✤AUSTIN-WHITTEMORE continued from page 23

said. "The Austin-Whittemore House is decorated in a different theme each Christmas, and refreshments are served here for those attending the Tour of Homes. Funds raised are used to maintain the home."

Pravecek said that it isn't a process that happens quickly.

"We will select a theme and then begin sorting through the different decorations that we have stored in the attic and decide what we need to add," she said. "I will also be watching throughout the year for any decorations or ideas that we can incorporate. Many times I will find items at the Civic Council that we can purchase to use here."

Saying that the decorating process will begin in early November so that it is completed by Thanksgiving, Pravecek says it wouldn't be possible without the help of the community and her board.

"Once we pick the theme we will start pulling out the decorations and setting everything," she said. "I am always excited to see how beautiful it will be, because then I can imagine what it was like for Helen as a child and then for her children celebrating the holidays here."

Even if you have visited the home in the past, Pravecek said please come back.

"We are constantly making changes and moving things around, displaying different items as new items get donated," she said. "We are in the process of redoing some of the bedrooms, such as making the room at the top of the stairs into a men's bedroom." She also noted that this year's Tour of Homes will be held on December 4, from 4:30-7:30 p.m.

"It will just be a great time. It always is," Pravecek said. "Last year we added a bus tour to the tour where we had one of the buses from Vermillion Transit take us around on the tour and it was just fantastic. I played tour guide and the women who rode the bus with me said they loved it.

"The list of homes will come out in early November and, while I can't say what they are yet because they have not all been finalized, I can tell you the ones we are working with will all be unique, beautiful and offer a great opportunity to see different homes of Vermillion."

Pravecek said the final stop on the tour this year will, as always be the Austin-Whittemore house where refreshments will be served.

"I just invite everyone to come out and experience the home, be it on the tour or during our open hours," she said. "It is just a great look into the history of this house and community."

For more information about the Austin-Whittemore House or the Clay County Historical Society, please call (605) 624-8266 or reach us via the website www.cchssd.org.

✤By Shauna Marlette

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