



The Wamego Outlook

Record Attendance At The Chamber/Mainstreet Annual Meeting

Quote of the Month

America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination, and unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.

- Harry S. Truman

The 2004 Annual Meeting kicked off 2005 with record attendance. Over 180 people attended this ceremonial event to highlight and celebrate the successes of 2004. Thank you to all of the social hour and table sponsors that helped make the night possible!

2004 was a very prosperous year for Wamego's events and the Chamber/Mainstreet. The Wamego Tulip Festival saw record numbers in attendance and vendors. Over 220 vendors participated in the event. Wamego also played host to over 10,000 visitors during the third weekend in April. The planning committee for this year's event is focusing their efforts to ensure that we continue to provide visitors to the festival a top-

notch experience.

The Independence Day celebrations also saw record numbers. It was estimated that 12,000-13,000 people lined the sidewalks of Lincoln Ave. to view the 4th of July parade. Over 30,000 people filed into Wamego to view the very impressive fireworks display. This group of dedicated volunteers will be working hard to continue to have the best parade and fireworks show in the region, if not the state.

Our standing committees and volunteers were also busy in 2004. Each committee accomplished amazing events and activities and have created even greater goals for 2005.

This year's Chamber/Mainstreet Annual Meeting also recognized those member businesses and volun-

teers that made extraordinary impacts on the Chamber/Mainstreet, the local economy and Wamego as a whole.

Wamego Telecommunications Co., Inc. took home the Business of the Year award for their outstanding support of the community of Wamego and the Chamber of Commerce.

Lincoln Perk received the Emerging Business Award as an up and coming business in Wamego.

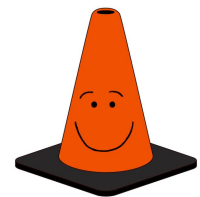
Clark Balderson, Charley Tucker and the City of Wamego all received the Impact Award for their tireless efforts to improve the Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet and City through marketing, events and support.

The Chamber/Mainstreet Has Big Plans During The Lincoln Ave. Construction

The Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet Committees have been working hard to develop plans for the up-coming construction on Lincoln Ave.

An information packet has

been created that describes some keys to succeeding during this period and also some promotional and event information that is planned during the construction. If you would like this packet, please call the office at 785-456-7849.



Meet Coney!
The Construction Mascot

Rick Segel's Tip of the Week—What Are You Good At?

Some one came up to me after a speech and asked me how much training I had as a speaker. It was one of those special days where I was hitting on every point and the audience was right with me from start to finish, so I was flattered with the question.

My response surprised her and took me on a journey that I had never expected to travel. I said, "I really haven't had much formal training other than a couple of sessions with a speech coach who evaluated what I did right and wrong and told me the things I needed to work on." She was sure that I must have studied for years but I off handedly said that all of us have one thing we are naturally good at, and finding it out is the challenge. I went on to explain that when I was in the store I was great at greeting a customer and suggesting the right thing but was never really strong at closing the sale.

She laughed and agreed with me because she felt that suggesting the right item to a customer came natural to her as well. I didn't understand the laugh. I must have hit a familiar chord but then she explained that she had become very good at every part of selling. At this point I am wondering how we went from my speaking ability to this person's sales skills but I was intrigued enough because of her unbridled enthusiasm and confidence that seemed almost out of character.

She explained that she had her skills evaluated. I asked her how it was done. She said her husband, who was a salesperson for a paint company, had it done at work. She was so impressed with the report and the insight it gave that she contacted the company to see if she could have her store's five employees evaluated. After the evaluation, she said her business had a jump of over 20% in sales and that she also had a much happier group of employees.

At this point I was fascinated and wanted more information about this miracle weapon. She later faxed me the assessment and the report and I was blown away with the insight and the almost limitless power of this type of tool. The only negative was that it really wasn't designed for a retail selling situation, although the 5 stages of a sale are the same for any type of business:

1. The opening or greeting
2. The investigation or the questioning period
3. Presenting or making the suggestion
4. Confirming the sale or answering objections and closing
5. Positioning for the next sale. (Collecting data)

Use this information at a meeting, training session, or a store exercise. Ask your employees to rank from 1 to 5 what stage of the sale that they think they are

the strongest or weakest? Do they have a strong greeting, but have a weakness in asking the customer questions to find out what they really want? Do you have employees who present the merchandise or make suggestions with the enthusiasm of a tired old man? Sometimes they don't even realize they are acting that way.

Review each of these 5 categories to see how you and your employees rank. Go through this process individually and in a "positive" group environment. It beats the frustration of trying to improve sales performance but not knowing where to start. This is a great starting point.

As for the rest of the story. I contacted the developer of the testing firm that created this wonderful assessment and after several conversations they have contracted me to modify their assessment for the retail community. They were so excited they have even presented it and sold it to a thousand-store chain. Yes, I will be offering this assessment to my clients starting February 1, 2005.

Isn't it strange how some things happen? You just never know where a simple question can lead.

For more information on retail expert Rick Segel, please visit www.ricksegel.com.

Business After Hours at Manhattan Workforce Center

Join a Joint Business After Hours with the Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet and Manhattan Chamber of Commerce at the Manhattan Workforce Center.

