

LIFESTYLE

GENEALOGY CORNER

SEK mining camps had colorful names

There were more than 100 coal mining camps in the Cherokee-Crawford coal field. Some of them had colorful or very interesting names.

Camps such as Capaldo and Ringo, in Crawford County, were named for the owner of the land that was leased or purchased by the coal companies.

Some of the camps were named for coal operators, superintendents and coal companies. Scammon, originally Scammonville, was named for the Scammon Brothers who were early mine operators. Fleming, a camp in Crawford County, was named for Ira Fleming, who worked as a superintendent for a coal company. Kirkwood and Croweburg, also in Crawford County,



were named for A. B. Kirkwood, co-owner of the Wear Coal Company and the Crowe Coal Company.

Camp 42 and 50 Camp were among the several mining camps named after the numbers of the shaft mines of major coal companies like Western Coal & Mining Company, Central Coal & Coke Company and Pittsburg & Midway Coal Mining Company.

Natural features or characteristics played a part in naming the mining communities of Mulberry Grove (later called Mulberry), Lone Oak,

Breezy Hill and Mineral City (later known as West Mineral).

Midway, an early camp in eastern Crawford County, was given that name because the community was midway between Fort Scott and Baxter Springs on the stagecoach line.

Many of the coal camps had interesting and sometimes humorous names. There were camps named 4 1/2 Camp, Red Onion, Dogtown (named for the large number of canines kept by the citizens), Water Lily, Gebo Camp, Red Camp (named for the red houses), Pumpkin Center, Blue Goose, Frogtown (named for a frog infested pond near the small camp), Scabpatch (named for non-union miners residing in the western portion

of Scammon) and Buzard's Roast Camp.

Little Italy, also known as West Chicopee, was at one time home to more than 500 residents who were mostly Italian. This camp extended southward toward another coal camp, Klondike. Capaldo in Crawford County and Carona and 42 Camp in Cherokee County were also largely settled by Italians.

Most of the mining communities were "melting pots" of native and European-born persons. They ranged in size from fewer than 50 individuals to more than 1,000 residents such as in Arma, Pittsburg, Frontenac, Scammon, Weir, Mulberry and Radley.

There were two basic types of houses in these mining settlements.

One was square with a hipped roof and was used in most cases by larger families or groups. The other was an elongated cracker box, which one author described as a box car cut crosswise into three rooms. Most of the houses were probably company owned, but a sizeable number were owned by individuals.

The mining families were steeped in traditions of hard work and spiritual faith. Therefore, churches and schools sprung up along with hotels, rooming houses, community halls, "company stores," opera houses, railroad tracks, dance halls and saloons.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, there were several saloons in each town. Weir had 35 sa-

loons while Scammon had 20 and Mineral had 27. Opera houses were also very popular in the more populated places. These three towns had eight opera houses total.

The Crawford County Genealogy Room and the Cherokee County Genealogical-Historical Library in Columbus have lots of information on coal mining and coal miners. Both libraries also have the Weir-Pittsburg Coal Field maps for sale.

The Crawford County Genealogy Room is located on the second floor of the Pittsburg Public Library and is open on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Tuesday through Friday, the room is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The phone number is 620-230-5558.

From our HISTORY Sponsored by



'Court to decide on bus problem'

Compiled by Brady Cloud

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Excerpted stories in Crawford County newspaper archives

100 Years Ago

March 11, 1926

The Pittsburg Teachers College has had a total enrollment for the 1925-26 terms, of 5,582 students, including 5,003 from Kansas, it was disclosed here today in the annual report of J. F. Mitchell registrar of the College. This figure is an increase of 412 over the 1924-25 school terms and it is the first time in the history of the College the enrollment from Kansas has come closer to the 5,000 mark than 300. "The figures," Registrar Mitchell said, "indicate substantial growth in every department of the College."

Formal opening of the

now Thompson-Stanton Motor Company. 302 North Locust, will be held tonight, tomorrow and tomorrow night, it was announced today. The Thompson-Stanton company recently was appointed exclusive local agency for Oakland motor cars, and incidentally, the new Pontiac sixes. The proprietors of the new firms - O. S. Thompson and Elmer Stanton - come here highly recommended and thoroughly capable and experienced. For twelve years they have been in the motor car and garage business at Mulberry, and therefore have a host of friends throughout Crawford and Bourbon counties.

