

Buddy Holly week celebrations begin

United Press International

LUBBOCK — West Texans are celebrating the annual Buddy Holly week in honor of the Sept. 7 birthday of their rock 'n' roll star who was killed in a 1959 Iowa plane crash.

The Buddy Holly Memorial Society was to kick off this year's festivities Thursday with a 12-hour meeting open to the public, organizers said.

Slide shows, videos and several bands are slated for the 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. meeting at Abbey Road, a restaurant bar. The Maines Brothers and The Planets are scheduled to play at the Texas Tech Museum from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday.

Museum officials planned the concert in conjunction with their exhibit on 75 years of West Texas music entitled "Nothin' Else to Do." Nearly 800 people attended the exhibit's opening on Sunday, project director Future Akins said.

Contestants from across Texas and eastern New Mexico are expected for Friday's second annual statewide Buddy Holly Dance Contest. Winners will be boppin' for a trip for two to London.

Holly's widow Maria Elena Holly Diaz, the Buddy Holly Memorial Society and the West Texas Music Association started working last year to expand Lubbock's Holly celebration in an attempt to rival Holly festivals in England.

The famed Lubbock native would have been 48 this year. He died in a Feb. 3, 1959, plane crash near the Mason City, Iowa, airport with music stars Richie Valens and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson.

Many of his relatives and friends still living in Lubbock recall stories

about Holly and his musicians. The family name is spelled Holley, but Decca misprinted the label on Holly's first record and he decided to let it stand.

Delton Combs remembers how he and Holly used to make so much noise at Lubbock's Pioneer Park that they got chased off by police officer David White. Today Combs is a police officer and White is a lieutenant in the police training academy.

"When David White threw me off the park, I wasn't playing (officially) with Buddy Holly then. We were just playing," Combs said. "We were playing music all night and David would come chase us off."

Combs still uses the guitar he bought when Holly purchased his.

"He put tooled leather with 'Buddy Holley' written on it, but I didn't have that kind of money," said Combs who called himself more of a country western performer than Holly.

"Holly had a kind of unique way. He really did. He had a sound," said the short, stocky policeman who still plays guitar. Combs gave up his chance to be a music star to become an auto mechanic years ago.

"The drugs and the booze was fixing to get to us. That'd kill you — Holly never did any drugs," Combs said, explaining how he got tired of performing one-night stands in West Texas and nearby states.

Holly had a country band called Buddy and Bob in 1954 and 1955 before he organized The Crickets in 1956.

"Whenever I quit playing with Buddy Holly, I didn't really stop," Combs said, adding he plays in a country-western band of friends.

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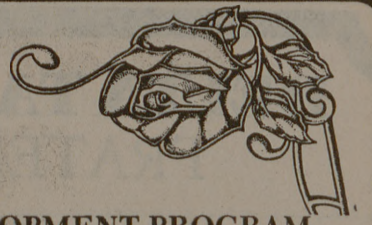
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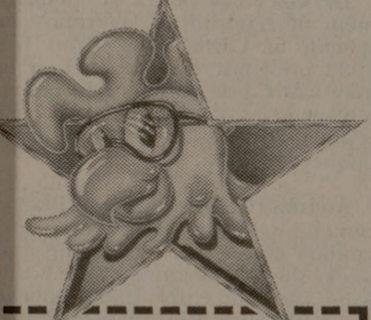
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Freshmen and Sophomore photos for the 1985 Aggieland yearbook will be taken at the Yearbook Associates office Sept. 10-Oct. 12. The office is located at 1700 S. Kyle behind Culpepper Plaza. Photos will also be taken at the Pavilion Oct. 15-26. Both studios are open weekdays only, 8:30-4:30 (closed 12-1).