



Man Traveling Around In Horse-Drawn-Wagon To Save Small Towns And Farms

"Rural America is dying." But, there is hope.

Small town businesses have closed their doors as those living in the communities travel to shop in the city. Former farm homes set idle, as the ones tilling the land dwindle in number, and the size of individual operations continues to increase.

"Rural America can be saved," according to James Sheldon, who is coordinating a "Faith March," with that sole objective.

The former Lawrence businessman now living at McLouth, when he's home, hooked his Clydesdale

mare to a box wagon, loaded up and hit the road to do his part to make that statement a reality.

"I stand to help save our little towns and farms, our blessings, and all we hold near-and-dear," said Sheldon recently at Burlingame, one of the towns visited, with more on his schedule.

"I stand to show the courage of our pioneer forefathers and mothers, who by putting themselves in God's hands, built something greater than their ability to imagine," emphasized Sheldon, who is inviting all to join him in the effort, so close and dear to his heart.

Before starting his journey, Sheldon compiled a seven-part objective, which is included on his website, www.faithmarch.com, along with a map where he intends to stop throughout the southeast United States, concluding in Texas. Updates are made on the site when he's in rural communities that do have services available for him to operate a computer.

"I am not trying to sell you anything, ask for money, or your vote," Sheldon said. "I am marching for rural and small town America to where God leads."

When Sheldon arrived in Burlingame, he visited with Pat Rusher, official of the Burlingame Saddle Club, 580 WIBW advertiser, who made contact with others in the community.

"We really appreciate Mr. Sheldon's efforts to increase awareness of our town, the farmers in the area, and others like us around the country," Rusher said.

Mayor Ray Hovestadt, a businessman, recognized, "We've been working hard to keep Burlingame alive, and a grocery store is going to be opened here again soon."



Idea for his "Faith March" was seeded several years ago when Sheldon walked and canoed the original 4,000-mile trek of Lewis and Clark.

"I got a firsthand view of problems facing rural America, and decided I'd do what I could to keep small towns and the little farmers alive," Sheldon said.

"To me, there is a threefold strategy for freedom. We must pull together as a people, defend ourselves against our enemies, and do as our pioneer ancestors who faced hardship with faith in God, and built something greater than their ability could have ever imagined."



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is
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come..."*