

History of Burdett

Burdett became a settlement in 1876

Burdett, located 23 miles west of Larned on the old Santa Fe Trail highway, is a small town of 265 residents. Originally Burdett was named Brown’s Grove for Dr. Gallatin Brown who staked out the town site in 1876. It became a thriving settlement. In 1897 Wright and Johnson built a flour mill on the Pawnee River. Power for the machinery was furnished by the river. The mill was the first to be located west of Hutchinson and was in operation for eight years. In 1885 the railroad was surveyed from Larned to one-half mile south of Brown’s Grove. Businesses moved south to meet the railroad before the first train arrived in 1886. The town was renamed Burdett by the railroad officials for a famous writer and humorist, Robert Jones Burdette.

Burdett was then the end of the line and a hand-operated turntable was used. These were boom years for the town.

School was first held in a dugout on the banks of the river. In 1877 a frame building was constructed. A grade school was built in 1911 and a high school in 1920. Mr. E. Row of Larned established a three-course study program for the high school. In 1916 four years of high school education was offered. The 64th class graduated from Burdett High School in 1966. In 1967 the first class graduated from the newly formed Pawnee Heights High School.

In 1877 the first religious meeting was a basket dinner on the creek bank organized by the Presbyterians. They built a church that was later sold to the Methodists in 1886. This building was struck by lightning and burned in 1897. The present Methodist church began construction in

1940, and the dedication of the newly constructed church was held in June 1941. During those early years the Catholic Church held services in various locations until 1949 when a building was moved from Jetmore. The new church was named Holy Rosary Catholic Church. Mass was held in the little church until its closing in 1997.

In 1961 Burdett incorporated with a mayor-city council form of government. Leon Jennings is the current mayor. The town has an excellent volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service. Currently there is one bank, a café, two insurance offices, an auto body shop, a welding shop, a community library, construction companies, an aerial crop spraying service, an electrical contractor, photographer, a guesthouse, commercial hay grinding, American Legion/Auxiliary/SAL, and the Farmer’s Cooperative. A new housing subdivision has been built with three homes completed.

There is also a city park, which boasts a volleyball court, first class tennis courts, an outdoor basketball court, a large children’s play area, a miniature golf course updated in 2015 with an astrology theme highlighting Pluto, and a horseshoe area. One of the shelter houses was built from limestone first used in the old W and J flourmill.

Burdett became world famous in 1930 when Clyde Tombaugh, who was reared on a nearby farm, discovered the ninth planet, Pluto. A highway marker located on the west edge of town was dedicated to Dr. Tombaugh in 1982. This marker was constructed completely by the community. Burdett celebrated the 75th anniversary of Tombaugh’s discovery

with a live amateur radio broadcast from the town’s Senior Center.

There are numerous civic organizations and clubs that are beneficial to the Burdett community. An active group of Burdett Seniors host a weekly covered dish luncheon on Mondays. A Coffee and Donut Hour the third Friday of each month is sponsored by local businesses.

In May 2014, Phase I of the Fredrick A. Browne American Legion Post 280 Brown’s Grove Cemetery was completed, with installation of flag poles and

flags honoring all branches of the military service, MIAs and Wounded Warriors.

Legion Members completed Phase II in 2015, with the placement of a granite marker near the flag poles noting all war veterans buried in Brown’s Grove Cemetery, with space for additional names to be added.

Phase III was granite benches installed in 2016.

The residents of Burdett are proud of their community, and they all work together to make this town a great place to call home.



Burdett Mayor Leon Jennings, with assistance by Clyde Tombaugh’s niece Ruth Martinez, Wichita, cuts the ribbon Saturday, at the first hole of the community’s newly-opened “Rediscover Pluto” miniature golf course after two years of dedicated volunteer labor and fundraising. (Reprinted from April 29, 2016 issue of The Tiller & Toiler.)

Rozel

continued from page 5

1968 the merger of the Rozel and Burdett schools took place with the new name of Pawnee Heights, USD 496. From 2005 to 2009 Pawnee Heights entered into a cooperative agreement with the Hanston School District and jointly operated attendance centers at Burdett grades (K-5), Hanston grades (6-8), and a high school at Rozel.

In 2010, the cooperative agreement with Hanston was discontinued, and the Pawnee Heights district moved all grades to the Rozel campus. The school is widely recognized for excellence and high achievement in the classroom. The school district also operates a virtual school that is headquartered in the Burdett school building, along with a community activity center, and the Pawnee Heights Community Library.

Not only is Rozel a thriving agricultural community. Additional businesses are Sweet Traditions, a catering business, and the Reiderer Inn Tea Room, both owned and operated by Faye and Gary Grandy; Style Station, a hair salon owned and operated by Kim Galliard; Galliard Electric, owned and operated by Trevis Galliard; Colglazier Crop Production/Seed Sales, owned and

operated by Doug Colglazier; Rozel Family Fitness, a Pride Project; and Cycle In Style operated by Kelsi Williamson.

The community food pantry is located at the Rozel United Methodist Church for those residing in the 67574 ZIP code. Hours of operation are 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month.

The city of Rozel was notified by Governor Bill Graves in December 2002 that the city had been awarded a Community Improvement Grant through the Kansas Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program. With money from the grant and local contributions, a handicapped accessible, 40- by 72-foot community center was built with a full kitchen and restrooms, and was dedicated in January 2003. The city and community are very proud of the building and feel that it can be used for years to come.

The City of Rozel was notified by Governor Mark Parkinson on July 24, 2009, that the City had been awarded a Community Development Block Grant. Through the Kansas Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, this award provided the needed financing for the water treatment project now in operation.

Serving The Agricultural Community

- Farm Store • Grain Storage • Grain Contracts • Feed Mill
- Ag Chemicals and Fertilizer • Service Station
- On The Farm Tire Service • CardTrol Gas Service • Fuel Delivery



Rozel



Sanford



Burdett

Edward Taylor, General Manager

Rozel
Julia Blake
Katie Hammeke
Kendra Brown
Austin Taylor
Ritch Foos
Brandon Enabnit
Jose Holguin
Refugio Holguin
Edward Taylor

Burdett
Deby Selfridge
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Danny Nuckolls
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Jason Selfridge
Johnny Schaben

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