



## THE WAMEGO OUTLOOK

Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet

February 19, 2008

### Thank You From the Community Life Committee

Wamego once again shined with the Old Fashioned Christmas Celebration on November 28<sup>th</sup>! This wonderful community event could not have taken place without the help of many dedicated volunteers. A huge thank you is extended to the City of Wamego, Merl, Morris, Rick, Willy and the many other city employees who put in extra time and effort to hang the Christmas lights and make the lighting ceremony a success. Many, many thanks to the Wamego Historical Society, Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, First Baptist Church,



Wamego Public Library, Charlie Tucker, Chris Hupe, Bethany Huddleston, Cheryl Mermis, and the Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet Community Life Committee—Joyce Mermis, T-Shane Roberts, Kim Clark, Shannon Leitch, Amanda Winter, Audrey Schremmer-Philip, Bunny McCloud, Tracy Humphreys,

Tasha Langvardt and Chad Bunger.

Wamego would not be such a wonderful place to visit and live if it was not for generous volunteers such as these!

Thanks again,  
Amy Okeson  
Chairperson  
Community Life

### Board of Directors

- Michele Jacobs—President
- Michael Malin—Vice Pres.
- Susan Symons—Treasurer
- Nancy O'Donnell—Past Pres
- Steve Peddicord
- Dave Karnowski
- Charley Tucker
- Chris Hupe
- Ken Werner
- Lanny Bosse
- Cheri Pugh
- T-Shane Roberts
- Sue Woods
- Chad Bunger—Director

The best of all gifts around any Christmas tree: the presence of a happy family all wrapped up in each other.

- Burton Hillis (Better Homes and Gardens)

### Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet Annual Meeting - January 28th

The Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet is planning another great Annual Meeting on January 28th.

The title for the evenings festivities will be titled "The Chamber of Secrets."

The fun will include a great meal, drinks, business and community awards and a murder mystery production. Nominations for the Citizen of the Year, Emerging Business, Impact Award and Business of the Year are

being sought. If you would like to nominate a community member or business, contact the Wamego Chamber/Mainstreet office at 456-7849 or download nomination forms at [www.wamegochamber.com](http://www.wamegochamber.com)

The City of Wamego would like to remind store owners along Lincoln Ave not to shovel snow into the flower planters. The ice melt salt mixed with the snow could harm the beautiful flowers planted for the Spring



## **Rick Segal Tip: Handling That Problem Customer**

This past week someone wrote in a question that I thought might have universal appeal. Here it is: "How do I handle a problematic customer (i.e. returning something that's been worn, damaged, etc.) What should I instruct my staff members to do?"

*What a wonderful question! This question has haunted me for the past 35 years. I have written articles, been quoted in newspapers, been on panels discussing it, and even made it to the Sally Jesse Raphael Show as an expert on people who "buy clothes, wear them, and return them." (What a topic to be an expert in!) I was actually on the TV show with people for whom it is perfectly OK to buy clothes, wear them, and return them -- as if it is their God given right. Don't even try to rationalize or explain it!*

Here are some basic facts about this situation. First, understand that this is not just a situation

about apparel. It applies to any business that has customers who might try to take advantage of us. If the customer claims that the merchandise is "defective", it falls into a product liability situation. That means the law is on the customer's side and, as much as you might think that the customer is trying to take advantage of you, the business is obligated to refund the money. I know that stinks but think about this: GM just recalled 3 million cars.

However, here is the good news: most customers don't know that. Now you have the situation of the customer who is just trying to pull a fast one and beat you out of something that they were only going to wear or use once or twice, decided they didn't like it, or just wanted something different. These people understand the tactic of "intimidation". They want to get their money back, even though they know they don't deserve it, by belittling you and making a big stink especially when there are

other customers in the store.

The sad part about it is they are right. It does work on us and we do want them out of the store as quickly as possible. We want to fight with them because we are right and they are just common crooks, but in the big scheme of things, *is it worth it?*

Is it worth it financially or emotionally? It ruins our day, it gets us upset, it can create bad will with the other customers in the store, and is it really worth it? Unfortunately, the answer is it's not worth the fight. Just look at it as a cost of doing business. 4% of your customers can and will act like that. Accept it and move on. But you can get back at them for being so mean -- slash their tires! (I'm only kidding, but I feel your pain.) It's time to just suck it up and focus on the good customers, not the bad ones.

For more information on retail expert Rick Segel, please visit [www.ricksegel.com](http://www.ricksegel.com).

## **Chamber/Mainstreet Will Host Job Interview Training**

Behavioral Event Interviewing (BEI) helps the organization select the right person for the job. It is not enough to hire a person based solely on what you *think* they can do or on "gut instinct".

