Coming full circle

By Caitlin Richards

Wandering through the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) Midway and show barns as a child, Bill O’Dwyer never imagined being involved with the fair other than just being a spectator. He is now the livestock committee chairman and serves on the fair’s board of directors.

“The fair has been a huge part of our life,” says O’Dwyer, “every October it’s just what we did growing up. My mom and her sister were always here as kids, and then we were, too. Getting involved to this level – it seems like some things have maybe gone full circle.”

Since 1984, O’Dwyer has been an active volunteer with the fair serving on and chairing various committees. He began volunteering with the fair on the livestock auction committee after his brother asked him to get involved. He had recently moved back to Dallas and saw the fair as a great organization, and in his opinion, serving some of the best youth in Texas.

“The main reason I’ve been involved for so many years, is just the kids,” says O’Dwyer. “These kids are getting up in the morning, feeding their animals, going to school, coming home, working with the animals and feeding again late at night. They get it when it comes to work ethic.”

As an owner and founder of MIINC Mechanical, a mechanical contracting business, O’Dwyer values work ethic in the next generation, and sees it in the youth exhibiting at the SFT. Supporting youth active in 4-H and FFA is why O’Dwyer has continued to be part of the fair for 35 years.

“Being able to contribute to the success of those kids matters,” says O’Dwyer. “There is nothing like auction day when you see those kids come into the ring with their animals representing all their hours of hard work. That is just the fun of it.”

O’Dwyer was never involved in 4-H and FFA, but was able to experience life on the farm while growing up. His parents had some acreage outside of Dallas in the surrounding rural area. Nearly every Sunday for O’Dwyer was spent on the family farm. He and his siblings would ride horses, and they would each spend time during the summer working on the farm.

“It was something to get away to, and just something to appreciate the land and animals more than anything,” O’Dwyer says. “I’m grateful to of have had that opportunity while growing up in the city of Dallas. It gave us a greater appreciation of what farm life was about.”

Even though O’Dwyer never exhibited at the fair as a youth, his ties with the fair go even farther than just attending as a kid. His grandad was also involved with the SFT because his company did the accounting for the fair years prior.

“He was an accountant on the fair’s account at one point in time,” O’Dwyer says. “Not long ago, I actually got to see some of the old accounting records, and his name was on the accounting documents - all the way back to the early 1950’s. That was pretty neat.”

When it comes to the show ring, O’Dwyer has actually made an appearance, just a little later in life. While at the fair one day, his wife Lisa fell in love with the dairy goats, and specifically the Sannen breed. She now shows them in open breeding shows across Texas and Oklahoma. O’Dwyer admits he isn’t usually the one making an appearance in the show ring, but he has helped out before.

“It’s usually better if I’m not the one in the ring,” chuckles O’Dwyer. “I am usually the official photographer, or I help with the goats to get them ready to

(Continued on page 2)
Outside of the show ring, the O’Dwyer’s have been active in the fair’s hobbies and collectibles side as well. For 25 years, they have entered something whether it is photography, or just hobby collectibles. They love doing that, he says.

O’Dwyer also serves on the scholarship committee, where he is part of reviewing applicants for the SFT’s scholarship program. He says he has enjoyed being part of that committee, and learning about the youth’s dreams for the future.

“It is neat to read the resumes and then get to visit with them about their future,” says O’Dwyer. “You get to see what their interests are and learn a lot about them. There is some hope in our youth, that’s for sure.”

As a past chairman of the livestock auction committee, O’Dwyer helped support the auction through coordinating fundraising events such as the golf tournament, clay shoot, champion club dinner and the day of live and silent auctions. He is proud to have been part of those events in the past and is excited about the new ways he gets to support the fair and youth as the livestock committee chairman.

“I know I have a lot to learn this first year,” says O’Dwyer. “I will be working closely with the many others who help make the fair happen. I am excited to understand to a greater degree what all of our committees and volunteers do. I will be doing a lot of listening this year and it is a blessing to be able to do that.”

A part of the role O’Dwyer is looking forward to is being a part of recognizing the individuals through the Texas Heritage Hall of Honor. The Texas Heritage Hall of Honor recognizes men and women who have made significant contributions to the agricultural heritage of Texas, and include farmers, ranchers, drovers, inventors, innovators, educators, authors, legislators and preservationists.

“Getting to meet some...” (Continued on page 4)
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It’s a family affair

By Lindsay Allen

You could say that the blood, but that wouldn’t be true...or at least it wouldn’t is in Johnny Lennon’s father of three became an SFT superintendent for the dairy judging contest almost immediately after he hung up his ag teacher hat he wore for 34 years. Two of his grandsons are superintendents for the dairy show and the third daughter used to be a superintendent before work interfered at the SFT. Two of his grandsons are faithful exhibitors at the fair and the other grandson will soon be too, once he reaches the age minimum next year. Lennon’s wife is never too far off during the fair as she is responsible for feeding the Lennon bunch during the dairy show and judging contest, along with anyone else that shows up at their stalls with an empty stomach. It’s fair to say that the SFT is in the whole family’s blood and a common denominator amongst them and when the calendar aligns just right, Lennon is able to celebrate his birthday at the fair, too.

