

## **“MOVE ‘EM ON, HEAD ‘EM UP” RAWHIDE”**

### **There’s a Cattle Drive a comin’**

Horseback trail riders, cowpokes, and those who’d like to be them will have a chance to participate in “The Last Cattle Drive” this September. “The Last Cattle Drive”, written in 1977 by Robert Day has become a cult Kansas novel. Day created his character Spangler Star Turkle from his own experiences working on the **Ward Sullivan** ranch northwest of Gorham and the book is set in that local area, where the book gets its setting.

September’s cattle drive, organized by O. Newton King, Lawrence and Kay Homewood, Russell, commemorates the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the book’s publication and celebrates the latest edition which brings a fresh perspective to looking at this modern-day Western classic. King and Homewood want to promote a positive image of the scenic hills and valleys of Russell County and the beauty of Kansas, and help increase the economy in area towns mentioned in Day’s book.

Riders will be stepping back in history as they experience a cattle drive similar to the 1977 drive but it will be geared to fit the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Unlike the drive from Blue Hills School North of Gorham to Kansas City, this year’s drive will be conducted in two days and take place on the Dickinson Ranch near Gorham. Kirk Dickinson will host the drive as part of his Agri-tourism business. The Dickinson Ranch was established in 1881 by the Dickinson Family to raise cattle and sheep.

The first day of cattle driving begins at 8 am on September 4<sup>th</sup> The second day follows on September 5<sup>th</sup>. The riders will become Dickinson cowhands along with Robert Day, author of ‘The Last Cattle Drive’, Governor Kathleen Sibelius, Nancy Kassebaum, and Newton King. The drive starts just north of the Saline River at an old homestead where riders will prepare their horses and ride (from the south east part of the ranch). The horses and riders will cross the Saline River and proceed to the northwest corner of the property to pick up some 50 head of cattle. Once the drive is on, the cattle will be driven on lease roads that run through the ranch back to the starting point. Participants will be treated to chuck wagon meals and entertainment in Paradise and Luray, towns named in the novel.

Homewood and King are working plans for additional drives to take place along the general route laid out in Day’s original novel. Persons wanting to ride along with “The Last Cattle Drive” may make application to either Kay Homewood (email [khomewood@eaglecom.net](mailto:khomewood@eaglecom.net)) or O. Newton King (email [onkplace@sunflower.com](mailto:onkplace@sunflower.com)). The fee for riding will be \$300.00 per rider per day.