WINTER EDITION

PURPLE CIRCLE

AMERICA'S YOUTH LIVESTOCK MAGAZINE

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Riley Hoyle

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FEATURED

19.

ON THE COVER

HUMMEL LIVESTOCK

Congratulates Bree Coxbill & Riley Hoyle on their successes!

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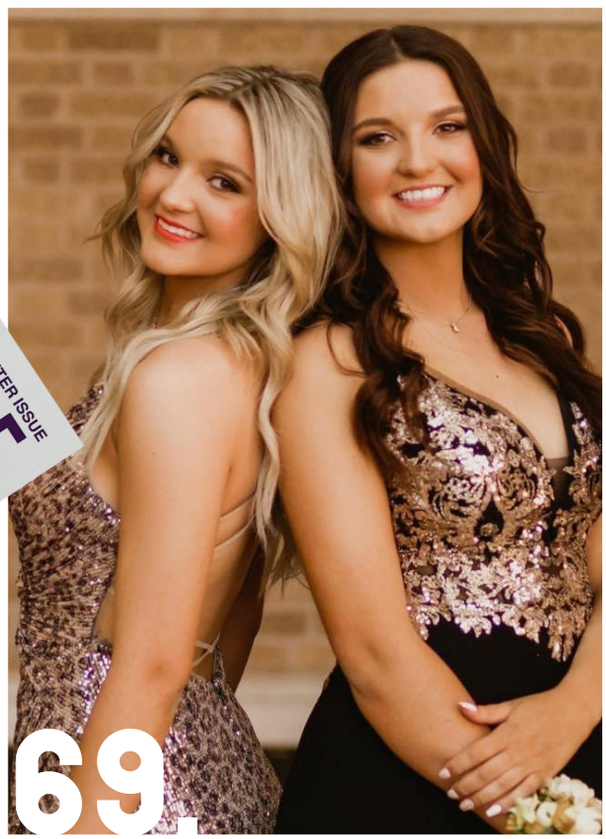

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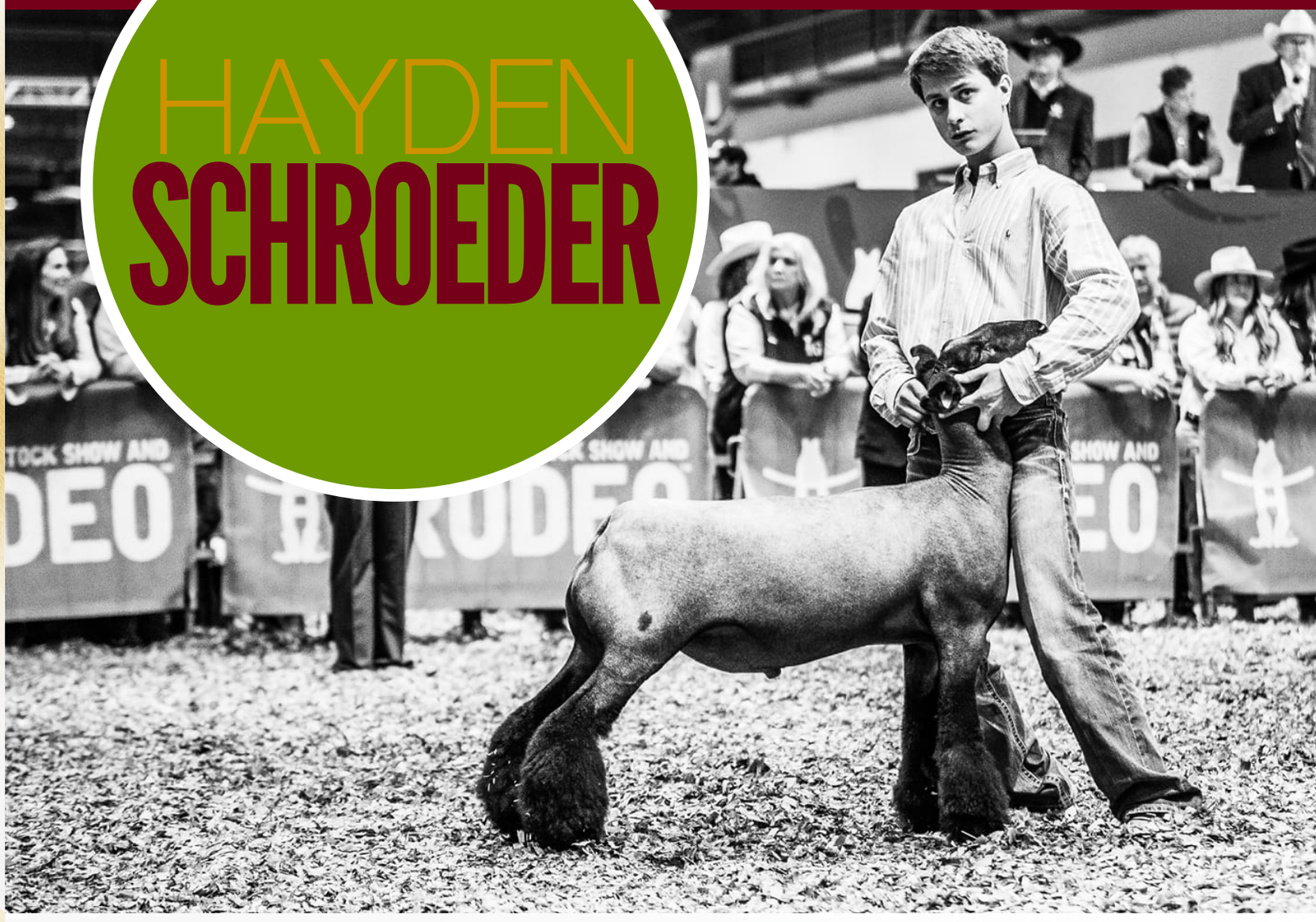

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SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

2017:
Grand Champion Market Goat Rodeo Austin, Light Weight Division Champion Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

2018:
Grand Champion Market Goat American Royal, Grand Champion Market Goat Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo

2019:
Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat American Royal, Grand Champion Market Goat NAILE, Grand Champion Market Goat National Western, Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat Arizona National, Reserve Division 3 Market Lamb Arizona National, Champion Cross Market Lamb Ft Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Grand Champion Wether Dam San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo

2020:
Grand Champion Market Goat American Royal, Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat NAILE, Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat Arizona National, Champion Cross Market Lamb Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Reserve Champion Dorper Keep it Weird (Rodeo Austin replacement show)

2021:
Grand Champion Market Goat American Royal, Grand Champion Market Goat and Market Lamb San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, Grand Champion Market Goat San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo, Grand Champion Market Lamb Rodeo Austin, Reserve Champion Division 1 Market Lamb American Royal

2022:
Grand Champion Market Lamb and Market Goat Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Grand Champion Market Lamb Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Reserve Grand Champion Market Lamb San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo; Reserve Grand Champion Market Lamb American Royal, Grand Champion Market Lamb NAILE, Grand Champion Market Goat NAILE

