

Country band to kick off fair week with concert

Country band Diamond Rio will perform at 6 p.m., Sunday, July 24, at the Colby Community Building, to kick off the Thomas County fair.

The band got its start clear back in the early 80s. Three of the members, Dan Truman, Jimmy Olander and Marty Roe, met through fate and ended up forming the Tennessee River Band. The band played together for a few years, then started playing on the road, where their fan numbers began to drop.

They decided that constant traveling was harder than expected. After several years the band lost and gained members. After the first drummer left, the band picked up Brian Prout and harmony singer Gene Johnson, who are still with the band today. By 1989, the band had acquired its final member, bass player Dana Williams, and the same six guys have been performing together ever since.

When looking for a new name, the band upon the name Diamond Reo. A Diamond Reo is a "big rig" truck. The name stuck out to the band because it signifies their travels up and down the road, and it didn't convey any musical genre. The band changed the "e" to an "i", and began their musical debut as Diamond Rio, Johnson said.

After fifteen years with their original music producer, Arista Music, the band changed directions and left the company.

After the band left, they started looking at their "bucket list" for ideas for their next possible step. The band decided to record a



The six-man country and gospel band Diamond Rio will perform at 6 p.m. Sunday, July 24, at the Colby Community Building. The concert, sponsored by JR Marketing, will kick off fair week.

Christmas Album, Diamond Rio Christmas. After this debut, the band signed with Word Records, who encouraged the band to do their first Christian Album, The Reason. Their Christian Album was a success, it landed the band a Grammy in 2011.

Along with making their fans happy, the band has had a number of other accomplishments. Diamond Rio made history in 1991 as the first group to have their debut single, "Meet in the Middle, reach number one. The band has sold more than 10 million albums,

with nine number one hits and 22 making it to the top ten singles lists. They are long-time spokespersons for the "Big Brothers Big Sisters of America" and have raised over \$750,000 for the charity.



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