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Mid Continent Farms receives KFRM reward

By Donna Sullivan, Editor

The alertness of an employee, and what Washington rancher Gregg Stewart admits was a little bit of luck, thwarted a would-be cattle rustler on Thanksgiving eve in 2015. The investigation then led to the recovery of seven head owned by Stewart's Ranch, Mid Continent Farms, as well as Bronc Barrows and Brigham Stewart, that had been stolen earlier and sold at Farmers and Ranchers Livestock in Salina.

Stewart recently received a $5000 reward offered by KFRM 550 AM radio for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a person involved in a livestock theft. Keith Buttenhoff was convicted in September of six counts of felony cattle theft in Lincoln County and sentenced to probation.

Mid Continent Farms employee Jarrod Beam was headed home for Thanksgiving on November 25, 2015 when he and his father John stopped to check and feed cattle on the Lincoln County ranch. They noticed that cattle were in portable corrals on the east side of the property, but didn't think much of it as it wasn't unusual for cattle to lounge in the pens, which were often left partially folded and open. But when they were about to leave and the cattle were still there, they checked it out and discovered the cattle were actually locked in the pen. Beam called Stewart, who instructed him to make sure they were really his cattle and to check their condition in case they had pushed their way into the pen and couldn't get out. Beam reported the cows were indeed Stewart's and they were in good condition, but appeared to have dirt on their noses as if they'd been eating off the ground.

His suspicions aroused, Stewart called the sheriff's office, then headed to the ranch himself, arriving at about 2 a.m. A deputy met him there and said there had been no activity so far, and Stewart decided to go back around from the north to check gates on his way to the pens.

"When I got there, I took the spotlight and did an appraisal around the pens," Stewart said. I could tell at that point that there was cake or feed on the ground, where he had baited them in from the north pasture to the catch pen. That's when the hair started standing up on the back of my neck and I knew we had a problem."

The threat was closer than he might have realized. Before Stewart could get the front pasture gate closed, he saw headlights coming from the north. He dropped the gate, pulled to the back side, west of the pens, shut off the lights and truck and waited. He saw what he thought was a pickup with a camper pulling a bumper-hitch trailer with no tail lights come into view, nearly stopping at the gate. Seeing Stewart's truck, the driver sped away. Stewart pursued him at speeds reaching 80 mph and called the sheriff's office to let them know he was following what he believed to be a cattle thief. An officer joined the pursuit from the north with lights and sirens, pulled the suspect over and arrested him.

Kyle Bauer, general manager of KFRM Full Time Farm Radio, presents a $5000 check to Gregg Stewart of Mid Continent Farms for his role in helping in the arrest and conviction of a cattle thief. *Courtesy photo*

On the Monday following their Saturday, November 28, production sale, Stewart inventoried his cattle and discovered seven head were missing, which he reported to the sheriff's office. He encouraged them to involve Kendal Lothman, who leads the Livestock/Brand Investigation Unit, a joint agreement between the Kansas Attorney General and Kansas Department of Agriculture.

"Lothman was certainly pivotal in the investigation, as he had jurisdictional freedom," Stewart said. The stolen cattle's bangs vaccination tags traced back to cattle owned by MCF, Barrows and Stewart. All seven head were recovered.

"The neighbors had already been alerting us that there was activity in and our of our pasture," Stewart recalled. "A neighbor had tracked what appeared to be a loaded trailer with a flat tire coming out of the pasture, so that put a timeline on it." That kind of awareness is what Lothman encourages when it comes to curtailing cattle thefts. It's also that kind of diligence that KFRM general manager Kyle Bauer hopes to encourage with their reward program, which started about a year ago.

As people in agriculture, I know we could do better reporting strange stuff if we just would," Bauer said. "But we don't want to poke our nose in somebody's business."

"The cattle industry is the core of the entire farming community in the Plains," Bauer continued. "And it harvests forage from many very isolated acres. We depend on the honesty of people in the area to keep those cattle where they belong. Cattle thieves rely on most of us assuming that everyone is honest and they depend on people not being suspicious. It is our intent to encourage people to be suspicious and ask questions by offering the reward and to make would-be thieves more concerned about getting caught."

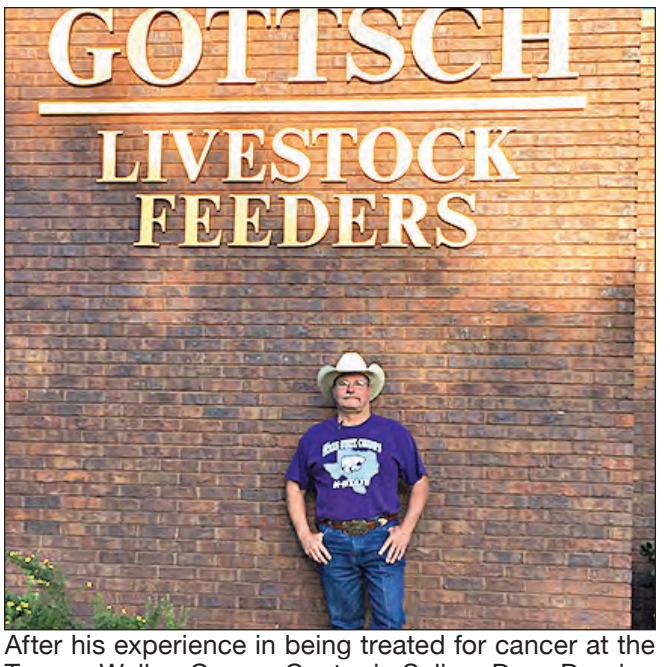
Stewart plans to use the reward money in part to help recoup some of the costs of location and transporting the cattle back to the ranch, as well as reimbursing the purchasers of the cattle their cost of returning them. "They were exposed to liability, yet were very upfront and cooperative with the investigation," he said. He also plans to donate money to both the Lincoln County Sheriff's office and the Lincoln County Fire Department.

"To me, this is a great opportunity to showcase the reward program to the general public and make the public more aware of cattle theft," he concluded.

Delphos resident finds way to give back to community

By Amy Feigley

For Dave Doering, giving back to the Salina community was something that weighed heavy on his heart, something that he has been wanting to do for the past year. In August 2015, Dave received a cancer diagnosis and with the referral of his doctor, he began treatments at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center in Salina almost immediately. Traveling to Salina from the Delphos area five days a week was something he would do for the next four to five months. Doering says he was thankful that he lived close enough to receive his chemo and radiation treatments, which also meant that he was able to be at home in the evenings. While there, he received remarkable care, and found the staff to be tremendously courteous. "When you go through something like this, it is nice to know you are in a place where people actually do care," he said. In January 2016, success came as Dave received his final treatment. From that day forward, he made it is his goal to do something in return for those who stood by his side day in and day out.



After his experience in being treated for cancer at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center in Salina, Dave Doering wanted to do something in return and spearheaded a fundraising auction of a calf at Farmers and Ranchers Livestock on January 3, 2017.

Spearheading this project is Dave Doering himself, who is a cattle buyer for Gottsch Feeders in Hastings, Nebraska. He met up with his longtime friend Mike Samples, who is the manager of Farmers and Ranchers Livestock in Salina, and ran this idea by him. He knew he wanted to do something special to give back to Salina for the treatment he received while at Tammy Walker. And with that, the idea was born to sell a calf at the forthcoming weaned vaccinated sale to be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at Farmers and Ranchers. And not just any calf, a very special calf with the Walker name attached to it.

After communicating with Trace Walker, Doering himself purchased a heifer calf from the Rolling Hills Ranch, which is owned by the Charlie Walker family. This is the same family that has, over the years, made many charitable donations towards the treatment of cancer. The Tammy Walker Cancer Center is named after Charlie's daughter Tammy, who, unfortunately, lost her battle with lung cancer at the age of eleven in 1973.

This calf will be sold continuously until no more bids are met and then will be sold one last time. His goal is to raise anywhere between $10,000 and $20,000 for Tammy Walker. And if this is a successful event, which Doering expects it will be, it will become a yearly happening. Elanco will also donate products for this event. One hundred percent of the proceeds raised will go towards medical equipment and research.

Make sure to mark Tuesday, January 3, 2017 on your calendar, with the special Walker calf to be sold at 2 p.m. We all know someone that has been touched by cancer and let's do this for them, whether in their honor or their memory.

Insight

KANSAS FARM BUREAU
The Voice of Agriculture

Where We Live

By John Schlageck,
Kansas Farm Bureau

Reflection is a good thing. It allows you to see where you've been and hopefully chart a better course on where you're going. While on vacation recently I had a chance to think about the small community where I grew up.

Located in northwestern Kansas, Seguin was a small farm/ranch community of approximately 50 hearty souls. It was located in Sheridan County, three miles south of Highway 24 and the Union Pacific railroad used to run through the small town.

Seguin was a community where families were raised and values – good and sometimes bad – were instilled. Looking back, those fortunate enough to grow up there like I did in the '50s and '60s were surrounded by people with core values that helped guide us throughout our lives.

At the top of this list of virtues my community provided was one spiritual in nature. A spiritual quality like, seek ye first this kingdom of God and his righteousness and all things shall be given unto you.

We all grew up with Monsignor Mulvihill and the Sisters of St. Joseph, went to mass six days a week and learned to abide by the golden rule.

Next was the courtesy level of our town. This was measured by the ordinary civilities a total stranger could expect. Residents of Seguin and the outlying community always welcomed family and friends back for special events – many centered around our church and its congregation.

Transient laborers, especially during wheat, milo and corn harvest, were also treated well because of their valuable contributions during these critical periods.

Rootedness or a sense of commitment on the part of a town's people was another cornerstone in our little community. Dependent on the fertile, sandy loam soil of the High Plains, Seguin's families lived by the unspoken agreement that this was a place to stay, put down roots and build a family, a farm, a business and a future.

This quality is closely related to a sense of place, which now grows rarer with each passing day.

Diversity – not necessarily in the form of many nationalities – but rather in the form of creative disagreement was another building block in our community. This meant our little town enjoyed a certain confidence that all of its inhabitants didn't have to echo one another in order to make progress.

On the contrary, a community, like a country, can profit by its differences. Believe me, nearly everyone I ever knew in Seguin spoke up, voiced their opinions and let their ideas be heard.

Loyalty was the fifth attribute our community was blessed with. Loyalty is often confused with conformity, though the two are really opposites.

It is precisely loyalty to the community, to posterity and to principle that moves a citizen not to conform. A dissenter may never be so loyal as when refusing to go along quietly.

Loyalty is a virtue, but not a simple one. Certainly, it is not as simple as those who use it as a club to enforce their will on an individual or a community.

