



Harvard's 'huge success'

CROWD TURNS OUT TO HONOR VETERANS

TONY HERRMAN
therman@hastingstribune.com

HARVARD — The number of people here grew dramatically during the weekend as the town dedicated the Harvard Veterans' Memorial, an event 18 months in the making.

"I thought it was a huge success for the community," Mayor Marvin Polacek said this morning. "I thought it was great. It really showed that a lot of people put work into it. It took the whole community to make it work."

Wall-related activities began 8 a.m. Saturday and continued through Sunday morning. Polacek guessed that 1,200-1,500 were in the town of nearly 1,000 residents.

The dedication ceremony included speeches from Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., and Gov. Dave Heineman.

A 14-person committee worked 18 months to create the wall.

"We've had a few fiascoes, as any project does," committee chairwoman Ruby Adam told the audience.

Among those fiascoes was a missing concrete cap for the memorial's center stone. Polacek said he learned last week the cap would not be ready for the dedication, so he and his son,

Karel, worked 10 hours to create a makeshift wooden cap.

"From a distance it looked great," he said this morning.

During the dedication, Adam joked about being the leader of such a large committee.

"There are no scars — no lasting ones, anyway," she said.

Nelson, who served as a pastor in Harvard in 1952 and 1953, said occasions like the dedication make people think about community.

"It's a culmination of people who are willing to make sure they pass that torch (of honoring veterans) on from one generation to the next," he said.

Please see **HARVARD**/page B2



BRENT McCOWN/Tribune

More than 500 people attend the dedication ceremony of the Veterans Memorial in Harvard Saturday afternoon.

Police investigate suspicious death

41-YEAR-OLD HASTINGS MAN DIES UNEXPECTEDLY

WILL VRASPIR
wvraspir@hastingstribune.com

Police are investigating the death of a 41-year-old Hastings man who died Wednesday at his home.

The autopsy on Craig Buck of 2507 W. Eighth St. was completed last week, but results have not been released.

"He was found dead, and it is under investigation as a possible suspicious death," Hastings Police Sgt. Bill Mann said this morning.

Mann said police are putting together a timeline to help determine the cause of death.

Buck's father, John, said the death of his son, a single father of two, was a surprise. John and Craig Buck lived together, along with Craig's two children, 4-year-old Amber and 1-year-old Hank.

"He'd been sick all day," John said. "He was just lying on the couch."

Buck lived in Hastings all his life and was self-employed as a concrete, roofing and construction worker.

"He had a lot of friends," John said. "He did all the work around here."

He said Craig will be missed, especially by his two children.

It is the second of three sons John Buck has outlived. His 37-year-old son, John "Scott" Buck, died in 1997.

"It's not very good," John said of losing two sons. "Someone must be picking on me."

According to Tribune archives, Scott reportedly died two hours after a fight involving Mike E. Renschler of Juniata in a south Hastings parking lot Oct. 5, 1997.

Please see **DEATH**/page B2



BRENT McCOWN/Tribune

The KC boat was one of two boats to sink into Lake Hastings Sunday during the rescheduled Kool-Aid Days Kardonboard Boat Races.

Sink or swim

COMPETITORS DO BOTH AT KOOL-AID DAYS KARDONBOARD BOAT RACES

SHAY BURK
sburk@hastingstribune.com

Arrmed with a small raft made of carpet tubing, 13 Hastings youth prepared for one of their greatest challenges yet. These representatives of the Mayor's Youth Council were ready for anything as they prepared for the Kool-Aid Days Kardonboard Boat Races at

Lake Hastings on Sunday.

"We haven't actually practiced together," Hillary Melvin, 17, said.

"We're just hoping that it will float."

While it floated for a while, their raft was one of two water vessels that didn't make it around the 150-yard course.

In all, there were 10 vessels made using a variety of cardboard, including boxes, tubing and other cardboard scraps.