HI, MY NAME IS HAYDEN SCHROEDER

I am 18 years old, and I'm from Zephyr, Texas. I have been involved in the livestock and show stock world from the beginning. Growing up with parents that were highly involved in the agriculture world [agriculture science teachers, livestock pharmaceutical sales reps, and show stock producers] has molded me into who I am today. At the age of 5, I started attending jackpot shows with my mom and her students and developed a love of showmanship, because I could participate on a pee-wee level. When I was finally old enough to show "for real", we started with a few very nice, crossbred gilts and 2 market goat wethers. I loved jackpotting the gilts and racked up quite a few showmanship wins, learned a lot about ring presence, and really LOVED those 3 ladies a lot. My 1st year showing goats was also successful, and even though I only had 2 in the barn, I learned a lot, won my county stock show, and then dotted at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. For the next few years, I continued to show market goats and hogs, and then actually traded market lambs for the pigs when I was in the 6th grade. As a family who attended all the major livestock shows, we decided it made more sense to show sheep and goats which went into the Texas majors at the same time. I started slowly with the sheep project, showing lots of off breeds, and just trying to learn the project. My 6th-grade year (2016-2017) was the year we started showing with Chad Walker Livestock, and we never looked back. Along with showing livestock in my 6th-grade year, I also got involved with livestock judging. I jumped in feet 1st and became part of a very successful and highly regarded Brown County Livestock Judging program. The core of our team has been together for 7 years. We have traveled thousands of miles together, won many contests and trinkets along the way, and hope to complete a successful senior year together! There are too many people to list that I owe the biggest of Thank You's to for molding me into the livestock enthusiast that I am. I am so thankful for the sacrifices made by so many, the time given to me by so many, and the opportunities afforded to me by so many. My parents, coaches, and industry leaders who have poured so much into my career will always hold a special place in my heart!!!!

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING THING ABOUT SHOWING LIVESTOCK?

I honestly feel like the most rewarding thing from showing livestock is the people that I have met and the connections that I have made along the way. These relationships and connections will sustain my future in this industry.

WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

I hold many values in high regard, but LOYALTY is the biggest and most important to me.

WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING THING ABOUT SHOWING LIVESTOCK?

I would say the most challenging thing about showing livestock is finding a balance between the work and time that needs to be spent in the barn with the livestock, your schoolwork, and other life activities. But it's also rewarding at the same time. There is no better place to learn balance and time management skills than a show barn.

IF YOU COULD TELL ONE NEW SHOWMAN SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Everyone's journey and story are different. Comparison is a thief and people's wins all look different. So, do your thing, and celebrate your WINNING SEASON whenever and however it may look.

WHEN YOU GRADUATE, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED FOR IN THE STOCKSHOW WORLD?

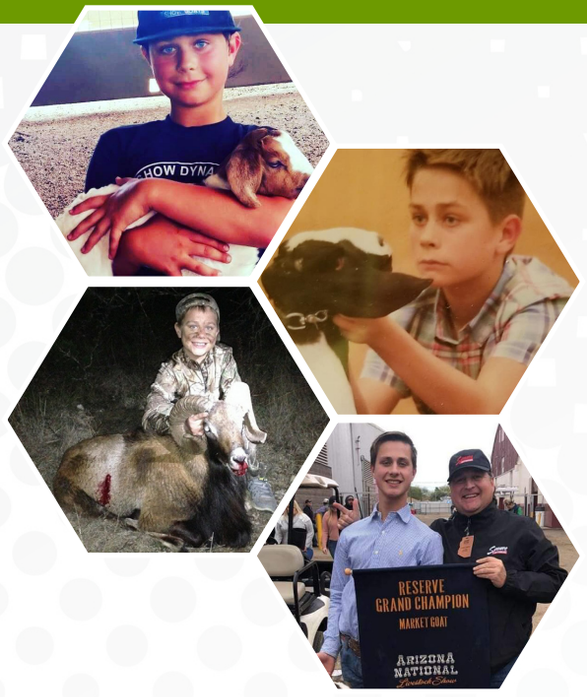
I want to be remembered as many things: as a great showman, as a leader in the sheep and goat industry, and as one of the hardest working and most winningest sheep and goat showmen of their time.

GIVE US YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SHOWMANSHIP TIP.

It's one that I have heard my whole life: "Nose down, neck back!"

SUPPOSE YOU COULD TAKE ANY CELEBRITY TO LUNCH AND TALK TO THEM ABOUT FFA/4-H, WHO WOULD YOU TAKE AND WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THEM?

I would take Seth Rogan (one of my favorite actors), and I would tell him that youth programs such as 4H and FFA are producing leaders that will sustain our country and American heritage for generations to come. That the things he may take for granted daily are made possible by those in the agriculture industry and that kids involved in either of those programs will continue to change and better the world!



WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

Over the next 5 years I see myself judging livestock collegiately both on the junior college and sr. college levels. I can't wait to continue my love of livestock but at the other end of the spectrum. Upon completing Sr. College, I plan to continue working and being involved in the livestock and show stock industries.

IF YOUR FRIENDS COULD DESCRIBE YOU, HOW WOULD THEY?

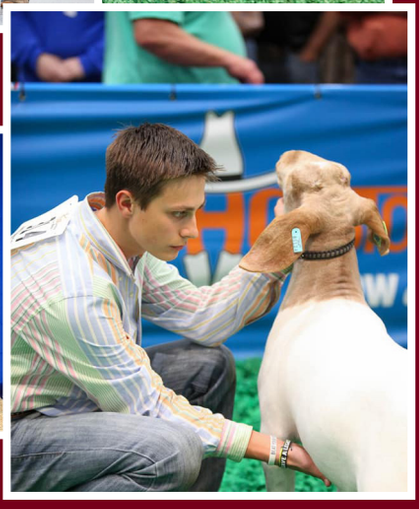
Happy, funny, and hard-working.

WHO IS YOUR ROLE MODEL?

I have several, but Tom Brady sticks out. He has a winner's mindset and mentality, that has allowed him to have a very long and successful career, and I admire that greatly about him.

Do you have a favorite quote or bible verse?

"Everybody has an addiction, mine happens to be success."
~Drake



IMAGINE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM TODAY. WHAT GOALS AND AMBITIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOURSELF, PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY?

What [I have come up with that] I feel would keep me involved in the livestock and show stock industries, is upon graduation from college to find a career selling livestock pharmaceuticals/products. This would keep me involved and up-to-date with veterinarians and producers and would keep me current in the livestock industry as well. I would also like to continue raising show goats with my family.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO BE A GOOD LEADER, AND TO PUT FORTH YOUR BEST EFFORT?

Being a good leader isn't something that anyone should take lightly. If you can inspire, motivate, or influence someone for the BETTER, then do it. I take pride in what my family does for a living and being the best human and representative for us, is the right thing to do.

HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT SETTING GOALS IN ORDER TO BECOME MORE SUCCESSFUL?

My family and I always talk about our goals. We talk about what we'd like to accomplish and then just work hard to do it. I feel like if you SAY IT OUTLOUD, and to someone, you are putting it into the universe, which makes me work harder to achieve them!

TELL US WHAT SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU

Success to me means: being able to win while staying humble and TRUE to my beliefs.

