

by Samuel Lawrence

The 2020 National Western Stock Show (NWSS) was one like attendees have never seen before and will not ever see again. Although things on the Hill were not different from years past, the “Yards” had a different story to tell. Growing up, I always dreamed about Denver and being able to witness the rich history of the NWSS firsthand, and in 2016 I had that opportunity.

Change is inevitable

I was a member of the Noble County 4-H livestock judging team representing the state of Indiana in the 4-H livestock judging contest. It was an amazing first trip to say the least. Our team received the honor of high team overall on the 4-H side, and our neighboring county’s team won the FFA side



of the contest. In addition to having an awesome contest, we also had the unforgettable opportunity to experience walking through the Yards.

As my livestock judging career continued through junior college at Illinois Central College and then college at Kansas State University, I haven’t missed an NWSS since 2016. Needless to say, there has been quite a bit of change that has taken place since my first NWSS.

This past summer we held the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Denver, and construction in the Yards was well underway at that time. For those of you who had the opportunity to attend the 2019 JNHE and/or the 2020 NWSS, there was not much difference other than that the temporary pens, which had been set up since JNHE.

Looking forward, there is a lot yet to change with the NWSS facilities, and I am personally grateful for the opportunity to witness their transitional period. Any time there is change, it takes a while for people to get on board and to support it simply because it is change in general.

Taking something as historical as the NWSS facilities and incorporating the concept of change puts “change” into a whole different perspective. I feel it is fair to say many are sad to see the historical Denver Stock Yards go, but I also feel there is good to come from the new facilities. As usual, time will tell.

Future JNHE events

So, what is next for Hereford juniors? Refer to Hereford.org for contest and entry deadlines for the 2020 JNHE, which will be hosted in the Bluegrass State July 11-18. As a National Junior Hereford Association board member and its leadership chair, I am pleased to say the planning of the JNHE is coming together nicely.

Also, Faces of Leadership will be July 28-Aug. 1 in Columbus, Ohio. As junior board members work through the logistics of the event, everything is coming together well and will feature several challenging yet fun activities and workshops. Our goal is to build and to inspire leaders within not only the Hereford breed but also the entire agriculture industry. **HW**



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