The event came one weekend after the main festivities of Kool-Aid Days, but that didn't stop more than 100 people from lining the banks of Lake Hastings.

Please see **SINK**/page B2



BRENT McCOWN/Tribune

Smoke pours from the mouth and nose of the dragon's head aboard the Drakkaress Sunday evening at Lake Hastings during the Kool-Aid Days Kardonboard Boat Races.

New race track welcomes vintage cars

SHAY BURK
sburk@hastingstribune.com

Spectators and drivers alike celebrated the inaugural race at Motorsport Park Hastings this weekend.

Nearly 80 drivers made the trip from Colorado to try out the new 2.3-mile asphalt track east of Hastings.

Several other events have been held on dirt at the site — Showboat Boulevard and U.S. Highway 6 —

but no official racing had been done on the asphalt track prior to this weekend's race by Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing Ltd.

Inside

More on Motorsport Park Hastings' vintage races. — Page A6, C1

racers were glad to finally try out

the new track.

The group was scheduled to have the track's inaugural event more than a month ago, but due to weather and other setbacks, the first race was pushed back.

"We're really glad to finally be here," Hively said. "And next time we come out, there will be even more drivers."

Hively said he hopes to make the event part of the group's annual racing schedule, bringing more

drivers for future races at MPH.

Races this weekend were Saturday and Sunday, and racers could test-drive the track Friday.

As a racer himself, with a 1967 Austin Healey, Hively said he enjoyed the new track.

"I love it," he said. "It's busy. There's something to do all the time. You've got to be sharp and keep your wits about you all the time."

Please see **TRACK**/page B2



BRENT McCOWN/Tribune

A 1968 Caldwell D-13 driven by Tim Oakley exits the track after warmups Sunday morning at Motorsport Park Hastings.

Weather

Lo: 62
Hi: 88

Partly cloudy Tuesday morning, becoming mostly sunny.



Art by Nicole Williamson, 8, Hawthorne School

HENPECKED HUBBY

BISMARCK, N.D. — Chicken was a part of the wedding of Terry Morris and Renee Biver, but it had nothing to do with the menu or the name of a popular dance. Henrietta, a hen, was a bridesmaid.

Nation

"She was a very good girl," maid of honor Paulette Winn said. "She wanted to eat part of the flower she was wearing." Henrietta is the pet of the groom. About the size of a dove, she fit into the crook of flower girl Jasmynne Morris' arm.

Jasmynne, 8, said holding the hen through the ceremony was boring, but overall "it was fun." Jasmynne, who is Terry Morris' granddaughter, has known Henrietta all of her life. "You can play with her, and she's a tame chicken," she said. The Associated Press

Inside

Agri/Business B4 Entertainment C5
Bridge C5 Obituaries A2
Classified D2 Opinion A4
Comics C4 Other Page D1

Harvard: Crowd turns out to honor veterans

Continued from page A1

Heineman, who graduated from Airborne Ranger school at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1970, encouraged audience members to serve in the military.

"There is nothing more exhilarating and nothing more exciting than jumping out of a perfectly good airplane," he said. Heineman also said it was important to honor veterans.

"Nowhere is that more tangible than at this memorial here," he said.

One of the most popular features of the weekend was the "Hall of Honor," a collection of military artifacts dating from the Civil War to the present, set up in the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall.

A register at the hall included visitors' signatures from throughout the country.

"It's such a great feeling. Everyone was talking about it," Polacek said. "We did it to

honor veterans. It's a great honor to see them attend it and show their support for the community as well."

Just before the dedication ceremony began, Kurt Muhle of Columbus flew a BT-13 plane over the town. Polacek said the only communication between dedication organizers and Muhle was that he should fly over at 3:05 p.m.

"The time of that was so perfect," Polacek said. "The flag hit the top of the pole as he flew over. It couldn't be planned that way."

Adam guessed about 300 people helped to make the weekend possible.

"For a little town of under 1,000, that says a lot," she said.