Generosity was the sixth attribute and not just with material support but a generosity of spirit akin to humility. This broader, deeper attribute sets aside not only personal interests for the sake of community, but personal grudges, slights and obsessions.

One might call this trait charity, but charity in our society has acquired an unfortunate connotation of being optional – not obligatory. Some believe charity is what you do with what you have left over. Those who believe they owe a debt to their community and embrace the opportunity to repay it practice charity, the real thing.

Pride in our little burg was also clear. Self-respect may be a better word for this civic virtue. It must do with much more than clean streets, green lawns and painted buildings. It also explains good schools, honest law enforcement and other amenities that make for a proud, self-respecting community.

Openness was the final attribute in our small northwestern Kansas community. Without openness, these other virtues would only be a façade. Our community was an open book. Everyone knew everyone else and everything that was going on. Candor, candidness, frankness, sincerity and plain dealing were the only way of doing business and conducting each day of your life.

Everyone who lived in Seguin was a member of the community and part of our town. Didn't matter who you were, where you lived, how old you were or whatever else. Our community was a place of human and humane values.

Sometimes in the rush of everyday life we forget to live by such values. Know your neighbors, coworkers and the members of your community. And, yes, it's all right to argue with them and disagree with them about what is best for the community.

What is important is to care about your community. Think of its best interests and don't let your mind be diverted by lesser concerns or scattered holdings.

Just like the little community I grew up in and the family and neighbors who helped shape who I am today, each of us live in communities that have values and fine traditions to uphold. Be part of yours.

John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

It looks like winter is finally upon us with the most bitter cold snap of the year. Just like last year, and the year before and the year before that, I am completely unprepared. Each year this first real arctic blast seems to catch me off guard and not ready. Never mind that it is well into the first week of December before we got really cold weather or that we have had a couple months of unseasonably nice temperatures. I am simply not ready.

Jennifer tells me that my unpreparedness is a chronic condition of my own doing caused by my tendency to procrastinate. Okay, she didn't put it to me that nicely and she may have said it when she mentioned that we should power wash the lambing barn on one of those nice sunny, seventy-degree late October days. I think my reply to her was that it was too nice and I wanted to do something else that was of equal importance in my mind, I would do the power washing later when I had more time.

Despite the theory of my wife, I am sure that my unpreparedness is a result of an early winter and global climate change or something along that line. I just assumed that the seventy-degree sunny days would last until at least Christmas. It is not my fault that the polar air couldn't wait to make an appearance; who would have thought it would be here this early?

Last week we had our first little taste of cold weather when the morning lows dipped down into the twenties. That was when I made the shocking discovery that I did not have any insulated bibs. It did eventually come back to me that at the end of calving season my bibs were in such bad shape and so dirty that Jennifer strongly suggested I burn them rather that subject our washing machine to the terror of trying to clean them. I believe it came with the statement that the settings only went to heavily soiled and not gross. It was probably for the best, without all the grime holding them together they would have disintegrated anyway.

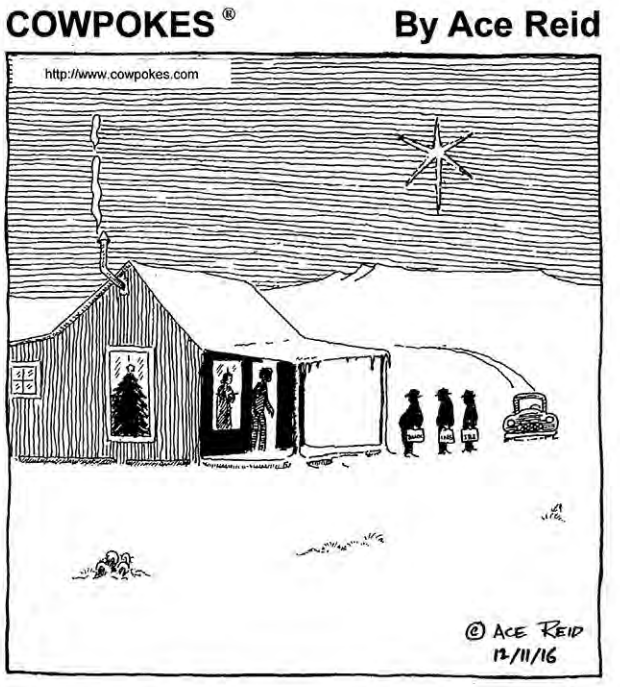
So, I had no insulated bibs and could not find any gloves. Did you ever wonder just where the gloves go? Each year I buy the biggest bundle of cotton gloves I can find and each year I am scrambling to find two gloves by March. As for my insulated hat with ear flaps, who knows where it might be? I am sure it will show up later (probably about April).

The prediction is for the bitter cold to be here tomorrow morning. I sure hope there are a pair of overalls that will fit me somewhere in Manhattan. Finding my size is not easy. I know if I lost weight clothes would be much easier to find and I will get right on that, later. I really don't think I procrastinate, I don't have time for it. Besides, without my insulated coveralls I might freeze to death if I wasn't a little chubby.

Aside from my personal comfort, I am woefully unprepared for cold weather. I probably ought to have the tank heaters ready to go, barns bedded down and water hoses drained. I am sure that will all get done in the next few hours. I might even have time to get the chimney cleaned so I can fire up the wood stove and have a place to thaw my cold hands out. That really only matters if I find a little time to get some firewood cut. I guess these are all things that could have been done earlier, but what was the hurry?

The sad truth is that I do often fly by the seat of my pants. That would be an uninsulated, cold, hopefully not frost-bitten seat of my pants. I have heard that preparation and planning do make life easier but what is the fun in that and where is the challenge? I think the thrill of the deadline and the exhilaration of the near- disaster are much more exciting.

It is very difficult to plan for everything and who has the time to get all of that done ahead of time. I am sure the days are shorter and minutes go by faster these days. The weather should have given me more warning than the seven to ten days I got from the long-term forecast. These are all the excuses that will be going through my head as I am power-washing the lambing barn on a day that is below freezing. Oh well, at least I will be warmer in my new insulated bibs and gloves.



"Maw, it's the three wise men, my banker, the internal revenue and the border patrol!"

Judge rules Hawaii counties cannot regulate GMOs

Circuit Judge Consuelo M. Callahan upheld a lower court's ruling recently in deciding that Hawaii counties can't enact individual bans or regulations on the growth or use of genetically modified crops, because Hawaii law prohibits counties from regulating agricultural issues.

According to the Associated Press, however, those opposed to the growth of genetically modified crops and use of related pesticides in Hawaii have vowed to introduce new legislation to address their concerns in the state's upcoming legislative session.

To learn more, visit http://tinyurl.com/GMO-12-2-16.

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Jesse McCurry to lead Kansas Grain Sorghum as executive director

Jesse McCurry has been selected as Executive Director of the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association. McCurry is an experienced agricultural advocate, with expertise in agriculture, ethanol and public policy. He most recently worked for National Sorghum Producers and United Sorghum Checkoff Program as a regional director.

Stephen Bigge, Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission chairman – farmer from Stockton, said "I am extremely excited to have Jesse coming on staff with our team. He brings vast knowledge of Kansas agriculture as well as the sorghum industry, not only in Kansas but across the sorghum belt. I believe with Jesse's leadership Kansas Grain Sorghum will be able to help provide the sorghum growers a valuable service as we continue to work to advance this crop."

McCurry fills a newly created position. Recently the boards came together under the banner of "Kansas Grain Sorghum" to advance the interests of Kansas sorghum farmers.

"We recognize that Jesse has worked diligently during his professional career to cultivate and maintain deep relationships with key players across the spectrum of Kansas agriculture, including the sorghum, livestock and ethanol sectors," said Kent Winter, president, Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association – farmer from Mt. Hope "Jesse's stellar background will serve Kansas sorghum interests well as he engages with policy and legislative discussions that will influence sorghum's future in Kansas, both in production agriculture and end-user settings."

McCurry joins a grower base, staff and leadership team that has established Kansas as the largest grain sorghum producing state in the United States.

Previously, McCurry served as an economic development representative at Kansas Department of Commerce; business development representative at KCOE ISOM; and director of individual giving at Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters. McCurry serves on the KARL, Inc. board of directors, Kansas Technical Committee for NRCS and Regional Advisory Committee for the Equus-Walnut.

Jesse holds an M.A. in Speech Communication and a B.S. in Agricultural Communications and Journalism from Kansas State University.

Kansas to exercise foreign animal disease response

The Kansas Department of Agriculture will lead an emergency preparedness exercise, Afterburn, Dec. 19–22, 2016, in Manhattan, to practice the state's response plan to a foreign animal disease event.

The four-day functional exercise, which will be based out of KDA headquarters in Manhattan, will enable KDA and its partners in other state agencies, federal and local government, industry, university and six other states to practice the state's foreign animal disease response plan. More than 200 individuals will participate in the Afterburn exercise, which will be based on the confirmation of foot-and-mouth disease in the United States.

Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey said KDA is committed to protecting animal health to the best of its ability and notes that regularly exercising emergency response plans benefits not only KDA but all partners to understand roles and responsibilities in a response, and to identify potential gaps in the plans.

"Agriculture is the largest industry and economic driver in Kansas. Responding to a foreign animal disease like FMD will require cooperation among state, local and federal government, private industry, universities and more to stop the spread of the disease and enable the industry to get back to business as quickly as possible," said McClaskey. "We are grateful to have so many partners join us for this exercise and all efforts to serve and protect Kansas agriculture."

In 2012, the KDA Division of Animal Health developed a five-year strategic plan designed to improve its ability to respond to animal disease emergencies. Last year's Invisible Fire exercise was KDA's first four-day interactive exercise, and as a result KDA determined that larger, more complex exercises result in significant improvement in the animal disease response plan, so the agency plans to hold multi-day exercises at least on a biennial basis. The 2016 Afterburn exercise will build upon plans and procedures that have been developed and revised since previous exercises and actual emergency events.

In addition to KDA, which will operate as the Incident Command Post for the exercise, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management and Haskell, Sherman and Thomas counties will activate emergency operations centers as part of the Afterburn exercise.

Foot-and-mouth disease was last identified in the United States in 1929. FMD is a highly contagious disease of cattle, sheep, swine, goats, deer and other cloven-hooved animals. It is not a human food safety concern nor a public health threat. It is a primary concern for animal health officials because it could have potentially devastating economic consequences due to disrupted trade and lost investor confidence.

The exercise has been funded with a grant provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Farm Bureau honors members and friends at 98th annual meeting

Kansas Farm Bureau recognized members and friends at its 98th Annual Meeting, Dec. 5-6 in Manhattan.

