

# OPINION

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Contact Stephanie Jump at (620) 532-3151 or email sjump@kconline.com

## Small Town, Big Heart

By Bernie Sheahan

There are things that suburbanites and city folk don't know about life in a small town. And since I've been asked many times (after moving here, to be near family and my ancestral home), this is what I say, because this is how it is for me.

Life in a small town means you know your waitress, and how many kids she has (three, with 23 grandkids). She knows that you like Coke and soda water, half and half, lots of ice.

Life in a small town means you know your bank president, who, turns out, is your third cousin once removed. His brother, also your cousin, is the sheriff.

Life in a small town means that you're so happy for the hardworking neighbor gal who got a new job for better pay and a chance at management, maybe.

Life in a small town means being able to buy honey at the gift shop, the honey sold by your uncle's brother and his

wife. It's sweet as can be.

Life in a small town - here in the Midwest - means freezing your rear off at a high school football game, and also losing your hat in the wind at the track meet. And getting burned to a crisp, maybe, at the first baseball or softball game, with that midwestern sun bearing down on your shoulders.

Life in a small town means having to watch what you say (so they tell me) because everyone is related to everyone else. Of course everyone knows their story anyway, so it doesn't really matter, does it?

Life in a small town means running a tab at your favorite hardware store because you forgot your wallet and they trust you. Or saying to the cashier at the restaurant "I'll be right back, I swear, I live around the corner" and then the dear lady behind you saying, "Don't worry, I got it. Catch me next time." And you do.

Life in a small town is spending a Saturday afternoon at the library with your kids - them playing games with the children's director while you dig into your family history in the Genealogy room and discover your great-grandpa died of an ailment you hadn't heard about.

For me, it's being able to say, "I'm the fourth generation in my family with a deed in the courthouse" even though I didn't grow up here but came to live out the fourth quarter of my life, Lord willin' and the creek don't rise.

Our branch of the family came relatively late to Kingman County - 1908, when the town was in full-swing and prosperous. Our family farm near Willowdale was purchased from one of the original homesteaders there on the Cleveland Ridge, where the land is particularly fine because water drains to the Chikaskia River on one side and the Ninnescah on the other. I think that's what Dad told me.

He was the oldest of the four boys and knew he wouldn't inherit the farm, so he found another path, working three jobs to go to college. (Go, Wildcats!)

That path took him to the Army and a dance where he met my Massachusetts mom, and wound up eventually in California, where I was raised. We loved our summer visits to see Grandma and Grandpa, aunts, uncles, and the rest of the 40 grandchildren who are my cousins. First cousins. I once asked Dad why we never met the second and third cousins. "Because we don't have time!"

I have time now. Meeting "new" cousins all the time, and getting to know them one by one or in a crowd of laughing relatives, because I come from a long line of happy folk. Happy, because it's an inherited trait, and also because we belong in this town, this wonderful, this lovely, this bighearted small town on the prairie.

## The Legacy of Round Barns

By Greg Doering, Kansas Farm Bureau

The ubiquitous image of a farm includes a red barn, which historically took that shade because iron oxide, or rust, was added to the linseed oil to prevent mold and fungus. It also added the red hue that became synonymous with barns. Despite a wide variety of pigments to choose from today, tradition still means there's plenty of red barns across the countryside.

Aside from color, a barn also conjures up specific shapes. A sturdy, square structure with a gable or gambrel roofline. That's what the barn on my grandparents' ranch looked like growing up. It wasn't red because it was built during World War II and a lack of material meant the plentiful limestone rock was used for the walls.

Inside there was an alleyway down the middle lined with stalls on either side with a grainery in one corner. Hay storage was on the second floor with cutouts above the stalls below for feeding. Aside from housing horses or the occasional bottle calf, the barn became outdated shortly after it was completed. A low ceiling on the first floor meant nothing larger than the Ford 8N tractor could fit inside.

For a brief period in the early 20th century, a subset of barns were not traditional in any sense, rather they were round or nearly so. The technical term for these

structures is nonorthogonal, which is fancy for not orthogonal. That's fancy for lack of perpendicularity.

Fewer than 1,400 round barns are estimated to have been built around the turn of the last century, mostly in the Midwest. George Washington has a 16-sided structure on his Mount Vernon estate, but it was New Yorker Elliot W. Stewart's octagonal barn built in 1874 that really started the wheels turning on round barns.

Stewart touted the structure's geometric advantages relating to cost of construction since a cylinder's exterior surface allows for a larger interior volume than a rectangle.

According to an article from University of Kansas geography professor James R. Shortridge, Stewart's ideas spread westward and reached Kansas in the early 1880s when two octagonal barns were built in Shawnee County. The next record of a nonorthogonal barn was a 12-sided structure built near Olathe in 1903. Kansas' first pure circle barn was erected in Harper County the following year.

The majority of the 41 round or roundish barns in Kansas were built in the following decade. Shortridge's research shows no strong correlation between farm practices and where the barns were

built in Kansas. Local influence appears to have played a key role in the construction of round barns. If you were in an area where one irregular barn was built, there's likely to be another one nearby.

That's likely how Marshall County became home to three circular barns in less than a decade. The first built a few miles east of Blue Rapids in 1906 and the last was constructed southwest of Marysville in 1914. The middle barn was finished in 1913 by Benton Steele, who was a prolific architect and builder of round barns from Indiana.

Charles and James Drennen commissioned the barn for their Hereford breeding operation, and it's still in use today. Herefords still graze along the bunks lining the perimeter nearly every day, and heifers still calve under the conical roof.

The most recent estimate of 24 round barns still standing in Kansas comes from Shortridge's article in 1999. Some are being preserved by owners on working farms and ranchers, others have found new life as event venues while others are being worn away by Kansas weather.

