

Off to Great Places



Julie White

This time of year is one of my favorites. As the fog, or frost, of winter finally lifts, warm weather and a good Midwestern rain brings about new beginnings — pastures are lush, flowers are up and blooming, and trees are full.

It was around this time 10 years ago I was about to embark on my own “new beginning,” graduating high school, leaving home and heading to college. My science teacher that year gave me a graduation gift I didn’t expect, a book by Dr. Seuss titled “Oh, the Places You’ll Go!”

As I read “You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who’ll decide where to go...,” I began to reflect how I became what society at least considered an adult and ready to meet the challenges of the next step. Of course my family and friends came to mind, teachers and coaches as well, but something I spent so many hours on throughout the years and almost all my summers was my livestock and youth ag programs.

Not only did the responsibility of caring for animals grow me as a person, but probably more importantly, it was the additional opportunities

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who’ll decide where to go...”

— Dr. Seuss

afforded by youth development programs, outside the showing, that helped to get me off on the right foot.

In this issue we are gearing up for the Junior National Hereford Expo in Grand Island, Neb., and the Program for Reaching Individuals Determined to Excel (PRIDE) Convention. And I know many youth in 4-H and FFA are preparing for summer fairs and camps.

Stepping out of my comfort zone and participating in different contests at the numerous junior nationals I attended, trying a new 4-H project

or volunteering in my community broadened an understanding of myself and the world around me. What better time than now to go out on a limb and try something new?

The book goes on to read: “I’m sorry to say so but, sadly, it’s true that Bang-ups and Hang-ups can happen to you.” “Bang-ups” and “Hang-ups” are all part of new experiences — sometimes an experience will be great, and sometimes you just consider it a way to learn to be gracious and, hopefully, extend a helpful hand to someone else.

Also in this issue you will read about twin sisters who are going “The Extra Mile,” like so many Hereford youth who have taken a leadership role within their family farm.

“Getting Her Bred” provides advice on ensuring your Hereford females breed with ease, and as summer is upon us, we’ve also covered keeping pastures healthy for many months of grazing. In addition, we are pleased to announce the Certified Hereford Beef Sire of Distinction program has recognized 1,548 Hereford bulls that excel in improving carcass traits.

So, as you are preparing for all the exciting times that summer brings, “You’re off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So...get on your way!” **HW**