

Teenager remembered as carefree

Brian Clark

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Brian Scott Romines was a people person, the type of guy who liked to have fun, be crazy and not worry about things.

"He took whatever came his way and found some way to handle it," said Chad Leal who was in the accident Friday night that took his friend's life. "Carefree, you know?"

Romines, a senior at Petrolia High School, was pronounced dead at 10:30 p.m. Friday at Clay County Memorial Hospital, at what had been the beginning of a promising weekend. Now his classmates will return to school today to sit next to an empty desk.

"You see it on TV all the time, people being killed," Leal said. "But you never think it could happen to you. All my friends are like, 'It's going to be different walking into class.'"

In the small town of Petrolia, with about 40 students in the senior class, word of what happened spread quickly. Josh Loucks, another friend and classmate, got the call from his brother.

"He said one of my friends got in a wreck," he said. "We drove around trying to find the road. Then we saw the ambulance and just followed that.

PETROLIA

"I asked one of my teachers — she's an EMT — what his chances are," Loucks said. "And she said they're pretty slim."

A 2001 Chevrolet pickup carrying Romines, Leal and Jefferson Mayo, all 18 and from Petrolia, and 15-year-old Rex Allen of Wichita Falls, was northbound about 2 miles north of Petrolia on FM810. At about 9:30 Mayo, who was driving, missed a curve, and the pickup went into the south ditch and rolled, throwing two people from the truck.

"When I found where Brian was laying at, he didn't move," Leal said. "He didn't say nothing. He just lay there."

Now the senior who started the season on the Petrolia basketball team and continued to play pickup games with friends is gone.

"He was real good," class-

mate Chris Morris said. "He could make any hook shot."

He leaves behind his mother and stepfather, his father, a brother and sister, grandparents, relatives and a school of friends. Counseling will be available at the school during the week, and services are scheduled for 2 p.m. Tuesday at the First Baptist Church of Petrolia.

"You just got to put in your head he's in a better place," Loucks said. "He wouldn't want us to be always sad and depressed about it."

Leal, who will see his friend's empty desk when he returns to school today, now has to find a way to say goodbye for himself and his classmates. His message comes from more people than just him.

"We love you Brian, your friends."

Police reporter Brian Clark can be reached at (940) 763-7597 or by e-mail at clarkb@wtr.com.