



CANDACE RACHEL/Plainville Times

MaKayla Hoffman had a big grin for winning the Junior Miss Rodeo Plainville title. Her horse Jackie seemed to take it all in stride.

Colby girl wins Plainville title

MaKayla Hoffman, daughter of Mike and Shawna Kersenbrock of Colby, was crowned Junior Miss Rodeo Plainville on June 11. Through her title, Hoffman will receive a travel budget from the Plainville Saddle Club to promote rodeo and to represent Plainville. During her reign, she will participate in community projects, parades, rodeos and youth events.

This is not the first rodeo title Hoffman has won. She has also held the titles of Thomas County Rodeo Junior Princess, Sheridan County Rodeo Princess and is the current Thomas County Rodeo Princess. Hoffman will pass on her Thomas County crown on Monday, July 25, at the Thomas County Rodeo in Colby.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE Thursday

- 1:35 a.m. – Assisted Sheriff's Office units at Citizens Medical Center about prisoner.
- 7:27 a.m. – Assisting U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Office of Inspector General on arrest.
- 1:31 p.m. – Subject called 911 to report hitting a gas line while mowing. Assisted Midwest Energy on call.
- 2:05 p.m. – Caller wanted a report since he had to flat spot his tires to avoid collision in the 2000 block of S. Range. Spoke to reporting party. Civil matter.
- 4:12 p.m. – Caller reported

- small child left unattended in the middle of the 200 block of W. Fourth St.
- 4:49 p.m. – Sexual assault/rape: caller reported possible assault on a prior date. Report filed.
- 5:13 p.m. – Recovered vehicle: caller reported vehicle parked in parking lot. Vehicle was reported stolen from California.
- 5:13 p.m. – Caller reported vehicle stolen from parking lot.
- 7:52 p.m. – Minor hit and run accident at 1805 S. Range.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF Thursday

- 3:48 a.m. – Booked Ricci J.

- Welter.
- 7:20 a.m. – Assisted U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General.
- 11:20 a.m. – Taylor M. Green arrested on warrant
- 11:20 a.m. – Kyle Louis Lebling arrested on warrant.
- 11:20 a.m. – Andrew Norman Russell arrested on warrant.
- 4:40 p.m. – Released Lebling.
- 4:49 p.m. – Released Russell.
- 5:24 p.m. – Subject came to law Enforcement Center reported male subject taking inappropriate pictures of female subject. Unable to locate.

Cat thief 'purr-loins' treasures

SAN MATEO, Calif. (AP) – A prolific cat burglar has stolen hundreds of precious possessions from homes near San Francisco. But police are staying off the case – the burglar really is a cat. Dusty, a 5-year-old feline from San Mateo, has taken hundreds of items during his nearly nightly heists. Owner Jean Chu tells the *San Francisco Chronicle* he has pilfered gloves, towels, shoes and more since

she adopted him from the Humane Society. Dusty has a special love for swimsuits. Neighbor Kelly McLellan says he stole her bikini – on two separate trips. She said he appeared focused on keeping the ensemble. Experts say Dusty's predatory instincts have gone astray, leaving him hunting for people's stuff. The cat's thieving has made him a minor celebrity.

Agriculture colleges feel budget squeeze nationwide

STEVE KARNOWSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) – As university budgets take a beating across the country, agricultural schools and extension programs are feeling the impact.

Large-scale layoffs have been threatened at some agricultural colleges, and even 4-H youth programs are facing the ax because federal and state funding are on the chopping block. At a time when farmers are being asked to grow more for food and fuel to meet soaring world demand, experts warn against eroding the country's commitment to agricultural research.

"We're mortgaging our future with some of these cuts," said Ian Maw, vice president for food, agriculture and natural resources at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.

Most state budgets are experiencing "real trauma," Maw said. Often, he said, schools are forced to cut into the "bone and marrow" of their capacity to serve agriculture.

Beverly Durgan, dean of the University of Minnesota Extension program, said cuts to agricultural colleges have far-reaching national impacts.

"As the funding slowly erodes away, the quality and the quantity of research and extension we can do at the land-grant universities is decreasing. People may not see the impact tomorrow but they will see long-term that not investing now means we'll have more problems in the future," said Durgan, chairwoman of an association agricultural committee.