On Mon., Dec. 5, the organization recognized its Friends of Agriculture. This award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to Kansas Farm Bureau and agriculture or rural Kansas. They included:

Jeff Davidson, Greenwood County, has served the agriculture industry for more than 40 years. In that time, he began the Southeast Kansas Weed Management Association, was on the team that brought the 4-H shooting sports program to Kansas, helped initiate a Kansas chapter of the National Prescribed Fire association and served as the coordinator for the Tallgrass Legacy Alliance for 12 years.

Dennis Gruenbacher, Sedgwick County, has served on the Sedgwick County Farm Bureau board and on KFB's state ag advisory committees. For the last six years, he's been active on the Kansas Soybean Commission and spent time on the National Biodiesel Board and Equus Beds Water Management Board.

Randy Lewis, Douglas County, served as KFB's District 1 Administrator for 40 years. His service to the counties of District 1 was wide ranging and included helping support policy and advocacy efforts, young farmers and ranchers, safety, rural health, membership marketing and women's activities and other various programs and services.

Jimmie Mengarelli, Crawford County, has been a 4-H and Youth Extension Agent for 31 years. He's judged livestock youth projects across the state and served as the superintendent of sheep and goat departments at the Kansas State Fair for 25 years. Jimmie is also the chairman of the 4-H Livestock Committee.

Mark Ploger, Pratt County, has served the agricultural industry for more than 25 years. He's been awarded the National Association of County Agricultural Agents Achievement award and service award. Mark was president of the Kansas Association of County Agricultural Agents as well as the Kansas Association of Extension Agents.

Les Regier, Johnson County, was the 2nd district administrator at Kansas Farm Bureau for 27 years. Over those years, he worked with hundreds of Farm Bureau volunteers in the ten counties he covered. In his role as district administrator he educated the county boards on Farm Bureau basics, brought new information to the boards, served as liaison to Kansas Farm Bureau, and encouraged all those around him.

As an excavating contractor for the past 49 years, Frank Van Fleet has worked with the City and Soil Conservation Service in Wyandotte County on hundreds of projects and soil conservation jobs to help keep soil erosion and pollutants out of the waterways of Wyandotte County. Frank has also worked with the mayors and the administrator's office in Wyandotte County to overcome the obstacles an expanding city creates for farmers, such as livestock in the city, farm equipment on city streets, utility easements and conservation easements.

Jere White, Anderson County, has served as the executive director of the Kansas Corn Growers Association. He is a board member on both the U.S. Meat Export Federation and the U.S. Grains Council. Jere was the founder and chairman of the Triazine Network, a national coalition of growers involved with the Environmental Protection Agency's regulation of the triazine herbicides, atrazine and simazine.

Richard, Michael and Brian Thompson, Norton County, received the Kansas Farm Bureau Natural Resources Award. This award goes to the farm family who exemplifies good land stewardship. The Thompsons focus on their most important resource--the soil. They know their livelihood is dependent upon it being healthy and productive. They believe their soil not only needs to be conserved, but rejuvenated with best management practices such as rotational grazing, cover crops and no-till.

Amy Cassel, Farm Bureau Financial Services Agency Manager, received KFB's Partnership Award. This award recognizes someone from Farm Bureau Financial Services who has gone above and beyond for the state's largest farm organization. Amy has been with Farm Bureau for 18 years and in that time, has been a huge supporter of Kansas Farm Bureau and its membership.

2016 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Katrina Morgan, Americus, Wins Holiday Contest This Week

Winner, Katrina Morgan, Americus: "My husband and I enjoy this easy to make soup on a cold day."

NACHO POTATO SOUP

5 1/4-ounce package augratin potatoes
11-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained
10-ounce can diced tomatoes & green chiles, undrained
2 cups water
2 cups milk
2 cups process American cheese, cubed
1 pound hamburger or sausage, cooked & drained

In a large saucepan combine the contents of the potato package, corn, tomatoes and water; mix well. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 to 18 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add milk, cheese and cooked hamburger. Cook and stir until the cheese is melted. Makes 6-8 servings.

*****

Marcile Shippy, Woodbine: "Best served warm, but good cold also."

BREAD STICKS

2 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon plus 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup milk (slightly warmed)
1/2 cup butter, melted
Toppings of choice

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Combine first 5 dry ingredients in a bowl. Sprinkle milk (one tablespoon at a time) evenly over flour mixture; stirring with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened. Roll dough into a 10-by-12-inch rectangle on a lightly floured board. Using a knife or pizza cutter, cut into 1 1/2-by-5-inch strips. Dip or roll strips in melted butter and place on baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Sprinkle with cinnamon-sugar mixture for a sweet treat or can sprinkle with garlic salt, parsley flakes, etc for a different taste. Bake at 425 degrees for 8 minutes or until golden brown.

*****

Loretta Shepard, Helena, Oklahoma: "This is great to serve on Christmas morning with coffee or hot chocolate."

CHOCOLATE STUFFED STICKY BUNDT

24 frozen dinner rolls, thawed but still cold
1 1/2 cups chocolate chips
1/2 cup sugar
1 tablespoon cocoa
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup chopped pecans or toffee bits
1/2 cup butter, melted
1/2 cup packed brown sugar

Cut rolls in half. Wrap each half around a teaspoon chocolate chips and completely enclose. In a bowl mix sugar, cocoa and cinnamon. Dip each half roll in sugar mixture until well coated. Place in a large sprayed bundt pan. Sprinkle remaining sugar mixture and pecans over rolls. Stir together butter and brown sugar in a small microwave bowl. Microwave 30 seconds and stir well and pour over rolls. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise until almost to top of the pan. Remove wrap. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Cover with foil the last 10 minutes. Invert onto serving platter.

*****

Linda Kepka, Dorrance:

STICKY BUNS

3 tablespoons margarine
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon water
1 can biscuits (10 count)

In a microwave dish add the margarine, brown sugar, cinnamon and water. Heat in the microwave for 1 minute. Tear each biscuit into four pieces and add the pieces to the mixture. Stir until the biscuits are coated. Return to microwave and cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.

*****

Beth Scripter, Abilene: "You can buy the expensive mix in the store, OR MAKE YOUR OWN! These are so good to put out at a holiday party or serve with soup!"

SEASONED CRACKERS

1 box saltine crackers
1 package dry Fiesta Ranch dressing
2 tablespoons red pepper flakes
1 1/4 cups canola oil

Place all the crackers in the ziploc bag. Stir the oil and ranch dressing and pepper flakes together. Pour over the crackers. Seal the bag. Turn the bag every 30 minutes or so then let it set overnight. They will be ready to eat.

*****

Marie Miller, McFarland:

CRAZY CEREAL

1/2 12-ounce box Rice Chex
1/2 12-ounce box Corn Chex
1/2 12-ounce box Cheerios
1/2 14-ounce box Wheat Chex
1 jar dry-roasted peanuts
Put all above ingredients in a large roaster. Mix together:
1 1/4 cups Wesson oil
2 teaspoons garlic salt
1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon seasoned salt
2 teaspoons Tabasco sauce
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

Mix well. Spoon over all cereal mixture. Bake in a 200-degree oven for 1 1/2 hours, stirring every 30 minutes. Cool and store in airtight container. Enjoy.

*****

Lisa Conger, Topeka:

COOL WHIP SNICKERDOODLES

1/3 cup sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
(1) 2-layer size yellow cake mix
8-ounce tub Cool Whip, thawed
1 egg

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Combine sugar and cinnamon in medium bowl. Beat remaining ingredients in large bowl with mixer until blended. Dough will be thick and sticky. Use 2 small spoons to drop dough, 2 teaspoons at a time into sugar mixture; toss until dough is evenly coated with sugar mixture. Place dough 2 inches apart on parchment-covered baking sheets. Bake 13-15 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on baking sheet 1 minute. Remove to wire racks and cool completely.

*****

Shirley Deiser, Kanopolis: "These are really good."

YUMMY YAM CASSEROLE

2 cans whole yams in heavy syrup
1/3 cup evaporated milk
2 eggs, unbeaten
1 stick oleo, melted
¾ cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup flour
½ stick oleo, melted
1 cup chopped pecans

Heat yams and drain. Place in greased 6-by-10-inch dish. Heat together evaporated milk, eggs, 1 stick oleo, sugar and vanilla. Pour over yams. Next mix together (for the topping) the brown sugar, flour, ½ stick melted oleo and chopped pecans. Crumble over yams and bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes.

*****

Cristi Ellexson, Tescott: "I usually make this simple dressing recipe at Thanksgiving ... simple and smells soooo good while it's cooking!"

SLOW COOKED SAGE DRESSING

14 to 15 cups day-old bread cubes
3 cups chopped celery
1 1/2 cups chopped onion
1 1/2 cups rubbed sage
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted

In a large bowl combine bread, celery, onion, sage, salt and pepper; mix well. add butter and toss. Spoon into a 5-quart slow-cooker. Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours, stirring once. Makes about 12 servings.

*****

Rose Edwards, Stillwater, Oklahoma:

NO-BAKE CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER HAYSTACKS

1 package chocolate chips (1 1/2 cups)
1 package peanut butter chips (1 1/2 cups)
1 cup peanuts
2 to 2 1/2 cups of chow mein noodles

Combine chocolate chips and peanut butter chips in a small saucepan and heat over medium heat on the stove. Stir often until fully melted. Remove from heat. Add in peanuts and chow mein noodles and stir to fully combine. Drop a tablespoon of the chocolate mixture on a sheet of waxed paper. Let set for a few hours until the chocolate hardens.

*****

Lucille Wohler, Clay Center:

EASY CRANBERRY SALAD

(2) 3-ounce packages cherry gelatin
2 cups hot water
2 cups sugar
2 cups ground cranberries
2 small cans crushed pineapple

Dissolve gelatin in hot water. Add sugar and stir until dissolved. Chill slightly. Add cranberries and pineapple and mix well. Chill.

*****

Mary Rogers, Topeka:

CHERRY ALMOND BARS

1/2 cup flour
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons Crisco oil
2 teaspoons water
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
3/4 cup Smuckers cherry preserves (you can use your favorite brand)
Topping:
1/2 cup chopped almonds
1/4 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons Crisco

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line bottom and sides of 8-by-8-inch pan with foil, extending foil over edges of pan. Coat lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Stir flour, brown sugar and salt until mixed. Add oil, water and extract. Combine with fork until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Pat evenly in bottom of prepared pan. Bake 15 minutes. Spread preserves evenly over warm crust. Mix almonds, brown sugar and oil until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over top of preserves. Bake 20 minutes. Cool completely. Lift out of pan using foil. Cut into bars.