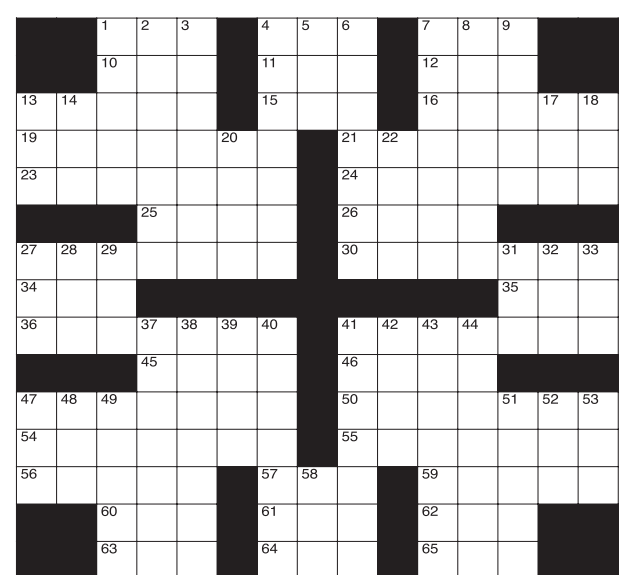
While red barns are the best known image of rural architecture, the brief building burst of round barns have left a legacy across the state as well.

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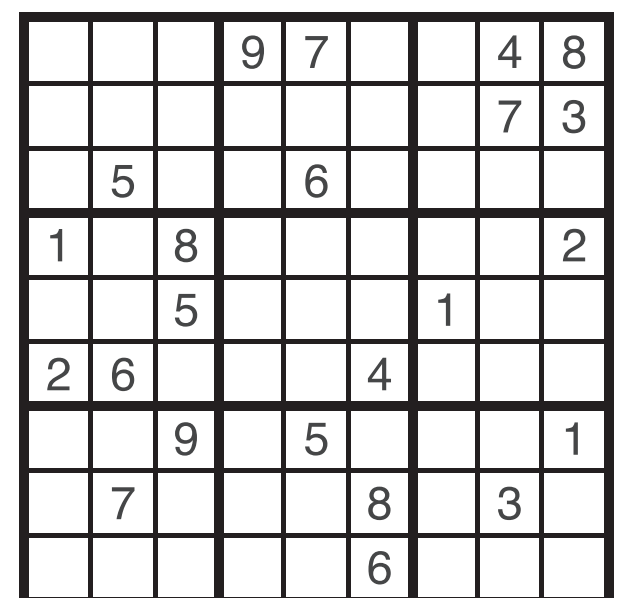


### CLUES ACROSS

- English TV station
- It fuels cars
- Where ships dock (abbr.)
- Indigenous people of Thailand
- Midway between northeast and east
- Small Milky Way constellation
- Fritz \_\_, Austrian chemist
- A Brit's grandmother
- Colombian city
- Visualize
- Charged
- People's assets
- Informative books
- Jeer
- You can do it with your horn
- Agents of your downfall
- Central Uganda city
- Supervises flying
- Type of tree
- Alfalfa
- Dishwasher soap brand
- Hall where military eats
- Ancient Greek City
- Speaks incessantly
- Discuss again
- Extreme greed
- Adopt or support
- Fantasy writer Russell
- Seize
- Early Mesoamerican civilization
- Noted pet detective Ventura
- Automobile
- Georgia rockers
- Color opposite green
- Amount of time
- Attempt

### CLUES DOWN

- Sheep sound
- Some can be emotional
- Inflammation of colon lining
- Origins
- Comedienne Gastereyer
- Perceived by the senses
- A place to play ball
- Occur before
- Animal body parts
- Thanksgiving dessert
- Root mean square (abbr.)
- 1960s teen idol Bobby
- Promotional materials
- One point east of northeast
- Piers Anthony protagonist
- Popular sports league
- Cologne
- Partner to cheese
- Constrictor snake
- Not good
- Supplement with difficulty
- Hug with fondness
- Enforced again
- Small amount of time (abbr.)
- Substance
- Anterior parts of the brain
- Brews
- Where ships load cargo
- Holiday season singer
- "\_\_ humbug!"
- Monetary unit of Macao
- Popular children's book elephant
- Glutinous
- Function
- Old world, new
- Swiss river



D N P C T S H G W E A K R W L N P F N K  
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## LEGAL NOTICE

(First published in the Kingman Leader-Courier on Thursday, April 10, 2025) 3t

### IN THE THIRTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT, KINGMAN COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION

In the matter of the Estate of RICHARD L. MCDONALD, Deceased.

KM-2025-PR-000014

(Filed Pursuant to K.S.A. Ch. 59)

### NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are notified that on April 7, 2025, a petition was filed in this Court by Regan McDonald, Executor named in the Last Will and Testament of Richard L. McDonald, deceased, dated December 15, 2023, requesting the documents filed with the petition be admitted to probate and record; petitioner be appointed Executor, without bond, and petitioner be granted Letters Testamentary.

You are required to file your written defenses to the peti-

tion on or before May 5, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., in the District Court of Kingman County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail to file your written defenses, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the petition.

All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within the latter of four months from the date of first publication of notice under K.S.A. 59-2236 and amendments thereto, or if the identity of the creditor is known or reasonably ascertainable, 30 days after actual notice was given as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

Regan McDonald  
Petitioner

JOHNSTON, EISENHAUER, EISENHAUER & LYNCH, LLC  
113 E. Third - PO Box 825  
Pratt, KS 67124  
(620) 672-5533  
Attorneys for Petitioner

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