



CHEYENNE COUNTY YOUNG MISS, Bailey Merklin shovels the ear corn into the sheller. Times staff photo by Norma Martinez.

## Girl earns Young Miss title

This year, there was little interest in the Cheyenne County Young Miss program. Bailey Merklin was the only junior girl to sign up.

A Young Miss has several duties during the year including tossing the first bundle of wheat into the threshing machine each day at the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show and being the emcee at the 4-H style revue held on Monday, the week of the Cheyenne County Fair.

The Young Miss committee agreed that Bailey Merklin should write an essay on "What is the biggest challenge facing teens today." Following is Bailey's essay.

*By Bailey Merklin*

Wouldn't you agree that there are many challenges facing the youth of our day? These challenges come in all different shapes and sizes and each person faces a different problem than the next. Typically I think the first thing people think about, concerning challenges my peers face, is the temptation of drink-

ing, drugs and sex.

I propose greater challenges range from trying to find out who you are as an individual, what you want to do as an adult, how you will afford to go to college and where. As we look to the future we also must think about finding a job afterward and the debt that will have to be repaid.

One thing I've noticed that will affect the "younger" generations is a lack of work ethic. I believe that is somewhat caused by social media and the technology that we all have access to now.

We may think we are great workers and that we aren't lazy at all, but when you hear stories from your great-grandparents about all the hard times they endured and had to work through it makes us look like a bunch of slackers! To be honest I'm not so sure that it's going to improve in future generations due to the distractions we face every day.

Despite the poor work ethic, there are students who do work hard and pay their way through

a college education. Since we were very young we've been told that we must go to college to get an education in order to have a good paying career.

However, we now hear that thousands of college grads are unemployed. Due to the recent economic downfall many baccalaureate- and-master prepared young adults are not able to find jobs. This and an ever-rising cost of college make the "normal" decisions we have to make even more stressful.

The challenges facing today's youth are endless and they don't stop here. However, the sooner we realize what is negatively affecting us — peer pressure, materialism, drinking, stress — the sooner we can try to turn it around.

There will always be bumps in the road that will challenge us and that is when we need to recall the supportive community and all that we've learned growing up in Cheyenne County. I feel better prepared for the world ahead because of it!

# Cheyenne County fair comes to a close late Saturday night

*By Karen Krien*

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It's over! After months of planning and work, the Cheyenne County Fair came to a close late Saturday night.

The 4-H'ers and their families, along with all the volunteers, carnival crew and fair board members, headed home Saturday night, tired but knowing that it had been a good fair.

I think the fair went really well this year, said Dick Bursch, fair board president. The weather was cool and it was nice for all fair goers. The new roof over the livestock show ring made great conditions for showing livestock and for buyers at the premium sale. This year's sale, he said, was probably one of the biggest sales ever.

Throughout the week of the fair, the temperatures were mild. Some days were warmer than others but, overall, there were no 100-plus degree days.

Wednesday was the first official day of the fair. The roping in the arena went well for the local ropers although there was a little wind blowing dust into the crowd. When the open roping started, the clouds began to move in. Before long, there was thunder, rain and lightning but ropers continued until the competition was complete.

There were 36 teams entered in the local roping. Winning was the team of Dustin Wiley and Javier Yanez. They received buckles from the St. Francis Equity.

The open roping had 121 teams. Winning the open roping were Roger Kirchenschlager and TJ Watts with a time of 22.17 seconds; Cory Zion and TJ Watts took second with 22.86 seconds; Dwight Arnold and Cory Zion, third, 24.08 seconds; and Dwight Arnold and Wade Smith, fourth, 24.36 seconds.

Carnival games and rides were busy all four nights of the fair, especially on Saturday night. There were a few games that didn't open because there was a shortage of volunteers to run them but, for the most part, the volunteers stepped up and the majority of the rides and games were there for the kids and adults.

"It takes a village to run a fair," said Raedell Winston, who had



FINAL BLOW — Tony Vandike, right, gave the final hit to Trent Kinen during the truck competition at the derby.

*Times staff photo by Doug Sloper*

spent many hours contacting people, especially at the last minute, to fill the roster for games and rides.

The demolition derby drew the big crowd during the fair. Adam Peter, committee chairman, said it sold out again. People filled the stands, there were others standing, some looking over the fence by the ice cream parlor, and the pit area was full.

