

Cedar to have festival reunion of country music

By Ron Wilson

Director
Huck Boyd National Institute
for Rural Development
at Kansas State University

Are you going to a reunion this summer? No, not a family reunion, a festival reunion. In June, a rural Kansas community is hosting its tenth and final annual country music festival, with a reunion of performers through the years.

Lowell Lydic is organizer of this annual music festival. This year's event is called the Cedar Depot Festival Reunion, because past performers are invited. The number and quality of the performers is amazing, considering that this festival is held in one of the smallest communities in Kansas.

Lowell Lydic's career with the DEKALB seed company took him to Illinois, Arizona, Texas and Kansas. While in Arizona, he got involved with the Rex Allen Museum and then became active in the Western Music Association.

He continued that involvement after moving to the small rural community of Cedar in northwest Kansas. He and his wife Nancy met lots of western entertainers, including Janet McBride from Texas.

Janet was performing at a festival in Nebraska, so she stayed at Lowell and Nancy's home. Lowell said, "The next morning she got up and looked at the park across the street from our house and said to us, 'That would be a pretty place to have a festival.' I said we were talking

about restoring the old depot over there so maybe we could pull that together."

Janet agreed to perform and they scheduled the festival. On Memorial Day weekend, with a couple of flatbed trailers by the depot as a stage, more than a thousand people showed up for the Cedar Depot Festival.

It went so well that it became an annual event and was moved to the weekend after Memorial Day so as to have space for lodging. The event has grown to include three days of shows, stages in two parks, musical workshops and equestrian performances.

It's a remarkable happening for a small Kansas town. After all, Cedar is a town of 17 people. Now,

that's rural.

What is life like in a town of 17 people? Lowell Lydic said, "Well, my wife and I are both on the city council and my brother-in-law is the mayor, and if you don't show up in church, you are missed." How does a town of 17 host a music festival for a couple thousand people? "It's taken the cooperation of everyone," Lowell said. People help from all over. "Some 60 RVers will camp at Cedar," Lowell said.

Do you know of any other town of 17 people that has two parks? Lowell explained that there was a lot in town with a falling-down house and brush around it that needed to be cleaned up. Lowell and Nancy bought it for a park and dedicated it to the memory of their son Jim, who

had died in a tragic poisoning incident in Arizona. Volunteers pitched in and today, it is a beautiful park.

2011 will mark the tenth year of this amazing event, but the decision has been made that this will be the last. This final show is called the Cedar Depot Festival Reunion, and performers through the years will be invited back - including Janet McBride, who will be selling her autobiographical book. The festival will be dedicated to her husband, who passed away in December 2010.

Daytime shows will feature more than 40 performers at Cedar, with cowboy church on Sunday. Friday and Saturday night concerts will be held at nearby Smith Center High School with headliners like Maggie

Mae, a nationally known performer from RFD-TV.

"We're especially proud of how we've involved and encouraged the young people," Lowell said. The festival has provided opportunities for numerous youngsters to perform and get a start here. In fact, a group called the Talented Teens will open each evening show. For more information, go to cedar-depot-festival.com.

Are you going to a reunion this summer? Not a family reunion, a festival reunion. We commend Lowell and Nancy Lydic and all those involved with the Cedar Depot Festival for making a difference by enhancing their community with country music. It sounds like a great place for any family to reunite.

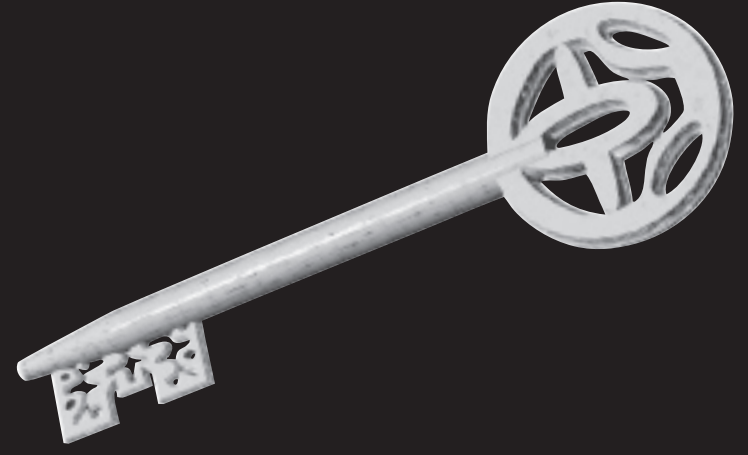
The Goodland Star News Service Directory

785-899-2338

Your KEY to business success.

