

Reflections

Nearly three years ago, in Kansas City, I ran for the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) board. Serving on the board had been a dream of mine since I was in second grade. Ever since my first Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Tulsa, I thought the directors were totally awesome.

I couldn't wait to be able to go to the next JNHE. These directors were people I knew I could look up to and always rely on, like a big brother or sister. They were always there, and even though at first I didn't realize all that they did, I knew it was important. That is why I set the goal to one day be like them.

So, 2011 in Kansas City was the place I decided to run. First I filled out my application, and then I couldn't wait. The whole process was very time consuming and a lot of work. The most intimidating part was being interviewed by

the retiring directors, American Hereford Association (AHA) Youth Director Amy Cowan and everyone else the first night.

After a long week of hard work and meeting all sorts of new people, it was time for the banquet. I was a nervous wreck, but I think even worse than me was my dad. I was the first to get a jacket and was so happy I could cry. I was fine, though, until I looked over and saw my dad well up with tears, and then we both were crying.

My parents were some of my biggest supporters the whole time — Mom hounding me about my speeches and Dad telling me he knew I could do it. I couldn't have even asked for a better group with whom to get elected. Keysto, Courtney and Krissi are awesome to work with, and I have loved getting close to them the last few years.

The experiences I have gained from being on the board I don't think I could have got many other places. Not long after being elected, I traveled to Sonoma, Calif., for the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) Harvest event. We toured wineries and Hereford ranches and networked with breeders from all over the country. It was a great event to start with.

Some other exciting things I got to participate in were the Youth Beef Industry Congress (YBIC) that was held with the Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville. We got to attend the convention and network with many important people, and for fun we went to the Grand Ole Opry.

I also got the chance to go to the World Hereford Conference in Canada. This was such an amazing opportunity. I met people from all over the world that have a passion for the Hereford breed and listened to many speakers. We also went to the Calgary Stampede.

The best part about all of it, though, was getting to know the board with whom I worked. We became a family, and we all worked so well together to get everything in our meetings accomplished.

I am so thankful to have been given this opportunity to serve and be a leader for the youth of the Hereford association. I love being a role model for the kids and helping the NJHA grow and change for the better. I may be going off the board in July, but these last three years were everything I could have hoped for and more. Dreams do come true, and being on the board was amazing. Thanks to everyone who helped me along the way.

— *Shelby Rogers, NJHA leadership chair*



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Live Life As If There Is No Tomorrow

As I sit here and reflect upon the last three years, I have to ask myself where to even start with my story. Should I begin with the life lessons I gained, the amazing friendships I made or the fun times we had together?

Each one of these elements was extremely important to me, and I

really see what I yielded as a member of this board. The National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) board has given me opportunities that I could have never imagined.

Three very short years ago, I was deciding if I should run for our NJHA board. I was finishing

continued on page 22...

my senior year in high school and planning to go to Butler Community College on a judging scholarship.

There were many factors that played into running for the board. All I could think of was the plethora of opportunities and experiences I would get from this one-of-a-kind association. It goes beyond that though. I thought of the board members that I was honored to know throughout my years of showing, and I wanted to have what they did. They were heroes and role models for me as a little 7-year-old girl. That is why I decided to run. I wanted to hopefully be that mentor that I had growing up.

I can still remember walking into the ring in Tulsa, Okla., at the young age of 7. I had board members all around the ring looking after me. If anything were to happen, one of them would've been there in a heartbeat. I will never forget that day.

Then, my brother was elected to the board, and he really showed me what leadership and being a role model were all about. Granted, his serving on the board was a few years before I had to make my own decision, but my mind was set on running for the board. I was immensely impressed by the board members I looked up to, and I wanted a junior to look at me the same way one day.

Through this board, I have had multiple experiences and have made lifelong friends. People from all over the country come together as one. Each one of us is unique and brings something to the board. I have grown close to people that I barely knew before this great experience, and I plan to keep in touch long after I retire.

Also, the life lessons I learned will stay with me forever. Small things such as calling to ask for a sponsorship or learning the responsibility and willpower it takes to stay on task and get things done. These will definitely help me in my teaching career and managing my own Hereford herd.

My lesson for everyone is to live life as if there is no tomorrow. We are not promised our next breath. The Hereford industry has undergone some tragic times lately within our junior program, and they really make me think about life and how we can live it to the fullest.

My nana always says, "I hope you dance." That song gives a perfect description of how to live your life. Never look back and just dance. I always tell people to take a chance because you never want to look back on life and regret turning it

down. Do not ever hold yourself back, especially for reasons that may not be important to you in 10 years. Take the opportunities presented to you.

I want to give a huge thank-you to my family for helping me and encouraging me to do what was best. My parents have always been there for me, never missed a show and spent countless nights at the barn with me. The time spent together was worth more than anything in the world.

My grandparents have helped in tremendous ways, and I truly could not be here without them. My brother and cousin have been mentors, heroes, coaches and my own personal fitting crew for years. They are the reason I started showing cattle, so I owe a lot to Matt and Seth.

I want to thank my state association. My advisors are absolutely amazing, and I have had tons of help from other juniors that are now like family. Last but not least, thank you Amy Cowan for all you have done. You and Bailey Clanton have helped me and molded the minds of all of us board members for the better.

I hope each person who reads this decides today that he is going to live life like there is no tomorrow and just...dance!

— *Krissi McCurdy, NJHA director*

NJHA board redefines regions

The National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) membership continues to grow. Because of this growth the board recently redefined the four regions from which NJHA directors are elected. Previously the NJHA director regions mirrored the American Hereford Association (AHA) board regions. With using those regions, however, the number of NJHA members was not evenly dispersed throughout the country.

After research and discussion, the NJHA board voted to redefine the regions by moving Minnesota and Iowa to the Northwest region, moving Missouri to the Southeast region and Colorado and Kansas to the Southwest.

A detailed map and more information about the region re-alignment is available online at JrHereford.org and in *The Advantage* newsletter. **HW**