

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

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Sharing Intro to Beef with Bryan Ag Academy



COURTESY PHOTO

Anita Keys shares the Sandhill ranching experience with students at Bryan Ag Academy at Bryan High School in Omaha.

Anita Keys of Elsmere and Doug Straight, Director of Industry Relations for the Nebraska Beef Council, traveled to Bryan High School in Bellevue, Friday, March 10, to share a bit about beef with the juniors enrolled in the Animal Science course.

Bryan is currently the only Omaha Public School to have an agricultural program and it has now become the largest FFA chapter in the State of Nebraska. Last week they had their District FFA Career Development Event contest and 24 Bryan FFA teams competed. The Bryan Urban Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Academy has 48 sophomores, 26 juniors and 25 seniors enrolled. Tyler Schindler is the Agricultural Education Instructor and FFA Advisor. In this academy, students utilize knowledge of both urban and traditional agriculture to be innovators in their field and positive members in the community. Agricultural themes are incorporated into their core coursework such as plant and animal science and food production. Students participate in various competitions and regularly attend field trips and conferences across the state. Vegetable and fruit gardens are managed by the students along with other landscaping projects throughout the campus. The Animal Science class was just beginning their Beef/Production unit.

Keys, of LEAD class XVII, was asked to share with the class due to the cooperative effort of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association with the Academy. Her goal was to be the face of a "Beef Producer." Coming from the Sandhills, Keys shared how they care for their animals by providing shelter belts for protection during storms, branding and tagging for identification, aiding in calving as needed, and using vaccines, shots and calling a veterinarian just like they would call a doctor for their children. As ranchers, they care for their animals, the bottom line for making a living is having a live calf.

Many students had never been on a farm or ranch. Keys shared the Sandhill distances to groceries, shopping and to school. She shared information on haying, feeding cattle, calving, branding, barbed wire fences, and general life on the ranch. Water is a valuable resource, coming from the Ogallala aquifer. The Sandhills is a fragile ecosystem.

Doug Straight of the NE Beef Council defined beef and bovine terms, breeds, meat cuts, and nutrition. He shared literature from the NE Beef Council. Many careers are related to beef production. Both Keys and Straight stressed the importance of agriculture in Nebraska, as is evident in the current Nebraska legislature with our shortage of revenue. The ag economy effects us all. The students were amazed at the many by-products of the beef animal, from A to Z. The Bryan students came away with a greater understanding of the beef industry and how critical agriculture is to Nebraska.

Saner & Martindale selected to attend Girls' State

Paige Martindale, daughter of Jennifer and Jeff Martindale, of Brewster and Heidi Saner, daughter of Clara and Steve Saner, of Dunning have been selected to attend American Legion Auxiliary Cornhusker Girls State. Martindale and Saner will study local, county, and state government processes in this nonpartisan political learning experience.

Every spring, the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program provides approximately 25,000 young women with a hands-on educational opportunity designed to instruct tomorrow's leaders in the privileges and duties of responsible citizenship.

Delegates receive special instruction in parliamentary procedure and organize themselves into two



Heidi Saner



Paige Martindale

mythical political parties. They then campaign, hold rallies, debate and ultimately vote to elect city, county and state officials. Once elected to office, delegates are sworn in and perform their prescribed duties. Citizens not elected to office are given appointments and visit the offices of their elected or appointed counterparts in actual state, county and city government.

Two outstanding citizens, known as "senators," are selected at each of the 49 Girls State sessions held across the country to represent their state at American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation held in Washington, DC in July.

Founded in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary is the world's largest patriotic women's service organization. With a membership of nearly 850,000, local (Continued on page 6)

Rooney leads Aggie Shooting Team



Craig Chandler / University Communication Photo

The NCTA Aggie Shooting Sports Team practices east of Curtis twice weekly.

The "Ice Out" Shooting Sports Competition held recently in Lincoln, proved challenging for collegiate sports enthusiasts.

Aggie Shooting Sports Team members from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture of Curtis faced rigorous competitors and some frigid conditions at the sport which drew students from throughout the Midwest.

Host Midland University of Fremont won the contest, and entered 25 of the 127 individual competitors. Students were from 14 colleges and six states.

