

Hang Your Hat In History
OZONA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISITOR CENTER PARK

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CHAMBER DIALOGUE

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**The Chamber of Commerce recognizes
OZONA WOOL & MOHAIR COMPANY
as our November
Business of the Month**



“Ozona Wool & Mohair Company opened 30 years ago,” said Pam Blount, Manager. “The building was bought from Vernon Jones. Several surrounding counties came together to form a co-op so that wool and mohair prices would be more competitive for everyone.”

Ozona Wool and Mohair started as simply a place where local ranchers could bring their wool to store and sale. “Up until last year and the drought, we were still seeing 400-600 thousand pounds of wool during the spring and fall sales,” said Pam. “We generally have two big sales a year, after the spring and fall clip. In the past, some years we had multiple sales.”

The majority of the wool brought in and sold is used for uniforms, rugs, hats and clothing. “The majority of the wool we received is from Crockett County ranchers. It’s quite a process to get ready for and to sell the wool,” said Pam.

The wool is checked in, verified, weighed, and sorted. Buyers are contacted. “Our buyers are from Brady, Mertzon, San Angelo, and China.” The samples of the wool are laid out by lots, and buyers silently bid on a price per pound. Once the wool is sold, it is re-weighed. “Some buyers like the wool to be cored and sent off for testing to determine the real value based on the vegetation (amount of dirt, weed and grass matter), micron (fineness of the wool), and yield (what’s actually left after it’s cleaned). The wool is reweighed, baled, re-marked and the buyers contacted to let them know it is ready for pick-up.

Like many surrounding area wool houses, Ozona Wool & Mohair has diversified its operation. They are a Carhartt Dealer and sell heavy coats and work clothing. “We have seen an increased interest in people buying scoured wool for spinning and weaving. We sell one pound bags. Also, we have ranchers that bring in cleaned mohair that spinners and weavers use for doll hair and other things.”

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Along with deer feed, the wool house sells a number of other products as well. They sell deer feeders, animal medicines, Sportmix cat and dog food, all natural and holistic pet food. If not in stock it can be ordered. Pet treats, bird seed, sunflowers and wind chimes. According to Pam, they can't keep their rocking chairs in stock. They have Circle E Candles, varmint hunting calls, farm and ranch tools, traps/snares, waxes and dyes, general tools, and some fishing poles. "We also try and keep inventory that would be of interest to the ladies." There are gifts, collectibles, cutting boards, Montana Silver Smith jewelry, watches, and cow hide rugs.

"We see a lot of travelers, hunters and spinners and weavers come in. Many people comment that it is becoming harder to find an original feed store and like the fact that, "it smells in here just like a feed store should!"

The Chamber of Commerce would like to recognize Ozona Wool & Mohair for their on-going efforts to expand their business, and their ability to recognize the meet the needs of the consumer and community.

Ozona Wool and Mohair Company is open Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm, and on Saturdays from 8am to 12 noon. Stop in and visit Manager Pam Blount (been with company for 6 years), and long time Warehouse Hand, "Cookie" Fierro, who has worked for the company on and off for 30 years. For more information you can contact 325/392-2623.

Happy Anniversary

The Ozona Chamber of Commerce would like to wish the following members a **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**, and THANK them for their support of the Chamber organization, its programs and services, and your community. We would like to recognize and express our **SINCERE** appreciation to the following members who joined during the months of November and December:

NOVEMBER

America's Best Value-1982
 Perry Family Trust-1983
 Oglesby Ranch Company-2003
 Barnhart Shaw's General Repair-2005
 Preddy Tire Service-2006
 FIML Natural Resources, LLC
 Thircanyon Ranch-2010
 Jerry Lynn Pierce-1997
 Joe Bean Ranches-1996
 Best Western Ozona Inn-1997
 KYXX Ozona 94.3 True Country
 Fort Lancaster State Historic Site-2008
 VIP Ranch Company-2001
 Ozona Insurance-1996
 Ozona Wool & Mohair-1997
 The Village Drug-1998
 Nabors Well Service-2008

DECEMBER

House of Flowers-1997
 Stripes #219-1997
 AEP Texas-1997
 Anadarko Petroleum Corporation-1997
 Better Business Bureau-2000
 Crockett County Consolidated Common School District-2006
 Crockett National Bank-1997
 Dairy Queen of Ozona-1997
 Fesco, LTD-1979
 JJ Marley Ranch-1997
 Media Jaw-2009
 Ozona National Bank-1997
 Ben Forehand-2011
 Casey A. Riley, Systems Consultant-2008

Snowflake Donut & Kolache Shop Ribbon Cutting

County officials, Chamber Board of Directors, staff, Ambassadors and locals all gathered to celebrate the opening of a new business in Ozona. Snowflake Donut & Kolache Shop, located at 903 15th Street (formerly Tia's Café) is now open for business seven days a week from 5am-2pm daily. Owners are Sim Him and Ros Tork.