The integral premise is the "*best predictor of future behavior (and success) is past successful behavior*". In the employee selection process, this becomes the focus of the interview. Now, an interview does not concentrate on what a prospective employee can do for you *in the future*, but rather on what has made that person successful *in the past* - and

how (if) those traits and attributes will deliver what your organization needs to meet your goals.

The 2.5-hour training from 5:17pm - 8pm January 3, 2006 will provide an overview of the BEI process, guidance in establishing behavioral, objective, fact-based criteria for the position, assistance in designing questions and probes that solicit examples of the desired behaviors. If time permits, practice conducting an interview that will

obtain the results the organization wants will also be available. Workshop location will be determined on interest.

This Brownbag Dinner Training Workshop (bring your own dinner!) is offered at no cost as part of your Wamego Chamber of Commerce membership. Contact the Chamber office (456-7849) to register or for further information. Registration deadline is Friday, December 30th.



## Chamber/Mainstreet to Conduct BREES Program

The Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet will be coordinating and implementing a local business retention & expansion survey or BREES program early next year according to Lanny Bosse, Economic Restructuring Committee Chairperson.

According to Cary Catchpole, Kansas BREES program administrator, before a community can assist its existing industry, it must identify the industry's needs, concerns and problems. Under the Kansas BREES, local volunteers administer the survey and gather this information. The local leaders running the program then try to solve those problems or better meet those needs identified by the businesses. "A key aspect of this program is confidentiality," according to Catchpole. "We do not publish any information on individual firms. The program is very careful

about this confidentiality issue."

Catchpole also states that the focus of the program is on assisting existing businesses rather than attracting new ones because existing businesses account for about 70% of all new jobs in the state.

"The visits we will be doing with local firms have four purposes" said Lanny Bosse. "First we want to show our local businesses that we really appreciate the contributions they are making to our local community. Second, we want to see if they have any local concerns, and if so, if there are any ways we can help. Third, we will be offering to help our local firms take better advantage of state and federal business programs. Finally, we want the businesses to help set priorities on future directions of local economic development efforts."

To assist existing businesses, over 30 volunteers have been trained to administer the survey. Over 45 local manufacturers and service businesses will be visited beginning in January. The volunteer teams, consisting of 2 members, will use a questionnaire prepared to identify, among other items, the businesses' needs, criticisms and concerns about Wamego and its business climate. This information will be compiled by the state's BREES program administrator and reviewed by the local task force of community leaders who will try to solve these problems. The volunteer task force includes members of the Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet Economic Restructuring Committee, students from Highland Community College business class, USD 320 entrepreneurial class and local business leaders.

## Kansas Mainstreet Training—January 25th

### Everything Rises or Falls with Leadership

### Building Healthy Partnerships to Inspire & Lead Change

At the core of downtown revitalization is communications and developing the one-on-one relationship with a wide range of potential partners and stakeholders. Downtown and organizational improvement begins with a transformational leader who excites and inspires others.

Development of volunteers and

partners to keep the organization vibrant and prepared to meet new needs and challenges is vital to keep the downtown effort continually moving forward. In this workshop in Topeka on January 25th, Dr. Stabile will provide an in-depth look at five



This Training is free to Chamber/Mainstreet members

foundational principles for developing a framework to build leadership capacity through relational trust and unfiltered communication.

Please call the Chamber/Mainstreet office if you would like more information or plan to attend at 785.456.7849

**Wamego Chamber of Commerce/  
Mainstreet**

PO Box 34  
Wamego, KS 66547  
Phone: 785-456-7849  
Fax: 785-456-2016  
E-mail: wchamber@kansas.net



## **Welcome New Members!**

The Wamego Chamber of Commerce/  
Mainstreet Ambassadors would like to  
welcome two new members to our  
organization.

- Jeff & Randal Hupe of RW Properties who specialize in the housing business in the Wamego area. Their contact information is  
PO Box 261  
Wamego, KS 66547  
785-456-2400
- Michael Leitch of Frontier Farm Credit. Frontier is the A. lender in Kansas who serve all aspects of agriculture and rural living.  
2401 N. Seth Child Rd  
Manhattan, KS 66505  
785-776-6931

## **Save the Date!**

Your Chamber of Commerce /Mainstreet Board of Directors would like you to save **Friday, May 5th, 2006** on you calendar.

That will be the date for the **Cinco de Mayo Chamber/Mainstreet Golf Tournament**. This fund raiser event will be a ton of fun for every kind of golfer. As you might guess, the tournament will have a Mexican theme complete with a full Mexican buffet meal and the "Sinko de Ballo" pitching contest.

So form your foursome early and get ready for a great spring tournament on May 5th!

## **Join the Community Band**

Steve Vonada is striking up the band and reforming Wamego's Community Band!

This band will be the pride of Wamego as it plays for community events, parades, etc.

All instruments and levels of players interested are encouraged to contact Steve via his email at [svonada@wamego.net](mailto:svonada@wamego.net).