

# Kids learn key livestock skills

Ask Kara Riffel a few questions, and the talkative 7-year-old is quite comfortable carrying the conversation. But ask about her strategy for overcoming nerves when showing pigs at the county fair, and her answer is more abrupt.

"I smile," she says. Young Kara is following in the footsteps of her older brothers - Karl, 14, and Kyle, 13 - who have been showing pigs and livestock, and winning awards for more than half a decade.

Kara got her first experience in the show ring last June when she placed third overall at the Washington County spring hog show, where Karl showed the grand champion and Kyle showed the reserve champion (second place) in their classes.

Those were the latest in a string of honors the Riffel family has racked up. Kyle showed the champion York gilt at the 2009 Kansas State Fair, and Karl has had the grand champion at the Marion County and Tri-County fairs several times.

Karl also was the high-point intermediate showman in the North Central Kansas Livestock circuit in 2009.

"They're fun [to raise]," said Kyle, who is in his seventh year of showing pigs and is particularly adept talking about 'notching,' or identifying pigs by putting notches on their ears. "We raise them here at home. People may think [pigs] are stubborn, but it's fun training

them to obey and do tasks."

The Riffels are among more than 1,500 Kansas kids who have attended the Junior Swine Producer Day at Kansas State University since 2002. This year, K-State will host its sixth event; organizer Joel DeRouchey says that an average of 300 kids head to Manhattan every other year for tips on husbandry, nutrition, showmanship and more.

"We get a lot of young families and young 4-Hers," said DeRouchey, a livestock specialist with K-State Research and Extension. "We've focused our program on base knowledge ... so that animals are well cared for."

The Riffels' mom, Beth, says the family has benefited a lot from the university's help.

"Regardless of your skill level in a project, you can always come away with information that you can put to use," she said. "It's great to hear from nationally known experts ... and get their opinion. As a parent, I can give my child the same advice, but they remember and use it much better if it comes from ... a K-State staff member or one of the speakers."

Beth and her husband, James, own a diversified farm near Tampa, in central Kansas. The family's livestock operation is primarily cattle, but they also raise goats, sheep and hogs.

Karl Riffel sees his experience in showing pigs as the springboard to one day having his own operation. While he says the fun part now is "going to shows, seeing my friends," he also realizes that the project is teaching him about

responsibility, leadership and proper care of livestock - or, "doing it better."

In 2010, the National Agricultural Statistics Service reported that the value of all livestock in Kansas was more than \$4.8 billion. Training youths to be future caretakers of that industry is important.

"There are so many good things that come from youth livestock projects," Beth Riffel said. "The ability to make decisions, time management, responsibility, and teamwork.... There is also the not-so-fun, but still-important, lessons about losing gracefully, following the rules and being responsible for your actions."

K-State's DeRouchey believes that the university has a good thing going with its Junior Swine Producer event, and notes that the National Pork Board places an emphasis on educating kids.

"We spend a lot of time getting parents and grandparents involved because they are the decision makers initially," DeRouchey said. "Youths take more of a leadership role as they get older - selecting the pig in the spring, feeding it, pen design, controlling the environment. Through it all, the kids develop the common sense that it takes to raise livestock."

Taking the time to learn more isn't going to be a problem for Kara Riffel.

"I want to show pigs for a lot of years," she says, "because it's fun."

## Senior Progress Center

Come support the Senior Progress Center at the potato bar fund raiser Thursday evening.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. shuffle board. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. Rummikub. **Wednesday:** prepare for potato bar. **Thursday:** 5 p.m. potato bar fund raiser. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** hamburger, potato rounds, corn, bun, apricots. **Tuesday:** chili with beans, orange pineapple salad, crackers, cinnamon roll. **Wednesday:** chicken dressing casserole, mashed potatoes with gravy, seasoned carrots, rosy pears. **Thurs-**

**day:** swiss steak with tomatoes, seasoned broccoli, applesauce gelatin, bread, cook's choice complement. **Friday:** baked fish, hash brown casserole, coleslaw with carrots fruit mix.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center. Home delivery is available, as is pick-up service. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others. For anyone under 60, home delivery is \$5.75.

Make reservations at (784) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

## On the Beat

### COLBY POLICE

**Tuesday**  
12:04 a.m. - Security check at Cornerstone Ag South.  
2:51 a.m. - Security check at Red River.  
8:25 a.m. - Theft of services report.  
2:32 p.m. - Two dogs at large at Donelan and Ninth. Not found.  
8:41 p.m. - Warrant arrest.

**Wednesday**  
12:02 a.m. - Sheriff's office requested help for an incident in Rexford. Supervisor notified; three officers on standby.  
7:50 a.m. - Accident on Davis by Colby High School.  
8:32 a.m. - Vehicle parked the wrong way in the 900 block of Brookside. Owner contacted.  
7:48 p.m. - Caller reported dog barking continuously.

### THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

**Tuesday**  
1:45 a.m. - Cattle out on U.S. 83 at County Rd. M. Someone contacted.  
8:03 a.m. - Two deputies and the sheriff responded to K-25 and County Rd. Z because of property dispute.  
9:54 a.m. - Traffic control at K-25 mile 180 for a semi-trailer slide off.  
9:59 a.m. - Assisted Highway Patrol at I-70 westbound rest area.  
10:43 a.m. - Booked, released

Craig Eric Etherton.  
12:29 p.m. - Seven vehicle identification number inspections at Motor Town.

11:53 p.m. - Caller wanted welfare check on subjects. Contact made, report filed.

**Wednesday**  
2:20 a.m. - Narcotics violation.  
3:10 a.m. - Booked Daniel E. Withers.

5:44 a.m. - Child in need of care report filed.  
8:33 a.m. - Served arrest warrants at 1:20 p.m. Tuesday on Phillip Salinas and Bonnie Logsdon.  
9:22 a.m. - Driving with no operator's license report filed on traffic stop.

10:29, 10:46 a.m. - Booked and released Michael Dewayne Donnelly.

11:44 a.m. - Driving while suspended report filed on traffic stop.  
12:21 p.m. - Released Logsdon.

12:30 p.m. - Released Salinas.  
12:48, 1:50 p.m. - Booked and released Crystal Lynn Hildebrand.

5:29 p.m. - Caller reported 14-year-old using credit card without permission to make online purchases. Spoke with subjects; provided information.

11:52 p.m. - Report of a vehicle all over the road eastbound on I-70 from mile 43. Report filed for driving under the influence. Wagner's towed vehicle.

## Student News

### Colby Public Schools

**Activities: Tuesday:** 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. kindergarten pre-enrollment, grade school; 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. third through fifth grade fitness and nutrition family night, grade school gym. **Wednesday:** 3:45 p.m. Coordinating Council, administration building. **Friday:** lunch money due; April Fool's Day; 1 p.m. track, McCook; 4 p.m. baseball, Holcomb; 4 p.m. softball vs. Holcomb. **Saturday:** regional solos and small ensembles, Oberlin; 8 a.m. forensics, Hugoton; 9 a.m. FFA livestock contest, Phillipsburg

**Menus: Monday:** breakfast: sausage patty, toast, orange juice; lunch: hot dogs, French fries, carrots, pear slices. **Tuesday:** breakfast: waffle sticks, grape juice; lunch: chicken nuggets, potatoes, gravy, green beans, hot rolls, peach. **Wednesday:** breakfast: French toast sticks, grape juice; lunch: burrito, corn, cornbread,

mandarin oranges. **Thursday:** breakfast: cereal, applesauce; lunch: hamburger, French fries, mixed veggies, pineapple chunks.

**Sacred Heart**  
**Activities: Friday:** kids' savings club.

**Menus: Monday:** cheeseburger macaroni, winter blend, orange slices. **Tuesday:** stromboli, green beans, peaches, strawberry shortcake. **Wednesday:** chicken noodles, mashed potatoes, corn, fruit mix. **Thursday:** pig in a blanket, tater tots, pease, carrots, grapes. **Friday:** grilled cheese, yogurt, carrot, celery stick, apple.

**Heartland**  
**Activities: Monday:** 4 to 7 p.m. pre-enrollment. **Tuesday:** 4 to 7 p.m. pre-enrollment; 3 p.m. high school track, Tribune. **Friday:** 10 a.m. track, Bird City; 6 p.m. work night. **Saturday:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. all school work day.

**Golden Plains**  
**Activities: Monday:** senior trip.

**Tuesday:** senior trip. **Wednesday:** elementary gifted seminar; senior trip. **Thursday:** senior trip. **Friday:** 10 a.m. middle school track, Cheylin. **Saturday:** regional music.

**Menus: Rexford: Monday:** breakfast: pancake, sausage; lunch: biscuit, gravy. **Tuesday:** breakfast: bagels; lunch: potato bar. **Wednesday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: surprise pizza. **Thursday:** breakfast: breakfast pizza; lunch: chicken nuggets.

**Selden: Monday:** breakfast: breakfast burrito; lunch: chicken and noodles. **Tuesday:** breakfast: French toast; lunch: pizza. **Wednesday:** breakfast: biscuit, gravy; lunch: sloppy Joe. **Thursday:** breakfast: sausage, biscuit; lunch: chicken nugget.

**Brewster**  
**Activities: Wednesday:** Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center elementary seminar. **Friday:** 10 a.m. track, Bird City; no

school.

**Menus: Monday:** breakfast: pancakes, sausage; lunch: beef and noodles, peas, cooked carrots, cinnamon apples, applesauce. **Tuesday:** breakfast: oatmeal chocolate chip muffin; lunch: chicken strips, mashed potatoes, gravy, cheesy green beans, peaches, orange slices. **Wednesday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs, cheese; lunch: cavatini, broccoli, baby carrots, pineapple. **Thursday:** breakfast: sausage cheese biscuit; lunch: turkey sandwich, fries, veggie sticks, pears, orange slices. **Triplains**

**Activities: Friday:** 10 a.m. junior high track, Bird City; 10 a.m. high school track, Bird City. **Saturday:** regional music.

Send us your calendar and menus. E-mail [colby.society@nwksociety.com](mailto:colby.society@nwksociety.com) or mail Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

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