Congress established land-grant universities in the 1800s to teach agriculture, science and engineering. It expanded their mission to

include agricultural experiment stations to conduct research, and cooperative extension programs to translate research into practical help for farmers and the larger public.

Much federal support for these programs flows through the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, which took a 9 percent cut this fiscal year.

Extension supporters largely beat back a House-passed \$30 million cut in a key category of federal matching funds within the National Institute of Food and Agriculture that supports salaries for a wide range of extension services, from county agents to 4-H. But a fiscal 2012 funding bill that passed the GOP-controlled House this month cuts \$35 million in those extension funds from the current level of \$294 million. The Democratic-controlled Senate has yet to act.

Perhaps no agricultural college was threatened with deeper cuts this year than at Pennsylvania State University. Gov. Tom Corbett proposed reducing Penn State's total appropriation – including the farm school's – by 52 percent.

"I spent a day being dismayed and the next day decided I'd better address what we could address," said Bruce McPherson, dean of its College of Agricultural Sciences.

McPherson warned that the college faced 440 job cuts; closings of research stations and county extension offices; and cuts to 4-H, which reaches almost 10 percent of Pennsylvania's youth. After people told lawmakers how much they value Penn State's agricultural programs, he said it's likely reductions will be far smaller, between \$5.5 million an \$8 million.

"It's odd that you can be in a circumstance where a 10 to 15 percent cut seems like a win,"

McPherson said. At the University of Georgia, Scott Angle, dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, recently decided to lay off 18 workers and sell a farm. He said there was nothing else left to cut.

"We have tried as best we can – and to a fairly successful extent – to protect the learning experience for our students on campus but this does mean our research and extension capabilities have been compromised," Angle said.

Farm programs in the University of California system have already seen steep declines in state support over the last 20 years. Daniel Dooley, vice president of its Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, said he expects agriculture at the Berkeley, Davis and Riverside campuses will be cut less than most programs once California's \$9.6 billion deficit is resolved, but it will be hurt.

"Final decisions haven't been made but the reality is with each reduction we're going to have to decide what we're going to do and what we're not going to do," Dooley said.

Jack Payne, senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources at the University of Florida, said his operations were "held harmless" in the Legislature this year. Florida construction and tourism were hard-hit by the recession, so he argued that agriculture and natural resources are now the backbone of the state economy.

At Iowa State University, agriculture has seen state funding erode since 2001. Wendy Wintersteen, dean of its College of Agriculture, said it's happening even as her enrollment rises 4 to 6 percent a year. She's planning for a 6 percent reduction in state funding – not as bad as it could be.

Cooking rules for pork change

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service has lowered its recommended temperature for cooking whole cuts of pork from 160 degrees F to 145 degrees F.

The change applies to chops, cutlets, roasts, steaks and tenderloins, and it includes the recommendation that cooked pork be allowed to rest for three minutes after being removed from the heat source (grill, skillet or oven, for example), said Karen Blakeslee, K-State Research and Extension food scientist.

Allowing rest time provides the opportunity for the cooked pork to continue cooking and further reduce potentially harmful pathogens that may be present. It also allows time for the juices to redistribute and the meat to firm up, making cutting or carving easier.

The change does not apply to ground pork. Like other ground meats, it should be cooked to 160

degrees F, because the grinding process increases the exposed surface areas that can attract bacterial growth, Blakeslee explained.

The new recommendation should make cooking meat safely easier for consumers, as:

- Whole cuts of beef, lamb, pork, and veal should be cooked to 145 degrees F.
- Ground meats, including ground beef, pork or lamb should be cooked to 160 degrees F, and
- All poultry should be cooked to 165 degrees F.

Blakeslee, an avid tailgater, also recommends cooking brats and hot dogs to 160 degrees F. Using a meat thermometer to measure cooked temperatures of meat and poultry is recommended, said Blakeslee, who noted that color alone should not be considered an indicator of doneness.


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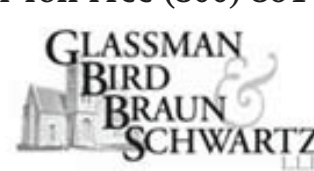


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