They serve raised, old fashioned, cake, sprinkled and filled donuts. You will find cinnamon rolls, cinnamon twists, éclairs and apple fritters. Also on the menu are bacon, egg, sausage, ham and cheese breakfast croissants, biscuits and burritos. You can also try their Sausage Pig in the Blanket. A tasty favorite are their Kolaches. “We have sausage

Kolaches, or you can try our cream cheese, lemon, raspberry, or strawberry fruit Kolaches,” said daughter Marla. Enjoy a beverage as well. On the menu is whole, 2% and chocolate milk, apple juice, sweet tea, coffee, cappuccino, bottle water and Starbucks Frappuccino and much more. Sim makes the Kolaches while Ros is in charge of the donuts.

“Everything on our menu is made fresh daily,” said Sim.

“I bet you want to know where we are from,” asked Ros of the Ribbon Cutting attendees. “We are from Cambodia”. Following the Civil War (1970-1975) the Khmer Rouge regime took over rule of Cambodia from 1975-1979. “No one was allowed to leave the country,” said Ros.

Sim, her first husband, their 6 month old and 3 year old daughters were run out of Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, and into the fields (later coined the Killing Fields) where many Cambodians were left to fend for themselves with no food, clothing or shelter. Sim lost her husband and two girls to starvation. “We had nothing,” said Sim.

Sim escaped Cambodia through Thailand. She came to the U.S. where she met her current husband Ros. Ros had escaped Cambodia as well through Vietnam. “In two years there were almost 3 million men, women, and children killed.” They were executed, starved or died from disease.

Sim and Ros both escaped Cambodia in 1984. The two had shared the same experience in separate parts of Cambodia and later met each other in the U.S. in Dallas, Texas. They now have two daughters and two sons. Daughter Marla has been working at the Ozona shop with her parents but is getting ready to move back to Dallas to go to college to major in International Business. Sons Tra and Woody live in Dallas, and daughter Vonica lives in California.

Sim and Ros moved to California for a while, but returned to Texas. “We lived in Allen, Texas, and always liked small towns,” said Sim. They looked around Kerrville and Fredericksburg but found Ozona and really like the community and how friendly everyone is. “At 4am we are up making donuts, and the travelers off the interstate stop by looking for coffee. In the big city you have to be careful, here we can open early and feel safe,” said Sim.

Snowflake donuts will also take large orders with at least one day's notice if you have a meeting, shower or event. Stop by the shop to pick up their brochure and menu. For more information you may call 325/392-5100.



Chamber Welcomes New Members-

New Beginnings Church

701 9th Street

Ozona, TX 76943

325/232-9439, 226-7040

Pastor Carlos Cantu

Non-Denominational Church

Sunday worship 10am, Wednesday 7pm

Monthly GALS Awesome Ladies meeting, www.newbeginningsozona.com

Big John's Wood Products

P.O. Box 26893

Fort Worth, TX 76126

254/485-0653, 817/443-3807

Bobby Pettijohn

Sell fire & grill wood, hunting leases, buy & sell ranches





Left to right; Carmen Villarreal-employee, and owners Ronda & Jeffrey Stuart, and "mom", Jackie Hopkins.

The Chamber of Commerce recognizes

CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS

As our December

Business of the Month

"It was actually my Dad, Jerry Hopkins, that inspired me to open a store," said Ronda Stuart. "He made wooden crosses, and I had a collection of them. We later expanded our line of products."

Close to Our Hearts, located at 908 11th Street opened in 2004, and is family owned and operated by Jackie Hopkins and Jeffrey and Ronda Stuart. "We truly are a family business. Even with a full-time job Jeffery still works the store on weekends and holidays. We have customers that come by just to see him! We've even tease him about how many candle burners he sells each month," said Ronda. "We try and keep a variety of items that would appeal to both the men and the ladies in the family."

Top sellers and things to look for at Close to our Hearts are their rock crosses and candles, Jon Hart luggage, Fiesta dishes and Mud House, Great Western and Morenci candles. "We get our crosses from a company called A Cut Above. They make handcrafted crosses out of rock, zebra and deer horns. They are very unique and popular, and our candles are a favorite item," said Ronda.

