



COLBY FREE PRESS

Colby festival a success

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Pickin on the Plains drew a big crowd this past weekend with people came from a number of states.

They all had one thing in common: a love of bluegrass.

Burt Reynolds of Watkins, Colo. said this was his first trip to the festival. He said some friends from Colby told him about the event so he decided to come give it a try.

"Some of the groups I've really enjoyed," he said, adding he particularly enjoyed the youth bluegrass competition on Saturday. "The kids made the weekend." Al Coop of Aurora, Colo. and Marvin Bell of Goodland were also first-time attendees.

Bell said they heard a gospel group in December and heard about the festival and decided to come. They both enjoy bluegrass and were having a good time.

John and Robin Schmitt of Ulysses, who own Bear Creek Lapidary, were at their second Pickin on the Plains.

"We come for the music and atmosphere," John said.

Though vendors, they also enjoy the music. Last year was their first year and they decided to come back.

Saturday afternoon they were enjoying the sounds of Spontaneous Combustion.

"I wait all day for them to come on," Robin said. John added they're an "excellent" group with their mix of old and new songs.

The two hope to come back next year.

James Taylor of Garden City was at his second festival.

"I'm glad to see this in this part of the country," he said.

Taylor used to go to the Winfield bluegrass festival but is happy to have an event in the re-



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ABOVE: The crowd at the annual Pickin on the Plains bluegrass festival watched Sons and Brothers of Colorado perform Saturday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. The event ran Friday through Sunday, and the music kept going Saturday night until late. **RIGHT:** Wilbur Henry and his horses gave rides Saturday evening during the bluegrass festival. It was one of many activities going on in conjunction with the event. Vendors, children's activities and more were part of the festivities. The annual music festival attracted people from all over the area as well as out of state. Local favorites, like the McLemore Family, performed, along with groups like Spontaneous Combustion.

gion instead.

"To have one closer is nice," he said.

Taylor said the people at the event are courteous and friendly and the



music is good, which makes for a memorable event.

Joanne Clark of Jetmore, with Mr. C's Tees and Crafts, was at her seventh Pickin on the Plains Blue-

grass Festival this weekend.

She said they got involved because they were doing T-shirts at other festivals and were asked to come to Colby because they only

print what they need.

Clark said it's a good place to sell shirts and crafts, but also enjoys meeting the people at the event.

Thomas County Fair Board hears request from 4-H member

By Tisha Cox
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Plans for this year's fair are set and ready to go, but there was a request at Thursday's Thomas County Fair Board meeting to make one scheduling adjustment.

Case Rundel, a member of the Abilene Hustlers 4-H Club, asked the board if it would be possible to change the time of hot laps at the races so they don't interfere with the last 20 minutes to half-hour of the 4-H livestock sale.

Rundel said it's hard to tell what's going on in the sale ring and the animals spook at the sounds from the track.

Extension agent Joe Leibbrandt also asked the board if the hot laps could be moved back. The sale starts at 5 p.m.

Board member Marty Crampton said the

sale time is the issue, not the time of the hot laps.

"This year it cannot be changed," he said, due to advertising already being printed up.

Board vice-president Mark Anderson suggested they work with race organizer Kerry Wark to see if they could work something out.

Crampton said the races start at 7 p.m. and each operation during the evening has a specific time, and Wark is "set" on that time.

Then Leibbrandt suggested changing the time of the sale, moving it back an hour to 4 p.m.

Anderson said there isn't any reason why the sale time couldn't be changed and told Leibbrandt to let them know what they decide so they can get the word out if the sale

time will be changed.

Brady Rundel, another 4-H member, said the sale is at 5 p.m. so the public can attend and see the results of all the 4-H members' hard work. And, he said, the hot laps do pose a problem.

"You're risking some kid getting hurt in the ring," he said, adding some animals get spooked and the animals are already hot at that point in the day and the noise from the races only makes them more uncomfortable and hard to handle.

Brady's father, Bob Rundel, said they should keep the sale the same time this year because it's already been published. He said they should at least let the kids get the sale over as quick as they can.

"At least give the kids a chance to sell their animals," he said. "I don't think it's

asking too much. We're just asking the courtesy."

Board member Darrell Dible said that's why they ask for book and schedule changes in September after the fair instead of June.

A clarification on just how shooting sports works in 4-H was also discussed. The board at their June meeting made the decision to move the event from 4-H to open class.

Board member Mark Bredemeier explained it is a project club and youth don't have to be members of a traditional community club to participate. Instead, shooting sports is a project club.

"They actually are in 4-H," he said.

Though it is an open class event this year, they plan to move it back under 4-H next

year, where it belongs.

The board also heard a request from Sally Jones, whose daughter, Ashley is a member of the Logan County Drill Team. Jones was their in the place of her daughter to ask if the drill team could perform during the fair rodeo. She said the kids have worked hard and practiced and want to do more performances than just Oakley.

And, Jones said, the group would like to start a tradition of coming to the Thomas County rodeo. The board approved the request.

In other business, the board approved:

- Changing the locks on the 4-H Building after the fair, for a cost of \$200.
- Approved paying for the new fairgrounds sound system in the amount of \$2,740.

Colby man's body found at Villa High lake

By Tisha Cox
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After a 14-hour search, the body of a Colby man was retrieved from the lake at Villa High Park on Friday afternoon.

The Colby Police Department located the body at 1:07 p.m., said Gary Shull, detective with the department.

He said the body came up on its own while another part of the lake was being searched by boat and by divers.

The victim, Clarence William Mauslein, 37, of Colby, disappeared at around 11 p.m. Thursday.

He was at the park with two friends, according to law enforcement officials.

Mauslein was swimming in the lake and they lost sight of him. They called the police department at 11:26 p.m.

They, along with the Colby Fire Department Search and Rescue



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Thomas County Coroner Dr. Victor Hildyard (fourth from right) was called early Friday afternoon after the body of Clarence Mauslein was found at Villa High Park.

Squad, searched the park and the lake until 2 a.m.

The search resumed the next

morning with boats and divers.

Also used was a drag borrowed from the Scott County Sheriff's

Office and another made by Thomas County Emergency Medical Services.

The department was using the Scott County drag when the body floated to the surface, Shull said. It was then pulled ashore and later taken out of the water when county corner Dr. Victor Hildyard showed up.

Shull said toxicology tests will be run and then a decision will be made on whether or not to do an autopsy.

"We do believe alcohol was involved," he said.

Shull said they would like to thank the family of Ron Alexander and Barry Kaaz for the use of their boats in the search; police department dispatcher Keyna Baalman and fire department member Todd Unruh for helping with the search as divers.

Services for Mauslein are pending with Chapel Oaks Funeral Home in Hiawatha.

100 years of 4-H



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Clockwise: Kimberly Gerstner, Rose Bear and Christy Gerstner worked on a birthday card in honor of the 100th anniversary of Kansas 4-H during the Thomas County Extension Office open house Thursday. The two-day event showcased the anniversary as well as promoted the services extension provides.