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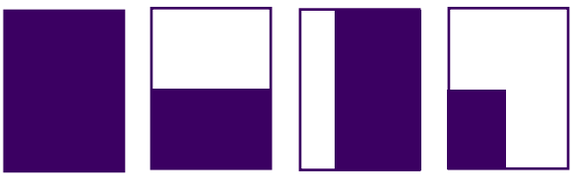

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Advertising Deadline June 20

SEPTEMBER
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Advertising Deadline August 15

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GRAND CHAMPION GRAHAM NEWSOM

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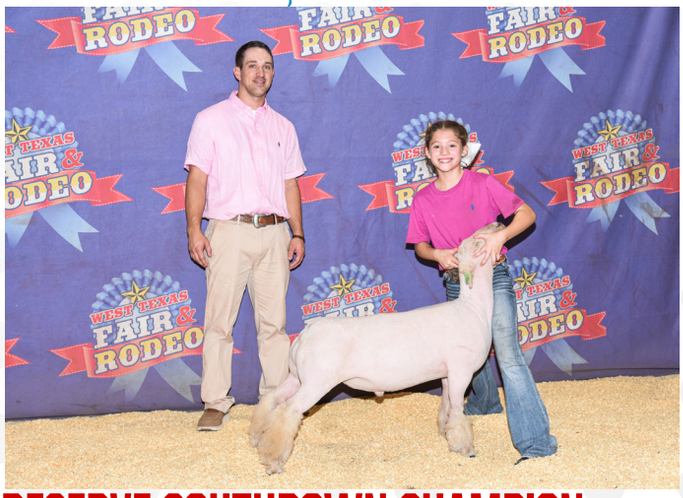

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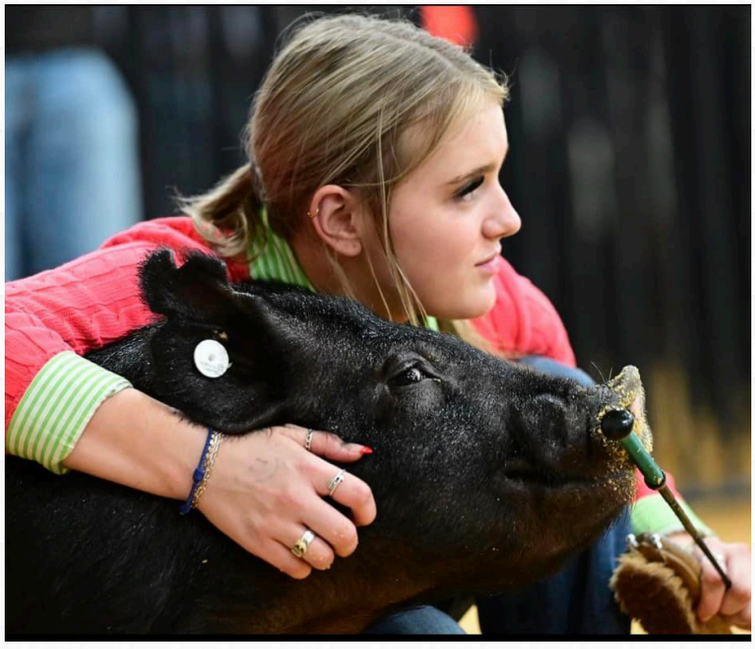
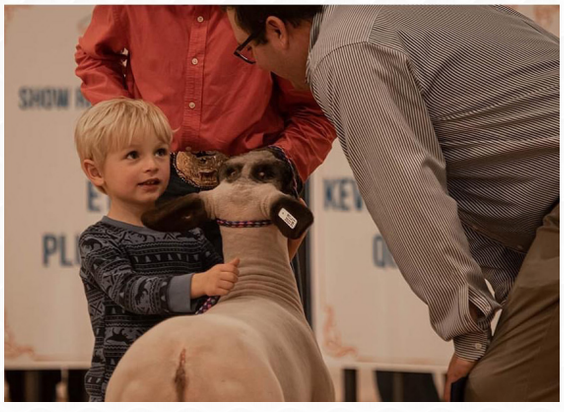
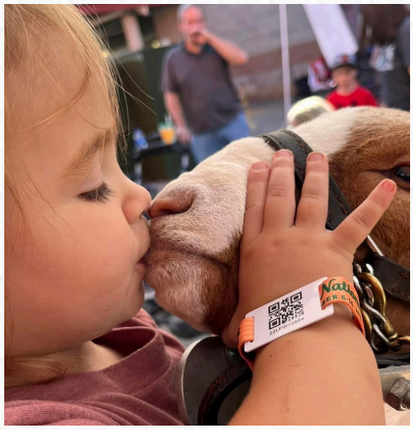
GOTCHA!







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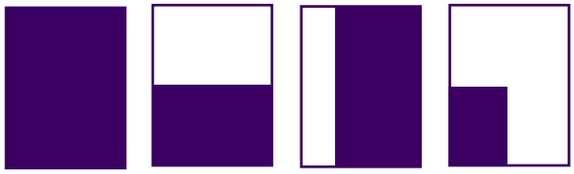

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY DEVIN SISK

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

KODYE NEEL MARTINEZ

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TELL US WHO YOU ARE

I grew up on a large commercial cow-calf operation in South Texas in Rufugio County where I showed steers. I was really heavily involved in livestock judging. I went to Texas A and M University where I started as an Animal Science major and I was on the wool judging team. My freshman year I received $200 as a Christmas present and I started making t-shirts because college is expensive. I just did it as a fun thing and being on a judging team, I knew that I could not have a traditional job due to traveling. So then, I started Wandering Maverick and things just kind of snowballed. I focused on wholesale originally but then I realized that I enjoyed the business side of things. I decided I was going to be an Ag Economic major for one semester which almost killed me. My G. P. A. plummeted. I was so over college at that point and considered dropping out to just work my business, but everyone convinced me not to. I had heard that Poultry Science was easy. Having touched chickens less than five times in my entire life, I didn't even know poultry science was an option but I did know that they had 100% job attainment after graduation. In 2019, I was on the Texas A&M poultry judging team and I was still just doing my business to make extra money in college. Then, 2020 rolls around. I was on the livestock judging team and also on the poultry judging team at the same time taking 16 hours. We all remember what happened in March of that year. Everything shut down. I only sold five orders of Wandering Maverick during January, February, and March of 2020 because I was so busy with everything else. Everyone kept telling me I needed to get a real job and I needed to get an internship that summer. I was the poultry marketing intern with Merck Animal Health. I believe that internships either teach you what you want to do in life or more importantly teach you what you don't want to do in life. I did not like having to work for someone else 8-5 every day. So, July 2020, I made the decision. I'm going to chance on myself. As I said, Poultry science is 100% job placement, so, in a year if I can't take Wandering Maverick full-time successfully, I'll just go get a job. We had 600% growth, six times the number of orders we had ever had in September and I realized that I would be able to make it work. A lot of this goes back to that internship with Merck. I was doing a mock interview and at the end of our interview, the lady asked if I had any questions. I said, "As a young woman in ag what are the struggles you face and why?" Her response just really gave me the motivation to find a way to grow the women in ag platform and community. It was not until um August 2020, 2.5 years into having Wandering Maverick, that I decided that I wanted to take it seriously and that I really wanted to focus on advocating for agriculture and supporting women and ag. I finished out my senior year at Texas A&M. I did not do poultry judging because they canceled the contest and quit the livestock judging team, which is the first thing I ever quit in my entire life. I graduated in May of 2021 and then I decided to move back home. I'm renting a warehouse and we're currently in the process of building a house and building a bigger warehouse to get into. Over the last year with Wandering Maverick, we've seen a lot of growth and have narrowed in that we want to advocate for agriculture. I truly believe a t-shirt is an easy way to start a conversation. We often get people who tell us "I was at the gas station and someone asked me what 'Teach Ag'?" It allows them to tell their story and advocate for agriculture.

is

DO YOU HAVE A MISSION STATEMENT OR A SET OF VALUES THAT YOU LIVE OR RUN YOUR BUSINESS BY?

I always say that are three main points in terms of our mission and vision.

