



# Council approves Cabinet-making helps homestead agreements

By Rosalie Ross

Atwood City Council met Sept. 18 with John Mapes present to review the Revenue Neutral Rate. Council passed a resolution to exceed the Revenue Neutral Rate. The public hearing of the budget brought forward no comments. The council voted to adopt the budget and the hearing was closed.

The council voted to approve a five-year contract with Mapes & Miller.

The regular meeting opened with the flag salute, approval of the agenda, approval of August minutes and reading of the bills. All were voted acceptance.

Council agreed to have two nuisance notices mailed or delivered for each property, as requested by Larry and Jessica Aldrich.

Cathy Domsch, Human Resource Manager for SurePoint Ag, presented a letter from SurePoint Ag Systems's board of directors which approved spending up to \$1.5 million for infrastructure that will support a city water connection to their property. One option would be a dedicated line to their new building. They prefer a second option which would improve the existing water line being upgraded from a 6" to an 8" line. Council agreed to the second op-

tion which will improve water pressure for all consumers on the line plus any future connections. SurePoint also requested that the city submit a grant application to the Kansas Water Office for \$714,000. Council agreed to option two and to the grant application for the city's portion of the infrastructure.

Shannon Praete from the Kansas Infrastructure Hub explained via GoTo Meeting about Rawlins County county being eligible to apply for the Economic Development disaster grant. Praete, Cathy Domsch and City Clerk Dana Philpott will work together on both grants.

Cathy Horton, representing Rawlins County Building Blocks Daycare, appeared requesting a special meeting as soon as possible. Council agreed to hold a special meeting following the variance hearing Oct 1. The hearing is to learn the Zoning Board's recommendation about the variance and make a decision on the request.

Council agreed to hold an October special workshop to include David Blau and Bernie Straetker with Miller & Associates. They will discuss the erosion and drainage problems at Greason Industrial Park.

The final pay application,

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# Cabinet-making helps homestead



This large farm house built in 1900 by its cabinet maker owner has been home to give generations of Simmingers.

By Rosalie Ross

Jean Pierre Simminger, a Frenchman, was born in Luxembourg in 1846. He spoke French, German and English. He was apprenticed to a cabinet maker in Paris before coming to the United States in 1865 at age 19. He began working at his trade in Wisconsin. His English name became John Peter, but for most of his life he was known as J.P. He married Rosa Miller in Silver Creek, Wisconsin Aug. 21, 1871.

Rosa was born in Wisconsin in 1853 to Matthew and Mary Miller, immigrants from Luxembourg.

J.P. came to Kansas with John Franke, seeking land to homestead. They rode the train to Culbertson and walked to Ludell. J.P. decided on 160 acres five miles north of Ludell and Franke was

close by. Later J.P. acquired land with a tree claim. The men went back to Wisconsin and brought their families to the Kansas prairie in 1884.

The Simminger family grew to seven children, Mary (Walsh), Nicholas, Jacob, John, Elizabeth (Nelson), Francis and Susanna who died in infancy.

Woodworker J.P. built their frame home in 1886 from Wisconsin lumber and part of it is still in use today. It began as a 20 ft. x 20 ft. structure. The girls slept in the attic and the boys in the cellar. In 1900 a big addition was added and more generations of Simmingers have made it home, including Casey a great-great grandson who lives there now. They also dug a well for water 280 ft. deep.

J.P. sought employment as a cabinetmaker to support his fam-

ily. He often built coffins, then went to work for the railroad at Plattsmouth, Neb. and later in Denver building furnishings for Pullman railroad cars. He sent money home via stage coach. Later, as more settlers came and towns grew, he found employment close to home building homes, two churches and Atwood Flour Mill. Blakeman was booming and he often was busy there.

Rosa stepped into the role of farm manager along with her duties as a pioneer homemaker and mother. She and her young sons helped the farm prosper. Rosa had a pistol and knew how to use it. The stage coach line was just east of their home and one evening she thought it brought an intruder. She stationed Nick, age 9, at the window with a rifle and then she shot the pistol shouting,

"If you want anymore of this, just come closer." He didn't.

The children all went to public schools in Ludell and to church at St. Mary's in Herndon. Francis, known as F.D. or Fran, took over the operation and stayed on the home place.

J.P. and Rosa lived to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary with a large group coming to their home for the occasion. The family has a newspaper clipping describing the celebration. He died in 1923 at age 75 and she died at age 82 in 1936.

F.D. Simminger married Doretta Beims in 1927. They had three children, sons Robert, Jean and daughter Rosemary (Weishapl). He spent his entire life, except for Army days during World War I, on the same farm.

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## News at a Glance

### NHS Induction Ceremony

USD 105 National Honor Society will hold their annual induction ceremony at 2:45 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15 in the elementary gym. The public is invited to attend. Refreshments will follow.

