

Wauneta Senior Center now debt free

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 15 May 2014 14:58 -

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

The Wauneta Senior Center held its annual meeting on Friday, May 9. The reports made by board president Joey Large were almost entirely good news.

In the past month the Wauneta Senior Center was able to pay off their mortgage, making the Center debt free. The board decided at their April meeting to cash in some investments in Windstream Holdings, Inc, made possible from a BWTelcom donation, to pay off their USDA loan that was taken out over a decade ago.

On April 24 the Senior Center hosted a hamburger feed fundraiser with hopes of raising roughly \$1,800 to finish paying off the loan after the investments were liquidated.

The public did not fail to support its Senior Center, raising enough funds to pay off the USDA loan as well as an additional \$1,847 to apply towards replacing the 35-foot by 20-foot concrete slab at the back of the building.

Thanks to the generous donations, the Center was able to get a bid for the concrete work and is already one-third of the way toward the project estimate of \$4,200.

Annual meeting

The annual meeting was held after the noon meal was served. Approximately 15 Senior Center patrons stayed for the meeting.

President Joey Large led the meeting, using a new PA system the Center recently purchased, thanks to a \$500 donation from Tony Cribelli with funds raised through the Yucca Run.

Large provided an overview of the Center's finances, comparing this year's year-to-date income and expenditures to those of the previous five years as well as providing budget figures for the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, budget year. Before he began, he asked those present to remember one thing, "The one thing you need to remember about senior centers is that they are not profitable."

Although not showing a profit, the Wauneta Senior Center is currently doing much better financially than it has in the past few years. As of April 30, 2014, the Senior Center has already grossed more income, \$49,142.38, than it has in any of the previous four fiscal years. That fact, combined with lower expenses and higher average meal counts has put the Senior Center in pretty good shape financially.

In fiscal year 2012-2013 the Center served a total of 5,430 meals with a raw food cost of \$2.97 per meal. In the first 10 months of fiscal year 2013-2014 the Center has already served 7,553 meals with a raw food cost of \$2.35 per meal.

The average meals served per day are up to 34-35 meals, up from 25 meals per day the year before. "The more people who come eat at the Center, the better the program will work," explained Large.

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One thing the Senior Center board has done is to make a decision that the Wauneta Senior Center can not afford two full time positions.

Instead, they have determined the best fit for the Wauneta Center is to have a full time kitchen position, currently held by Joan Corey, and a part time bookkeeper. Myra Large serves the Center as bookkeeper, working about 10 hours per week.

Contributions from the public play a big role in keeping the Senior Center afloat. This year income from state programs look to fall just over \$6,000 short of covering Senior Center expenses. The board makes up the difference through monthly fundraisers such as the pancake feed and Sunday dinners and through contributions and donations. The Center also has an anonymous donor who gives a significant gift each December.

When asking for questions or comments from those in attendance, Dick Miller of Hamlet was the only one who spoke up saying, "Excellent meals, that's all I have to say."

Officers elected

The Wauneta Senior Center board has five members who each hold two-year staggering terms. At a meeting held earlier in the day, Joey Large and Ruth Petsch each signed on for an additional term.

Officers for the upcoming year include, Large as president, Terry Engell as vice president, Petsch as secretary and Berneta Steinert as treasurer. Betty McCallum also serves on the board.

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Services to the community

Large also provided an overview of the services the Senior Center has available to the community. The Senior Center is available to the public for rent.

When rented it offers amenities such as PA systems, new chairs purchased this year, a flat-screen TV donated earlier this year by the Harchelroad family, a new microwave, several new appliances.