



Several new businesses including Dollar General and Alco have opened up recently in Smith Center



Smith Center thrives on new businesses, homes

Smith Center has gone through many changes and has had many new items added to its history in the past year.

HOUSING

A housing unit, Centerview Place, was built on School Avenue for low income households. There are ten units.

Additional land has been purchased by Smith Center for another unit of homes to build. Smith Estates is the name of the housing development that will be built across from Western Plains. Economic Development is working on a land purchase agreement between ED, Judy Joy and Wes Bainter (the developer).

They are hoping for finalization within the next few weeks and Bainter will start

construction.

Homes to rent have been harder to come by in Smith Center during the past year. Part of this is due to a large number of workers that are here building the University of The Global County of World Peace that is located north of Smith Center.

According to real estate Bob Rethorst there are less houses on the market at this time. More houses have been sold in the past year.

BUSINESSES

Main Street has seen many changes recently. Jim's Alignment was sold to Rob and Julie (Kussel) Reitz.

Next door to it, Stortz Auction has renovated the building and operates an

auction house. This is owned by Dave and Nancy Stortz. Keith Waldron and Debbie Dickerson purchased a building. He has renovated it from top to bottom, making a beautiful home. The front is not quite finished and may be rented out to a business. This has not been decided at this time.

The Smith County State Bank and Trust Company, with banks in Smith Center and Lebanon, has entered into a definitive agreement to be acquired by The People Bank, a Kansas state banking company with its main office in Pratt. The Manna Shop has closed. The shop was owned by Merlin and Kadina Watts. Centre Pharmacy sold to Pamida and became Pamida Pharmacy in December. Dream, Inc. opened its doors this year. They offer alcohol and drug services, evaluations and counseling for adults, adolescents and family.

Duckwalls closed when the biggest ALCO in the state of Kansas was built on Highway 36 next to the Pizza Hut.

Another addition to the business district was Dollar General, also on U.S. 36.

Picture This Studio purchased a building in downtown Smith Center and opened a photography studio. Andrea (Jarvis) Wilkinson is the owner and photographer.

She does portraits, weddings, pets and much more. The Smith County Health Department has purchased the former Quilted Four Patch, Inc. on Main Street. It is currently undergoing renovations and was to open in March.

Brooke Corporation has purchased the former Duntz Motors. They have no plans for the building and land at time of purchase.

Wayne and Mitze Frieling are buying the property formerly known as, Gobble Tire and Auto in Smith Center. Wayne is currently owner and manager of Frieling Auto Sales in Manhattan. His plans now, are to open a used auto dealership, of very affordable but dependable vehicles, at the Junction of Hwy. 36 and 281 in Smith Center in the near future.

Another business on Highway 36 that has sold is the former Smith Automotive

location. Smith Automotive was purchased by Kelly Lyon. After cleaning it up, he has sold it to Richard and Therese Carll. They own and operate a Daylight Donuts bakery in Osborne, but are wanting to move it to Smith Center.

The ModernAire Motel, formerly owned by Jim and Betty Chapin sold to Monte and Barbara Jones. The Jones' have built on, done many updates and renamed the motel, The Buckshot Inn Motel and Lodge. Guns and More opened on the highway next to the Wine and More liquor store.

REDMEN PRIDE

The Smith Center football team earned its fourth year in a row title of state-championship. This included breaking a national title of number of wins in a row.

This of course was lead to by the coaching skills of Coach Roger Barta, who was recognized as the National Coach of the Year. The U.S. Army All-American Bowl Selection Committee has announced Roger Barta, Smith Center High School, Smith Center, as the winner of the 2008 Field Turf Bill Yoast National Coach of the Year Award. The National Coach of the Year award honors the nation's top high school football coach. The winner of the award must not only be a great coach, but also serve as a positive influence to the youth of America on and off the field.

The street, formerly know as School Avenue, was renamed in his honor as Roger Barta Way. The Smith Center Wrestling Team became state champions in 2008.

FUTURE PLANS

A Public Transportation plan has been approved at City Council. Lacy Porter wrote the grant to DOT and has turned it in for their review. Word should be coming from them very soon on approval. Center Township and the City of Smith Center; Lane Township and the City of Athol both passed a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan which went into effect January 1, 2008. Lacy Porter has been working on a countywide plan which should be finalized and in effect in April.

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Special Attractions:

Just northwest of Athol is the "Home on the range" cottage (1871).

*Lebanon is close to the "Center of the US" and a good state road gives access to the little park where the marker is located.

*Smith Center, the county seat has an Old Dutch-style windmill once used to grind grain.

Special Events in Smith County

*Gaylord has become known as the "Watermelon City" and people from miles around gather on Labor Day weekend to celebrate Watermelon Day.

*Kensington celebrates Veterans Day with a community barbecue.

*The Smith County Free Fair is held in July in Smith Center.

Stop in, your welcome anytime!