

MID-WINTER SWAP

By Sharon Marburger (photos by Jayne Beer and John Moss)

The 2025 Mid-Winter Swap went off without a hitch on Sunday, January 19. Being our first year at a new venue, Jim, Vera, and I showed up extra early (at 8:00 a.m.!) to get the floor plan mapped out on the floor, using painters' tape to define each "booth". Mike and Donitte Stiles were close on our heels and their help was greatly appreciated. Other club members straggled in and helped as needed.



Marking the floor with tape to define each booth space. Photo by John.

Defining the vendor spaces did not take as much time as expected, so co-chair Jayne decided to let vendors in earlier than the 9:30 specified time. This did not create a problem because all spaces were reserved and assigned in advance.

Although there were three cancellations, we were able to fill the spaces by allowing three vendors to rent a second space for their booths. Now that we have a Swap under our belts at the new venue, we have determined there is enough room to add two more selling spaces.

The day was extremely cold; it was 1°F, with below zero wind chills when we arrived at the Firefighters Reception Hall. The day didn't get much better. I believe the high temperature was 7°F., plus wind chill.

Jayne generously allowed Vera and me to move our admission table inside the room instead of out in the vestibule. It was still cold with the door opening with each entry, but it was nicer with the space heater Jayne loaned us. Then, of course, we had to battle the wifi to get our electronics to work. Life is so much easier with computers and the like. Ha!



Jim, Sharon, Vera, Corey. Photo by Jayne.

We ended up with 18 vendors instead of the original 21, but every spot was filled and everyone was happy. You can't beat having a room full of happy vendors, especially when said room is filled with buyers! Thank you to our vendors Tim Aulner, Greg Syslo, Mike and Donitte Stiles, Ed Ridge, Aerie (Allan and Tammy Jeanneret), Spear T Fossils (Brad Nielsen), CR Rocks (Rowdy Cropp), Steve May and Dick Leib, Gene Mulinix, Zen Sage Crystals, Dick and Donna



Photo by Jayne.



Photo by John.

Farlow, GA Crystal Co (Brittany Lopez), Kessler on the Rocks (Randy Kessler), Afghan Silver (Hanif), Charles Wooldridge, Nykky Lytle, By the Beers, and jimspasttime (Jim Marburger).

Tear down was simple and fast. I learned that we will just mark spaces at the corners and not run the tape the entire length of a row. It was somewhat difficult to remove the tape after it was stepped on repeatedly throughout the day. Live and learn!

President and Junior Leader, Brett, spent most of the day in the kitchen preparing and serving food. We discovered part way through the day that we were not allowed to have snacks or any kind of food items for public consumption without a Food Handler's License and Food Handler's Permit. This differed from our previous venue. However, we could provide food for club members and our vendors. Going forward, we will arrange for a food truck to provide food for the public.

Brett prepared a vegetarian curry, beef enchiladas, and hot dogs/chili dogs for our internal lunch. It was all very tasty. For supper, with the help of several club members, a pasta supper was prepared (on site and potluck), which included

spaghetti and flat noodles with three choices of sauces (marinara meat, plain red sauce, and alfredo), green salad and dressing, croissants, crackers, spinach dip, and a plethora of desserts. There may have been more but I was so tired, I didn't notice.

Unfortunately, we did not get pictures of all of our vendors. Sorry to those not shown. (photos by John)



Brett getting ready to add coconut milk to the curry. Photo by John.



Jan mixing and serving up the salad. Photo by John.



Beers



Lopez



Barb taking over the important job of cleaning. Photo by John.

A short meeting followed the supper (see minutes on page 4).

Brett and his crew made sure the venue was clean enough to pass inspection.

We will hold the 2026 Mid-Winter Swap at this same venue. We paid for two years up front. I believe the consensus is to hold the Swap at this location going forward. It is a great venue; we heard nothing but compliments from club members, vendors, and the public. Several comments on how much better this venue is, compared to Bethany. We are pleased that everyone was happy.



Farlows



Jeannerets



Aulners



Syslo



Leib



May

(Photos by John.)



Zen Sage



Hanif at Afghan Silver



Nielsen



Mulinex



Kessler



MIDWINTER SWAP ... NEW LOCATION!

By Jayne Beer

We moved the swap out to the Nebraska Firefighters Hall just north of West O Street and Sun Valley Boulevard after being in Bethany Park for many years. I was concerned that our customers wouldn't be able to find us there, so I was thrilled to see so many of them show up. I heard only great reviews of our new location. The space is bright and attractive and there is great parking nice and close. Even with so many customers showing up, it never seemed overly crowded.

These things, especially when we move to a new location, take lots of time on the part of the Board to coordinate and plan for all of the setting up of the new space. The day went smoothly with the help of members and nonmembers who worked in the kitchen and put out signs in the extreme cold. They stepped up to help in all the ways we needed them.

As always, if you saw things that we could do differently to improve our event, we are always listening and trying to make all of our events welcoming to vendors and customers. Thank you to all who made our midwinter swap a success.

THANKS FROM WOOLY

By Charles Wooldrige

I would like to thank everyone that helped make the swap a huge success. The food, the signs, the gate keeper and everyone else that I have failed to mention. There are too many to mention, by name! I think it was incredible to see, and I want you all to know how impressed and appreciative I am. Thank you!

