

Sandhills Cattle Association Steers For Students Tour

Story & Photos By
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The Sandhills Cattle Association held a 'Steers for Students Tour' at Husker Meats LLC in Ainsworth in April. We decided to have this extra event because of the increasing interest in our Steers for Students Program and to get as many students as possible into the locker.

If you didn't already know, the 'Steers for Students' program is a new educational program geared toward the youth of the Sandhills. The donated calves will be penned with the other calves during the Educational, Performance, and Carcass Contest. Their donors will still receive the calf's data during and after the contest. However, the 'Steers for Students' program calves will be sent to Husker Meats LLC of Ainsworth, Nebraska, instead of being shipped to the larger

plants like the retained ownership calves. Jim Pinney of Husker Meats and other industry professionals will offer local students and producers a chance to learn about carcass evaluation while experiencing how a packing plant operates. Schools the calf donor chooses will receive the donated beef for their school lunch programs at little to no cost. We have six schools that are included in the program this year, thanks to the generous donation of calves from various ranchers, including Herb & Lori Hall - Halls & Sons, Wes Kil-murry - Atkinson Livestock Market, Craig & Katie O'Kief - Walking X Cattle, Logan & Jennifer Hill - HI/ Cattle Co., and Richard Lackaff - Lackaff Cattle Corp.

On the tour, we had several schools, including Valentine, Bassett, Dunning, Stapleton, and Thedford. We had over 70



Pictured above in front of Husker Meats are the students from are schools including, Valentine, Bassett, Dunning, Stapleton and Thedford.

attendees who learned a lot of information about carcass evaluation & meat science from Nicolas Herrera, a graduate student at UNL. They also learned about how the locker functions on a day-to-day basis, how to process the animal, and about the various cuts of meat that come from cattle from

Jim Pinney and his crew! After the morning tour was held, we had a BBQ rib lunch for all of the schools and then our afternoon tour ended the day around 4 p.m. Overall the day was a huge success with students and even teachers learning new things.

We will have our origi-

nally scheduled 'Steers for Students Program' on June 29th with West Holt Public Schools, other interested schools, and the ranchers that donated calves. After the program on June 29th, all the ground beef will go to the participating schools for little to no cost, thanks to

donations we have received throughout the year. If you want to help ensure that a school receives its beef absolutely free, please get in touch with us at the Sandhills Cattle Association about a donation today. Contact us at 402-376-2310 or info@sandhillscattle.com.



Jim Pinney, owner of Husker Meats, in the fabrication room talking about cuts of meat.

Thedford Prom Royalty Crowned



BRIDGET LICKING - WITH LOVE PHOTOGRAPHY

The Sandhills/Thedford junior-senior prom was held Saturday, April 15, 2023, at the Thomas County Fair Building near Thedford. The prom consisted of the banquet for students in grades 11 and 12 and a dance followed for students in grades 9-12. The grand march was open to the public. Bridget Licking, With Love Photography, took class pictures.

This year's Thedford Prom King was Skyler Andersen, son of Eric Ridenour & Shelby Andersen. The Queen was Winter Benscoter, daughter of Kevin and Justina Benscoter.

More pictures of the Junior and Seniors from Thedford and Sandhills High School may be found on page 8.

Counties are a better place thanks to The Childers Fund

The legacy left by Bob and Susan Childers was celebrated when over 100 residents of Hooker, Logan, McPherson and Thomas counties came together Wednesday, April 26 at the Seneca Auditorium.

Bob and Susan married in 1968 and lived and worked in the Nebraska Sandhills raising cattle and hogs. Their house was in Thomas County, their barn in Hooker County, and their land was in the four counties of Thomas, Hooker, Logan and McPherson.

The couple worked hard all their lives and Susan inherited some assets from her family that added to their holdings. During their lives they were generous contributors to worthy causes. Having no children they began visiting with Eric Seacrest, executive director of Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation to leave a legacy to the Sandhills area and provide assistance to people living here.

Susan died in June of 2019 and Bob a few months later in 2020.

Eric Seacrest gave a history of the foundation which is celebrating 45 years of charitable impact.

"There are 300 grants we oversee providing scholarships and funding projects for non-profits," Seacrest said. "Bob and Susan bequeathed \$16 million to our foundation and it is the largest single amount to date. They had stipulations it would go to benefit projects within the four counties and they wanted to permanently preserve principal that would generate funding for projects now and in the future. Gifting began in 2020 with \$5,500 for two awarded projects. In the first three months of 2023 we awarded \$73,000. To date \$200,000 has been gifted."

Organizations with 501c3 status may go on-



TERRI LICKING

A large crowd was on hand to celebrate the legacy of Bob and Susan Childers in Seneca on April 26.

line and apply for funding. Seacrest was assisted in answering questions about the foundation by MNCF staff and board members including board president, Joe Staroksa. Board member, Dan O'Neill closed out the day with a tribute in song to the legacy left by Bob and Susan to the tune of Glen Campbell's 'Rhinestone Cowboy.'

Recent betterment grants from the Bob & Susan Childers Funds include:

2020
Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway, COVID Safety for Visitors - \$1,500
Village of Stapleton, Recycling Building - \$4,000

2021
Thedford Golf Association - Greens Mower - \$7,000
Thomas County Fair Board, Event Building Flooring - \$12,000

Logan County Agricultural Society - Finish large room at Logan County Fairgrounds - \$4,000
Stapleton Volunteer Fire Department - Chassis for fire truck for grass fires - \$20,000
Thomas County Airport

- Aviation fuel service expansion - \$10,000

Village of Stapleton - Sidewalks with handicap ramps - \$4,000

2022
Mullen Hospital District - Replace roof on nursing home - \$35,000

United Methodist Church - Repair Seneca Auditorium entrance - \$8,600

Thedford Golf Association - Upgrade fairway irrigation system - \$5,000
Great Plains Health - Improve Mullen Clinic facility - \$3,600

Thomas County Fair Board - New bleacher & shade renovation - \$22,500

West Central District Health Department - First Aid/CPR/AED Community Training - \$4,600

Thedford Rural Fire Protection District - Fire & tornado siren - \$11,000

Thedford Volunteer Rescue Squad - Stryker ambulance cot - \$5,000

Village of Stapleton - New dumpsters - \$6,000

2023 (through March)
Hooker County Community Foundation - Cedarview Cemetery street repairs - \$20,000
Sandhills Resource Con-

servation & Development - Computers and software upgrade - \$3,000

Village of Stapleton - Sewer lift station control panel - \$30,000

Village of Thedford - Replace three fire hydrants - \$20,000

Lunch was catered by Gregg and Dawn Mallory, owners of Chuck Wagon 'n Jug of Mullen and was paid for through the administrative funds of the MNCF.

For more information on how to apply for a betterment grant go to mid-nebraskafoundation.org and look for the "Grants" tab.

Huddle To Be Honored On Retirement

Gordon Huddle of Thedford has retired from Custer Public Power District after 32 years of service.

The public is invited to a come and go reception on Saturday, May 13, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Sandhills Corral east room, Thedford.

Come and enjoy refreshments and wish him well on his next milestone.