### Rummage Sale

Town and Country Guild will be holding their annual Fall Rummage Sale Friday, Oct. 17 at the American Legion Hall in Atwood. They are accepting donations Wednesday, Oct. 15 from 5 to 6 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 16 until 11:30 a.m.

### Hazardous Waste Cleanup

There will be a fall cleanup of Household Hazardous waste from 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 at the Rawlins County Landfill and from 1 to 3 p.m. Oct. 18 at the Cheyenne County Landfill. Each county will accept old paint, herbicides and pesticides, batteries, used oil and antifreeze. If you have any questions, please contact The Rawlins County Landfill at 785-626-3071 or the Cheyenne County Landfill at 785-332-8842.

### Philip Daniel to Perform

Musician Philip Daniel is set to perform 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 at the Atwood United Methodist Church and at 1:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20 at the Rawlins County Elementary School gymnasium. The public is invited to attend either concert.

### Spook Parade

Elementary school children are dressing up Thursday Oct. 30 for their annual trip through the Atwood business district. Action begins at 2 p.m.

### Free Movie

A Halloween treat is being offered to kids by Atwood Rotary. A free movie will be shown at 2 p.m. Oct. 31 at the Jayhawk Theatre. Moviegoers get a free bag of popcorn too!

### Food Pantry

The Rawlins County Food Pantry located at 5 Ten Main is regularly open from 4 to 6 p.m. every Thursday afternoon. Come to the alley entrance. Donations are welcome then also.

### Submit Your Stories

The *Square Deal* is still collecting stories from those with family remaining on land originally homesteaded in Rawlins County. Call 785-626-3600 or email atwood.news@nwkansas.com to make an appointment for an interview.

# McCarty Family Farms named Producer of the Year at World Dairy Expo



McCarty Family Farms was named Dairy Producers of the Year at the World Dairy Expo Oct. 1 in Madison, Wis.

Courtesy photo

Rexford, Kan. — McCarty Family Farms has been honored as the 2025 Dairy Producers of the Year at World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis. The award, presented on Oct. 1, recognizes the McCarty family's long-standing commitment to producing high-quality milk while advancing animal welfare, regenerative farming practices, and community stewardship.

Owned and operated by fourth-generation dairymen Ken, Mike, Dave and Clay McCarty, with their father Tom McCarty playing a key role in the operation, the family farm exemplifies the balance between innovation and tradition. Having established their roots in Pennsylvania in 1914 and relocating their operation to northwest Kansas with the opening of their dairy in 2000, the McCartys have grown into one of the most respected dairy

families in the nation, overseeing the world's largest registered herd of Holsteins. The McCartys operate five dairy sites: three in Kansas, one in Nebraska, and a partnership dairy, MVP Dairy, in Ohio.

McCarty Family Farms North, located in Rexford, is their newest location, completed in 2023, and stands as their most innovative dairy facility to date. Eight inverted six-row, tunnel-ventilated freestall barns house 10,000 Holsteins, which are milked on two 120-stall carousels. Each stall is sand-bedded, and more than 95% of the sand is reclaimed and reused through a flush system and solids separation process. The site is also home to the newest addition to McCarty Family Farms' sustainability efforts — an anaerobic digester. This system processes approximately 260,000 gallons of manure daily, breaking

it down into methane gas that is injected into a nearby utility company pipeline. The remaining liquids and solids are repurposed as nutrient-rich fertilizer.

McCarty Family Farms has also invested heavily in on-site processing. In 2012, the family established an evaporative milk condensing plant, marking the beginning of their direct relationship with Danone North America. To support continued growth, the processing plant was expanded and upgraded in 2023 with the addition of ultra-filtration and reverse osmosis technologies. Today, McCarty Family Farms produces Non-GMO Project Verified milk exclusively for Danone North America.

Beyond their commitment to responsible farming, the McCartys also prioritize education and transparency through the Judy McCarty Dairy Learning

Center, established in 2024 and named in honor of their late mother. The 8,000-square-foot nonprofit center connects visitors to the story of dairy, from soil to yogurt cup. Guests can view the farm's 120-cow carousel parlor, ride a guided shuttle through the barns, and explore interactive displays. Serving the community and the agricultural industry, the Learning Center provides research projects, internships, and leadership experiences for the next generation of agricultural leaders.

"We are deeply honored to be recognized as Dairy Producers of the Year by World Dairy Expo," said Ken McCarty. "This award reflects not only the hard work of our family, but also the dedication of our incredible team and partners who share our commitment to innovation, animal care, and sustainability."

Ken McCarty also emphasized the family's long-term vision. "As fourth-generation farmers, we take seriously the responsibility of nourishing families while caring for the land and animals entrusted to us. This recognition inspires us to keep building on that legacy — producing nutritious food, advancing sustainable practices, and creating connections with the communities we serve."

World Dairy Expo's annual Recognition Awards celebrate individuals and families who make remarkable contributions to the dairy industry and their communities. McCarty Family Farms was honored alongside Industry Person of the Year, Jim Mulhern, and International Person of the Year, Juan F. Moreno.