



THE WEATHER WAS GREAT, in the 80s, for the 19th annual Cheyenne County Trail Ride held Sunday northwest of St. Francis. Top, an unidentified group of riders took a few minutes, giving both themselves and the horses a break; clockwise: the Yonkeys, (l to r) Gail, Tonya and Kale, have saddled up and are ready to go; Rachel Huffman and Kurt Bucholtz, along with Margaret Bucholtz, not pictured, brought water for a mid-ride break; Sharon Olofson waits for the ride to begin; and Gary Cooper, one of the coordinators, talked about the ride next year.

Herald staff photos by Margaret Butholz and Karen Krien

Seventy horsemen enjoy ride in northwest Kansas

By Karen Krien
karen.k@nwkans.com

Sunday dawned warm with the sun shining — just right for a trail ride through a section of the Arikaree Breaks on the Roger Samler farm. The ride had 70 people on horses and lasted almost three hours. Halfway through the ride, Kurt and Margaret Bucholtz and Rachel Huffman, representing the Historical Society, met the riders with water. The ride was not for sissies! There were steep hills to climb and descend. In several places, the trail was narrow and there was a straight drop off into the canyon below. However, all in all, it was a

beautiful, warm day. The pastures were painted with fall colors and occasionally, there were ducks flying overhead. Cattle, at one point, out of curiosity, came closer to get a look at the riders but stayed their distance. There were several ponds and a tank where many of the horses stopped for a drink. One of the riders was overheard to say that she didn't realize there was this kind of country in northwest Kansas. Gary Cooper, one of the coordinators, has been organizing the ride for 19 years. Next year, on the 20th, he and the committee will be looking at a longer ride.

For the 10th year, the ride lasted two days. He said he really didn't want to try that again. However, he is considering a four or five hour ride which would be laid out in a figure eight. In the morning, the group would meet at the middle of the eight, then ride the first circle. At noon, they would meet back at the middle; the trailers would be there for the horses and the riders would enjoy lunch and a time to visit. Then, the riders would travel the second circle in the afternoon. Mr. Cooper asked for suggestions on the date. The ride is held the second weekend in October but this year, there was rain, snow and

extremely cold temperatures. That is why it was held the third weekend. He wondered if Labor Day might be a better time but, it appeared the consensus of the group was "no." Look for more information on the 20th ride next fall. Following the ride, everyone met at Mr. Samler's shop where Doug Ross had prepared barbecued beef and the 4-H horse club members and mothers served the sandwiches, beans, chips and brownies. The food was served from Fred Magley's chuck wagon which had been hauled to the site. Sharon Olofson, one of the coordinators and the chairman for

raising funds for St. Jude Children's Hospital, reported that the donations from the riders had totaled \$612. "I am humbled by the amount given for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital," Mrs. Olofson said. "For riders and fans of the Cheyenne County Trail Ride to provide that generous of an amount to children and their families in desperate need of hope, I'm very pleased and grateful." The sun was beginning slide to behind the hills as the last of the trailers headed down the road toward home.