

encroaching,” Sitz says. “To operate our ranch, we lease a lot of land from out-of-state owners — many are executives who have bought land here for the scenery or the wildlife. So, I thought the ‘Path to Eden’ video was a good opportunity for educating others about the importance of the land for ranching and emphasizing the values of being a good neighbor.”

Carrel has heard that many people have seen the DVD, and he hopes it will make a difference in getting new and absentee landowners to work with traditional ranchers. His advice to newcomers is “to work to fit into the community and be cognizant of fencing, spraying weeds and other stewardship issues.”

Sitz is also hopeful the DVD may help create awareness among absentee landowners of opportunities for the next generation of ranchers.

“Anymore, young kids can’t get into ranching [either due to finances or finding land], so possibly some opportunities can be created for the next generation to manage or lease some of these lands from absentee landowners,” he says.

Keeping it going

Response to the DVD since it was released last summer has been very positive from both longtime landowners and newcomers, Von Stein reports. More than 3,000 copies of the DVD have been distributed based on individual requests.

In addition to individual distribution, distribution of the DVD has been through realtors, banks, land trusts, conservation

More resources for country newcomers

Escaping the traffic and congestion of city life and moving to the country may sound like a dream come true for many — but there are many factors to consider in making the transition.

To that end, Kansas State University (K-State) Extension specialist Morgan Powell and his colleague Kerri Ebert have developed a K-State Extension publication titled, “Living in the Country.” It includes sections on risks and rewards, government, legal issues, public services, buying or building a home, utilities, agriculture, trash removal, being a good neighbor and others. The 15-page booklet also contains a list of resources, as well as common acronyms used in everyday conversation by country dwellers. Download it at www.oznet.ksu.edu/library; type in MF2798 before pressing “Go.”

Similarly, the Wyoming Farm Bureau is offering a “Moving to the Country” brochure for individuals considering a move into the wilds of Wyoming. The brochure highlights the importance of understanding water rights, easements, landscapes, livestock and farming operations and how these issues relate to living in the country. The brochure is available online at www.wyfb.org; click on the publications tab.

If you are an absentee landowner seeking information about conservation programs that may suit your property, the Center for Absentee Landowners has designed a web site at www.absenteelandowners.org with helpful information. The center aims to help landowners understand the different available programs, which agencies to contact and the tools needed to implement conservation. It also offers tips to farmers who would like to use land under absentee ownership.

groups such as Extension and conservation districts, chamber of commerce groups, and county planners.

Von Stein has also given presentations at more than 25 large group meetings across the state to help introduce the film and encourage communities to use it as a tool.

“I want people to be proactive versus reactive to the challenges of changing land ownership,” she says.

Looking ahead, Von Stein plans to continue doing presentations as funding allows. “I feel it is critical to get this message out, so I will continue to do the most with what funding is available,” she says.

Overall, Von Stein says she hopes the DVD will help new landowners be better able to make informed decisions with regard to Montana’s resources — and that through working together the Eden that is Montana can be maintained for generations to come.

“We’ve gotten people talking about a topic that no one wanted to talk about,” she says. “That is a huge success.”



Editor’s Note: To request a copy of the “Path to Eden” DVD, visit www.pathtoeden.org or call 406-522-7654. A suggested donation of \$10 is requested to order the DVD.

That Old West Magic

Don’t miss the 2008 Angus Foundation Benefit Auction and Gala, scheduled to take place Aug. 30 at the world-renowned



National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Themed “That Old West Magic — A Saturday Night at Prosperity Junction,” the event will be hosted and underwritten by Bob Funk of Express Ranches, Yukon, Okla., and features one-of-a-kind entertainment, an auction and fine dining. Proceeds from the event will go toward the Angus Foundation’s *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus*.

To request your personal invitation and respond with a \$100-per-person donation by Aug. 8, visit www.angusjournal.com/foundevent08.

For more information contact one of these event organizers:

- ▶ Milford Jenkins, president, Angus Foundation; 816-383-5163; mjenkins@angusfoundation.org
- ▶ Julie McMahan French, event co-chair; 989-435-2599; juliefrench@nethawk.com
- ▶ Wynn Dalton Herbers, event co-chair; 434-384-3667; wynnherbers@verizon.net
- ▶ Jenni Beck Winegarner, auction coordinator; 806-683-4634; jdibeck@gmail.com

Seating is limited, so sign up today!