First is to support women in agriculture, especially young women because I want to show and set a positive example. I strive to give them confidence that they can do anything in the agriculture industry and it doesn't have to be limited to working just in production.

The next is advocating for agriculture. I had this epiphany when I was 16 in the Texas Youth Livestock ambassador program. My question was "Why is agriculture always reactive, why isn't agriculture proactive in the agriculture industry as a whole?" We always wait until PETA posts a video or a picture and we all share it to make a point. Nobody realizes that this reactive response is just driving that traffic to them. I want to encourage people to tell their stories before somebody tries to attack. At Wandering Maverick, we post these letter boards on our social media every day. One of our letter boards said, "All chicken is antibiotic and hormone free." My aunt, my very own aunt commented saying "Wow! I didn't know this, you just saved me money in the grocery store!" When I realized that my own aunt, who is around agriculture, didn't even know this, then there are lots of other people who need to hear it out there.

Our third mission is supporting agriculture education. We want to come out with more agriculture education support, to really help those teachers in the classroom.

LEADING OFF OF THAT, WE KNOW THAT THERE IS A NATIONWIDE SHORTAGE OF AG SCIENCE TEACHERS. IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIFIC THAT YOU THINK WE CAN DO TO HELP ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO FOLLOW THAT CAREER PATH OR SUPPORT TEACHERS?

I have seen firsthand at the conventions that we go to, and I have seen tons of high schoolers interested in Ag Ed degrees. I think from the time when I was in high school, it wasn't nearly as "cool" to want to be an ag teacher and I was actually told not to become one because they don't make a lot of money and it takes a lot of extra time. Unfortunately, I believe the teacher shortage isn't necessarily coming from inside our industry. I think it's coming from politics and school districts.

It appears like there is a shift in recent years to more female ag teachers, where it used to be predominantly male. After seeing how ag teachers impact kids, I think that is a huge draw for teachers wanting to make a difference. If we change the language for our youth and encourage those interested in that degree path, I think we can make a difference. I know some teachers who are living the most fulfilled life because they're able to impact so many students.

UNDER THE INFLUENCE KODYE NEEL MARTINEZ

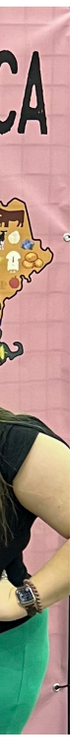
PRESENTED BY SULLIVAN SUPPLY

WHAT ARE SOME TANGIBLE TIPS THAT YOU CAN GIVE YOUNG AGRICULTURALISTS TO DO OR ADVOCATE FOR AGRICULTURE

I love this question. We post a letter board every single day and we stick to the letter board because I realized that nobody is going to take that time to read a long, drawn-out caption or post. I like to always tell everyone that one of the best ways I think advocating for agriculture is by keeping it short simple and to the point and keeping it black, and white. Especially when you have conversations with people who don't necessarily know. When I go and speak, I love to tell students that if we took everyone's social media following and we added them all together, off of every single platform, we would touch so many people. It's not necessarily the fact of who can reach the most people, but I always go back to the example of my aunt and someone in my own family. Being positive and being proactive instead of reactive in terms of agriculture, I think would really help shift the mindset and shift the conversation to positivity all around.

WHO IS YOUR BIGGEST INSPIRATION

I've always been inspired by my dad. I grew up on the ranch with him and, he was my livestock judging coach, he was the one who taught us everything with steers. I always like to say that I'm very in line with him. He would literally wake us up on the weekends and be like, "well, I bet so and so already said their steers" or "you're not gonna get anywhere sleeping in..." His life lessons and inspiration have made me who I am today. One of my biggest fears in life is mediocracy. I believe that every day, something in your life can get better. If you're not happy with something in your life that you have the ability to change it. It is also a detriment of mine for sure because sometimes I'm borderline too hard on myself. But, having that inspiration, and having that role model of someone who has worked so hard and worked his way up through an industry has been a blessing. About four years ago he got diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Being able to see him still go out and work cattle, still do all those things, despite his diagnosis has just been one of the like biggest inspirations for me.



DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PIVOTING YOUR BUSINESS IN ANY OTHER DIRECTION FROM T-SHIRTS OR UM, ANYTHING IN THE FUTURE?

We just actually secured FFA licensing. So, for the next three years, we are one of the few officially licensed retailers which is important to me to be able to do business legally. It was an 11-month process, but we are now officially FFA licensed. We want to add a men's side- we always get asked for men's. I kind of touched on this earlier, but, we want to start incorporating more agriculture education supplements for schools. This year we had posters and unfortunately, the mail services did not make this easy for us but we did get some out. Ever since the beginning, I said that I wanted quality animals on anything that we do. I believe that it is important to be able to get proper animals and information into classrooms for those kids to properly see um the cuts of the market steer, or a good quality show pig. We had our maps that displayed the top 5 to 10 commodities in each state. Ag teachers can use that to point out to students what grows where and who produces what animals in all 50 states. I want to grow this education aspect over the next five years. Last year was the first year we launched a Women in Agriculture Scholarship where we awarded 10 girls each a $500 scholarship for a total of $5,000. We had 1,176 applicants in 46 states. I want to grow the scholarship and truly give back to women in agriculture.

YOU DIDN'T GROW UP WITH A SHOW PIG BACKGROUND. HOW DO YOU THINK THAT HAS AFFECTED HOW YOU OPERATE TODAY?

I think the absolute best thing any young person in agriculture can do is to start SOMETHING. That is for any young person in general. I spoke about this at an FFA conference in Oklahoma a couple of weeks ago, and I talked about how I started my business. Nearly five years ago, come January, I was 18 years old. I did not expect my five-year plan to go like this. I was talking to a group of middle school to high school students, aged 13 to 18 and I said "If you're 13 years old and you start something, just think where you could be in five years?!" It could be anything from picking up the camera and going to mentor livestock photographers, starting a retail business, starting Esty store, getting a cow, and starting a small herd or pig sheep operation, etc. I believe that the best thing you can do is just start. Specifically, for me, I took a cricket that I got from Christmas and $200 of money that I got from Christmas to buy supplies. I made three t-shirts. I posted them on Facebook and I told myself I have to sell eight t-shirts before I can buy a heat press. I remember that first day I sold eight t-shirts and I invested back into it. That's my biggest piece of advice is to start something, go for something. You truly never know where you're going to end up. I know another kind of person I always like to point out to because I think I find so many similarities with her is Alyssa Shultz with Sweet Briar Creative and I know she was also in the 30 under 30 also. She started in college and just look at what she's grown.

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WHY POULTRY?

Before we dig into the why's and what's of the market poultry project, there is a huge misconception that this is like raising backyard laying hens and that the poultry project is easy. Hopefully the point will be covered that to be successful on all levels the poultry projects are far from easy, in fact they are the most time intense if raised correctly.

ARTICLE BY ALISA HAIRSTON

THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF MARKET POULTRY PROJECTS.

1. Market Broilers, typically a 6-week project that consists of a pen of 3 birds entered at the show. Depending on the show an exhibitor may enter a pen of 3 pullets, females, or a pen of cockerels, 3 males.

2. Roasters, typically a 9-week project that consists of a single bird entry generally being 1 cockerel, male. This is simply an overgrown market broiler.

3. Market Turkeys, typically a 15–18 week project that consist of a single bird entry of either a turkey hen or a turkey tom.