The B.A.H. is Hosted by
Manhattan Workforce Center
Adult Learning Center
Kelly Services, Inc.
Manhattan Area Builders Assn.
Open Door — Manhattan/Ogden -

USD 383
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Sponsored by
Central Mechanical Construction Co
Flint Hills Job Corps Center
The Trust Co. of Manhattan

Please join us for the usual libations and culinary arts at the Business

After Hours on
March 9, 2005, from
5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at
the Manhattan Workforce Center, 205
South 4th Street. Come see us or call
539-5691 for all your employment
needs.

Additional parking is available in the southwest corner (near Sears) of the mall parking lot. To enter the building for the BAH event go to the north door located on Houston street.



Wamego's Easter Bunny Is Asking For Help

Easter is just around the corner and we are preparing our coupons now for any SPECIAL PRIZES.

If you would like to participate, please contact my office or Bunny at bunny.mccloud@wamtelco.com.

Your special prize can be anything you'd like, and as many or as few as you'd like. You could do an Easter



basket, whether you make it up yourself or purchase one, it can be chocolate bunnies, or a product of your own that you would like to donate. At this

point we are just requesting information on how many and where you want it/them picked up. Since not all businesses are open on Saturday, we do have a group of bunny helpers that will distribute prizes the day of the hunt in the park. For instance, if you decide to give one Easter basket and you want the winner to come to your business to pick it up, PLEASE let us know you will have one special prize and you want them to come to your business, and we'll make the coupon to put inside the egg that indicates the same. If you decide to do 10 chocolate bunnies but aren't going to be open, please let us know you will

have 10 special prizes and they will be picked up in the park.

Then the week of March 21st we would like to have the special prizes that are to be picked up at the park

delivered to my office at 529 Lincoln or to Bunny at Wamego Telecommunications Co at 1009 Lincoln.

ANY questions, please let us know. THANK YOU in advance for your consideration for a prompt reply.

A Slight Increase In General Membership Meeting Fees

The Chamber/Mainstreet Board of Directors voted at the February meeting to increase the monthly general membership meeting fee to \$8.00 per person to ensure that all costs associated with hosting the meeting will be covered.

This price increase will take

effect at the March General Membership Meeting on March 21st.

The Board felt that \$8.00 was a fair price to pay for a meal plus the opportunity to keep up to date on business and community issues and have an opportunity to network with fellow Wamego

business people.

In return for this increase, the Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet staff will ensure that each month will have a quality, informative presentation to keep you up to date on all the latest information.

Community Return on Investment Statistics for 2004

- 157 New Residents
- 15% increase in private building permits issued
- 8% increase in assessed property value in Wamego's city limits.
- 5% increase in sales tax.

Does Your Building's Exterior Need A Little Spring Cleaning? Try A New Coat of Paint!

Painting can be one of the most drastic improvements you can make to your building and can be very effective in capturing a potential customer to come in your back or front door during the construction period

The enclosed insert describes the steps to help smooth the way for a successful paint job.

A very important tip to ensure that this finished product will last for a long time is that you prep your surfaces ade-

quately before applying paint. If you are painting a masonry building it is important to check the mortar first, repoint the mortar before you apply paint.

Check the conditions of your windows. If you are going to take the time to freshen up your exterior walls, you might as well make sure

that your window putty and glass is up to par.

Prepare the surface adequately by removing all peeling and loose



paint. If you have a building with native stone walls, check first with a professional before you sand blast.

This building spruce up can make a big difference in how your customers view your business. Your business might also meet the requirements for an Incentive Without Wall Loan to help pay for the costs of the project. If you are interested in learning more about these loans call the Chamber/Mainstreet office at 785-456-7849.

Wamego Chamber of Commerce/Mainstreet

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Check out our new website at
www.wamegochamber.com



The Community Calendar

February 24 - RETAIL MARKETING SEMINARS

This seminar presented by the Washburn University Small Business Development Center is designed to reinvigorate established retailers by providing ideas & insight that will allow you to improve your customer service and dress up your store. Learn more about two key aspects of marketing: customer service & visual merchandising.

Thursday, Feb. 24, 6:00—8:30

Wamego Public Library

Fee: \$20.00

Call 785-234-8656

February 26 & 27 - WAMEGO BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION TOURNAMENT

Over 70 youth basketball teams and their families will be in town the weekend of February 26th. If you are interested in ad-

vertising in the WBA official program, please call Chad Bunger for more information at 785-456-7849. The WBA is also looking for volunteers to help with the management of the event. Please call Sharla Ditto at 785-45-2151 if you are interested.

March 3 - EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURSHIP SEMINAR

This seminar presented by the Washburn University Small Business Development Center is for prospective entrepreneurs will learn the basic steps of setting up a new small business. Topics will include: taxes, financing, legal structure, insurance, business plan outline and business license/permits.

Thursday, Mar. 3, 6:00—8:30

Wamego Public Library

Fee: \$20

Call 785-234-8656

March 13 - CABIN FEVER CHALLENGE BIKE RIDE

Tired of winter? Want more access to bike trails? Then join us for the Cabin Fever Challenge!

The Cabin Fever Challenge will be Sunday, March 13, 2005. Check-in time is from 7am until 8am. The ride will begin and end at the Wamego City Park.

Net proceeds from the ride will be going to the Pottawatomie County Outdoor Recreation Council to help fund a bicycle trail that will begin in Wamego and connect with the Linear Trail in Manhattan.

Contact the Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corp. for more information at 785-456-9776.



If you have any community calendar information to be added, please call the Chamber/Mainstreet office at 785-456-7849.