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Padre says:

***“It is Christmas
in the heart that
puts Christmas
in the air.”***

Burlingame Comes Together To Revive Community With Country Christmas



Located where the Santa Fe Railroad crosses the old Santa Fe Trail, as its heritage runs deep, long and continuing, Burlingame, Kansas, like most Midwest rural communities is having survival struggles.

But, the younger generation has now joined sides with longtime residents of the Osage County farming town to whip defeat and grow to thrive once more.

Evidence is obvious by the contagious enthusiasm during planning sessions for the Country Christmas Celebration set December 1, and advertised and promoted on 580 WIBW, The BIG 94.5 Country and the Kansas Ag Network.

Burlingame's resurgence is foremost to Mayor Ray Hovestadt who's operated a car body shop there more than three decades.

Hovestadt assured, "Population has leveled off. We have thriving businesses, and we're working to get a grocery store and other retail outlets."

A nursing home that sat idle for years was purchased by the city. "We hope it becomes a medium-income housing development with assistance from a grant through the Osage County Economic Development office," Hovestadt related.

St. Francis Hospital has expressed intentions to offer regular services through a Burlingame location. City Clerk Patti Gilbert emphatically contended, "Burlingame is a way of life. We are not a bedroom community, like some people say. Burlingame is home where people live, work, and raise their families.

Pat Rusher, community supporter-worker, evaluated, "Townpeople often are of the mindset that rural area's struggles will take care of themselves, but that's not the case. Everybody must work together to make it happen."

The Burlingame Chamber of Commerce has struggled, too, but Kenna Burns, acting president, said, "The city of Burlingame has led efforts to continue our 23rd annual Country Christmas, and the chamber is working closely with everybody to assure its success."

Among festivities set Saturday, Dec. 1, are a cupcake decoration contest, Lion's Club turkey dinner, Girl Scout's lunch, Snow Princess pageant, holiday home tours and three dozen vendors will have displays.

"Christmas is all about children, so we have a Candy Land planned with games and gifts," Burns related. "We have a Burlingame Angel Tree to offer assistance, and make Christmas a happier time for the increasing-number of families who are struggling this year."

Climax for Country Christmas at Burlingame is the chili feed, lighting of the Main Street Christmas tree, and the Christmas Parade at 5:30. Shown, Mayor Ray Hovestadt, Pat Rusher and City Clerk Patti Gilbert talked about the day's activities.