Poultry exhibitors are limited to what shows they are eligible for. You have your count, local level and within that you might have a school show as well. Market Poultry also is shown at State Fair of Texas (broilers only), San Antonio Livestock Show, Houston Livestock Show, and Rodeo Austin. Keep in mind depending on the show and time of year an exhibitor may have birds 10 out of the 12 months as there are county shows in the Fall which consist of different hatch and different sets than the major shows in the Winter/Spring.

So, what do you do if you want to get started in the market poultry Project? First, it is best to contact your County Extension Agent (4-H) or Ag Science Teacher (FFA) to see when bird orders are due. You see market poultry is very different than you 4 legged animals. The exhibitor does not reach out to a breeder to get their birds from. Rather all exhibitors order through a system that all birds are received from the same hatchery, same day, and same breed. The breed used in market poultry projects is a breed that is bred to specifically grow muscles efficiently. This sets the exhibitors up for an equal chance at success. Typically, the birds are ordered in increments of 25 with the maximum number of birds ordered being 75. There are some show specific rules that are different, but this is the most common ordering. 75??? Yes, that many birds, and that sets the exhibitor up with a greater chance of success over an exhibitor with only 25 birds as genetics plays a huge part in this project. Upon hatching, the birds are wing banded and randomly assigned to each exhibitor. Then it is off to the races, and literally it is a race against a time clock. In the poultry project you have very little time to maximize your result, so there is absolutely no room for mistakes or lost time to be made up.

HOUSING

Do you need expensive housing? Absolutely not, but you MUST have housing that is effective! Effective means clean, dry, well ventilated, plenty of space, and able to control and maintain temperatures. The most effective housing is something constructed that is enclosed and insulated with the ability of openings and closings to allow for ventilation and fresh air. Fresh air is a key factor. Opening can be such as windows and louvers. Ventilation is controlled with exhaust fans on thermostats. This allows you to push out heat when needed and allows fresh air to be brought into the pen. Flooring is also important as this is a factor that helps control the pen environment too. Concrete flooring is optimal, but wood flooring also works. White pine shavings that are fluffy and dust free are used as bedding for the birds. This bedding is stirred and cleaned daily. In between sets of birds the pen is cleaned and disinfected.

SPACE

Space is extremely important for the birds to reach their maximum potential. So how much space is needed? For broilers day 1 to 2 weeks of age 2 square feet per bird and after 2 weeks 3-4 square feet per bird is best. With turkeys they need much more space. From day 1 to 3 weeks 2 square feet each, 3-8 weeks of age about 6 square feet. By 12 weeks of age hens need about 7 square feet and toms need about 10 square feet.

LIGHTING & TEMPERATURE

Birds need bright clear lights 24/7. In the beginning phases of the project the birds need to be kept warm, so heat lamps are used, and depending on ambient temperatures additional heating sources will be needed the raising area needs to be approximately 90 degrees the first week. As the birds start to grow and feather out, the temperature is reduced so that by 4 weeks of age the pen is kept around 65-70 degrees. Turkeys are much hardier to the temperature fluctuations and thrive in the cooler temperatures (50-55 degrees) when fully feathered.

FEED, WATER & SUPPLEMENTS

With poultry you will come across numerous feeding plans. As a show family, be very critical and specific as to the plan you choose. You want a plan that is going to set you up for success. You do not want a generic or outdated plan. As far as feed, you want show quality feed, which for poultry there are very few available. Water consumption is crucial for proper feed consumption. The more water the bird consumes, the more feed the bird will consume. The birds that consume the most then convert over to the birds with the most mass and muscle. There are some great poultry specific supplements available that will give you an edge. They are a supplement with a specific purpose, not a complete feed so follow the instructions designed for each supplement, so that it isn't over done and take away from what the feed is designed to do. Optimum performance is key with proper nutrition. For poultry projects exhibitors start with a high protein crumble feed then transition to a pellet feed while lowering the protein and increasing the fat throughout the project. A&B Livestock Supply in Caldwell, TX has dialed in on the market poultry projects in the last 6 years offering complete feed and supplement package. With 3 pieces of information, they can put together packages for broilers, roasters, and turkeys. This also includes a show specific detailed feed plan.

CULLING & SELECTION FOR SHOW

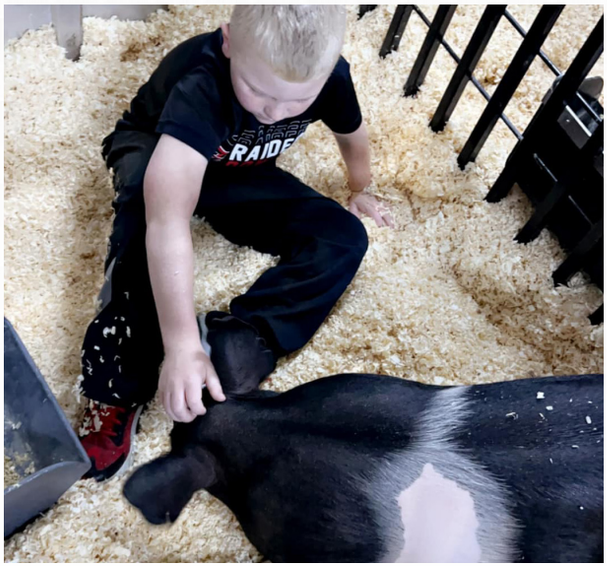
The exhibitor starts with 75, but you absolutely do not feed all 75 birds out in the same pen. A culling schedule is key. With broilers you will start culling birds around 2 weeks of age and turkeys around 6 weeks of age. This culling process is continued throughout the project to give the better birds more space and the maximum time at feeders and waters. Mostexhibitors will raise their culls out in a separate raising pen to then process the birds for consumption. Following a proper culling schedule is key to making sure to keep the best birds. Most exhibitors will bring a poultry mentor into their pen to assist with culling and selection to make sure they keep the best birds and then select the best birds for their pen. There are several that raise very competitive birds, but just are not knowledgeable when it comes to culling and selecting. Having someone with poultry knowledge is extremely beneficial to being successful in the show ring. None of this process is done based on weight, but rather feeling each individual bird looking for the birds that exhibit the most amount of meat. The yield of breast meat is derived from the birds that are the widest, longest, and deepest. The easiest most common example is you want birds to resemble a box shaped breast rather than a breast that is triangular shaped. Many years ago, a term uniformity was used when selecting broilers for show. Like stated, many years ago! Now, when selecting for show you want the birds that will give you the most meat in return, so that means if when you are selecting birds, broilers specifically you have a bird that is larger in the fact that is has more meat then the other 2 broilers, you want that bird in your pen as overall for the pen of 3 you will yield more meat. When selecting roasters and turkeys, selection tends to be a bit easier as you are looking for the single bird that will exhibit the most about of breast meat.

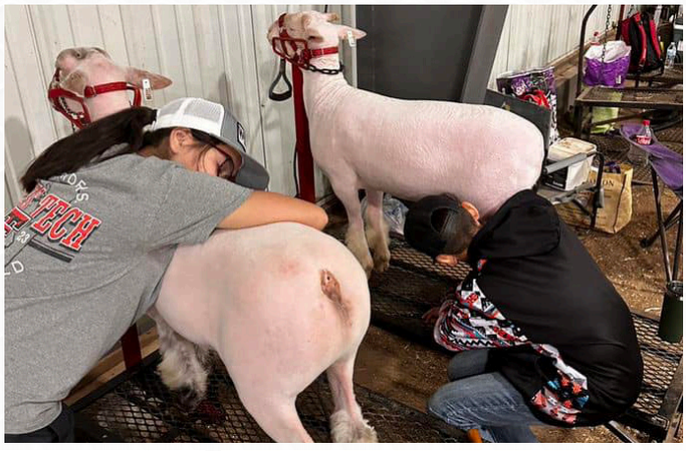
The number one thing when an exhibitor is successful is families want to know their secrets. I promise you there are not any secrets,

BUT A LOT OF HARD WORK AND TIME IN THE PEN.

