

# Ringside Chats

Youth exhibitors offer advice and share their favorite Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) memories.

by *Haley Stark*

**Favorite part of JNHE:** I met a lot of cool people at the wash rack while getting sprayed.

**Easiest part of JNHE:** Meeting new people.

**Hardest part of JNHE:** Getting enough sleep.

**Most important thing to bring to a show:**  
A good attitude!

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** Don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone. Once you do that, it makes everything better and more enjoyable.

**Favorite part of JNHE:** It was getting a callback in showmanship. It was my first time in JNHE showing — I was a little nervous but showmanship is my favorite part.

**Hardest part of JNHE:** Being sleep deprived all the time!

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** I learned that you have to be very, very prepared. You have to have everything you're going to need to compete. Also, when you have a bigger state it's more fun. I'm moving from New York to Kansas, and I'm really excited to be a part of the Kansas association.



**Maddie Stitzlein**  
Glenmont, Ohio  
14 years old  
3rd JNHE



**Sam Birdsall**  
Homer, N.Y.  
12 years old  
6th JNHE



**Haley Cranwell**  
Eaton, N.Y.  
12 years old  
1st JNHE

**Favorite part of JNHE:**

Showmanship, because you see how you're doing and how other people are doing. It takes a lot of hard work, you have to work everyday at home and practice setting them up. My heifer, Molly, was really good for me in showmanship.

**The most important thing to bring to JNHE:** The cows!

**Favorite part of JNHE:** At JNHE I competed in showmanship, individual sales, team sales, livestock judging, illustrated talk, and quiz bowl. My favorite contest is illustrated speech. I used to be very shy, but I've done an illustrated speech since my 2nd JNHE, and now I'm more confident talking in front of people.

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** Practice with your heifer or steer at home!



**Sarah Birdsall**  
Homer, N.Y.  
10 years old  
6th JNHE



**Ben Jensen**  
Courtland, Kan.  
17 years old  
10th JNHE

**Favorite JNHE memory:** Getting to see my sister win senior showmanship this year, finally after four years.

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** When you're not working, try to make as many friends as possible because those could be industry connections you'll have for the rest of your life.

**One thing you've improved in because of attending and participating at JNHE:** I've improved in public speaking because I've done illustrated speech, then moved into extemporaneous speech and team sales. Those contests really helped me a lot.

**Most challenging part of JNHE:** I'd say balancing working with the cattle, having free time and enjoying the show with getting enough sleep.

**Something you wish you would have known before you showed at JNHE for the first time:** That it's okay to ask questions, and everyone's here to help you; we're all a Hereford family, especially the national directors. If you have questions or your confused or scared they're more than happy to answer your questions.

**Most challenging part of JNHE:** I think the hardest part is actually getting to JNHE. There's always the anticipation and car rides, especially coming from Texas. It takes the most time to get out of our own state.

**Favorite part of JNHE and why:** My personal favorite is the extemporaneous speech contest. I've competed in that contest every year, and I've been fortunate enough to win every time I've competed. It's the contest I look the most forward to.

**Something you've improved in since showing at JNHE:** Most definitely showmanship! At first I was completely clueless, although I had the best people to help me out. Practice makes perfect, and now I look forward to it every year.

**Most important thing to bring to a show:** A good attitude because you never know what's going to happen. Every judge has his own opinion, things can go wrong, so you just have to come with a positive attitude ready to have fun and learn.

**Advice you would give to someone about JNHE:** Keep your head up. Don't be afraid because when you have confidence people will notice, especially when you're in the showring. It's easier to make friends when you're smiling, laughing and having a good time.

**Favorite part of JNHE:** Hanging out with friends and showing my heifer — it was fun! She gave me a hard time in showmanship but worked well in her class.

**Favorite JNHE contest:** The livestock judging contest is my favorite. My friend and I were on a junior team that got second overall. We were pretty surprised, but excited because it was my first year as a junior so we went up against a bunch of older kids.

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** Have fun as long as you can — showing doesn't last forever.

**Most important thing to bring to JNHE:** Friends and family because JNHE wouldn't be any fun without them.

**Most challenging part of JNHE:** Getting your heifer fit right before the show is the hardest. It's always a rush, so you have to make sure you have plenty of time.



**Savannah West**  
Channing, Texas  
18 years old  
7th JNHE



**Wesley Denton**  
Blue Rapids, Kan.  
15 years old  
9th JNHE

**Favorite JNHE memory:** My favorite heifer was a class winner, so we got to go back in for division, and I got a callback in showmanship with her.

**Advice you would give to someone showing at JNHE for the first time:** Have fun and make friends — it's what makes JNHE fun!

**Most challenging part of JNHE:** Getting all the cattle ready to go for their classes. We try to estimate the time for each class so we know when to get the cattle up. Our whole family works together and communicates with each other to get it done.

**One thing you've improved in because of attending and participating at JNHE:** I've become more calm in the showring and I'm better at making the cattle look the best they can in the ring.



**Dustin Denton**  
Blue Rapids, Kan.  
11 years old  
5th JNHE