



WHILE GUESTS were finding their seats, Paul Siebert (above) played the hammer dulcimer. Mr. Siebert also performed during dinner, after everyone was served. Michaela Wasson, 1 1/2, (below) pushed around a John Deere toy lawn mower she won in the drawing.



Banquet provides meal, prizes and music

For a couple of hours Friday night, the community said thanks to Decatur County farmers and ranchers in the area at a dinner at The Gateway.

It was the fourth year that the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce has sponsored the Farmer/Rancher Appreciation Banquet in February or March. Although the dinner is held to say thanks to one group, it's open to everyone.

With the help of sponsors, the Chamber puts on a free meal. This year, the barbecue beef and pork were cooked by Robert Groneweg and Dave Bergling, while the side dishes were handled by the staff at The Gateway.

There were 175 people at the banquet, said Amanda Grafel, a Chamber board member, mostly farmers and ranchers, along with a handful of people in other professions.

Sponsors also donate items to be given away. Throughout the evening, board members, and former mayor, Ken Shobe, announced names of people who had been drawn to win prizes. Gifts included John Deere toys for toddlers, music players, lots of gift certificates and two Traeger grills, one donated by Mr. Groneweg and R&M Service Center.



AT THE GATEWAY on Friday evening during the annual Farmer/Rancher Appreciation Banquet, Connie Olson filled her plate. It was sponsored by the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce.