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July 25, 2014

## SALINE COUNTY FAIR HAS SURPRISING ENDING

I am in the reflection mode today coming out of an outstanding Saline County Fair and how hard the Extension staff works to support the fair. The biggest game changer this year was the weather. We drew the most awesome weather I have ever experienced for the entire week. On Monday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, which is cleanup day, with a handful of kids and Ag Society members, I was reminded of previous weather, as the heat and humidity quickly rose.

For the opening night event on Wednesday, the Nebraska Bush Pullers Tractor Pull, it was hard to keep up with the 4-H concessions with the large crowd. People were patronizing the 4-H Foodstand and the hotdogs, hamburgers and cheeseburgers being grilled a block away, we couldn't keep up. In addition, we ran out of supplies towards the end of the event. It was a record for the volunteers that worked that evening. All proceeds from the 4-H Junior Leader Foodstand go toward the Citizenship Trip to Washington, D.C. and surrounding area. Gross proceeds are higher this year for the 4-H Junior Leader concessions, but food expenses were higher too.

We are now in the second year of a 4-H and FFA premium auction held on Sunday afternoon of the fair. There are pros and cons, but the youth receive support for the expenses involved with market animals. It also has brought on an increase in the market beef that showed this year at the fair and that participated in the auction.

I have been told by a bidder that has attended and made bids at multiple 4-H premium auctions, our youth and adults in Saline County are ahead of the pack, doing an excellent job in hosting and showing genuine support to the people in attendance and their communication and leadership skills. 4-H'ers involved in the premium auction introduced themselves, cleared the picnic tables, and mingled with potential buyers telling them about their project animal and future plans.

At the end of the fair this year, there was an amazing thing that happened of charity and community support. If you don't receive the Lincoln Journal Star newspaper, look at the online article written by Cindy Lange-Kubick at: <http://ow.ly/zy9p4>. The title of the story is "*The day it rained hundred-dollar bills at the county fair*".

Breauna Derr, a Saline County 4-H'er, is battling cancer in her leg called osteosarcoma. She was in attendance for the second annual Saline County 4-H and FFA market animal premium auction. There was help from brother Nathan with her 4-H market steer. As family, neighbors and business representatives gathered for the auction lunch served by the Crete FFA Alumni, the Saline County youth took a group photo and in secret signed a card of support for Breauna. Some of the youth donated 10 - 20% of what they received for the added premium to Breauna for medical expenses during the auction.

Breauna's name was drawn last to enter the ring with her steer. This was by pure chance or 1 out of 18. With a total outpouring of community support, over \$8,200 was raised for the blue ribbon steer, Ralph, and Breauna.

A fund to help Breauna Derr and her family has been established at First Bank of Utica – Friend, P.O. Box 94, Friend, NE 68359. Checks payable to Kim or Andrew Derr (memo - medical expenses).

As Kim Derr said, "We have awesome people in this county, what would people do in similar circumstances who live in large cities?"

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