

This year's Festival of Lights Christmas Parade grand marshals represent both Sand Springs' philanthropic history and the event's agriculture theme. The parade will be at 7 p.m. Dec. 5 in downtown Sand Springs. It was moved from Dec. 4 for the Class 6A all state football game between Sand Springs and Bixby. Parade director Debra Nobles said Mike and Lotsee Spradling were selected because of their community involvement and in keeping with the "down on the farm" theme. Nobles said the parade will feature 103 floats. Mike and Lotsee Spradling own the 2,000-acre Flying G Ranch, where they raise cattle, sell pecans, peanuts and more, as well as run an equestrian center. Lotsee said her dad, George Campbell, an attorney, moved their family to the Sand Springs area from Anadarko during the Great Depression so Campbell could work for his great uncle and Sand Springs' founder, Charles Page. The ranch was established in 1932. "Tulsa and Sand Springs got in a fight about who was going to annex this land for tax revenue...My dad and his friend applied for a township charter [for the ranch] and it was granted. That's how the town of Lotsee started," Lotsee said. After finishing college, she returned to the ranch to carry on her parents' cattle operation. She's served on the school board, assisted local FFA chapters and scouting groups, and hosted foreign exchange students. "I've helped raise kids," Lotsee said. Mike Spradling has served as president of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau, been on the American Farm Bureau board of directors and vice president of the Oklahoma Pecan Growers, among other boards and organizations. Mike has traveled around the world for agriculture events. "We appreciate being recognized, but, more importantly, that agriculture is recognized in the theme," he said. "Agriculture is so important. In 2050, we're going to have to produce 100 percent more food than we do today. Today, two percent produce the food for the other 98 percent." Both greet customers in their retail shop with smiles and pecan samples. For more information about the parade, call the chamber office at 918-245-3321. For more information about the Flying G Ranch, visit <http://www.flying-g-ranch.com>.