

Volunteer never sees start of rodeo

For the past twenty-plus years, Denis Miller goes to his hometown rodeo. But he never sees the first half of it.

It's not that the Phillipsburg resident is late getting there, it's that his volunteer duties keep him away from the arena till the rodeo is nearly over.

The Phillips County native has volunteered with Kansas' Biggest Rodeo for the last quarter-century, but he misses about 75 percent of it.

That's because his job, to supervise ticket takers and count money, is busiest at the beginning of the rodeo, from more than an hour before gates open, till about the barrel racing begins.

Miller, part-owner of Mapes and Miller, CPAs in Phillipsburg, came to the rodeo when he was a child growing up in Agra. Back then, the rodeo still had Sunday afternoon performances, which "were really hot," he said. After graduating from Ft. Hays State University, and jobs with a CPA firms and oil companies in Wichita and Smith Center, he came to Phillipsburg.

After a few years, Miller wanted to become more involved in the community. He bought a share of the Phillipsburg Rodeo Association and

was active in the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development, as a "way to say I was vested in the community," he said. It didn't take long to get recruited for his rodeo job.

At first, it was to work as a ticket seller. As the rodeo grew, it morphed into counting cash, assisting ticket takers, and having the official attendance number for the rodeo each night.

For the last dozen years or so, as the rodeo has grown, his job has grown. He misses about three-quarters of the rodeo, as he takes care of his duties. "I get done about ten (p.m.), so I get to see some of the barrel racing and the bull riding and that's it." His employees at Mapes and Miller help out as well.

The rodeo has changed since Miller was a spectator on those hot Sunday afternoons, as a kid. The facilities have improved. "They tore most of the old facilities down, added (seating) boxes, the south grandstand, and added an office, hospitality and bathroom building on the east side. Now they're adding bathrooms on the west side," he said. "Every two or three years, they upgrade facilities, and they've probably doubled the seating since I started helping."

It's also changed financially.

The committee "has increased the dollars, putting more money into the purse," for cowboys. And attendance has increased. "It's gotten bigger. The biggest problem is, I don't know how they can get much bigger."

And when the 85th annual event rolls around in late July and early August, Miller once again won't hear the national anthem or see the first five events. He'll be busy counting tickets. But as soon as that job is done and he's given an official attendance count, he'll be in the stands, ready for the bull riding.

This year's Kansas' Biggest Rodeo is July 31-August 2 at the rodeo grounds two miles north of town. Performances begin at 8 pm each night. Reserved tickets for adults are \$15 and for children ages 3-12 are \$11. General admission tickets for adults are \$13 and for children ages 3-12 are \$10. For more information, visit Kansas-BiggestRodeo.com or call 785-543-2448.



Tower of power!



A 280-foot cell tower is being erected at the Norton-Decatur county line across U.S. 36 from Norcatour. The tower is being built by Hayden Tower Service out of Topeka and will take another week to week and a half to complete. The tower is for Verizon and will carry a 4G system.

-Telegram photo by Cynthia Haynes

Stockton

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Winklepleck said. "They will also be able to offer a wider array of services and larger loan amounts, while distributing compliance costs over a greater asset base."

The Stockton National Bank will also maintain First Security Bank's routing numbers for approximately six months, which means customers can utilize their existing checks until the end of January 2015. Besides Norton and Lenora, customers will be able to utilize the banks in Stockton, Hill City and Bogue, and all Stockton National

Bank ATM's free of charge.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to become part of the Norton and Lenora communities," Winklepleck said. "The Stockton National Bank specializes in agriculture lending and we feel both towns fit our business model extremely well. We are committed to providing excellent customer service and offering a wide range of products and services to the individuals and businesses within the area."

The Stockton National Bank will also continue to operate First Security Bank and Trust's insurance division which offers

a complete line of personal and business insurance products. Their services range from health, life, auto and home insurance, to crop and livestock risk, farm and ranch coverage, worker's compensation, commercial property and liability.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, First Security Bank and Trust's two full-service banks in Norton and Lenora reported total assets of \$63 million, total loans of \$31 million and total deposits of \$34 million.

"We're an Ag bank and we're growing right now. Both locations are perfect for us."

Moran and Roberts work to protect farmers/ranchers

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran and U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts introduced an amendment to the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014 to prohibit the United States Department of Agriculture and United States Department of the Interior from altering any land management practices based on the listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken as a threatened species.

"As conservation efforts for the Lesser Prairie Chicken are considered, farmers and ranchers deserve the flexibility to implement plans that fit their operations," Sen. Moran said. "I am committed to making certain the measures implemented are based on sound science and common sense, as well as represent the best interest of producers. We will continue to do what we can to resolve the problem and avoid thwarting industries vital to our state's economy."

"Just as we thought, in Kansas, the Lesser Prairie Chicken numbers are up in areas that have recently seen a little rain

in this ongoing, multi-year drought," Sen. Roberts said. "This amendment will protect farmers and ranchers, who are also suffering from the effects of drought, from having to change their operations and land management due to the listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken."

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Broadband

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in Norton on August 5 at The Rock. There are 30 slots available for the workshop with a minimum of 10 reserved for Norton County businesses.

"Our hope is that the workshop will help businesses understand the benefits of attending one of the two-and-a-half day bootcamps that are held in Longmont, Colo. several times each year," Sproul said.

The fee for Norton County businesses is \$50 and \$125 for businesses outside the county. The focus of this workshop is to further develop sales, marketing and customer service.