You will find a number of collectible items available at Close to our Hearts such as the Painted Pony collection and Jim Shore products. "The chicken and rooster Poultry in Motion collection we can't keep on the shelf," said employee Carmen Villarreal. "We also carry the Lodge cookware, in colors. Many locations do not have a color selection available," said Ronda. The store also carries both Red River Traders and Rodeo Rick jewelry.

Ronda just returned from Germany and has brought back Santa's Christmas ornaments and displays and incense smokers. "In Germany they call their candles incense smokers."

The store, all dressed up for Christmas, has a number of rooms and areas to explore. There is the Angel, Western, and Sale Rooms. You can shop the kitchen and children's areas along with the Kritter Korner (bird houses and wind chimes), and an area has been set aside with all type of teen accessories.

"The newest series we carry is the Show Off Art. These pieces are children's interpretations of verses in the Bible. They have become very popular as well," said Ronda.

"We were concerned when our neighboring businesses started closing and how that would limit our traffic, but the community has been very supportive, and we are so thankful," said Ronda. "We will be here through the holidays and will also have an after Christmas sale in January."

The Chamber of Commerce would like to recognize Close to our Hearts for their effort to expand their business, provide quality customer service, recognize the needs of the consumer, and for being an added asset to the local business community.

Close to our Hearts is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. Saturday hours are seasonal. You can also stop by the store to enter a weekly drawing. Just drop by, and enter your name. For more information call 325/392-2700.

Congressman Canseco's office visits Ozona

In what many were hoping to be a discussion with U.S. Rep., Francisco "Quico" Canseco turned out to be a sharing of information with one of the congressman's representatives. The Congressman had visited Ozona in both September and October.

Tied up in Washington, D.C. as the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate debated over the Payroll Tax Bill, Canseco was unable to make his Dec. 20 visit to Ozona. Instead, Michael Koerner, the congressman's district director in the San Antonio, visited with local citizens.

Canseco's office issued a statement after the congressman voted in favor of sending the payroll tax cut bill to conference with the senate. By voting in favor of the motion, Canseco voted to advance the process in Congress towards securing a one year extension of the payroll tax cut instead of the Senate-passed mere two month extension, the release stated. "The senate is wrong. We need to give American families certainty for the year ahead, not just two months. Non partisan experts have said the senate's plan is unworkable. The senate is playing politics by kicking the can down the road and taking the easy way out. Therefore, I will vote for - as I have already done- and continue to fight for a year-long extension to give middle class Americans the certainty they need," Canseco said.

Koerner, who cannot officially speak for Canseco, said he would take everyone's concerns and questions back to Canseco. The representative made stops at the Senior Center, the Ozona Chamber of Commerce and El Chato's Restaurant.



A lengthy discussion took place on border control, especially about the lack of border patrol or law enforcement present on State Highway 163 south.

County Judge Fred Deaton told Koerner that Ozona use to have a border patrol station that deterred illegal traffic. Koerner informed the group that Canseco has introduced a Cross Border bill. This was following President Obama's trip to El Paso stating the border was safer than it ever had been.

Cross Border is a program involving local sheriffs' departments, border patrol agencies, etc. that will submit and compile reports that will measure over a 12 month period illegal traffic and border violence by county, Koerner said. This information can then be used to seek and justify future border control. "Congressman Canseco is from Laredo, and completely understands the border issue," Koerner said.

Canseco issued a statement last week in response to the announced plans by the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security to reduce the number of National Guard personnel deployed along our nation's southern border. "Today, the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security announced that beginning in 2012 the number of National Guard troops patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border will be reduced from 1,200 to roughly 300. I am concerned that such a drastic reduction in the number of U.S. personnel tasked with securing our southern border will leave our border communities vulnerable to spillover violence from Mexico and result in our borders being less secure than they are now," Canseco said. "As I visit with constituents of the 23rd district, many of whom are living in border communities, they tell me the threat of spillover violence has become a part of daily life. Shamefully, this is the same area that the Obama Administration and Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano have categorized as 'safe,' 'secure' and 'open for business.' I have seen firsthand the ruthless tactics the cartels use along the border, exerting power through unimaginable violence and disregard for the rule of law. Yet the Obama Administration is apparently going to remove security personnel from the region, leaving Americans who live along the border to do so in a heightened state of fear."

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Koerner said \$18 billion in disaster relief authorized for Texas wildfires has been issued through FEMA. Local counties will be informed about FEMA modifications.