*****

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2016 Grass & Grain Holiday Recipe Contest

Carole Monahan, Westmoreland:

CRANBERRY JALAPEÑO DIP

12-ounce package fresh cranberries
1/4 cup green onions, chopped fine
¼ cup cilantro, chopped
4 jalapeño peppers, diced, seeds removed
1 1/4 cups sugar
¼ teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Dash of salt
(2) 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 boxes of Wheat Thin crackers

Chop cranberries in a blender. Put in a bowl and add sugar, peppers, green onions, cumin, cilantro, lemon juice and salt. Mix well, cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours. Mix softened cream cheese with the sour cream and garlic powder. Spread on a plate or platter then spread the cranberry mixture on top. Serve with Wheat Thin crackers.

*****

Delores Jueneman, Hanover: "If you like custard, this is similar. This is very easy and very good; the kids love it."

NO-CRUST COCONUT PIE

4 eggs
1 ¾ cups sugar
¾ cup flour
4 tablespoons melted oleo
1 ½ teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 ½ cups milk
1 cup sweetened coconut

Beat eggs with electric mixer; add sugar at low speed, also oleo, vanilla, baking powder and milk. Add coconut and stir by hand. Pour into 9-inch pie plate and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

*****

Doris Shivers, Abilene:

BAKED DATE PUDDING

1 pound dates, cut
1 cup cold water
1 teaspoon soda
1/4 cup hot water
1/4 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 1/2 cups flour
1 cup nut meats
1 teaspoon vanilla

Add cold water to dates and cook until it forms a paste then set to cool. Dissolve soda in 1/4 cup of hot water and add to first mixture. Cream 1/4 cup butter and 1 cup sugar. Beat egg well and add to first mixture then add 1 1/2 cups flour, nut meats and vanilla. Bake 30 minutes at 275 or 300 degrees.

*****

Mary Trojan, Beaver Crossing, Nebraska:

EASY CUSTARD PIE

3 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups milk
Unbaked pastry shell

Beat eggs slightly and combine with sugar, salt, nutmeg and vanilla. Slowly add milk and mix well. Pour into a 8- or 9-inch pie shell. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes then at 325 degrees for about 25 minutes. Serve hot or cold.

NOTE: Leave in until it doesn't "jiggle!"

*****

Kellee George, Lawrence:

CANDY CANE FUDGE

31/2 cups vanilla baking chips
14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
2 teaspoons peppermint extract
1 1/2 cups crushed candy canes, about 50 miniature

Line bottom and sides of an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick foil. Melt chips and milk in a heavy saucepan over medium low heat, stirring constantly, until just melted, about 4 minutes. Remove pan from heat. Working quickly, stir in extract and 1 1/4 cups candy canes. Quickly spread fudge in pan. Smooth surface with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle remaining 1/4 cup candy canes over top and press into fudge. Chill uncovered until firm, about 1 hour. Lift fudge out of pan using foil, peel off foil then cut fudge into 1-inch squares. Bring to room temperature to serve.

*****

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:

MAPLE WALNUT FUDGE

3 cups white chocolate chips
14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
1/2 stick butter, cut into pieces
4 teaspoons maple flavored extract
1 1/2 cups walnut halves & pieces

Line an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick foil. Melt chips, butter and milk over low heat stirring constantly until smooth, about 10 minutes. Watch not to overheat chocolate or it will scorch. Stir in extract then add walnuts. Pour into prepared pan. Chill until set, about 1 hour. Lift fudge out of pan using foil.

*****

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:

CINNAMON PRETZELS

2/3 cup coconut oil
1/2 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cinnamon
1 bag pretzel twists

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl mix oil, sugar, cinnamon. Stir in pretzels until incorporated. Use large jelly roll pan and spread pretzels evenly. Bake 15-20 minutes until mixture has dried. Allow to cool before serving.

*****

Lydia J. Miller, Westphalia:

FIRE STICK CANDY

3 cups sugar
1 cup white syrup
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon cinnamon oil
Red food color

Cook sugar, syrup and water to hard-crack stage (300 degrees). Remove from heat and add cinnamon oil and a few drops of food color. Stir. Pour into a buttered cookie sheet. Cool and break into pieces.

*****

Lydia J. Miller, Westphalia:

MICROWAVE PEANUT BRITTLE

1 cup sugar
1/2 cup corn syrup
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 to 1 1/2 cups raw peanuts
1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon baking soda

Mix sugar, syrup, salt. Microwave on high for 5 1/2 minutes, stirring once, halfway through. Stir in peanuts and cook another 5 1/2 minutes, stirring once halfway through. When finished, quickly stir in butter, vanilla and soda (soda last). Let mixture foam as you stir. Pour onto buttered cookie sheet; cool.

NOTE: Watch mixture closely during last 5 1/2 minutes. If mixture starts to turn golden, it's done. Burns easily.

*****

Delores Dickinson, Overbrook:

CRANBERRY CRUNCH

12-ounce package fresh cranberries
4 cups sliced, unpeeled apples

Make basic cranberry sauce as directed on package. Oil a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and spread apples evenly in dish and pour cranberry sauce over them. Make a topping of:

1/2 cup (1 stick) cold butter
1 cup brown sugar
1 cup quick oats
3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup pecans, chopped

Cut cold butter into flour and brown sugar until fat lumps are pea-sized. Add oats and pecans. Spread mix evenly over the apples and cranberries. Bake 45 minutes or until lightly browned at 375 degrees. Flavor improves if made a day before serving.

*****

Claire Martin, Salina: "Elegant and delicious!"

ORANGE AVOCADO SALAD

2 medium avocados, diced
15-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained
5 ounces mixed baby greens
1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion
1/3 cup walnuts, chopped & toasted
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup balsamic vinaigrette
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Cooked rice
Green onions, optional

Arrange mixed greens in a large bowl and top with oranges, avocados, red onion and walnuts. Whisk together in a small bowl the remaining ingredients and drizzle over salad. Toss to coat.

*****

Cristi Ellexson, Tescott: "I made this at Christmas. It was easy to make and it went over well!!"

CRANBERRY TRIFLE

16-ounce package angel food cake
(2) 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
2 cups confectioner's sugar
1 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 carton Cool Whip, thawed
(2) 16-ounce cans whole-berry cranberry sauce
2 tablespoons sugar
2 to 3 teaspoons grated orange peel

Bake and cool cake. Cut into 1-inch cubes; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, confectioner's sugar, sour cream and vanilla; beat until smooth. Fold in Cool Whip. In a bowl combine cranberry sauce, sugar and orange peel. In trifle bowl, layer half of cake cubes, cranberry mix and whipped topping mix. Repeat layers. Refrigerate until serving.

*****

Millie Conger, Tecumseh:

GERMAN CHOCOLATE CLUSTERS

2 pounds white almond bark
4 ounces German chocolate bar
12 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
24 ounces dry roasted peanuts

Add all ingredients to slow-cooker. Let cook on low for 1 hour without stirring. After an hour stir well. Allow to cook for another hour stirring every 15 minutes. Drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper and allow to cool completely.

*****

Lydia J. Miller, Westphalia:

POPCORN CANDY

2 cups brown sugar
1 cup heavy cream
1 cup white Karo syrup
3 tablespoons butter
6 cups ground popcorn

Cook brown sugar, cream, syrup and butter until it becomes a soft-ball in cold water, stirring often. Add approximately 6 cups ground popcorn. Stir well; put out on a cookie sheet. Should be thickened enough you can't "pour it."

*****

Katrina Morgan, Americus:

PEPPER POPPERS

8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
6 bacon strips, cooked & crumbled
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 pound fresh jalapenos, halved lengthwise & seeded
1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
Ranch salad dressing (for dipping)

In a mixing bowl combine the cheeses, bacon and seasonings; mix well. Spoon about 2 tablespoonfuls into each pepper half. Roll in bread crumbs. Place on a greased 15-by-10-inch baking pan. Bake uncovered at 300 degrees for 20 minutes for spicy flavor or 30 minutes for medium and 40 minutes for mild. Serve with Ranch dressing if desired. Makes about 2 dozen.

TIP: When cutting or seeding peppers use plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

*****

Home and Away

December Blues

By Lou Ann Thomas

December can be a difficult month for many of us to navigate. There are so many expectations around the holidays and the pressure to create the perfect gathering or family portrait is at its highest of the year.

A lot of this pressure derives from comparing our family time or holiday involvement and the images we see in the media of families that appear so much happier and healthier than ours. Seeing joy-filled families gathered around tables heaped with food with nary a cross word or a grumpy attendee in the frame can make us feel like we must be perfect reflections of that.

If this time of year feels like, instead of connecting you with joy and hopefulness, it is sucking the life right out of you, I say, toss out those expectations and give up the idea of perfection! No family is perfect because families are made up of people and people are certainly not perfect. We're messy, imperfect, sometimes grumpy humans and not nearly as good as our dogs believe us to be.

But it is our imperfections that can make us rather interesting company and create gatherings resulting in the most lasting memories. In fact, the family Christmas I remember most fondly was the one where we woke up with no water and over 20 people heading to our house for dinner in a few hours. It was frigidly cold and our well had stopped working. My dad and I pulled on as many layers of warm clothing as we could and still be able to move our legs, then headed down into the field where our old pump was housed. With my father below ground in the pump house, my job was to run back and forth between the shed and him with whatever tool or need he yelled up at me.

My mother, in the meantime, was desperately trying to complete preparations for the food and get the house ready.

Less than an hour before the first guests showed up, the old pump lurched into service and water once again flowed into the house. Christmas dinner was saved and no one who attended was even slightly inconvenienced. But, for my parents and I, this was one of our most memorable Christmases, not because it was in any way perfect, but because in its imperfection it had tested us and we had risen above its challenges - together.

So give yourself a break this year. Enjoy the simple gift of being among those you love and celebrate the magnificent mess that you are!

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A good number of students and industry professionals gathered at the Stanley Stout Center for a panel discussion on the role of women in the ag industry.

Photo by Cami Roth

Panelists for the Women in Agriculture event were, from left: Anna Lemmon, Debbie Lyons-Blythe, Mary Ann Kniebel, Beth Gaines, Linda Hickam, Marcine Moldenhauer, Barb Downey and Cami Roth.

KSU Collegiate Cattlewomen Club holds Women in Agriculture panel

By Molly Bertz

With microphones in hand, six women leaders in the beef and agriculture industry sat in front of students and professionals, who had gathered together to gain pieces of wisdom at the first ever Women in Agriculture panel. The Collegiate Cattlewomen Club at Kansas State University held this event at the Stanley Stout Center on Monday, November 14th in Manhattan.