Charles Laue, service officer for the Harvard VFW, was moving through the crowd in his wheelchair handing out programs for the dedication ceremony.

"If it wasn't for veterans we wouldn't be the great country

we are today," he said.

Earlier in the day he sold T-shirts and flags, and was also a part of the accompanying parade.

Laue didn't spend time in combat but spent eight years in the service, most of it in Germany. He is wheelchair-bound because of an automobile accident following his years in the service.

Laue, who has called Harvard home since 1967, said he had never seen the town as full as it was Saturday.

"It tells you American people and Nebraska people are appreciative of their veterans, whether they served or not," he said.

Adam said the large turnout was humbling.

"It's humbling; it should be the veterans that are getting the praise," she said. "They are the ones who gave up everything to go and protect this country and make it a wonderful place to live in. I wish I could hug them all."



BRENT MCCOWN / Tribune

People look at all the names on the Veterans Memorial in Harvard after a dedication ceremony Saturday.

Track: MPH welcomes vintage cars for first races on asphalt

Continued from page A1

The technical difficulty of the track was something both drivers and spectators loved.

"Road racing is much more enjoyable than races like Daytona, where they just go in a complete oval," spectator Steve Erickson of Guide Rock said. "Here, it's a lot more skill."

Erickson and his wife, Vicki, went to the races Sunday after watching the track be built during the last several months.

"We've been watching the track go up all summer, and we just wanted to come out and see what it was all about," he said.

The Ericksons brought their 5- and 6-year-old grandchildren, who also enjoyed the races.

"We enjoy the fast cars, and this is something the family can do together," Steve Erickson said.

Driver Julie Rice said it was that family aspect of racing that got her into the sport.

"My family has been doing it for about 14 years," she said. "I've been watching them, and decided I wanted to do it."

With her dad as her mechanic, Julie and her father Bill — a racer himself — travel around Colorado and several other states each summer with their 1967 MGB Roadster.

In her sixth year of racing, Julie, 36, said she has found a family in the drivers she competes against, too.

Fellow female driver Marcia Hubbell taught both Julie and Bill how to race.

"This is definitely my family," Julie said. "I have lots of big brothers here."

"We're very competitive with each other, but if there was a part on my car that was broken, I would have five people lined up to help me and give me a spare part so that I could get out and race."

As for the track, Julie agreed with Hively about its technical difficulty.

During practice on Friday, Rice wasn't sure she liked the track.

"It was really tough yesterday. It's hard learning a new track," she said. "And today, I'm loving it. I'm getting the hang of it."

The track has a total of 14 turns, so drivers must constantly be watching, turning and braking just to remain on the track.

"It's really memorization," Rice said. "You have to memorize every turn."

On Friday, she wasn't sure she would beat her goal lap time of 1:50.

Then during her qualifying laps, Rice not only beat her goal, but she also took the pole position for the second race on Sunday.

"When I went out this morning, I just felt a lot better," she said.

In fact, it was only the second time in her six years of racing that Rice took the pole from qualifying.

On Sunday, Rice finished first after the last race, but due to tire and clutch problems, she was unable to race in the final feature race where she would have started in the front.

Tony and Kathy Scaccia of Hastings watched Sunday's feature race from the back of their truck.

After watching the track as it was built throughout the summer, the couple decided to just come out and watch.

"It sounded interesting," Tony said.

"Who'd have thought watching cars go around could be interesting, but it is," Kathy added.

Rural Hastings resident Stan Karash said he was extremely excited about the track and couldn't wait to go watch the races.

"I think it's outstanding," he said. "It's a great facility."

While he plans to come back for more races in the future, Karash said he was highly impressed with Sunday's race.

"For an opening show, this is a heck of a show," he said.

Sink: Cardboard boat races launch

Continued from page A1

The event was rained out Aug. 13 during the annual Kool-Aid festival, so participants decided they would wait to debut their boats, Kool-Aid Days Executive Director Randal Kottwitz said.