Have your name up front when a customer needs you. Repetitive advertising is the key to opening the door to new customers.

Combined rates are available to feature your services in the Goodland Star-News and The Country Advocate.



Pro Floor Care
Cleaning Northwest Kansas one house at a time!
Free Estimates
Proudly offering wide variety of cleaning products for Commercial and Residential
Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning Specialists Commercial & Residential
* Advanced cleaning methods
* Affordable Quality Service * Spot & Spill Service
* Water Damage Restoration * VCT Tile & Ceramic Maintenance
Colby, Kan. (785) 462-8313 Toll Free (800) 473-4138
www.profloorcareandsupply.com
We don't cut corners. We Clean Them!

DAN BRENNER
FORD-MERCURY, INC.
"Where Service is an Affair of the Heart"
2005 PRESIDENT'S AWARD
2005 PRESIDENT'S AWARD
222 W. Hwy. 24, I-70 BUSINESS LOOP
GOODLAND, KS 67735
(Toll Free) 800-636-8770
(Business) 785-899-2316 (Fax) 785-899-2317

BOWEN'S
Refrigeration & Appliance Service
Dale Bowen
719-340-1716-cell
785-890-6227-home
Independent Authorized Whirlpool & General Electric Warranty Service Provider

Safe Driver Discount
Now your concern for them can save you money
There is nothing more important than the safety of your loved ones. A safe driver discount from Shelter is just a little extra incentive.
Jim Alcorn
1624 Main
Goodland, KS 67735
785-899-2553
ShelterInsurance.com
We're your Shield. We're your Shelter.

Weathercraft Roofing & Overhead Door
Committed to serving the Goodland area since 1972!
The Genuine. The Original.
716 W. Highway 24, Goodland • (785) 899-3064

Sugar Hills Golf Club
6450 Rd. 16, Goodland, KS • 785-899-2785
Two For Tuesdays
\$40 Green Fees
That's \$20/person plus cart fee. (must have 2 people)
After 3:00 p.m.
Must present this coupon.

The Decorating Co.
Affordable Luxuries
Irene Smith & Rochelle Kling
Design Consultants
• Window Treatments • Fabrics & Trims
• Staging Services • Color & Design Consultants • Space Planning
• Interior Re-design • Floral Design
• Professional Shopping
1011 Main Avenue, Goodland, KS 67735
(785) 890-5441
E-mail: decorco@st-tel.net

Sugar Hills Golf Club
6450 Rd. 16, Goodland, KS • 785-899-2785
Super Saturdays
\$25 Green Fees
After 3:00 pm.
Must present this coupon.

PLAINS HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING, INC.
FREE ESTIMATES!
Scott Sitzman
Residential & Commercial HVAC
New Installations-Replacements-Service
Phone: (719) 775-2914 Toll Free: (800) 678-2914
E-mail: plahtg@co-isp.com
976 Main Street, Limon, CO 80828
"Serving Eastern Colorado for 35 years, and now serving Western Kansas!"
Discover the comfort of a Mendota Fire!
www.plainsheating.com

Truck Lettering
800-886-2423
AWARD WINNING SIGNS AND PINSTRIPING SINCE 1974
Hot Brush 204 W. 4th Box 309
Bird City, Kan. 67731

NEW SYSTEM PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANING
Serving Northwest Kansas & Northeastern Colorado since 1992!
(785) 462-6995 OR (800) 611-6735
egriffith@st-tel.net
www.mywindowcleaner.net
Eldean and Janet Griffith 155 E. 5th, Box 692, Colby, KS

Brandon's Carpentry
Drywall • Painting • Flooring • Roofing
Doors • Windows • Siding • Decks • Ramps
Small Building Construction • Garages and More
BRANDON LEE (785)332-3370
St. Francis, KS 67756 Cell: (785)332-5264
Serving the tri-state area.

Culligan
Better Water. Pure and Simple™ Quality Service since 1948
* Drinking Systems
* Water Softeners (Sales & Rentals)
* Water Coolers
* Salt Sales & Delivery
Scheopner's Water Conditioning, Inc.
904 Main, Goodland
(785) 899-2352

Bowman's Heating / Air Conditioning
577 W. 31st St., Goodland, KS
785 899 5770
It's Hard To Stop A Trane™

TRANE
It's Hard To Stop A Trane™