



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Kids and parents alike helped out last year setting up exhibits in the 4-H building, which included 4-H kids and an open class section, open to the world.

Not in 4-H? Go open class

By Sam Dieter

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A fair in Thomas County would not be complete without every conceivable kind of plant, animal, food or work of art grown, raised, cooked or made by kids from the area 4-H clubs on display. But what about everyone else?

Thomas County Extension Agent Diann Gerstner, who works with the ag-based club, said there is always the open class entry. Exhibits in rocketry, photography and robotics – among other things – will go up in the 4-H building. But while they are being set up, space will be set aside for people who are not in the organization. This could include those who do not meet the 7- to 18-year-old age requirement, or 4-H kids who did not sign up their work on time.

According to Gerstner, 4-H and open class exhibits “are both in the 4-H building, and the animals are all stored together.”

A wide array of exhibits, including different kinds of artwork and foods, are open class and therefore open to the world. All manner of farm or garden crops are also included in this category. Animals, from steers and sheep to rabbits and hand pets, can be entered into 4-H or open class areas.

But there are some events exclusively for

4-H or FFA members. Gerstner said these are generally events with visual presentations, such as herdsmanship, showmanship and buymanship. The two classes each have their own dog show and horse show.

The 4-Hers dog show last Saturday morning at Heartland Christian School was followed by the open class dog show at noon. The two groups both had their dog agility competition at 4 p.m. Sunday at the ballfields.

The open class horse show will be Saturday and the 4-H horse show will be Monday, at the start of fair week.

The 4-H competitions in clothing and modeling, lifeskills judging, buymanship judging and visual arts judging were on Tuesday and Thursday.

Most exhibits and livestock will be shown that week. The 4-Hers will set up their booths Sunday and Monday.

Open class entries for exhibits and animals will be accepted from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Gerstner said; open class non-animal entries will be judged on later in the day.

4-Hers can enter their exhibits from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Tuesday. Both open and 4-H livestock of all kinds will be weighed in at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, and the animals will be shown over the following week.

Both categories will include a combination cat, rabbit, hand pet and poultry show at 2 p.m. Tuesday.

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