The panel featured five Kansas natives; Barb Downey of Downey Ranch, Beth Gaines, communications coordinator for the Red Angus Association of America, Mary Ann Kniebel of Kniebel Cattle Co., Marcine Moldenhauer of Meat Link Management, LLC, and Debbie Lyons-Blythe, a Kansas rancher and blogger. Linda Hickam, state veterinarian for the state of Missouri, also joined as a member of the panel.

Cami Roth, senior in animal science and industry at Kansas State University, served as a moderator for the panel discussion.

"We wanted to bring together a group of women who have been successful in their careers and could share their experiences with us," Roth said. "The panel was a great success. It was inspiring to hear from the ladies about the challenges they have overcome and advice they have for us as college students."

These six influential women spent the evening discussing the challenges one can face as a leader in agriculture despite gender through an interactive panel discussion. As the panel and audience began to engage in conversation, the issue of gender roles in agriculture took theme.

All members of the panel agreed that as time has evolved and history has set, women are beginning to take larger roles in agriculture as ranchers, veterinarians, farmers, and industry professionals. The panelist also agreed that being a woman in agriculture industry does not grant special treatment.

Downey, of Wamego, described her lack of knowledge regarding gender bias as a gift when she began her work in the beef industry.

"There wasn't a difference between genders. We did what we were expected to do," Downey said.

"It doesn't matter the gender. Work needs done," said Lyons-Blythe of Strong City, KS.

Kniebel, of White City, seconded Downey and Lyons-Blythe's statements regarding the myth of gender roles in agriculture.

"You put your head down and get the job done," Kniebel said. "You win them over because you're no longer a female, you're someone who works as hard as they do and you get the job done. That's it."

In response to the discussion on gender roles, a question arose from the floor seeking the panel's suggestions to young professionals when faced with prejudice in the agriculture industry.

"Don't expect to be treated differently," Moldenhauer, of Valley Center, said. Downey followed by saying, "Don't look for gender bias or walk with a chip on your shoulder."

Hickam, of Columbia, Mo., joined in the conversation by adding a valuable lesson she learned from her own experiences in dealing with prejudice in agriculture.

"If you look for prejudice, you will find it," Hickam said. "But don't. You must set your boundaries and do your job and do it well. You have to follow your passion. People have broken barriers before you, so take advantage of it."

The panel also discussed topics of being a good communicator, work-life balance, working in a new environment, and knowing when to step up or step down when face-to-face with a challenge.

As the evening began to come to a close, the panel left the audience with the heavy challenge to learn from mistakes made.

"Not knowing everything is a good thing," said Gaines. "The worst thing you can do is walk into a situation thinking that you already have all of the answers."

Downey further concluded that failure is necessary for success.

"You must fail," she said. "You've got to stick your neck out and fall on your face. Don't let the fear of failure hold you back."

Linda Bilberry, senior in agriculture economics at Kansas State, attended the event and described how the panel of women has been trailblazers in the agriculture industry.

"This panel left me excited about my future as a young professional in agriculture," Bilberry said. "I am thankful for the women who have gone before us to break the glass ceiling. I'm empowered knowing that if I do my job and work hard in agriculture, I can be successful."

Kansas farmer sues to stop wind farm to protect cranes

(AP) – A Kansas farmer has filed a federal lawsuit to stop a new wind farm from operating out of concern for the endangered whooping crane.

Edwin Petrowsky of Pratt County filed the lawsuit last month seeking injunctions against NextEra Energy Resources, whose Ninnescah Wind Farm is scheduled to start operating next week, the *Hutchinson News* reported.

Petrowsky contends the wind farm is located in the bird's flyway. At last count, there were an estimated 329 wild cranes in the flock that migrates between Canada and Texas.

Parts of the wind farm, which will generate 200 megawatts of electricity that Westar Energy is under a 20-year contract to buy, are within 35 to 40 miles of the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge and Cheyenne Bottoms – both designated as critical habitat for the whooping crane. The Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge, another designated habitat, is also nearby.

"Whooping cranes have been recently documented to use the farmland in Pratt County for feeding while roosting at Critical Habitat areas," Petrowsky states in the lawsuit.

The American Bird Conservancy also lists the Ninnescah project as one of the ten most dangerous wind projects in the nation for birds and one of the worst for potential mortality of endangered species.

NextEra spokesman Steve Stengel says the company has worked with state and federal authorities and that the turbines' placement took the birds' migratory patterns into account.

"Whooping cranes generally fly higher than the heights of the turbines," Stengel said. "But, in working with the agencies, we have agreed to ongoing bird monitoring at the site."

Petrowsky said his concern is with birds taking off and landing in the area for feeding. The tallest flying bird in North America, the whooping crane takes long distances to reach flying altitude.

Petrowsky also contends the company has failed to obtain an "incidental taking permit" that would allow the incidental killing of some birds.

"Technically, until they get all these permits they cannot put up the wind farm," he said.

AROUND KANSAS

I grew up knowing about the plane crash in 1944 on Bull Mountain in Patrick County, Virginia, that killed the eleven crewmen aboard, including Neale Narramore from Elmdale, Kansas. There was, just a few years ago, a memorial placed on the courthouse lawn back in Stuart, Virginia. And there's a memorial on the mountain to them thanks to my good friend Clarence Hall. In researching this story, though, I've come across a much bigger story. I actually went to Elmdale and we visited the Methodist Church where Sergeant Narramore's funeral was held in 1944. The other piece of the story, and what the good folks in Chase County have made me aware of, is just incredible.

Neale had an older brother, Roth Narramore, who was stationed in North Africa when Neale was killed. The Army brought him back for his brother's funeral. They brought him into Miami and then flew him into Dallas/Fort Worth and then Wichita where a highway patrolman picked him up and brought him to the Elmdale Methodist Church.

What an incredible feeling that must have been, for in 1941 Roth Narramore's funeral had been held in that same church. He was presumed killed in action at Pearl Harbor where he and some other boys from Chase County were stationed. In fact, four of them were from the small town of Elmdale: Marvin Dole, Roth Narramore, Bill Pretzer, and Richard Bale. And then there was a Dale Bowers from Clements also in Chase County.

When the bombing occurred, Roth sent his parents a telegram, just four words- "Am safe don't worry."

How relieved his parents must have been to have gotten that telegram! But not long afterward, another telegram from the War Department arrived. It said their son was not safe but had, in fact, been killed in action at Hickam Field.

A week later, a funeral was held for Roth at the Elmdale Methodist Church. Ten hours after Roth's funeral the Narramores received yet another telegram from the War Department – "We are gratified to inform you that our previous telegram was in error and your son is severely wounded but alive."

Can you imagine what this poor family had gone through? Thinking he was spared, then thinking he was dead, having a funeral for him and then realizing that he was alive. And can you imagine when they got word that the younger son had been killed back in Patrick County, Virginia, just in a training mission? Can you imagine how hopeful they must have been that that report too must have been an error. And how they must have waited hoping that they would receive yet another notice that their son was still alive. What a heartbreaking story. I just can't imagine the roller coaster of emotions that this family went through.

I went to Elmdale, and then back to my home, Patrick County, to talk to the man who owns the mountain where Neale and his crewmates crashed. Visit Aroundkansas.com for this story and another, the story of Leslie Short, the Kansan credited with shooting down the first enemy aircraft in defense of Pearl Harbor.

The stories of our veterans are dear to me. They are the stories that are most meaningful and that I feel most strongly about sharing. Do likewise. Visit us on Facebook or on our website and share these important stories with your friends.

Deb Goodrich is the co-host of Around Kansas, the Wednesday feature of AGam in Kansas. You may reach her at author.debgoodrich@gmail.

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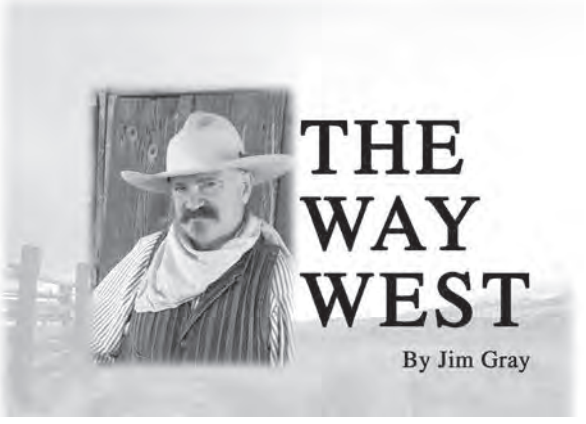

Kansas Below The Arkansas River

The 13th President of the United States, Millard Fillmore, addressed Congress on December 13, 1850. His special announcement revealed that the State of Texas had agreed to new official boundaries. Part of that agreement included land south of the Arkansas River in what is today southwest Kansas. The boundary at the Arkansas River had long been a thorn in commercial relations between the United States and Mexico by way of the Santa Fe Trail.

The northern boundary of Mexico had been set at the Arkansas River going back to Spanish colonial origins. Spanish authorities prohibited trade with the French and English who pressed into the plains in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Anyone crossing the border was arrested, with their trade goods confiscated. Early traders often found themselves languishing in a Mexico City prison.

In 1821 Mexico gained independence from Spain motivating William Becknell to test the possibility of unfettered trade. His successful venture opened the Santa Fe Trail. In 1829 the U.S. government provided army troops to escort the wagons. However, they could only provide protection as far as the Arkansas River. Once the wagons crossed the river, near present-day Cimarron, Kansas, they were in Mexico. There were no Mexican troops on the other side to continue the escort.

The subject of the boundary line with Mexico took on an extraordinary tone when Texas gained independence in 1836. Under Mexican control, slavery had been against the law in Texas. With the establishment of the Republic of Texas, slavery was recognized in the new expansive country lying just beyond U.S. borders. In its earliest stages Texas stretched to the northwest across portions of today's New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, Wyoming, and southwest Kansas.

Sam Houston, president of the Republic of Texas, found himself in a tight financial spot. He spent two million dollars keeping his government viable. Houston needed money, but Texans were not friendly to taxation. He hoped for annexation by the United States which would bring U.S. investment and military protection to Texas, but in Washington there was considerable opposition to admitting a new slave state to the Union. He needed five million dollars to operate, but no nation was willing to bet on Texas. He finally secured a loan from the Bank of the United States for a little more than four hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Houston's successor Mirabeau Lamar fared no better. With the establishment of the Republic of Texas in 1836, Texas claimed jurisdiction over Santa Fe and the surrounding territory. Nevertheless, Texas had failed to establish administrative control over the distant region. The young Republic was struggling financially while hundreds of thousands of dollars in trade rolled into Santa Fe.

