

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

THOMAS COUNTY, THEDFORD, NEBRASKA 69166

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2017

NO. 13

Record Setting Range Judging Contest Held in Keith County



COURTESY PHOTO

2017 Range Judges Identifying Plants

Five hundred and thirty-six high school students and teachers from 46 schools from across Nebraska visited Keith County this week to test their knowledge of rangeland management during the 63rd Annual Nebraska State Range Judging Contest. The attendance at this contest is the largest attendance ever at a Nebraska range judging contest surpassing by far the previous record of 450 students in 2013.

Each fall, students enrolled in agriculture or natural resources classes compete for top honors in range judging contests. Contestants compete as individuals and as teams in either the Junior or Senior Division. Six area contests are held in mid to late September in addition to the State contest. The contests are sponsored by the Nebraska Section Society for Range Management. Co-sponsors include Nebraska Extension, Natural Resources Districts (NRD), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Volunteers from these and other natural resource agencies and groups assist local committees with organizing and conducting the contests. Over the last 10 years, attendance at area contests has averaged 1,100 students.

Range Judging Contests test the participants' skills and knowledge of plant identification, ecological site identification and composition, rangeland conservation and grazing management. While studying for range judging competitions, students learn about one of Nebraska's major land uses. Rangelands cover nearly 50% of Nebraska and approximately 60% of the United States. Even if these young contest participants do not pursue a career in rangeland or natural resource management, they will gain an understanding of a major natural resource that will be remembered throughout their lifetimes.

The Junior Division included 262 individuals and 63 teams. Sheridan Wilson from Arthur County took first place individual honors in the Junior Division. Olivia Fredrick, Amherst FFA placed second; Bridget Slagle, Sargent FFA placed third; and James Wetovick from Fullerton FFA placed fourth. Members of the first place junior team from Hayes Center are Ashton Erickson, Jakob Anderjaska, Jaycee Lapp and Avery Johnson.

The Senior Division included 245 individuals and 64 teams. Wesley Wach from Hayes Center took first place individual honors in the Senior Division. Mason Hale, West Holt

FFA placed second; Rebecca Taylor placed third and Sam Wilkins placed fourth. Rebecca and Sam are both from Ainsworth FFA. Members of the first place senior team from West Holt are Mason Hale, Casey Coburn, Emily Burk and Caitlin Butterfield.

Thirty-one adults also participated in the contest. Kevin Wetovick, Ag-Ed instructor from Fullerton placed first in the adult competition.

The Old West Regional Range Judging Contest is an additional opportunity for range judges. The Old West Region includes the states of Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska. This year, the Old West Regional Contest will be held in Valentine, Nebraska, on October 12.

Local students who competed and their placings were:

Senior Division

Theadford High School - 11. Kalee Jepsen, 357; 54. Cauy Pokorny, 248; 36. Morgan Rinestine, 245; 45. Kaylin Parker, 204; 52. Caitly Hessel-tine, 157; 53. Aaron Nelson, 97.

Sandhills High School - 16. Nolan Marten, 305; 18. Paige Martindale, 297; 24. Tyler Swisher, 285; 26. Liz Peterson, 281; 29. Ty Bass, 275; 30. Riggan Anderson, 272; 35. Ridge Anderson, 245; 43. Jaylee Simonson, 224.

Senior Team Results - 5. Sandhills FFA, 1168, members are: Nolan Marten, Paige Martindale, Tyler Swisher and Liz Peterson; 8. Theadford FFA, 1032, members are: Kalee Jepsen, Cauy Pokorny, Morgan Rinestine and Kaylin Parker; 9. Sandhills FFA, 1014, members are: Ty Bass, Riggan Anderson, Ridge Anderson, Jaylee Simonson.

Junior Division

Theadford High School - 49. Rhianon Painter, 208; 54. Grant Ahlstrom, 189; 56. Colton Polnsky, 186; 62. Tyson Stengel, 170; 69. David Gordon, 155; 73. Lan Wilde, 135; 74. Shaydon Anderson, 123.

Sandhills High School - 4. Matthew Dailey, 369; 7. Brett Downing, 353; 17. Logan Hafer, 292; 18. Reece Zutavern, 282; 23. Madison Marten, 273; 24. Courtney Swisher, 261; 26. Miriam Ganoung, 249; 30. Emily Martindale, 244; 52. Jenna Christie, 194; 65. Cooper Bass, 161; 71. Brea Branie, 154; 72. Zach Bradley, 157.

Junior Team Results - 3. Sandhills FFA, 1,296, members are: Matthew Dailey, Brett Downing, Logan Hafer and Reece Zutavern; 7. Sandhills FFA, 1,017, members are: Madison Marten, Courtney Swisher, Miriam Ganoung, Emily Martindale; 14. Theadford FFA, 753, members are: (Continued on page 2)

Natural Resources Committee Hearing for LR 125

Citizens speak out on commercial wind energy in Nebraska

Citizens from counties across the State, most especially in the Sandhills. Many urged Senators on the Committee to reconsider Sen. Brewer's bill, LB 504, which would put a two-year moratorium on the new construction of commercial wind energy projects while the Legislature studied the subject to form more comprehensive state policy on wind energy. Many also voiced concern over the lack of government oversight of

energy projects across the State, most especially in the Sandhills. Many urged Senators on the Committee to reconsider Sen. Brewer's bill, LB 504, which would put a two-year moratorium on the new construction of commercial wind energy projects while the Legislature studied the subject to form more comprehensive state policy on wind energy. Many also voiced concern over the lack of government oversight of

public power in Nebraska with respect to the "R Line" high voltage transmission line which is routed through some of the most environmentally sensitive terrain in Nebraska. The R Line is needed for future development of wind energy projects planned for the Sandhills. Citizen objection to the project will likely require eminent domain be used to secure access for much of the route.