Raising market poultry is no easy game.

GOTCHA!





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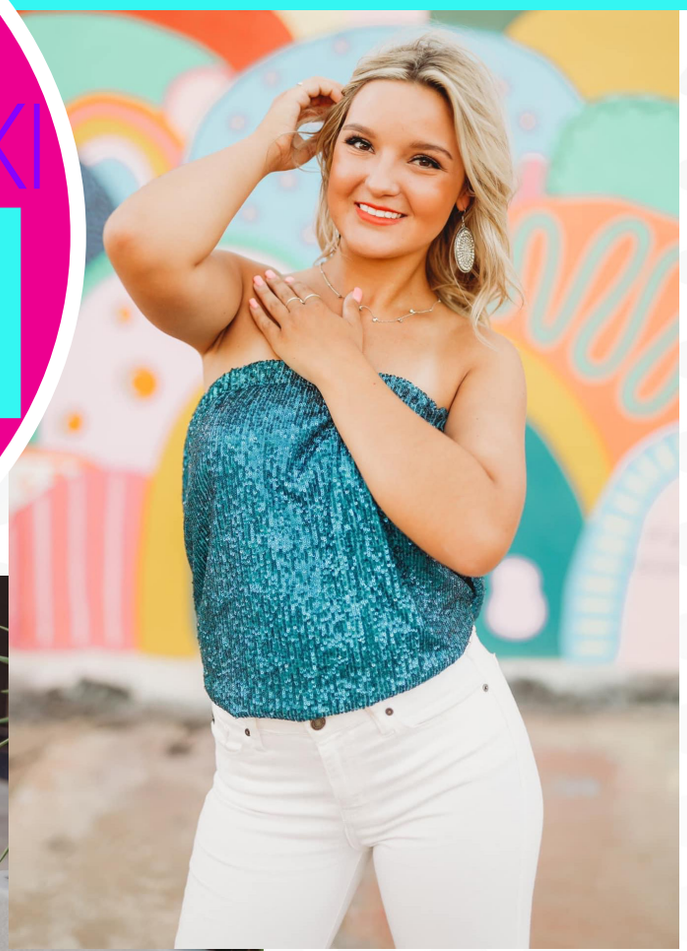
GRACI & ROXI SHERMAN



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SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

HI, WE ARE GRACI & ROXI SHERMAN

Graci- My name is Graci Sherman and I am a senior at Lubbock-Cooper High School. I enjoy doing as many jackpots as possible and showing at every Texas major. I love spending time with my family, especially my new nephew Riggs! I will be attending Texas Tech University in the fall majoring in Agricultural Business.

Roxi- I attend Lubbock-Cooper High School, I represented Miss Lubbock Texas Teen and Miss Hub City Texas Teen at Miss Texas and placed in the top 16. I am attending Texas Tech University in the fall and majoring in Agricultural Business.

SENIORSPOTLIGHT

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING THING ABOUT SHOWING LIVESTOCK?

Graci- the most rewarding thing about showing livestock would have to be the life lessons you learn through showing. Throughout the years of being in this industry, I have learned hard and dedication and overall just how to be tough. There are times when you are going to lose. But that doesn't mean giving up. I have learned that in order to win you have to work hard and push yourself to your fullest potential.

Roxi- I think that the most rewarding part about showing livestock is the family that you gain throughout the years. I get to meet so many people from all over and end up becoming one big family with all of the wonderful people that I met.

WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Graci- My most important values would have to be kindness and respect.

Roxi- Values that are most important to me are integrity, loyalty, honesty, and respect.

WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING THING ABOUT SHOWING LIVESTOCK?

Graci- the most challenging part about showing livestock would have to be the complexity of this industry. Things are always evolving and there are so many things to keep up with and stay on top of. Almost every day I am learning something new.

Roxi- I believe that the most challenging part about showing livestock is keeping up with how the industry changes. I feel that the livestock industry changes every year making it a little more difficult to keep up with.

IF YOU COULD TELL ONE NEW SHOWMAN SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Graci- No one said showing livestock would be easy. Things definitely start to get tough sometimes. I have had a few moments where I thought it was too much for me. But I can promise you that in the end you will be grateful and all of your hard work does pay off.

Roxi- If I could tell one new showman some words of encouragement is to never stop working for what you want. No matter how hard the work starts to become, or if you haven't seen results from the hard work that you are putting in, just be patient because you will start to see results if you just keep going.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SHOWMANSHIP TIP?

Graci- be aware of your surroundings. No matter your show style, that is the one thing that always stays the same. In a ring with 30-40 pigs, you have to find those empty spots in order to make it out. I would also have to say intensity is a very important aspect. You have to look like you want to win, if you don't want to be there why would the judge want to pick you?

Roxi- My most important showmanship tip would have to be making your presence known. One thing that I always do is walk in the ring with confidence and act like I am supposed to be there.

WHEN YOU GRADUATE, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED FOR IN THE STOCKSHOW WORLD?

Graci- I would have to say my showmanship skills. Me, my twin sister Roxi, and Lisa Allen have been putting on a few showmanship clinics this year. I just hope we are making an impact on others that they will hopefully remember throughout their showing careers.

Roxi- When I graduate I want to be remembered as a hard worker that put in the work to succeed. I also want to be remembered for always being able to talk to strangers and make friends with anyone that I meet.

SUPPOSE YOU COULD TAKE ANY CELEBRITY TO LUNCH AND TALK TO THEM ABOUT FFA/4-H, WHO WOULD YOU TAKE AND WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THEM?

Graci- I would like to take Kevin Costner to lunch. Not only does he play the role of John Dutton on Yellowstone, but he is also a huge advocate for agriculture. I think he could make a big impression on kids today to become ranchers or farmers. Without agriculture, we would all be naked and hungry!

Roxi- I would want to take Ree Drummond, also known as "The Pioneer Woman". I would like to share all of the amazing things that the FFA does for our agriculture, and how kids are learning more and more almost every day. I would also like to share with her how much of a difference her cattle ranching business has made for our agriculture.

IF A FRIEND COULD DESCRIBE YOU, HOW WOULD THEY?

Graci- I think my friends would describe me as outgoing and a people person that loves to listen and talk with others.

Roxi- My friends would definitely describe me as a goofy, loyal, and bubbly person.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

Graci- In the next five years, I would hope to have graduated with my college degree as well as my pilot's license ready to take on the world!

Roxi- In the next five years I see myself with a college degree and beginning to start my career.

WHO IS YOUR ROLE MODEL?

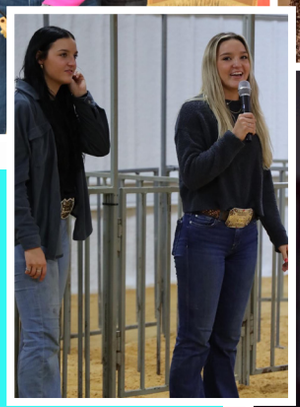
Graci- My role model is Mr. Jonathan Hisey (aka the bus driver). Mr. Hisey has always been my number-one fan. He has instilled my work ethic, and the determination to never quit, in the show ring and life in general. I learn something new from him daily and I am so so grateful for all that he has done for us. Thank you, Mr. Hisey!

