



### By Jan Rahn

#### *Managing Editor*

Area first responders were honored at a “Beefin’ Up Our Heroes” appreciation dinner last Tuesday night at the Grant Family Restaurant.

This was the 11th such event organized by Cal Siegfried, vice president of marketing at Willow Creek Meats in McCook.

Several business sponsors made the evening possible with financial contributions.

“Your sacrifices do not go unnoticed in the community,” Siegfried told the firefighters, emergency service and law enforcement personnel. He provided several amusing jokes and stories while first responders and their spouses, along with employees of several company sponsors, enjoyed visiting and dining on prime rib.



The crowd of 105 in attendance was then entertained with several old favorites from Three 4 All in a short concert that followed.

The evening was a nice tribute to those who serve their communities on a daily basis as first responders.

“We all know we don’t say ‘thank you’ nearly enough for everything you do,” read a section on the placemats which listed the businesses providing sponsorship for the evening.

The top presenting sponsors included Frenchman Valley Co-op of Grant and Imperial, and Harchelroad Motors, Inc. of Imperial.

Major sponsorships were provided by Farm Bureau Financial Services, Zeilinger Law Office, Pinnacle Bank, Perkins County Health Services and Hatch’s Super Foods.

Media sponsors included The Grant Tribune-Sentinel and Grant Family Restaurant.

#### Beefin’ Up Our Heroes

The program was originally designed to honor both national and local heroes in a variety of ways—it was started in December 2009 when Heartland Cattle Company of McCook sent 575

packages of Willow Creek Meats beef jerky to U.S. troops stationed in Iraq.

Siegfried said the response from the troops was incredible—Heartland received emails, photos and even a flag that had flown over their camp. Since then, the program has expanded and grown into an opportunity for individuals and businesses to honor our troops.

Locally, the “Beefin’ Up Our Heroes” program took off when the founder, Cal Seigfried, was driving between McCook and Culbertson one evening and saw several volunteer firefighters running into a grain storage facility that was fully engulfed in flames.

“The light went on!” said Seigfried. He realized that with the amount of time, training and personal sacrifice local volunteers gave to their community, “thanks” should be said to them and their families.

Thus, the local version of “Beefin’ Up Our Heroes” was born.

According to Seigfried, this unique program has been met with tremendous support and appreciation and is funded solely by local sponsorship.