There were 12 cars and 2 trucks competing with St. Francis man, David Rose, raking in the first prize money of \$1,500 and a trophy.

Second place went to Kelly Lampe who took home \$800 in prize money; third place went to Dennis Vandyke, \$500 prize money, David Stephens took fourth place and earned \$250 in prize money. Austin White earned the Mad Dog award of \$500.

The truck competition, had only two trucks but was an exciting duel between Tony Vandyke and Trent Kinen, with Tony coming out on top.

The lawn mower tractor pull was held Thursday night. There was no information available as to the winners.

The 4-H premium sale had more 4-H'ers with premiums and more buyers. This year's sale brought in \$86,600. Look for more details in the After Fair section.

The Tuff Trucks competition was Friday's grandstand entertainment. This was the third year for the event and there was a total of 19 drivers racing around a track of short turns, humps and bumps. There were some vehicles that just didn't want to travel the track, stopping ever so often only to be

coaxed in to starting again by their anxious drivers. A few didn't make it that far and had to be pulled out with the county's loader. The overall winner was Joshua Thomas from Haigler. He took home prize money of \$380. Adam Peter, was very pleased with the crowd turnout and the number of entries. He plans to make next year's event even more challenging for the drivers.

Saturday's parade was long with a number of entries. St. Francis' Main Street was lined with people including lots of children just waiting for candy and other treats to be tossed their way. The Once Again Sound Band went through the parade twice as did the band on the Unger Chiropractor float. There is nothing like music to make a parade.

The overall grand champion went to the St. Francis Equity with a huge birthday cake on the float. The Equity is celebrating 100 years in business.

Taking first in the organization/church division went to Eastern Star. In the commercial division, Tri-State Irrigation was the winner, and the Andrist-Schultz family took home the first prize in the family division.

The 4-H and open class results along with articles and photos of the events and happenings at the fair will be inserted as the After Fair section in both *The Saint Francis Herald* and *Bird City Times* on Aug. 22.

The fair board and Amusement Authority members will be meeting within the next month to start planning next year's Cheyenne County Fair.

## Food pantry has two new volunteers

The Cheyenne County Food Pantry has two new volunteer coordinators assisting Candi Douthit. Carol and Doug Sloper have volunteered to handle in-kind donation collection, food pantry stocking, and food pantry distributions. Mrs. Douthit will remain involved managing the overall food pantry operations. "We have a number of volunteers that help out occasionally," said Mrs. Douthit, "But it has been a challenge to find someone who would take on the coordination full time. I appreciate the Slopers stepping up so we could continue to offer this important service to those who need assistance on a routine basis."

The food pantry has existed for more than 40 years providing a supplemental food source for families or individuals in need of assistance. It currently provides an average of 26 families representing more than 70 individuals per month with supplemental food. More than half of the food distributed in the county assists families with children. Approximately

a quarter of the foods provided assist the elderly.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, the poverty level in Cheyenne County is approximately 15 percent or around 400 residents of the county. "Based on these numbers, there are still a lot of people in Cheyenne County who need help that aren't receiving this benefit," said Carol. "Sometimes pride keeps people from utilizing resources that are available. We do not judge those that come for assistance. We welcome all those who have the need for help." If your family is struggling to make ends meet, you are eligible to pick up a box of food from the food pantry once per month. Distributions are made on the third Saturday of each month from 9 – 11 am at the west entrance of the county courthouse in St. Francis. You must be a resident of Cheyenne County, to be eligible.

Of the food provided 100 percent is from cash or in-kind donations. It costs approximately

\$38 per family per month to operate the food pantry. Cash donations to provide assistance can be made by contacting Mrs. Douthit at 332-0068. In-kind donations of non expired, nonperishable food items can be made through many of the local churches in the county or by contacting Carol at 785-829-3679. Our thanks to the Community Garden and other residents for providing fresh produce when available.

If you are not able to donate food or cash, volunteering your time to help with the food pantry is also rewarding, Mrs. Douthit said. Volunteers are needed once or twice a month for just a few hours at a time. There is a specific need for a volunteer on the third Saturday of each month for a bilingual (Spanish English) speaking person to help with translation from 9 - 11 am. For additional information or to volunteer, contact Carol at slopercd@yahoo.com or 785-829-3679.

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