interrogate a child. Often a child will volunteer information, including thoughts, feeling, or concerns, when doing something else, such as walking, riding in the car or learning how to make a dish to take to a picnic or potluck.
- Listen to what a child is saying, but don’t rush to judgment. Take time to process the information and strive toward helping a child explore opportunities or resolve conflicts without doing it for him or her.
- Praise effort, but recognize that failures also can be learning experiences.

More tips are available at [www.k-state.edu/wwparent/wondhome.htm](http://www.k-state.edu/wwparent/wondhome.htm) and [www.raising-courageouskids.com](http://www.raising-courageouskids.com).

# Bridge Club

Meadow Lake bridge winners for Tuesday, Aug. 18, were first, Elaine Ptacek; second, Joy Davis; third, Jean Snyder; fourth, Larry Barrett; fifth, Barb Ulmer; sixth, Lyle Worthy.

MOVIE  
PASSES

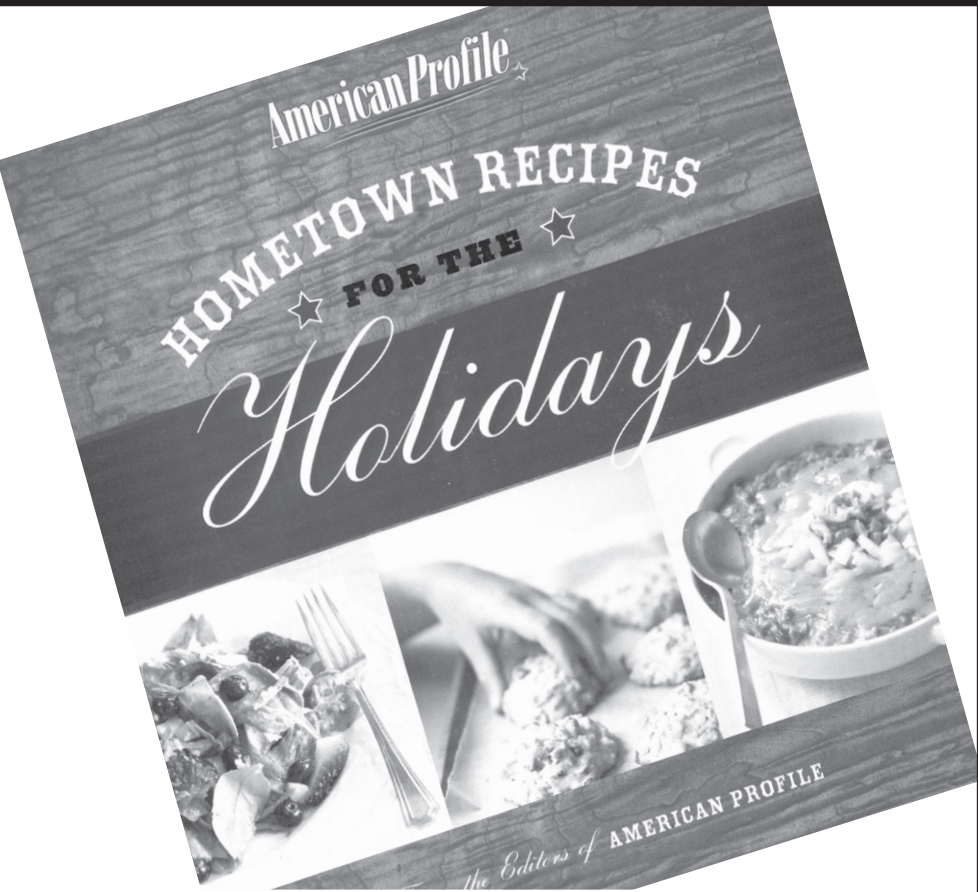
Watch for your  
name in the  
Wednesday movie  
listings  
for 2 free  
passes.



(Passes must be used within 7 days.)