"Everybody told us they would rather have it the next week with great weather, and it looks like everybody came back," he said. "We're really happy with the crowd."

Of the boats, no two were exactly alike.

Fourteen-year-old William Amyot designed The KS Sink or Swim for his team of four.

"We have flat noses on front and back, so it's pretty much reversible," he said.

The boat was a long, red-and-white vessel with double cardboard on the sides and a carpet tube in the center.

"The tube through the middle will add to the buoyancy, and it's something for us to sit on," Amyot said.

To go along with the Kool-Aid theme, Sara Babcock, 14, said they also had a Kool-Aid stand on the boat.

"It's the world's largest floating Kool-Aid stand," she said.

While they had the Kool-Aid stand on the boat ahead of time, it was removed before they went out on the lake.

The other two members of the team were 11-year-olds Kate Amyot and Carl Babcock.

The KS Sink or Swim was one of the first two boats on



BRENT MCCOWN / Tribune

The Kool-Aid Boat Race rules state that as long as one person is paddling, the boat is still in the race. That, coupled with a lot of determination, kept The Grape Illusion piloted by the Mayor's Youth Council going despite being submerged from the moment they all boarded. The entry finished the course in 16 minutes when the first youth paddled up to the boat ramp clutching a piece of the raft.

While the group was excited to go, designer William Amyot wasn't so sure how long it would float.

Once on the water, neither KS Sink or Swim or Kool-Aid and the Gang, another boat, had a great start.

Once the two teams got the hang of rowing their cardboard contraptions, the operation went much smoother.

About halfway through the course, the two teams had a slight collision, but neither boat sustained any visible damage.

After just more than three minutes of paddling, the Sink

till about halfway to the second buoy," Rikki Lay, 16, said. "Then it just kind of sunk and fell over, and we just paddled our way in."

No one on the bank was sure how far the group would go around the course after the 13 members climbed on.

Once they all slid onto the small raft, every member was chest deep in water, and the raft was nowhere to be seen.

"It's our first submarine," Kottwitz joked to the audience.

Even so, the group just kept rowing, and one member in the back even peddled with his feet, as he hung on to another crew member.

About halfway around the course, the boat fell apart and everyone just started grabbing pieces of the grape disintegration to swim for shore.

Even so, there was one diehard group of three that kept paddling on their small part of the raft and actually finished the race.

At the end of the day, the group was awarded the Most Spectacular Sinking award for their amazing boat loss and continued dedication.

Other awards included: ♦ The Kool Aid Cup went to Bye Bye Birdie with a time of 2:42 minutes.

♦ The People's Choice trophy went to Drakkaress with a total of 436 votes.

♦ The Most Original Design went to Drakkaress, which was a Viking ship.

♦ The Best Kool-Aid Days Theme trophy went to Sink Or Swim.

Officials worry tax burden might drive retirees out of Nebraska

The Associated Press

LINCOLN — There is no hard data showing that retirees are fleeing Nebraska at a higher rate than in the past or that taxes are the reason retirees are leaving, but those who track that age group and keep an eye on economic development worry there may be something to the notion.

And they're doing everything from digging for hard evidence to thinking up advertising campaigns to draw retirees back.

"We're hearing these claims,

and we'd like to find out if they're true," said Mark Intermill, an executive with AARP Nebraska.

Dorothy Hense is an example of the kind of recent retiree Intermill and others are worried about. Hense is considering moving to Kansas or Missouri in retirement because she believes the taxes are lower there.

Hense, who is widowed, recently moved to an apartment in Lincoln and says she may have to sell her house because of property taxes.

Omaha area's 911 system operates with backup

Death: 41-year-old man dies

Continued from page A1

He reportedly died from a blood clot the size of a fist at the base of his brain, which resulted after his head hit the ground. He reportedly

refused medical treatment.

Renschler was charged with manslaughter and third-degree assault, but the charges were dismissed.