Hospital's new chief financial officer offers a wealth of experience

By Amber Hanneken Staff Writer

HUGO- Choctaw Memorial Hospital's newest chief financial officer is a familiar face from the past.

Mike McKenzie moved to Hugo with his family when he was in the third grade. His parents owned a ranch north of town and he graduated from Hugo High School in 1961. His seemingly ordinary beginnings eventually led him to a successful career in accounting, retirement in Mexico and eventual return to the city he loves.

"I found out I got a heck of a good education here in Hugo," McKenzie said. "I went out into a little bit bigger world, bigger cities, bigger companies. I didn't have any trouble competing."

McKenzie attended Oklahoma State University for his first year of college, but because his parents moved to Texas, he transferred to University of Texas at Austin to avoid out of state tuition fees. His undergraduate degree was a bachelor's in business administration with a major in accounting. He was married to Linda in 1967 and had three boys.

McKenzie attributes two jobs in preparing him for the hospital's CFO position. He worked for US Brass Corporation in Plano, Texas, a small to medium sized manufacturing company, where he headed the cost accounting department and later transitioned into system controller for four years. After working for US Brass for eight years, McKenzie started up his own accounting practice in Plano, Texas. He ran that business for 18 years before retiring in December 1997.

McKenzie and his wife took their retirement in central Mexico, south of Guadalajara.

"We moved to Mexico just to experience a different lifestyle and different culture," he said. "My wife had liked to vacation there a number of times." Eventually, changes in Mexico made the McKenzies want to move back to the United States. In 2007, he returned to Hugo with Linda after about 40 years of absence.

"When we decided to come back to the states we said, 'where?' and this was home to me despite all the time away," McKenzie said. "I spent a number of formative years here from third grade through high school. I had lived in the big city and I couldn't go back to that; so here we are." Despite being retired, when McKenzie was approached by a member of the Choctaw Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees about an open CFO position, he accepted and began the interview process.

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