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Tuesday Evening												
August 25, 2009												
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30		
KAKE/ABC	Shaq Vs.		Shaq Vs.		Primetime		Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live			
KBSL/CBS	NCIS		Big Brother 11		The Mentalist		Local	Late Show-Letterman		Late Late		
KSNK/NBC	America's Got Talent		America's Got Talent				Local	Tonight Show		Late Nigh		
KSAS/FOX	Hell's Kitchen		More to Love		Local							
Cable Channels												
A & E	The First 48		The First 48		The Cleaner		The Cleaner		The First 48			
AMC	GoodFellas							Mobsters				
ANIM	Killing for a Living		Animal Nightmares		Bear Attack!		Killing for a Living		Animal Nightmares			
BRAVO	Top Chef: Las Vegas		Flipping Out		Flipping Out		Flipping Out		Flipping Out			
CMT	Extreme-Home		Son-in-Law					In the Army Now				
CNN	Campbell Brown		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360				Larry King Live			
COMEDY	Daily	Colbert	S. Park	S. Park	S. Park	S. Park	Daily	Colbert	S. Park	S. Park		
DISC	Swords: Life		Swords: Life		The Colony		Swords: Life		Swords: Life			
DISN	Dadnapped			Phineas	Wizards	Montana	The Suite	So Raven	Life With	Cory		
E!	Kendra		Reality	Soup	Kourtney	Kourtney	Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea	Kourtney		
ESPN	World Series		World Series		Baseball Tonight		SportsCenter		Baseball	NFL Live		
ESPN2	Little League				WNBA Basketball				SportsNation			
FAM	10 Things	Ruby	Legally Blonde				The 700 Club		Make It or Break It			
FOOD	Cakes	Cakes	Unwrapped	The Best	Chopped		Good Eats	Unwrapped	Unwrapped	The Best		
FX	The Green Mile				Rescue Me		Rescue Me		'70s Show	'70s Show		
HGTV	My First	My First	House	Buck	House	House	Estate	My First	My First	My First		
HIST	The Universe		The Universe		Earth-Made		Mega Disasters		The Universe			
LIFE	Reba	Reba	Acceptance				Will	Will	Frasier	Frasier		
MTV	True Life		Jazmin	Daddy	Daddy	Jazmin	Daddy	Jazmin	Best Dance Crew			
NICK	Malcolm	Malcolm	Lopez	Lopez	Lopez	Lopez	The Nanny	The Nanny	The Nanny	The Nanny		
SCI	Warehouse 13		Warehouse 13		ECW		Warehouse 13		Stargate SG-1			
SPIKE	Star Wars: Episode II		Star Wars Ep 2							CSI		
TBS	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Office	Office	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Sex and t	Sex and t		
TCM	The Lodger			Scarlet Pimprnl				The Divorce of Lady X				
TLC	Jon & Kate Plus 8		18 Kids	18 Kids	Masters of Reception		18 Kids	18 Kids	Masters of Reception			
TNT	Bones		Bones		HawthoRNe		Saving Grace		HawthoRNe			
TOON	Total Dra	Total	Stoked	6TEEN	King-Hill	King-Hill	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Aqua Teen		
TRAV	Anthony Bourdain		Bizarre Foods		Bizarre Foods		Bizarre Foods		Anthony Bourdain			
TV LAND	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Roseanne			
USA	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law Order: CI		Law Order: CI			
VH1	Real Chance of Love		Megan Wants		My Antonio		Celeb Moment		Real Chance of Love			
WGN	Keeping-Steins				WGN News at Nine		Scrubs	Scrubs	The Bob & Tom Show			
Premium Channels												
HBO	Fixer: The Taking		Max Payne				Entourage		True Blood		Lopez	
MAX	Sarah M		Charlie Wilson's War		The Rocker							
SHOW	Rescue		Rambo		Weeds	Nurse	Weeds	Nurse	There Will Be Blood			