Oct 24-25: Quicken Workshop for Farm-Ranch Record Keeping

When commodity prices go down, it's important to keep financial books on the ranch for more than just tax time.

A Quicken Workshop for Farmers and Ranchers will be held at two locations: Tuesday, October 24 at the Blaine County Courtroom in Brewster, or Wednesday, October 25 at the Grant County Courthouse basement meeting room in Hyannis from 10 am to noon (local time).

Nebraska Extension Educators will teach how to use Quicken, a popular commercial record-keeping software package that is user friendly, inexpensive, and easy to find. Quicken is flexible for ag and non-ag business enterprises and separates out family living ex-

penses. Quicken's checkbook register makes for a familiar environment to begin computerized record-keeping. Quicken comes with home and general business income and expense categories, but educators will show how to easily import farm categories to match the tax Schedule F.

Quicken allows organization of finances by category and subclasses, but also a tag feature that is useful for splitting enterprises, by partnership share, or by ranch. Quicken allows users to split transactions, so one check written at a local gas station can be divided among several expenses: fast food, oil for the tractor, and farm fuel for the

feed pickup. Reports such as transactions, cash flow, account balances, balance sheet, comparison, and tax summary can be easily generated, information filtered and layout modified. Quicken files can also be exported to QuickBooks®, used by many tax accountants.

The hands-on trainings will include computer time with Quicken. Educators will also show how to run reports helpful for financial decisions.

Pre-registration is required. Call the Nebraska Extension Office in Theadford to pre-register at 308-645-2267 or email bjohnston3@unl.edu. The cost to attend is \$20 per person. This workshop is limited to 10 participants.

Rath & Sherman show cattle at Nebraska State Fair

Four-H members represented Thomas County very well at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island.

Tyler Rath and Jentri Sherman both showed their 4-H Beef in the 4-H Livestock Show.

Tyler placed fifth in his first year in Senior Showmanship, and received a Blue ribbon. He received a Purple ribbon for his breeding heifer, and a Red ribbon for his Market Beef.

Jentri received a Blue ribbon in Senior Beef Showmanship, a Blue ribbon for her Market Beef, and a Blue ribbon for her Foundation Simmental Breeding Beef.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission launches new permit site

The Nebraska Game and Parks system has launched a new website for the sale of hunting, fishing and state park permits. The site, which went live on Sept. 28, offers improved navigation, mobile responsiveness and many other features, including:

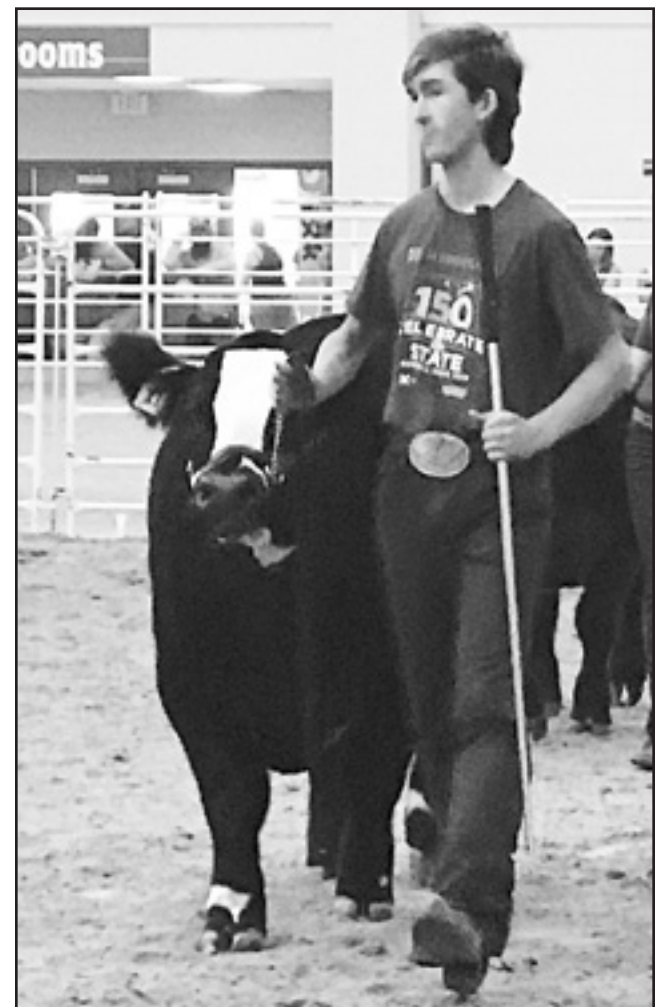
Information about each type of permit offered by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, including accompanying stamp requirements, unit maps, telecheck instructions, and links to guides and Harvest Information Program (HIP) registration.

The ability to search and sort remaining big game permits so hunters can find the units they are interested in hunting. (Continued on page 2)



JUDY RATH PHOTOS

Jentri Sherman showing her heifer.



Tyler Rath showing at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island.

Index

Legal Page	2
Community	
Calendar	2
Social Side	3
Obituary	3
Opinion Page	4
Comics	4
Classified Page	5
Business Directory	5
School News	6
Knight Booster Ad	6
Sports	7
Local News	8

Inside This Issue

- L.J.'s Column
- Over The Hills
- Happenings On The Hill
- Life's Outtakes
- Odds & Ends
- Pelster Column
- Life's Outtakes
- Sandhills & Theadford School Activities

Obituary

- Mary Ann Mintle

Notices

- Notice To Bidders
- Thomas County Commissioners' Public Notice

Upcoming Issues

- Junior High Team Pictures
- Junior High Sports Picture Highlights
- FCCLA Leadership Workshop