Roxi- My role model is my dad. My dad has been helping me show livestock since I was in the third grade. He has taught me the most valuable life lessons in the barn that I am very grateful to have now. He also has taught me how much hard work really pays off in the end.

IMAGINE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM TODAY. WHAT GOALS AND AMBITIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOURSELF, PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY?

Graci- Ten years from now I would hope to be starting a family of my own, and being a boss babe!

Roxi- Ten years from now I would hope to own my own event center and start a family of my own.



Do you have a favorite quote or bible verse?

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all that hope in the lord"
Psalms 31:24
-Graci

"Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the lord your god goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."
Deuteronomy 31:6
-Roxi

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO BE A GOOD LEADER, AND TO PUT FORTH YOUR BEST EFFORT?

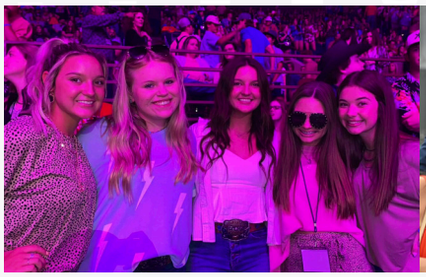
Graci- The thing that motivates me the most is having a sense of achievement knowing I could boost my team's spirit!

Roxi- What motivates me the most to be a good leader would have to be seeing the younger generation that we have in our FFA and remember I used to be one of them looking up to the seniors during shows.

HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT SETTING GOALS IN ORDER TO BECOME MORE SUCCESSFUL?

Graci- Never stop reaching for the stars, the sky's the limit!

Roxi- The way that I set goals is by making them smaller and working up to bigger ones so that I become successful.



TELL US WHAT SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU

Graci- Success means to me that the work you are putting in is paying off. I am reaching for a goal and accomplishing it.

Roxi- Success means the proof of all of the late nights, long hours, hard work, and dedication that I have put into my livestock.

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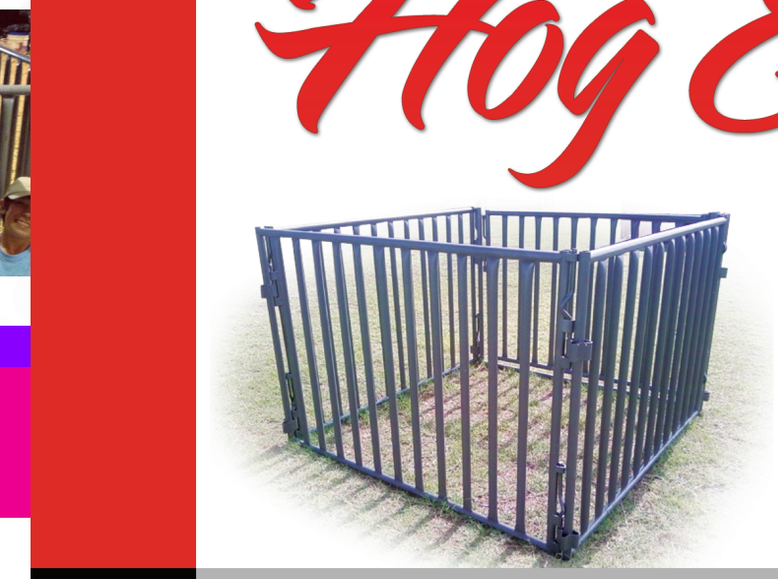

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TAKE TAKE courage

Are You A Follower of Jesus?

In our country and industry, there are so many who profess to be a Christian. In fact, I'd say we'd be hard pressed to find many people who would say, they don't believe in Jesus Christ as their savior for their sins. As we take an honest look at the Scripture and look at the description of lifestyle, of the born again believer, and of the lost person. That question is one that should come to life for each of us.

That question should be something we contemplate daily. Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning, Great is Your faithfulness". We also should look to His mercies daily, and in turn, evaluate our lifestyles daily. In 1 John, the Apostle clears the air on a couple things. Talking to believers, John writes in 1 John 1:9-10 that if we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins. And if we say we have no sin, we are a liar. It's clear, that we all sin and all fall. Believers and followers of Christ still will fail in our flesh.

However, that's not a license to sin, or excuse for our sin. It's just a fact. Also, in 1 John 2:15, the word says, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him." I used to struggle with this one and didn't fully understand it. There are lots of things I enjoy in this world, "does that mean the love of the Father isn't in me?"

Then when I was truly saved and born again, and began to genuinely walk with the Lord, I noticed there were things (sinful things) that at one time, used to not bother me, that I began to be more sensitive to. (Sensitive in the fact that I didn't like to do, see, talk about, or be around them). As I continue to grow in Christ, more and more things which at one point didn't bother me, now do. More and more of my sin in my life is convicted to me by the Holy Spirit. My lifestyle and things I do, watch, support, or involve myself in, slowly are becoming less of the world, and more of Christ.

As we grow in our walk with Christ, this will be true, and as we allow Him to sanctify us, we will grow more and more sensitive to sin, because we are becoming more like Him. Throughout Scripture we are commanded to grow in His word and truth, to keep His commands, and to follow Him. As Paul writes in Philippians 1:6, He who began a work in us, will continue it until the day of Christ Jesus.

As genuine believers, we are growing closer to Christ continually in prayer, in His word, and by the power of the Holy Spirit working in us. Again, not in perfection (1 John 1:9-10), but in growth and Spiritual maturity. These are the answers to the question asked about the Christian lifestyle compared to the lost person, both described in comparison in Ephesians chapter 4 & 5. Ephesians 5:8-10 says, "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

If we take an honest look at our life, or rather when we take an honest look. Do we see our lives walking down the righteous path of a born again believer as is described in Ephesians chapter 4? Does our walk with Christ shine to others as followers of Jesus that represent the beatitudes Jesus Himself describes in the beginning of the sermon on the mount in Matthew 5? Is our lifestyle exposed with the love for one another and goal of keeping His commands that Jesus speaks of in John 13:34-35 and John 14:15? These are some of the marks of a Christian believer.

No doubt there is a change when we come to follow Jesus. That change isn't ours but the one He makes in us. When we submit to Him and are born again as John 3 tells us. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, we are a new creature in Christ, the old passes away and the new has come. There is a CHANGE when we decide to follow Jesus. The old is gone, the new is here, and He will continue to sanctify His followers until He comes back. The Word is clear and consistent on this. We live in a culture that assumes so many to be saved, yet do you hold your life, your confession of Christ in light of the Scripture and words that Jesus has left us with to test our confession? I only say these things not to condemn, but to challenge. As I walked nearly 25 years in this world thinking I was a believer, who couldn't have been further from Him. On my own track to an eternal death without God. And I don't want that for any of you. The most important decisions we make in life, we study, research, and comb through the fine details. Sometimes over and over to be sure we know exactly what decision we are making. Buying a house or a car, making a big business decision or career change. Which university to go to? All of these questions we don't take someone else's word for or just go in blind. Our salvation and relationship with Jesus is the most precious and delicate question we must answer in this life, and we are so blessed to have God's Word that is alive and for us. I encourage you to take what Paul wrote in 1 Cor 13:5 and test yourself. Do you know Jesus? Are you His Disciple? Is He your Lord and Savior? Are your sins removed and you've become a new creature in Christ?