The city of Almena is closer to applying for a moderate-income housing grant. The economic development staff and Northwest Kansas Planning and Development began working on the application grant after a

meeting was held last week to confirm the details of the project. Almena would like to build primarily duplexes and Northwest Kansas Housing Authority will provide cost estimates on the types of housing they typically build to give the investors a range. No buildings or design plans have been decided on yet.

"We've been working on this project for three years now," Sproul said. "We're progressing, but it takes time."

Norton Estates has rented all eight of its units, according to Sproul. Inquiries will continue to be referred to Bainter Construction, and a timeline for phase two has not been announced.

The Economic Development board has raised \$20,000 of the \$30,000 needed to retain the services of Pinegar, Smith & Associates. Sproul said they are looking for options to acquire the other \$10,000. The deadline

is September 1.

"They've been very instrumental in a lot of things we've done."

Demolition on the Heaton Building continues to move along. Sproul reported that 95 percent of the building's upstairs has been demolished and 50 percent of the north storefront has been as well.

In other board news:

- approved a resolution from KCAMP, the liability and property insurer for the County.
- approved the June minutes as amended.

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July 18-20, Chanute
The Veteran's Memorial in Santa Fe Park will be joined by the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall. Chanute is the Wall's only stop in Kansas this summer.
chanutepost170.org

Four State Farm Show
July 18-20, Pittsburg
Three days of 700+ agricultural product displays and equipment demonstrations spread out over 25 acres. Free admission and parking. (800) 356-8255
farmtalknewspaper.com/fourstatefarmshow

KKOA Leadsled Spectacular
July 24-27, Salina
"The World's Oldest & Most Established Kustom Car & Truck Event". Ol' Skool Spectacular Cruise Thu. evening. Car show Fri. - Sun. at Oakdale Park. Fri. night drags, Sat. night concert at the Stiefel Theatre.
kustomkempsofamerica.com

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Storage

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surgery and after two weeks will only be able to work from his desk. Plans are being made to accommodate this officer.

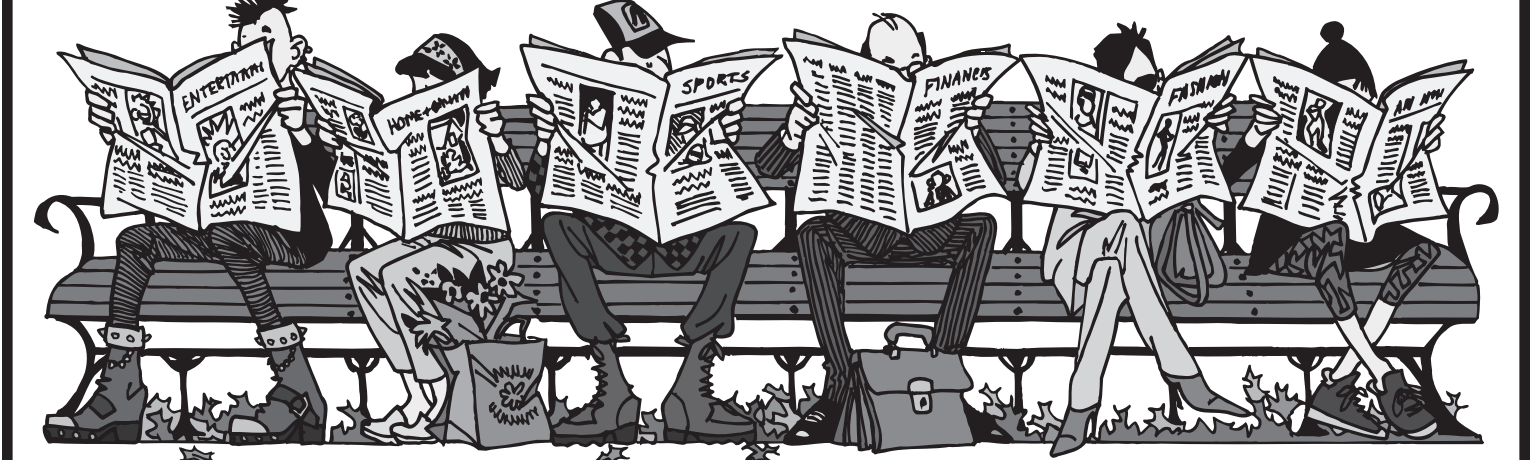
The third visitor to the commissioners was Gina Frack from the Norton County Health Department. Frack reported that the Work Well Kansas training was coming up and wanted to encourage the commissioners to attend. They agreed that it was important and would be there.

Gil Otter, who is in charge of the Norton County 4-H Building, visited with the commissioners about changing phone companies. Currently the building is serviced by AT&T but he spoke with Nex-Tech and they are offering a better plan with internet accessibility. The commissioners agreed that the offer was much better and told Otter

to go forward with the switch over to Nex-Tech.

Lastly, Floyd Richard of the Road and Bridge Department stopped in to talk about repairs on Road A between E13 and E14. He mentioned that it could be patched with millings or the county could do a permanent fix by purchasing mudrock and having it trucked in. Two places were looked at for the mudrock, T&F out of Elm creek, Nebr. or Bladen out of Naponee, Nebr. It was figured that 16 loads of mudrock would be needed and with the help of county trucks hauling it would be cheaper to use the mudrock versus millings which would need to be repaired yearly. Richard was instructed to find out the distance from both providers and determine which company would be cheapest in the long run to haul the rock from.

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