

Welcome to Our Adventure

Welcome to our adventure and the vision we had of creating our own country venue—a dream that has truly come to life. Thank you for taking an interest in our story and in this special place where you can watch the sun rise and experience some of the most beautiful sunsets in Southwest Nebraska.

My first experience cooking on my own came twenty-six years ago when a family asked if I would cater a reunion at the senior center in my hometown of Hayes Center, Nebraska. I was thrilled to accept, and that moment marked the beginning of an incredible journey. What started as a way to earn a few extra dollars quickly blossomed into something much bigger. I partnered with friends on various catering ventures, traveling to different locations to cook for our customers. What began as a few events each year soon grew into every weekend—and often more.

Twenty years ago, Lowell and I realized we shared the same dream and passion for cooking and hospitality. Before long, we had outgrown our kitchen at home. We would often take drives through the countryside, searching for an old barn to convert into a venue or a piece of land where we could build one ourselves.

Then, the property at 38404 Road 719 came up for sale.

It was exactly what we had been hoping for. Located between McCook and the lake, outside the city limits and along a paved highway, it offered the accessibility our customers needed. With more than 8.5 acres, we finally had the space to grow our dream.

What was once a veterinary clinic became **Marlene's Kitchen**. The building underwent a complete renovation, including new air conditioning units, bathrooms, doors, electrical systems, flooring, gathering spaces, and much more. With the help of dedicated contractors, our vision became reality, and we began welcoming and serving countless groups and celebrations on the property.

Then one day, we learned that an old, abandoned church in a small town was going to be demolished. I had a strong feeling that we should build a small country chapel. Lowell wasn't entirely convinced, but I couldn't let go of the idea. Around that same time, my childhood friends had wooden grain bins available to move, piece by piece, and soon our chapel project was underway.

That gut feeling was there for a reason.

My maternal grandparents were married in that very church on **September 1, 1926**. I often think about that little piece of heaven that belonged to them and how it somehow found its way to us.

We have poured our hearts, passion, and vision into this property, and our hope is that its next owners will continue to keep the dream alive. We would love to see this special place become the setting where your own dreams begin.