Lamar conceived a plan to tap into the lucrative trade and sway the government in Santa Fe to join the Republic of Texas. In 1841, an expedition of twenty-one wagons containing two hundred thousand dollars' worth of merchandise and a military escort left Texas for Santa Fe. Someone forgot to tell the governor of New Mexico that Texas had his best interest at heart, or maybe he realized on his own that Mexico was where his allegiance should lie. When the "Santa Fe Expedition" reached New Mexico the Texans were captured and their property seized. Later expeditions suffered a similar fate. In New Mexico as well as the United States Texans were seen as bandits and troublemakers.

For all the Texas bravado and bluster concerning the Republic of Texas, the fact remains that Texas was a failed state. Deficits continued to plague the young nation until it was virtually bankrupt. By 1845 the United States saw Texas as a valuable pawn in its increasingly difficult relationship with Mexico. Texas needed five million dollars to meet its financial obligations. The U.S. negotiated for the far-flung parts of Texas to be divided into four states. The northern border of the slave holding state was drawn at 36*30', the line established in 1820 known as the Missouri Compromise. However, Mexico still held most of the land that Texas claimed was theirs by right of independence in 1836.

The annexation of Texas to the United States further enraged Mexico, leading to the Mexican-American War. U.S. troops crossed the Arkansas River border in 1846. The victory over Mexico reestablished the Texas claim to its larger borders which was upheld by the United States and confirmed by President Fillmore's address to congress on December 12, 1850. And that is the long story of how the southwest corner below the Arkansas River was added to what would become Kansas on The Way West.

"The Cowboy," Jim Gray is author of the book Desperate Seed: Ellsworth Kansas on the Violent Frontier, Executive Director of the National Drovers Hall of Fame. Contact Kansas Cowboy, P.O. Box 62, Ellsworth, KS 67439. Phone 785-531-2058 or kansascowboy@kans.com

Don't plan to sell high-price calves anytime soon, says economist

"Don't look in the rearview mirror," a University of Missouri Extension economist told cattle producers at the Kirksville Livestock Symposium.

Scott Brown said record-setting high cattle prices are not likely to occur again soon. "The beef outlook approaches a new near-normal trend."

On the commodity-price trend lines, Brown knocked out prices from the last four years. Without that volatility, his chart lines show a slow upward trend.

"Cattle prices are lower, but not catastrophic," Brown said. What he called a "phenomenal time of very high prices" is over. You won't see $3 calf prices again soon.

The upsurge in prices resulted from convergence of outside events. First, record droughts brought sharp drops in cow numbers. That sent less beef to market.

"High prices were more supply-driven than demand-driven," Brown said. With record prices, producers responded by rebuilding beef herds. That shift continues to expand beef supplies.

There will be more beef through 2018-19.

Now prices must become demand-driven, Brown said. What he calls a "mountain of meat" must be moved by more consumers or lower prices.

"I am doing my part, but you must eat a lot more beef," Brown told the audience. "Or we must sell more in export."

Foreign trade can lift prices. Southeast Asia offers opportunity for more trade. "China could be particularly important," Brown said. Trade must not be shut down.

There is greater economic growth and larger growing populations outside of the United States than within our borders. Those populations prefer our quality beef, he said.

It wasn't just the drought that added volatility. Record demand for ethanol and the worst recession in decades affected feed stock prices.

We're not likely to see that combination of events again, Brown said. "From 2008 to 2012 gave amazing revenues for U.S. agriculture."

In the long-term trend, current prices are not that bad, Brown said. It's just that these prices looked a lot better on the way up than on the way down.

When cattle prices are uncertain, Brown told producers to shift their focus. "You can't control prices you sell for, but you can control costs of production."

He showed USDA numbers on differences between low-cost and high-cost farms. Low-cost producers tended to also get better revenues. That indicates better management on both sides of the equation.

Management can easily make a $100 difference in return per acre. "That can make a difference between profit and loss."

Knowing the cost of producing a calf is needed when you lock in a price. "If you don't know your costs, you can lock in a loss." Brown said.

Brown didn't ask for a show of hands when asking if anyone had locked in recent high calf prices. Often in the past when he asked, no hands went up.

Brown did point out the downside risks on cattle prices. There's still a need for risk management.

One trend in beef pricing can aid risk management. Prices for lower-quality select-grade beef at the packers trend lower. Meanwhile, prices for USDA prime beef remains steady and higher.

"Investing in better genetics can boost revenue," Brown said. "That's risk management."

Other MU Extension state specialists gave tips on increasing value and cutting loss. Agronomist Craig Roberts told how to cut losses on cattle grazing toxic tall-fescue pastures. Replacing K-31 fescue with novel endophyte fescue improves gains and herd health.

Jared Decker, MU Extension geneticist, told that DNA testing of replacement heifers boosts genetics. Recent sales of Show-Me-Select heifers showed that heifers with known genetics sold for big premiums.

"Help is available from your regional Extension specialists," Brown said. "I am willing to help."

Livestock symposium information is at www.missourilivestock.com.

Dane G. Hansen Foundation awards $200,000 to Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation, Logan, has awarded a $200,000 grant to the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation to assist with a greenhouse expansion project at the Kansas Wheat Innovation Center (KWIC) in Manhattan.

The grant will assist in the construction of a four-bay greenhouse to be used for public-private collaborative research and commercialization in wheat biotechnology. Molecular and genetic research done in the Kansas Wheat Innovation Center laboratories will be conducted in the greenhouses. A more controlled environment will both enhance and accelerate results.

The 12,750 square-foot expansion will be constructed adjacent to existing greenhouses, offices and laboratories at the KWIC. The new space will include separate rooms for potting, seed processing, soil preparation and a soil room to receive and handle bulk potting. Special temperature control and grid lighting systems are also included in the project.

Additional funding for the expansion will come from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and the Kansas Wheat Commission. Groundbreaking for the project is expected to begin later this month.

Wheat is a significant part of the economic vitality of the Dane G. Hansen Foundation service area in Northwest Kansas, and the Foundation is pleased to support a project that enhances crop development for all farmers.

Loud and clear: beef market demands quality

By Miranda Reiman

The beef market tells you what it wants. You just have to pay attention.

"We know there are signals out there in the marketplace for quality. As you move further away from the end product, we know those signals are… not quite as distinct," said Mark McCully, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) at the 2016 Angus Convention in Indianapolis in November.

The brand's vice president of supply made sense of many of those economic indicators.

"We need to make sure we're watching the long-term trends and don't get too carried away with some of the short-term 'noise,' because the decisions we're making in our breeding programs are really about the next two, three, five years," he said.

On a carcass-weight basis, there's 37% more Prime beef today than just two years ago, compared to Select grade, which is down 21.7%.

"This year we actually see a higher percentage of dollar contribution is coming from branded product than Select," McCully said, noting that branded beef accounts for 16.3% of total industry revenue.

"Not all beef is created equal and not all beef brings the same price out in the marketplace," he said.

Through the third quarter of 2016, carcass cutout values showed a $35-per-hundredweight advantage for Prime over Select.

That reward potential may help explain why 78% of cattle today sell on alternative marketing agreements like value-based grids, compared to just 52% a decade ago.

The bar on such arrangements keeps moving higher. When 76% of fed cattle are grading Choice, beating plant averages is more difficult than it was in 1997 when barely more than half reached that level. Most grids only pay a Choice premium on that share of a load that exceeds the plant average.

"We get this question a lot: 'Have we gotten them to grade high enough? We've selected for quality long enough – maybe we ought to go select for something else,'" McCully said. "If you want to continue to reap the premiums, or if your customers do, you've got to be better than the average. That's how these systems work."

Producers sometimes tell him they must give up pounds to get quality, but he showed that the average Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand qualifying carcass is 7 lb. heavier than the overall industry average.

"I dispel the myth that high-quality cattle aren't also high-producing, high-performing, heavy cattle because, again, the data suggests you don't give up weight for quality," McCully said.

Showing a grid marketing example with cattle ranging from no Primes and 14% CAB to 15% Prime and 55% CAB. He decreased carcass weight 65 lb. from the poor group to the excellent.

"I know you don't have to do this, but how much weight could you give up and still keep your dollars the same?"

With those high-grading cattle, the quality premiums would make up for dropping 65 lb. in carcass weight.

The Choice-Select spread runs on a seasonal pattern. There are times when those "excellent" cattle would be more advantageous than others, but McCully noted the long-term signal is clear.

"We hear from time to time when the Choice-Select spread gets to zero, or goes negative. The reality is, that doesn't happen too often," he said. That is less than 2% of the time, compared to more than 35% of the time that spread is $10 or above.

Even while producing much less Select in 2016, packers continue to pay up for Choice.

"The discounts for yield grade Y4s and Y5s have narrowed over the last several years, which in-and-of-itself has been a quality signal," he said.

The more cow-calf producers know and communicate about their cattle, the better position they are in to capture additional value.

"Nobody wants to pay more for cattle just because," McCully said. "We're starting to see more value around the data: the carcass history, the reputation, where these cattle came from, what the genetics have been, how they've been managed."

He predicts that will continue to be more important with cow inventory numbers on the upswing.

"Feeder cattle supplies have been pretty tight. All of them have been worth a lot of money," he said. "What's going on right now? We've got more supplies out there; guess who gets to be a little pickier? The feeder."

Producers who are investing in high-quality genetics need to do a better job marketing them, McCully said.

"If you're going to take a set of premium calves and you're going to run them down to the sale barn and not tell anybody anything about them, guess what? They're going to probably bring the average price," he said. "You take a premium product, market it as a commodity, you're probably going to get a commodity price."

Perrier applauds members for advancing KLA's mission

Outgoing KLA president Matt Perrier's parting remarks at their convention in Wichita centered around his pride in the organization and its efforts to strengthen the beef industry for future generations. The Eureka rancher said KLA is enhanced by its all-inclusive structure and the diversity of its membership.

"We are probably the only state organization that has as much diversity in terms of segments of our industry represented, but also philosophies and ideas," Perrier said. "When it gets right down to it, all you have to do is sit in these rooms this week to find out there are a lot of different outlooks on where the beef industry needs to go within our membership."

It's that culture of fresh perspectives of which Perrier is most proud.

"You (KLA members) see the industry's glass as half-full, not half-empty," he said. "You attend the meetings, read the newsletters and continue the quest to produce better beef but more importantly, better people."

Looking ahead, Perrier encouraged members to continue telling their stories in an effort to build rapport with consumers.

"We have to realize they want more than just a piece of protein on a plate," he said. "They want the sizzle, not just the steak. They want the story of how that steak came to be and the hard-working families that raised that piece of meat that ended up on their dinner plate."