Rancher Paul Perner expressed concern that Farm Service Agencies have restrictive guidelines that do not include “outside fence” locations for fire relief.

Art Roane inquired about conservation programs such as water quality/control, brush clearing, etc. Koerner said this was a state budgeted item. Roane also said, “the Forage Disaster program worked well for land owners, and we appreciated the assistance.” Koerner said this was part of the disaster relief program and was 65 percent federally funded.

Deaton expressed the need for an upgrade in our local postal service, both a new post office and mail delivery. County Librarian Louise Ledoux said “if you lose your post office, you lose your town.” Koerner said he understood that the Congressman understands that the post office is the lifeline for rural communities. Ginger Perner said, “We have no mail delivery and UPS already takes your mail to the post office to be picked up, but for us it is a 60 mile drive one way.” Koerner said that most people do not understand that the post office is a quasi-government agency. It is not federally funded and is a for profit business like any other business. He also mentioned that there are a number of agencies like Fed-Ex, UPS and others watching this situation very closely. The U.S. Post Office approached congress about funding assistance and they were denied.

Shirley Kirby asked Koerner about federal grants for the Crockett County Health and Wellness Center project. Koerner said that his office works with helping constituents find federal grants, along with sending letters of recommendation when they apply for them.

Kirby also asked Koerner about social security. As a retired teacher, she cannot draw her late husband’s social security funds. Koerner said the system is going to have to change for the benefit of the people.

In an e-mail statement, Canseco said social security is on a path to bankruptcy without reforms. “I strongly support common sense reforms to social security so that we can strengthen it so that it is there for our children and grandchildren. Enacting reforms to social security will also give us an opportunity to take a look at and potentially address issues like the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision, which are of concern to many Americans, particularly Texas school teachers,” Canseco said. For more information, visit <http://canseco.house.gov/>

Web Design

Is your website feeling stale? When designing a website for a small business, there are a few tried and true tips you can use to guarantee your website will make a good impression on those who visit. These four tips can help your site become an effective tool that works for you 24/7 to help you gain more business:

Keep the homepage action oriented. Google is famous for its bare bones landing page, with only the Google search bar front and center. Facebook and Twitter both have login or sign-up as the two options for a guest to do on their homepage. You should decide early on in the website design process what the goal of your website will be, and always direct users toward completing that goal. Also, make sure you have contact information on your homepage so people can pick up the phone and start doing business with you right away. The best bet is to keep the homepage down to a just a few buttons and your most important information. From there people can choose where they want to go on the website and find out more about you, your business, or your services.

Integrate social media. Integrating social media can be done from the website or from the Social Media sites. For example, you can have buttons on your page to divert browsers to check out your social media site, and you can also regularly share pages from your website on your Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn pages that will divert people to your website and hopefully help generate more leads. By integrating social media you can begin to gain more feedback from your customers on what their needs are, what you are doing right, and what you may be doing wrong.

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Keep it simple. Sometimes keeping it simple can be a lot more difficult than it sounds. When you have a lot of content, or many different types of users, it may become difficult to keep your content simple. One way to counteract the tendency to overdo is to always remember that you are more likely to have someone read information on a well-organized and clean looking screen than a cluttered one with an overabundance of content. I think we've all been victim of a webpage with annoying blinking images, pop-ups, or information overload at one time or another. To get someone to come back to your site after they have been turned off by its design can be a difficult thing to do. Good planning can help keep it simple.

Make it memorable. Will people come to your page and be bored? Or will they be inspired to do business with you? You can work on making your webpage memorable by having valuable content. Valuable content can include captivating photos that give readers a good idea of the work you can do and also having interesting and well written copy on your website. Poor grammar, misspelled words, and sloppy sentences will make readers assume that your work is sloppy as well. Use your pictures and copy to bring your business's story to life. And don't be afraid to interject some personality. You can attract new customers by showing you are personable, professional, and interesting. When your website guests get a good impression of you from your website, they will be motivated to find out more and eventually purchase the goods or services you are selling.

When a website is designed well it can be a powerful tool for a business to build their brand and gain more customers. By integrating these four tips into the design of your website, you can improve your business's image as well as make it easier for customers and potential customers to do business with you.

This article was written by Jessica Lambert, Business Development Training Coordinator and Certified Training Coordinator of Angelo State University's Small Business Development Center. For more information on the topic of this article or the services of the ASU · SBDC, contact her at Jessica.Lambert@angelo.edu.

From the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and staff

Merry Christmas

