

**By Jan Rahn**

*Managing Editor*

The recent addition of Kimball will expand the South Platte Valley Association (SPVA) Conference to seven western Nebraska schools when the sports season gets underway this fall.

Joining the conference is the Kimball Longhorns.

On Friday, April 26, the six current conference schools voted unanimously to allow Kimball to join.

Kimball sought out the SPVA, as has Bridgeport, said Chip Kay, Perkins County's activities director.

"That reflects well on the member schools that have helped create such a positive reputation for the conference," said Kay. "I am hopeful Bridgeport will strongly consider following Kimball and join the conference in 2014."

As an eight-team conference, the SPVA would be one of the top conferences in the state, said Kay.

School representatives from the conference met prior to the SPVA track meet held in Hershey the last Friday in April. Attending the meeting were Bridgeport High School's activities director and superintendent who expressed interest in joining in the future.

"Adding Kimball to the conference is very beneficial," said Kay. "It will ensure that the SPVA continues to be a strong, competitive conference."

Kay said there will not be much of an impact on Perkins County from a sports scheduling standpoint, as Plainsmen teams already compete against Kimball in volleyball, football, girls golf and basketball.

"We are excited to add them to our conference tournaments," he said.

Kimball was attracted to SPVA because of the activities offered, said Kay, including music/band, speech, play production, quiz bowl, recognition of academics and the athletics.

"We were able to offer Kimball opportunities their current conference could not," he said.

Both Kimball and Bridgeport are currently in the Western Trails Conference. Others include Mitchell, Morrill, Gordon Rushville, Hemingford and Bayard.