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Grass & Grain Auction Calendar

Online Construction Equipment auction bidding starts to close Dec. 15 — (purplewave.com)

December 14 — Brand new box springs, mattresses & frames, automobiles, furniture, collectibles, antiques, glassware & more at Manhattan for Kansas Department of Revenue & Two Estates. Auctioneers: Totally Auction.

December 14 — Online farm machinery auction (www.bigiron.com).

December 14 — 612 acres m/l Dickinson/Morris County line tillable & pasture land offered in 3 tracts held at Junction City for Jared & Kevin Morgan Trusts. Auctioneers: Horizon Farm & Ranch Realty, LLC.

December 14 — Hartley & Moore County, Texas farmland (12,160 m/l acres) held at Dalhart, Texas for Wilder Farms, Inc., Wilder Corporation. Auctioneers: Schrader Real Estate & Auction Company, Inc.

December 15 — 105 acres m/l Riley County native grassland held at Randolph. Auctioneers: Gene Francis & Associates.

December 16 — Tractor, combine, truck, pickup, farm machinery of all kinds, trailer & other farm items at Portis for Dave & Linda Henke. Auctioneers: Wolters Auction.

December 17 — Modern farm machinery held Southeast of Greenleaf for Jason & Jennifer Hiltgen. Auctioneers: Donald Prell Realty & Auction.

December 17 — 158.1 m/l acres Washington County farmland, pasture & wildlife habitat held at Linn for Klozenbucher Family Trust. Auctioneers: Midwest Land & Home, Mark Uhlik, Jeff Dankenbring.

December 17 — 187 total acres m/l NW Shawnee County land, crop ground, pond, wildlife habitat held at Rossville for Dayton Family Trust. Auctioneers: Pearl Real Estate & Appraisal Service, Inc.

December 18 — Furniture, household, antiques, collectibles, ceramics, etc., guns & ammo at Herington for Jack Pickering & Goldie Vaughan. Auctioneers: Bob's Auction Service, Bob Kickhaefer.

December 19 — 348 m/l acres Marion County land sold in 3 tracts held at Hillsboro for Ethel G. Abrahams Trust. Auctioneers: Van Schmidt Auction.

December 29 — Late model farm machinery at Mulvane for Butts Brothers Partnership. Auctioneers: Theurer Auction & Realty.

December 31 — Winchester commemorative guns & other Winchester long guns, other long guns, hand guns, collectible ammo at Abilene for Alan & Barbara Pettijohn. Auctioneers: Reynolds Auction Service.

December 31 — Harley Gerdes 32nd annual New Years consignment auction at Lyndon.

January 10, 2017 — 3 tracts of land in Saline County held at Salina. Auctioneers: Gene Francis & Associates.

January 14, 2017 — Real estate & equipment held at Summerfield for CG's Grocery Store. Auctioneers: Olmsteds & Sandstrom.

January 21, 2017 — Consignments at Salina. Auctioneers: Wilson Realty & Auction Service.

January 21, 2017 — Toy tractors, Hallmark, Earnhardt, tools at Osage City for Mrs. Dale "Judy" Fowler. Auctioneers: Wischropp Auctions.

January 24, 2017 — 575 acres Franklin County land in 5 tracts held at Ottawa for L.A. "Art" Witham Estate. Auctioneers: Miller & Midyett RE, Wischropp Auctions.

February 3 — 160 acres m/l Marshall County land held at Frankfort for Johnny C. Bramhall Estate. Auctioneers: Horigan Auction.

March 11, 2017 — Annual Concordia Optimist Club consignment auction at Concordia.

Washington man earns KLA reward for helping convict cattle thief

The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) Board of Directors has voted to pay a $2,500 reward to Gregg Stewart of Washington for his part in helping convict a Lincoln man for cattle theft. Information provided by Stewart played a key role in the arrest and conviction of Keith Earl Buttenhoff for stealing seven head of cattle from Mid Continent Farms in November of 2015.

Kendal Lothman, head of the Kansas Livestock/Brand Investigation Unit with the state attorney general's office, assisted the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department with the investigation. Buttenhoff was convicted September 6, 2016, in Lincoln County District Court on six counts of felony cattle theft. He later was sentenced to 12 months of probation. If probation is violated, he could face 16 months of incarceration with the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Stewart, who is a partner in the family-owned Mid Continent Farms, pledged to donate part of the reward to the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department for its role in convicting the thief. He also plans to give a portion to the Lincoln County Fire Department for helping local ranchers during the prescribed burning season.

KLA's long-standing program offers up to a $2,500 reward for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of livestock thieves. For the reward to apply, the victim must be a KLA member.

"We hope this case and the role the KLA theft reward program played serves to deter others from stealing livestock in Kansas," said KLA president David Clawson of Englewood.

KLA is a 5,400-member trade organization representing the state's livestock business on legislative, regulatory and industry issues at both the state and federal levels. The association's work is funded through voluntary dues dollars paid by its members.

VFD: last-minute steps for success

The first step in being prepared for the new antibiotic use regulation is to solidify a professional relationship with a veterinarian, if you haven't done so already, according to Dave Pyburn, senior vice president of science and technology for the Pork Checkoff.

"Farmers may be at a different place in being prepared, but it's time to get any remaining things done," Pyburn said. "If you still need to find a veterinarian for your farm, visit the Checkoff's Antibiotic Resource Center at pork.org/antibiotics. In conjunction with Global Vet Link, pork producers can click on the 'Find-a-Vet' button to locate a vet to establish a veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR)."

Pyburn added that having a valid VCPR is critical as we enter 2017 because that's the only way you can legally obtain a veterinary feed directive (VFD) for in-feed antibiotics or a prescription for medications used via water, as required by FDA regulations.

"Exploring the information on our Antibiotics Resource Center is a good way to learn more about specific issues and scenarios related to the new regulations," Pyburn said. "With less than a month to go, the Checkoff is continuing to expand its materials and information to assist producers in this momentous change in how antibiotics are used and obtained."

This includes a Pork Checkoff Report newsletter dedicated to frequently asked questions on the new rules that will arrive in producer mailboxes in early January.

"Take steps now to have a plan ready to go Jan. 1," Pyburn said. "You'll be in great shape to start the new year off right for you and your pigs."

Make use of Kansas State University ag economics tools

By David Hallauer, Meadowlark Extension District Agent, Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Economics is seldom a one size fits all topic. Everyone has a little different budget – a little different rate that they are willing to pay for rent or other inputs. Purchasing a sprayer for one operation may not be as valuable as it for another. A 'one size fits all' answer isn't going to cut it when making those types of decisions. That's kind of the purpose of the tools available at our KSU Agricultural Economics website: www.agmanager.info .

For example: while we do offer a publication that can provide custom rates information, you may want to evaluate your custom rates fees to determine if they are economical for your information. A spreadsheet is available for that very purpose, and many others as well, including evaluating everything from owning your own sprayer to the economics of seeding a cover crop. All of them allow you to put in your numbers to get a number for you instead of a general average.

Rental rates are another huge discussion point between tenants and landlords. AgManager provides USDA-NASS information, as well as calculated averages from inputs used in their KSU Lease spreadsheet – as well as the spreadsheet itself. It might take you a little time to determine the appropriate inputs, but it can also help you better understand how to come to an equitable crop share or cash lease agreement.

Marketing newsletters and projected ARC or PLC farm program price levels, as well as many other budget and price tools are also available. Not comfortable with spreadsheets? Instructions are included with most spreadsheets to help. Don't even want to mess with the computer – or can't find something you are in need of? Don't hesitate to contact your District Office for assistance.

The near-term commodity price projections aren't all that great. With tighter margins, an economic evaluation of varying production facets of your operation is never a bad idea. Take a look at these resources and see whether they might be of value to you.

Apply for Angus summer internships by Feb. 6, 2017

Each summer, the American Angus Association invites college students to gain real-world knowledge and hands-on skills by serving as an intern for the nation's largest beef breed organization. The ten-week, paid internship programs offer three students the chance to gain experience in the beef cattle industry.

The member-driven organization provides internship opportunities through the events and education department, communications and public relations, and the *Angus Journal* editorial team. Application details are outlined below, and all materials must be received by Feb. 6, 2017.

A summer intern joining the Association's events and education department can expect to play a significant role in planning and executing youth events hosted by the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA). The selected intern will assist with preparations, communications and correspondence for junior shows and events.

Applicants should consider themselves a self-starter, detail-oriented and an outgoing individual who has the ability to work well with others. Livestock and event planning experience is a plus, but not required. Travel to the 2017 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference, and other shows and events is expected.

To apply, send a cover letter, résumé and references to Chelsey Smith, events and education assistant director, American Angus Association, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506, or email csmith@angus.org.

College students with a passion for agricultural communications would make an excellent addition to Angus Media's communications team. From print stories to television scripts, and photography to graphic design, the summer intern will experience all facets of communications for the American Angus Association.

Applicants should have strong writing and design skills, in addition to having completed coursework in news and feature writing, editing and design. Experience in photography, video and social media is an asset in this fast-paced internship.

To apply, send a cover letter, résumé, references and writing samples to Jena McRell, digital editor, Angus Media, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506. For more information, contact McRell at 816-383-5100 or jmcrell@angus.media.

Working closely with the communications intern on the Angus Media team, Angus Journal offers a college junior or senior the opportunity to be part of its editorial team for the summer. The writing-intensive internship offers the selected intern an opportunity to participate in producing various publications, including *Angus Journal*, *Angus Journal Digital*, *Angus Beef Bulletin*, *Angus Beef Bulletin EXTRA*, Angus Journal Daily, editorial websites, and social media efforts.

The internship will be flexible enough to tailor to the strengths and needs of the intern, but many duties can be expected. Experience in news and feature writing, editing and photography are strongly suggested.

To apply, send a cover letter, résumé and writing samples to Shauna Hermel, *Angus Journal* editor, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506. For more information, contact Hermel at 816-383-5270 or shermel@angus.media.

KDWP reports 2016 mountain lion sightings

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism biologists have been busy investigating a flurry of mountain lion reports lately. Three more mountain lion reports were confirmed in Kansas recently, bringing the total number of confirmed sightings for the year to four.

A hunter recently checked his trail camera on Fort Riley to find a photo of a mountain lion taken on Nov. 9. On Nov. 20, about 55 miles away, another hunter's trail camera in Shawnee County snapped several photos of a mountain lion passing by at around 1 a.m.

