

Hereford Juniors Celebrate in

The good Lord gave us mountains so we can learn how to climb.

JNHE section articles and photos by *Tosha Powell, Sara Weller, Crystal Young, Amy Cowan and Angie Stump Denton*

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Beginning something new is scary and not easy to do. However, a person has to start at the bottom to make it to the top. The National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) Mentor Program was introduced at the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) this year in Denver. Experienced juniors offered their knowledge of cattle showing and participation in other JNHE events to junior members who are just beginning their JNHE journey.

For first-time junior members like Colin Miller, Council Hill, Okla., the excitement of starting something new would have been hard to experience without a helping hand. Colin says he enjoyed learning from his mentor, Elise Hackett, Tuscola, Ill., and was glad to have her handy.

Catie Sims, past NJHA president, was quick to tell the benefits of the junior mentoring program. "The biggest thing is that you get to meet a lot of people and make good contacts," she says. "Junior members who might be too shy to make friends on their own have an opportunity to get one-on-one with an older member and really ask the questions they have. I only wish this was available for me when I first started."

Miller's mother, Samra, gave great praise to the NJHA for the idea. "My son is really happy he participated in the mentoring program," she says. "I was pleased



Colin Miller and mentor, Elise Hackett, are "all-tied up" to begin the scavenger hunt, which was part of the NJHA Mentor Program mixer.

to hear this opportunity was available. My shy son would not have been able to become so involved without this one-on-one contact. I am so glad that the NJHA cares about our children like they do."

The program began with a mixer where mentors and protégés greeted each other and had time to get to know one another. Their busy week together started with a scavenger hunt of various items around the show barns. Protégés were then advised to attend each of the events and contests offered at the JNHE to learn about them and find their niche.

"I am very grateful to Elise," Miller says. "I wouldn't have had as much fun this week not knowing the things she taught me. The mentoring program is something I hope the NJHA keeps running. I would like to give back one day and help the kids that are younger than I am now."

Denver

Yes, even the “Mile High City” wasn’t high enough to escape Hereford youth. The JNHE once again attracted a very large crowd and a first-rate showing of Hereford cattle July 8-14 in Denver. This, the largest Hereford show in the world, featured more than 600 youth exhibitors from 36 states plus Canada. The western states Hereford organizations and breeders hosted the event at the National Western Complex. The title sponsor for the 2007 JNHE was VitaFerm®.

The number of entries totaled 1,082, including 52 cow-calf pairs, 62 bred-and-owned bulls, 217 bred-and-owned heifers, 78 steers, 475 owned polled heifers and 198 owned horned heifers.

Participants did more than show cattle. Junior members showcased numerous talents through various contests during the week. Skill-building contests such as speech, judging, team fitting and team marketing, basketball and even a talent contest kept the junior members busy. Juniors also interviewed for prominent scholarships presented at the awards banquet. The true value of the JNHE is in the skills and relationships developed through these activities, as well as the investment made in the future of the Hereford breed.

Take a look at the following scenes from the 2007 JNHE — a week of fun, memories and mountains worth climbing.

— **Tosha Powell**



Bringing in the troops to begin a fun-filled week at JNHE.



“Just a little farther...” Exhibitors haul cattle from across the nation to participate at JNHE.



The AHA teamed up with Gallagher Animal Management Solutions and Allflex USA to tag animals exhibiting in the JNHE with electronic identification. Hereford youth became the first junior cattle breed organization to adopt this technology.



NJHA Director Jessica Slone explains the use of the electronic identification tags being placed in cattle’s ears.



At weigh in, ultrasound data was collected on steers for the carcass contest.





"Which sticker looks best here?" Each year the National Organization of Poll-ettes sponsors the creative arts contest, where youth of all ages can participate.



Juniors show off their skills on the basketball court during the 3-on-3 tournament.



The state basket silent auction raised \$10,000 with money to be split between the NJHA and the states. The high-selling basket was Kansas' with the top bid of \$2,000.



Members of the first-place Hereford grill-off team from Washington wow judges with their knowledge of Certified Hereford Beef®.



The Greeley Stampede Riders performed during opening ceremonies.



Junior member Dylan Evans, Lebo, Kan., sang the National Anthem during opening ceremonies.



Planning the JNHE was a team effort with help from adult and junior members from the West. Larry Peebles, JNHE co-chair, recognized members of the JNHE executive committee and the National Western staff for their help with the event. Pictured (l to r) are: Bill Angel, National Western Stock Show livestock manager; Jim Mickelson, JNHE treasurer; Marshall Ernst, JNHE co-chair; and Peebles.



NJHA directors foamed National Advisor Todd Herman as a big thank you for his leadership and payback for his pranks through the years.



Minnesota junior Marty Delany is all smiles when he receives a \$1,000 scholarship from the Poll-ettes to purchase a polled Hereford heifer.

JNHE is a fun-filled week when lifelong friendships are made.



"Catch that balloon!" The balloon toss was one of many fun activities during the JNHE fun rodeo.



"Pull harder." Juniors display their strength during the tug-of-war tournament during the fun rodeo.





National Polled Hereford Queen, Amber Schmidt, Pipestone, Minn., (center) and state Hereford queens helped distribute awards during the show. The state polled Hereford queens have the opportunity to vie for the 2008 National Polled Hereford Queen title during the National Western Stock Show in Denver next January.



Brady Irwin, Enumclaw, Wash., showcases his vocal and guitar talent during the Hereford Idol competition.



Justin Moser, Westmoreland, Kan., tells the pee-wee speech judges about his first year of showing Herefords.



Food and fellowship were enjoyed at the National Organization of Poll-ettes breakfast, during which more than 100 ladies attended to discuss Poll-ette projects and progress.



"Our bull is guaranteed to build strength in your herd," says the Oklahoma junior team during the team marketing contest July 10.



"Did you place 4 on top or bottom?" The judging contest drew large numbers of youth and adults Tuesday morning.



Noah Benedict, Mahomet, Ill., was the lucky winner of a loaded showbox, donated by Sullivan Supply. All JNHE showmanship competitors were eligible to win. One name was drawn from each showmanship heat and put into a raffle. Benedict was the final name drawn.



"You did what?" Jay Elfeldt and Ben Brillhart, AHA fieldmen, raised money to put Chris Stephens, AHA director of youth activities, in a dunk tank Monday.



"Looks like it's true!" The dunk tank raised more than \$1,000 for the Hereford Youth Foundation of America.



"Brrr, that water's cold!" A large crowd gathered while Chris was dunked.



Junior members scurried throughout the barns to find everything on the list and be named the winner of the Mentor Mixer Scavenger Hunt.



The fitting demonstration presented by Kirk Stierwalt of Andis attracted a large audience and was followed by the team fitting contest, which was also sponsored by Andis.



After a long, hard week of contests, shows and fun this junior member and his dad say it's time for a break.

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