He is quick to save, and desires all to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4) and be saved. And those who seek Him with all their heart will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). Romans 3:23 says we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory, Romans 6:23 says our penalty for sin is death. Jesus says in Matthew 4:17 to repent, for the Kingdom is at hand. John 3:16-17 tells us how much God loved us by sending His son to save us from this sin & death we all have to face. John 3:36 says He who believes the Son has life. Will you cry out to Him and follow Him today? It is popular to reach out to God, take comfort in Christ when needed, but do we look at Jesus as an extra to life that we need it trying times, or thankful to Him in good times? Or do we see Him and share the relationship with Him as a servant to Him, just as He calls us to do by example as mentioned in Matthew 20:24-28.

My question for each of you today is a simple, yet deep one. Are you saved?....and not to overreach a simple question. But if I may ask one follow-up. How do you know you are saved? Do you follow the one you profess to be saved by? Is He genuinely the Lord of your life? Or is He a God of your own creation that you reach out to when it's convenient? Do you serve Him in your life? What are your thoughts? Your daily actions? Your most important priorities? Do they match up with what Scripture teaches of a born again Christian? Jesus is the Way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but through Him. Are you following Him you profess to serve and believe in?

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Cookin' with Friends

Cheesy Sweet Potato & Black Bean Casserole

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 ¼ pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can fire-roasted diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 (4 ounce) can mild diced green chiles, drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can no-salt-added black beans, rinsed
- ¾ cup canned no-salt-added sweet corn, drained
- 1 ¼ cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 lime, cut into 6 wedges

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.

2. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add sweet potatoes; cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender on the outside, 10 to 12 minutes. Add chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in tomatoes and green chiles; cook, stirring occasionally, for 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in black beans, corn and 3/4 cup cheese.

3. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish. Scatter the remaining 1/2 cup cheese on top. Cover the baking dish with foil; bake for 15 minutes. Remove the foil; bake until the sweet potatoes are tender and the cheese is melted and bubbly, 8 to 10 minutes. Top with scallions and cilantro. Serve with lime wedges.

Sautéed Asparagus with Pancetta

- 4 ounces pancetta cut into ¼ inch slices
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 pound asparagus woody ends trimmed and sliced into 2-inch pieces on the bias
- 1¼ cups sliced leek thinly sliced crosswise (white & pale green parts)
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts or sunflower seeds
- 1-2 tablespoons fresh Italian parsley chopped
- Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Place the sliced pancetta in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook until crisp and light golden brown.
2. Add the butter, asparagus pieces and sliced leek, and sauté 3-4 minutes or until asparagus is tender crisp.
3. Add garlic, lemon zest, orange zest, pine nuts and parsley, and sauté 1 minute.
4. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Snow Punch

- 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 5 medium ripe bananas
- ¾ cup granulated sugar; superfine if possible
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 liter lemon-lime soda
- ½ gallon vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt

Optional Rim:

- ½ cup sweetened shredded coconut
- Canned vanilla icing or corn syrup

Directions

1. Place lemon juice, bananas and sugar in a blender, cover and mix until smooth. Add half-and-half, cover and blend until smooth. Cover and refrigerate up to 1 hour.
2. Just before serving, pour lemon/banana mixture into a punch bowl. Stir in soda and top with scoops of ice cream.
3. Optional, but oh, so pretty; dip the rims of the glasses in corn syrup or vanilla icing then dip the coated rims in coconut.

Enjoy!

White Chocolate Dipped Ginger Cookies

- 10 oz. Ghirardelli White
- Chocolate Melting Wafers or Chocolate
- 8 graham crackers
- Crushed peppermint

Directions

1. Place Ghirardelli White Chocolate Melting Wafers in microwave-safe container.

2. Microwave chocolate for 1 minute. Stir thoroughly (product keeps its original shape until stirred). If not completely melted, continue to microwave at 15 second intervals and stir until smooth. Overheating will cause wafers to burn.

3. Dip graham crackers one at a time coating the graham cracker on both sides, using a fork and place on parchment paper.

4. Add crushed peppermint to top.

Let sit at room temperature until set.

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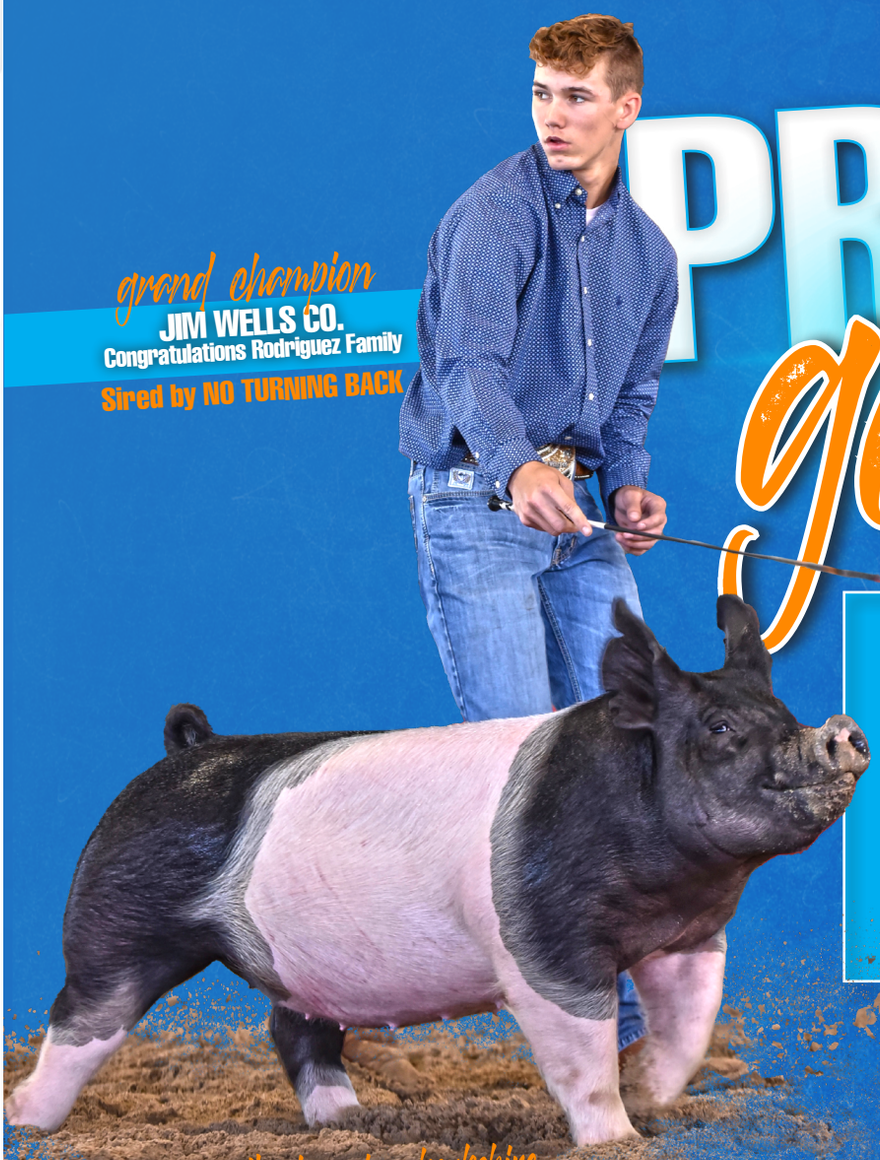

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