By Sheri Hink

The Wauneta Breeze

An action-packed weekend is planned in Palisade this weekend for Palisade Pioneer Days. See a complete list of weekend activities in the ad on page seven.

The theme of the 30th anniversary event is “Keep the Home Fires Burning.” The weekend-long celebration will honor the Palisade Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department as well as notable current and past members of the town Fire Department.

Ray Ridlen, Tom Monnahan and Betty Simants will be honored for their many years of service. The celebration will also honor Bernie Schutte’s memory.

Friday’s activities

Things will kick-off on Friday night with the annual Alumni and Friends Banquet at the Palisade Attendance Center gymnasium.

This year’s alumni banquet will honor Palisade High School graduates of the “2” and “3” years (for example, 1982, 1972 or 1983, 1973, etc.).

Because of the amount of work that goes into just the alumni banquet, this year will be the last annual banquet. Alumni banquets will move to a three year rotation, with the next being held in 2015 and honoring the “4,” “5” and “6” year classes.

Aaron and Sarah Behrends and the Cabriolet Barbershop Quartet will provide the entertainment at this year’s banquet.

After the banquet, at approximately 8:30 p.m. CT, everyone is invited to come to the lot south of the fire department for a bonfire. The Fire Department is hosting the event reminiscent of pep rallies of years past.

Saturday’s activities

There’s activities planned for everyone on Saturday. The day is by far the most active of the celebration and has something to offer for everyone.

The day starts off with a Fire Department Pancake Breakfast and Eating Contest at the Fire Department.

The Pioneer Days parade will begin at 10:30 a.m. CT. Following the parade there are a variety of activities taking place downtown.

After the parade, events include the Dime Toss sponsored by Frenchman Valley 4-H club, the kiddy carnival, kids games, cake walk or cow pie bingo sponsored by the Palisade Fire Department. The VFW will also sponsor a luncheon at the Legion Post 318.

Those interested in photography can participate in a photography contest at JD Studios from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. CT.

Those who like to get out and get dirty can participate in sand volleyball (registration at 11 a.m. CT at Krotter Park).

After lunch the fun continues. Southwest Public Power District is sponsoring free swimming all afternoon at the Palisade swimming pool.

Those who would rather stay out of the pool can compete in the horseshoe tournament at Krotter Park.

Want to escape the summer heat? There’s an activity for that too. Am-Vets is sponsoring bingo at the SWPPD community room from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. CT.

Things continue into Saturday evening.

Southwest Public Power District will host a free barbeque at Krotter Park.

The barbeque will be followed by pie and ice cream also at Krotter Park, with proceeds from the dessert event going to the Am-Vets organization.

Saturday will conclude with a dance at the park. The event will feature a live band, Night Riders, and will begin at 8 p.m. CT.

Sunday’s activities

Sunday morning things kick off with attendance at each person’s church of choice or at the community worship service at the park hosted by the Methodist Church.

The morning worship celebration at the park will begin at 11:00 a.m. CT. A potluck lunch will follow the worship service in the park.

Pioneer days conclude with the Community Gospel Songfest featuring Randy Hayes and Rick Eldred at 3:00 p.m. at the Church of Christ Sunday afternoon.

Making it happen

These three days of celebration don’t just happen on their own. Pioneer Days were originally started by Palisade’s Community Service Club but the three days of activity has grown to merit a dedicated committee of volunteers who plan and implement the events.

The members of the 2012 Pioneer Days Committee are Sarah Vrbas (Chair), Lisa Kisinger (Secretary), Heidi Adams (Treasurer), Julie Derby, Kari Klumpe, Kaisha Coffman, Gerald Bridgman, Joe Vrbas, Kerry Hamilton, Josie Lytle and Kim Book.

The committee’s spouses are also members by default as they are always around to help set up and tear down events during the celebration.