Girard, March 11. - Silas James, superintendent of the Republic Coal Company mine near Breezy Hill, was arrested on a warrant charging him with assault with a deadly

weapon by Sheriff J. D. Turkington this morning, and released by Justice Eugene English on a bond of \$1,000. The warrant for the arrest of James was sworn to by Harry W. Burr, secretary-treasurer of District 14 of the United Mine Workers of America, who came here from Pittsburg last night. It was from James that two automatic revolvers were taken by the marching miners during their demonstration at the mine of the Republic Coal Company last Saturday morning, according to reports.

50 years ago

March 11, 1976

A City Court hearing this morning will determine the legality of safety signals and yellow paint on two buses used to transport Mulberry and Arcadia area students to Girard. The Kansas Highway Pa-

trol last month cited the drivers of one of the buses for failure to adapt the bus to non-school district regulations, Highway Patrol Lt. Col. James Martin said Tuesday in Topeka. However, Vernon Grassie, deputy Crawford County attorney, said Wednesday, "Our present opinion is that they're probably operating within the law."

A \$998,000 bond issue request by the Northeast Unified School District 246 was denied by the State Board of Education Tuesday. Unless approval is given by the state board, a school district is limited to a bonded indebtedness equal to seven per cent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property in the district. The bond proposal, to build a new high school in Arma, would have exceeded the seven per cent limitation by \$906,000, state

education officials said.

As part of a re-organization effort, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce Jask force chairmen met Wednesday to discuss proposed goals in areas ranging from the Pittsburg airport to education. The chamber has replaced its traditional committee structure with task forces which will concentrate on the quick implementation of specific goals, chamber officials have said. Carl Jackson, chamber president, said at the luncheon Wednesday, the proposals of the task forces would be reviewed before final approval by the chamber board of directors.

25 years ago

March 11, 2001

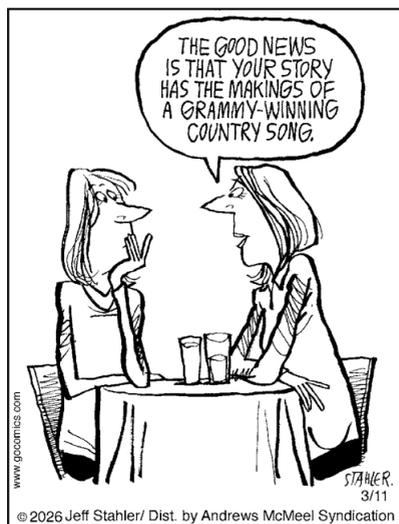
A variety of different methods need to be explored for funding education, Crawford County legislators said at a Pancake and Politics session Saturday morning at the St. Mary's Activity Center. "I think we need to look at a mixture of everything," Rep. Bob Grant, D-Cherokee, told the audience of about 60 attending the meeting, sponsored by the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce and Kansas Gas Service. "We should look at property, income, sales,

maybe 'sin' taxes."

A South Dakota man died early Saturday when the pickup he was driving slammed head-on into a semi-tractor trailer on the U.S. 69 bypass west of Pittsburg. Robert Lindholm, 36, of Dell Rapids, S.D., was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident that woke many southwest Pittsburg residents from their sleep at 6:18 Saturday morning. Two other South Dakota men, Justin Radel, 21, of Parkston, and Leroy Colreis, 44, of Mitchell, were taken by Crawford County Emergency Medical Service ambulance to Mt. Carmel Medical Center.

The Meadowbrook Mall center court was transformed into a circus Saturday for Girl Scout Day at the mall. Around 120 girls from 11 troops in Pittsburg and Cherokee gathered for the event, according to Konnie McDowell. She's normally the Girl Scout service unit manager, but donned a ringmaster's jacket and hat for the occasion. She said that the mall day is held each year, though the event was canceled last year because of inclement weather. "We are the only ones in the Ozark Area Girl Scout Council who have a mall day," McDowell said.

MODERATELY CONFUSED



FAMILY CIRCUS



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PREVIOUS ANSWER

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