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Wednesday Evening												
August 26, 2009												
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30		
KAKE/ABC	Wipeout		Crash Course		Primetime: Crime		Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live			
KBSL/CBS	Christine	Gary	Criminal Minds		CSI: NY		Local	Late Show-Letterman		Late Late		
KSNK/NBC	America's Got Talent		America's Got Talent		Law & Order: SVU		Local	Tonight Show		Late Nigh		
KSAS/FOX	Bones		Bones		Local							
Cable Channels												
A & E	Bounty Hunter		Dog		Criss Angel		Criss Angel		Bounty Hunter			
AMC	The Delta Force						Delta Force 2					
ANIM	Untamed and Uncut		I Was Bitten		I Shouldn't Be Alive		I Was Bitten		I Shouldn't Be Alive			
BRAVO	Top Chef		Top Chef: Las Vegas		Top Chef: Las Vegas		Top Chef: Las Vegas		Top Chef: Las Vegas			
CMT	Extreme-Home		Blazing Saddles				Blazing Saddles					
CNN	Campbell Brown		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360				Larry King Live			
COMEDY	Daily	Colbert	Futurama	S. Park	S. Park	Michael	Daily	Colbert	S. Park	Michael		
DISC	MythBusters		Man vs. Wild		Man vs. Wild		MythBusters		Man vs. Wild			
DISN	Princess Diaries 2				Wizards	Montana	The Suite	So Raven	Life With	Cory		
E!	Hollywood Murder				Billion-Murder		Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea	Kendra		
ESPN	Little League				Baseball Tonight		SportsCenter		Baseball	NFL Live		
ESPN2	MLB Baseball				World Series		World Series		SportsNation			
FAM	Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		The 700 Club		10 Things	Ruby		
FOOD	Munchies Unwrapped		Play	Play	Dinner: Impossible		Good Eats	Unwrapped	Play	Play		
FX	A Few Good Men						A Few Good Men					
HGTV	Property	Property	House	Income	House	Renovatn	Amazing	My First	Property	Property		
We Celebrate Hometown Life												
Stories from hometowns just like yours. Look for us each week in this paper.												
HIST	MonsterQuest		MonsterQuest		Ice Road Truckers		Modern Marvels		MonsterQuest			
LIFE	Reba	Reba	Spring Breakdown				Project Runway		Models	Frasier		
MTV	Jazmin	Daddy	The Real World		The Real World		The Real World		Going Out	Going Out		
NICK	Malcolm	Malcolm	Lopez	Lopez	Lopez	Lopez	The Nanny	The Nanny	The Nanny	The Nanny		
SCI	Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		Scariest Places			
SPIKE	Star Wars: Ep. III		Star Wars: Ep. III							CSI		
TBS	Payne	Payne	Browns	Browns	Payne	Payne	Payne	Payne	Sex and t	Sex and t		
TCM	The King and I				Magnificent 7							
TLC	Lottery Changed		Truth Be Told		Toddlers & Tiaras		Lottery Changed		Truth Be Told			
Leverage			Leverage		Dark Blue		Leverage		Dark Blue			
TOON	Bobb'e	Dude	Otherside	Survive	King-Hill	King-Hill	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Aqua Teen		
TRAV	Mega Factories		Man/Food	Man Food	Man/Food	Man Food	Man/Food	Man Food	Mega Factories			
TV LAND	Married	Married	Married	Married	Get Rich	Get Rich	Roseanne	Roseanne	Roseanne	Roseanne		
USA	NCIS		NCIS		NCIS		NCIS		You Only Live Twice			
VH1	One-Hit Wndrs		The Beatles				My Antonio		Megan Wants			
WGN	Coach	Coach	Becker	Becker	WGN News at Nine		Scrubs	Scrubs	The Bob & Tom Show			
Premium Channels												
HBO	The Express		True Blood		Hard Knocks		Real Time		REAL Sports			
MAX	Vampire		Back to School		RocknRolla				Co-ed Confidential 3			
SHOW	Stardust		Nurse	Weeds	The Kite Runner				Lars			

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