"The weather was cold, cold," said Aggies Coach

Alan Taylor. "The 11 students from the NCTA team did well considering the weather, and we saw progress."

"Carli Johnson had a fantastic improvement in skeet from this fall. She has put in great effort to accomplish this," Taylor added.

Johnson, a sophomore from Hastings, led the three Aggie women with a total overall of 246 points from five categories - sporting clay, skeet, 5-stand sporting clay, international skeet and trap.

Alan Rooney of Brewster, was high overall for the Aggie men with 311 points. He also was team

high in sporting clay, international skeet, and 5-stand sporting clay.

Tyler Heidemann of Daykin, was high Aggie shooter in trap, and Shawn Barger of Wahoo, led in skeet shooting.

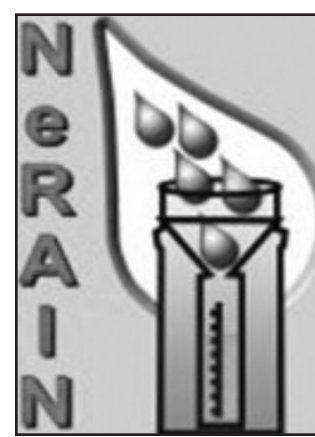
Other Aggie shooters included Allen Matejka, Loomis; Alyssa Nowicki, Grand Island; Rilee Vandonge, Holton, Kan.; Thomas Hennig, Tekamah; Trevor Kuhn, Omaha; Stetson Youel, Hay Springs; and Jonathan Herz, Alma.

For more details on NCTA Shooting Sports Club or other programs, see ncta.unl.edu or call 1-800-5CURTIS.

Upper Loup NRD Needs NeRAIN Volunteers

The Upper Loup NRD is in need of NeRAIN volunteers in all of our Counties (Grant, Hooker, Blaine, Brown, Cherry, Thomas, Logan, and McPherson). It only takes a few minutes a day to record measurements using backyard gauges provided to you at no cost. Some of you already collect this information on your own but you can now become part of the NeRAIN network that will affect local, state, and even National Weather Service reporting.

NeRAIN is an acronym that stands for the Nebraska Rainfall Assessment and Information Network. This is a project that records and monitors precipitation trends across the state and has been funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust. Information gained is used for decision making in agriculture, industry, home water use, utility providers, insurance companies, resource managers, and educators. Nebraska has continued to battle drought in recent years



and the NeRAIN project is one of many that help to expand our knowledge on the impact that precipitation events have on individual watersheds within Nebraska.

The Upper Loup NRD is providing participants with high quality precision rain gauges at no cost. In return, participants record precipitation measurements such as hail, rain and snow. Observers will also be asked to keep notes on storm details and characteristics and related weather conditions. The precipitation reports will be transmitted by computer using a web site designed to allow you to enter your precip data. For the data to be considered accurate and precise volunteers must understand that this is a long-term commitment of daily reporting.

To be a part of this unique project and to get your rain gauge contact the ULNRD office at 308-645-2250 and ask for Jake.

Nebraska Ranch Practicum to be held in North Platte

The 2017 Nebraska Ranch Practicum gives ranchers cutting edge research in range livestock production from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Natural resources, livestock management, and economic reality are integrated throughout the Practicum.

During the three-session UNL Extension class, participants have the opportunity to expand their knowledge with an overview of ranching practices from new angles. Throughout the program, participants will cover a variety of topics including the effective use of decision support tools to evaluate management and marketing alternatives, plant identification, range condition and grazing strategies, wildlife management, evaluation of cow body condition scores, and beef cattle production systems.

Classroom activities will open and close the Practicum in North Platte with the remainder of the classes conducted at UNL's Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory, a working ranch with education and research facilities, near Whitman. The 12,800 acre ranch provides hands-on experience to ranchers. Practicum dates are June 6 and 7, July 6, September 6 and 7, and November 2, 2017, and January 10 and 11, 2018 for the eight-session class. Scheduling of the sessions from June to January is designed to cover the production cycle of both livestock and forage resources.

The 2017 Nebraska Ranch Practicum can count for college or continuing education credit. Participants looking to earn credits should make arrangements during the initial session.

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