

Lions to honor Hernandez Family

**Annual Cowboy Breakfast will be served Aug. 2 at the Sterling Elks Lodge**

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SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL-ADVOCATE

This year the Sterling Lions Club will honor the Hernandez Family of Proctor at the annual Cowboy Breakfast, which will be held from

6:30 to 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 2 at the Elks Lodge. Tickets are \$8 each for all ages and are available from any Lions members or at the door.

Traditionally, the breakfast has kicked off the Logan County Fair since the breakfast began in the old municipal auditorium 71 years ago. On the menu are Lions pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, orange juice, milk, and coffee. Breakfast attendees will arrive to the aroma of the food being cooked outside of the Elks Club by the Lions' Grill Committee. The breakfast will be in the club's ballroom with Sterling Lions members manning the serving duties. Cowboy attire is very appropriate but is not mandatory. The public is invited to come, eat, and have a good time.

The program is scheduled to end by 7:45 a.m. so those who need to get to work can do so.

In 2000, Lion Jack Annan thought the Lions Club should honor those who have called Logan County "home" for many years, and the club heartily agreed with him. Since this award was to be given at the Logan County Fair Breakfast, those honored usually had an agricultural background. Each year two or three Pioneers were chosen by the Pioneer Committee to be so honored.

Since its beginning, 69 Logan County residents have received the "Pioneers of the Year" Award. This year, the committee will honor a Logan County family that has farmed in the county for 100 years and still has family members farming on the same ground. This family is that of Manuel and Antonia Hernandez of the Proctor area, where their grandsons, brothers George and James David Hernandez, still farm many acres of irrigated and dryland that was originally purchased by Manuel in the early 1920s.

Manuel and Antonia had 51 grandchildren, 132 great-grandchildren, and approximately 137 great-great-grandchildren. Five of their great-grandsons, David, Kelly, Marty, George, and Andrew Hernandez are still farming in Proctor, and two great-grandsons, Ray Hernandez and Bill Ramirez, farm at Crook. Other great-grandchildren farm in Nebraska. Many of Manuel and Antonia's descendants will be at the Cowboy Breakfast to receive the award.

Manuel Hernandez was born June 11, 1877, in the State of Jalisco, Mexico, while Antonia was born June 13, 1882, in Aguascalientes, Mexico. Manuel's mother died giving birth to him and he was raised by his grandmother. He and Antonia Lopez married and were the parents of seven children.

In March 1923, they decided to come to the United States and five of those children came with them. The two older ones, Cesario and Pasquala, were married and decided to remain in Mexico. The family of seven, Manuel, Antonia, John, Ralph, Ray, Antonio (Tony), and Hilda immigrated first to Chicago, then to Padroni, Colo.

Shortly afterward, Cesario also immigrated. but Pasquala remained in Mexico. Manuel worked for another farmer until he was able to buy his own cattle and his own farm in Proctor. Sons John, Ralph, Ray and Tony also became farmers and raised cattle. Tony eventually moved to California where he became a mechanic.

After Antonia's death in 1939, Manuel moved in with son Ray and helped him on the farm. Manuel was an early riser and was always ready to go to work. He raised a large garden every year and worked in the beet and bean fields with his grandchildren. He always took two rows at a time when thinning and cleaning the beets and helped the grandchildren catch up when they fell behind. Manuel visited his daughter Pasquala in Mexico every year and loved to bring back Mexican candy for the grandchildren.

Always a horseman, Manuel's favorite time of year was late autumn when he could attend the Logan County Fair Rodeo and Parade. He loved giving his grandchildren money for the fair. How fitting that we are honoring the Manuel Hernandez family at the fair breakfast!

Manuel passed away on Nov. 16, 1971. at the age of 94 years. assured that his sons and grandsons would continue to farm his land. All of the Hernandez family members born in Mexico became citizens of the United States.