Four days later and about 20 miles away, a couple of young raccoon hunters in Wabaunsee County were hunting with a single hound when it bayed "treed." They were quite surprised when they shined their lights into the tree and found a mountain lion staring back at them. They had the presence of mind to take some video and snap a few photos for evidence, and even called a few friends and family out to see the lion for themselves. Biologists later visited the site and were able to recover a few hairs from the tree limbs. It is uncertain at this time whether sufficient material was present for DNA extraction, but if so, it can help biologists determine the animal's sex, where it came from, where it has been, and where it may end up.

It is uncertain whether these recent confirmations are the result of a single or multiple cats. Young male mountain lions can wander great distances in search of a home range, and the proximity and timing of these latest sightings indicate a single lion is a possibility, but this is not a certainty. An additional sighting is still being investigated, and if confirmed, Kansas may have a record year for mountain lion sightings.

Since 2007, when the first mountain lion was confirmed in Kansas, 18 more have been added to the total. Most are presumed to be transient young male lions displaced from states north or west of Kansas. Consistent with this theory, the presence of arm barring on several of these recent confirmations is an indicator of a young (less than three-year-old) lion. A resident population, as indicated by the presence of kittens, adult females, or repeated documentations in the same vicinity, has not been observed nor confirmed.

Visit KSOutdoors.com > Wildlife & Nature > Wildlife Sightings for more information.

Verdigris Regional Advisory Committee to meet in Coffeyville

The Kansas Water Office's (KWO) Verdigris Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) will hold a meeting to discuss current water issues affecting the region as well as the state.

The meeting will be held Monday, Dec. 19 at the Ron Stevenson Building in Walter Johnson Park, 601 Park Avenue in Coffeyville. The main agenda item is the operations and future roles of the committee.

The agenda and meeting materials will be available at www.kwo.org or you may request copies by calling (785) 296-3185 or toll-free at (888) KAN-WATER (526-9283).

If accommodations are needed for a person with disabilities, please notify the Kansas Water Office at 900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 404, Topeka, KS 66611-1249 or call (785) 296-3185 at least five working days prior to

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Legal Description Tract 1: The SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of 29-20-2E, 40 acres m/l, Marion County, KS.
Tract 2: The SW 1/4 of 24-20-1E, except the west 12 acres in the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4, 148 acres m/l, Marion County, KS.
Tract 3: The NW 1/4 of 11-19-2E, 160 acres m/l, Marion County, KS.
See last week's Grass & Grain or website for complete info!
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AUCTION
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 — 1:00 PM
Located at HERINGTON, KS Community Building, South Broadway
FURNITURE, HOUSEHOLD, ETC., ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES, CERAMICS, GUNS & AMMO (SELL AT 3 PM)
See last week's Grass & Grain for listings & Click on ksallink.com
SELLERS: JACK PICKERING & GOLDIE VAUGHAN
AUCTIONEERS: BOB KICKHAEFER, 785-258-4188
Clerk/Cashier: Bob's Auction Service

LAND AUCTION
Saline County, KS
Tuesday, January 10th at 11:00 a.m.
Kenwood hall • 900 Greeley • Salina, KS
TRACT 1: 75 acres +/- of cropland - the W ½ SW ¼ of Section 36, Township 13 South, Range 2 West of the 6th P.M., Saline County, KS; EXCEPT a tract of land located in the Northwest corner of the SW ¼ of Section 36 (full legal description will be provided).
LOCATION: The property is located to the southeast of the southeast corner of New Cambria, KS. It is located on the east side of the road. The parcel surrounds the New Cambria wastewater facility.
TRACT 2: 14.5 acres +/- of cropland - the East 14 ½ acres of the South 51 acres of the SE ¼ of Section 31, Township 13 South, Range 1 West of the 6th P.M., Saline County, KS.
LOCATION: Travel 1 mile south of New Cambria, KS to E. Stimmel Rd and then 1¾ miles east. It is on the north side of the road.
TRACT 3: 78 acres +/- of cropland - the N ½ SW ¼ of Section 9, Township 14 South, Range 1 West of the 6th P.M., Saline County, KS.
LOCATION: The property is located 6 miles east of Salina on Country Club Road and 1/4 mile to the north on Kipp Rd. It is on the east side of the road.
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AUCTION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14 — 3:30 PM
2049 Fort Riley Lane — MANHATTAN, KANSAS
30 to 40 Brand New box springs, mattresses and frames, Twin Size to King, 95 Lincoln Town car, Pontiac Grand AM GT, Furniture, Collectibles, Antiques, Glassware AND MUCH MORE.
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TERMS & CONDITIONS: 10% buyer's premium applies to all sales. Forms of payment: Credit Cards, Cash or good check. Announcements day of sale take precedence over previous printed materials.
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LAND AUCTION
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 — 10:00 AM
American Legion, 100 5th St. — LINN, KANSAS
158.1 ACRES± WASHINGTON COUNTY KANSAS LAND
80.6 acres gently rolling cropland, balance pasture, trees & wildlife habitat. Approx. 50 additional acres of fairly clean pasture. Good access to this tract. This tract is a jewel in the rough, with a little spit and polish, it could be a top producer. Come take a look!
Gi□e Mark Uhlik, Broker, a call for more details □785□325-2740.
See last week's Grass & Grain for complete information or go to www.MidwestLandandHome.com
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133 Ac. Crop Ground
3-Acre Pond
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Excellent Wildlife Habitat
Paved Hoch Rd, North of Silver Lake, KS
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016 — 10:00 AM
Citizen Potawatomi Community Center, 806 Nishnabe Trail, ROSSVILLE, KS
LOCATION/DIRECTIONS: From Silver Lake go north 6 miles on Hoch Rd, property on west side
BRIEF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: SE½ Less Tract 9-10-14 -153.17 Acres & NE¼ NE¼ Less 2 Tracts 16-10-14 – 33.87 Acres, Shawnee County, Kansas.
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION: 187 acres with 133 acres of terraced crop ground with mostly Class II & III Pawnee clay loam soils, very nice 3 acre pond, small amount of brome grass hay ground, excellent wildlife habitat from tree covered draw with flowing water and grain fields on both sides, established interior field roads gives easy access to pond and to the west side of the farm. This versatile property would make a wonderful weekend getaway or a great setting for your new home plus farm income and recreational hunting and fishing.
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BAXTER BLACK

ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

A Family Affair

If you live in a rural community, you can probably name many examples of a multi-generational family that operates a ranch or farm. Their lives are built around the animals or crops they raise. Last August I spent a couple days gathering and branding calves for a local rancher.

It was obvious that Dad was in charge and every member of this tight-knit family knew his job. You expected things would move smoothly along, in part due to the up-to-date facilities and reasonably calm livestock. He said a prayer for the gather, then sent us out to bring in the 100 or so cows.

When we got the pairs to the corral we sorted the 250-pound calves off into a separate pen. "We" is defined as the four hired help plus the dad, the son and the daughter, all family members over 6' 2" feet tall... and tough! I was assigned to fill the holes, sort of a quality control position. Ropers rotated. We had at least three muggers on the crew that seemed to take pleasure doing the flanking. I got tired just watching them!

By noon it was 96 degrees and the dust was thick as diesel fumes. Dad had a Nord Fork calf holder he wanted to try. It reduces labor by holding the front quarters while the roper holds the hind legs. The muggers ignored him. Every time he attempted to hook up his Nord Fork the muggers stepped in front and dove at the calf!

We were down to the bigger calves. Roper drug a big 'un by the hind legs into the sweat-soaked, dirty crew. I reached down to hold the rope tight so Roper could take up slack.

The rest of the story is still blurry in my memory; visions of Gettysburg, *Moby Dick*, *Star Trek*, the Ziegfeld Follies and Jurassic Park clash, wherein Captain Ahab gets his harpoon line tangled around Dr. Spock's ankle who is fishing for Jaws. Shrek is water skiing, Catwoman is juggling the vaccine gun, a branding iron, an ear tagger, open pocket knife and a can of fly spray. This whole extravaganza is accompanied by Beethoven playing *Ship My Body Back to Texas if I Die Out on the Trail!*

The calf got one hind foot loose. Daughter dived on top of the calf. From my view looking up, dad's silhouette is trying to get his Nord Fork on the front end but gets sucked into the vortex and crashes forward onto the growing pile. This is when son jumps on top of sister; alias daughter. Mind you, brother, alias son, weighs as much as the calf which makes sister a 500-pound sandwich!

This is a moment when I stood up and took an imaginary photograph. I titled it *Killer Whales attacking a Writhing Porpoise.*

PAUSE.

The calf rose to his feet; castrated, vaccinated, tagged and branded. He stared at the creatures around him. Although he had never seen a coal miner he figured that's what they would look like comin' home from work. All they needed was a light helmet and lunch bucket.

Junior Swine, Meat Goat Days scheduled in March

The Kansas State University Youth Livestock Program, K-State Research and Extension, and the K-State Department of Animal Sciences and Industry will host two junior producer days in the spring of 2017. Junior Swine Producer Day will be Saturday, March 11 and Junior Meat Goat Producer Day will be Saturday, March 25.

Both events will be in Weber Arena on the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan. The junior day programs are a one-day educational opportunity for youth, parents, 4-H and FFA project leaders, agents, and other adults to increase their knowledge about livestock production and management. All ages are welcome, but all attendees must register. These are biennial events, with swine and meat goat days hosted in odd years and beef and sheep in even years.

The cost for each junior day is $15 per person for those who register by the early deadline, and $20 per person for those who register after the deadline. Early registration for Junior Swine Producer Day is Feb. 22 and March 3 for Junior Meat Goat Producer Day. Registrations received after the early deadline cannot be guaranteed a t-shirt.

Registration is available two ways: 1) download the flyer at http://bit.ly/ksujr-producerdays, complete the bottom portion of the flyer and mail it with payment; or 2) complete the online registration at http://bit.ly/ksuasiregister .

More information is available at www.youth-livestock.ksu.edu or by contacting Lexie Hayes, youth livestock coordinator, at adhayes@ksu.edu or 785-532-1264.

Neosho Regional Advisory Committee to meet in Council Grove Dec. 14

The Kansas Water Office's (KWO) Neosho Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) is set to meet Wednesday, December 14 to discuss current water issues affecting the region as well as the state.

The RAC will meet at 2 p.m. at the Council Grove City Hall, 2015 North Union in Council Grove. The main discussion will be the operations and future roles of the committee.

The agenda and meeting materials will be available at www.kwo.org or you may request copies by calling (785) 296-3185 or toll-free at (888) KAN-WATER (526-9283).

If accommodations are needed for a person with disabilities, please notify the Kansas Water Office at 900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 404, Topeka, KS 66611-1249 or call (785) 296-3185 at least five working days prior to the meeting.

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