

# Freedom's ring

*Juneteenth Community Picnic helps bring Lincolmites together*

By AMY KELLER  
Staff Reporter

It was a time to be together instead of fighting and shooting each other.

That's how Trumane Bell described the Juneteenth Community Picnic, a celebration held Sunday afternoon at Trago Park, 22<sup>nd</sup> and U streets. A few hundred people gathered there to commemorate the signing and enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Bell, an alumnus of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, one of the many organizations that sponsored the event, said the celebration was "like a big family party." And like a family picnic, it included free food and refreshments, all donated by Lincoln businesses. Local musicians also pitched in, providing free entertainment.

The Emancipation Proclamation was signed on January 1, 1863. But it was not enforced until June 19, 1865, when the Union army arrived in Texas to put the proclamation into effect.

Now, the Juneteenth festival is

celebrated throughout the country in more than 200 cities each year.

Michell Lockman, a background singer for Black Dee, one of the groups that performed at Lincoln's celebration, said she came to the picnic to support the community, a sentiment that was shared by many of the festival's sponsors.

Lincoln individuals, businesses and organizations such as the NAACP, Oasis Barber Shop, N-DAMIXX CDs, Records and Tapes, the Malone Community Center, Mike Branker, Mohammed's Barber Shop, Jai Jai's, the Hair Suite, GrandPa's, Terry Ruppert, Kappa Alpha Psi and Helping Our People Excel sponsored the picnic.

Betty Brown, a mail distribution clerk at Woodmen Accident and Life, said she came to the festival to "socialize and get involved with different races."

The Mobile Health Force van, a week-old health service, was also at the Juneteenth festival. The van is open to people in Lincoln and other communities in Lancaster county, offering free dental and health services, immunizations, and STD and HIV screenings.

PHOTOS BY LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

(clockwise from top right)

**DOSHA HARRIS** (front), 7, of Lincoln and **Corrina Mitchell**, 5, from Drew, Miss., dance to the music at Sunday's Juneteenth Community Picnic.

**DONNELL JONES**, also known as DJ Romeo, provided the music for Sunday's celebration. Rainy weather forced Jones to move his show inside temporarily.

**FLOYD McCOY**, 7, was among the 50 members of the American Legion Post 30 drill team who showed up at Trago Park Sunday to help celebrate Juneteenth.

**EDDIE KEY**, a drafting student at Southeast Community College, and **Sabrina Weaver**, a volunteer at the Malone Center, help run the grill Sunday afternoon.

