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Bonneville Co. Celebrates Centennial Birthday

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IDAHO FALLS, Idaho -- Bonneville County's yearlong Centennial Celebration is coming to an end this weekend with three nights of galas.

The first on Thursday night wasn't a full house but drew 150 to 250 people. It was held to honor the pistol-shaped county that points west.

Bagpipes ushered in Bonneville County's 100th birthday.

"I think the word is out: We have a great quality of life," said Commissioner Dave Radford.

2011 has been the year of centennial celebrations for the county. Eighteen events spread around its six-and-a-half cities culminate this weekend with four gala events.

Each night showcases a choir of 177 students from four high schools and an hourlong video produced over the past year.

"I'm an Idaho native and proud to be a part of this selected activity," said Paul Jenkins, who produced the film.

Attendees can also vote on the top 100 county treasures.

"Carnegie Library, Civic Auditorium, Museum of Idaho, Colonial Theatre," said Gary Goodson, co-chairman of the Bonneville County Heritage Association.

Lt. Gov. Brad Little made the trip from Boise to take in the celebration. He said Bonneville County is an important part of Idaho's economic past, present and future.

"Historically, it was agriculture, and recently it's been a whole potpourri of energy alternatives," said Little. "But it's always been an innovation center."

"(With the) announcement of Areva ... (we're) real optimistic about starting to lead the nation into economic recovery," said Radford.

For those who want to wish the county a happy birthday, there are a few more opportunities over the weekend. The events are Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. They're all at the Civic Auditorium in Idaho Falls.