“It is good to be there with all my family and help them and help other kids,” says O’Dwyer, “and being able to support all the other volunteers who are a part of the fair who contribute to their success as well.”

When O’Dwyer isn’t working at his day job or volunteering with the fair, he enjoys spending time with Lisa at their small farm in Poetry, Texas. While she enjoys taking care of the goats, he enjoys relaxing on the farm. They also enjoy spending time with their two children and three grandchildren. As a graduate of Texas A&M University, O’Dwyer enjoys all things Aggie sports. SLS

(Continued from page 2)

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She’s the gal

By Caitlin Richards

She’s the gal – Patty Poe. Around the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) Livestock Office, if something needs to get done, Poe is who they call. Her agricultural knowledge, paired with her natural mothering spirit makes her one of a kind, and a huge asset to the fair.

“Literally, whatever needs to be done,” says Poe, “I run, go do it and take care of it.”

Poe’s primary responsibility at the SFT is the horse show, which encompasses all of the fair’s equestrian events that take place prior to the start of the fair. She brings a wealth of knowledge from her own equestrian background to her role as the assistant superintendent for the horse show.

Poe grew up in Midland, Texas showing Quarter Horses in the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) and 4-H. She recalls her mother saying she always had a love for horses ever since she was a tiny child. Poe begged for a horse for years until she was finally big enough.

“Slowly, but surely I got a horse,” says Poe. “I’ve always loved being outside and being with animals. I would rather be outside any day than inside working. My best day is if I get to go ride a horse and spend time in the barn. Then, when I went to college my mother said to be sure to major in something you love, and I did.”

She went on to Texas Tech University where she majored in animal science and was on the horse and livestock judging teams. After graduating, she went to work for the National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA). She was the assistant editor for NCHA’s magazine, “The Chatter” for a number of years.

“Then children came, two boys,” says Poe. “I guess you could say I took a sabbatical from agriculture, livestock, horses and everything. I stayed home and focused on raising them. Ice hockey became their passion and for 25 years, I was a hockey mom. Jared and Jacob played at a high level and played college hockey.”

After her two boys left home, Poe began to ride again and jump back into the horse show world. She started working for friend, Dan Moore, in the horse show office at AQHA circuit shows. This brought her back to her roots, seeing dear friends and show life she loved.

“After 25 years,” says Poe, “I started riding again, got back with working horse shows, and it kind of all just blossomed from there.”

For 37 years, Poe has lived in Arlington along with her high school sweetheart and husband, Jay Poe. The opportunity for her to assist the fair in their horse show came up in 2016 and she has been with the fair ever since.

Her role involves more than the horse shows she was used to coordinating. She is now part of coordinating a wide range of equestrian events for the SFT, including different species like mules and donkeys and different events like barrel racing, ranch sorting and team roping.

“Since working with the horse shows at the fair, I’ve learned a lot from all of the other breeds and species,” says Poe. “For the things I don’t know about it is a learning experience. I just love being around all of it.”

The fair hosts a variety of horse shows, and Poe enjoys learning about the variety of equestrian events and helping in any way. With the majority of the equestrian events taking place prior to the fair, Patty has become a huge asset to the livestock office team.

“I just stayed on working wherever they needed me,” says Poe. “I love the SFT, I work in the livestock office at the window and greet people. Pretty much what needs to be done I just do it.”

While this includes an amount of paperwork and errand running, it is much more than that for Poe. Her natural mothering spirit kicks in and she takes care of much more than fair duties in the livestock office. She takes care of the people in the livestock office.

“I am kind of the mom in there taking care of things and trying to help people,” says Poe. “Sometimes I bring in lunch or bring in tacos, baked potatoes or whatever to mix it up. The days get long and sleep is short. Making sure everyone is taken care of whether with food, extra hands, or keeping the office ready to start each day is what I do.”

(Continued on page 6)
Patty Poe wears many hats at the State Fair of Texas, including lots of responsibilities with the equestrian events and in the general office. Poe is a people person and enjoys seeing all of the families and kids come through the barns. Many of which she has some connection to through her many years spent in the horse and livestock world. From college roommates to old friends, Poe gets to see them all.

“I really love when I am working in the office and some of my old friends that are professors now at Texas Tech or A&M, or ag teachers, come with their judging teams or just ag kids I know,” says Poe. “I just love seeing all of them. It just takes me back. It is my happy place. I just love the livestock and ag world.”

When asked why she gives and serves the way she does, Poe said it is just the way she has always been. Whether it is horses, her family or other people, Poe cares about others. “Mothering Patty” says is just her calling.

The people are who make it special for Poe and Poe makes the fair a special place for all the people she serves. She says everyone in the livestock office is like family to her and she is grateful to be a part of the team.

“You can just tell there is a lot of love for one another and we all watch out for each another,” says Poe. “Everybody loves livestock and it is about promoting the livestock industry through the kids who come to the event to show their animals, the scholarships and the families who are teaching the next generation of farmers and ranchers while teaching these exhibitors about responsibility, loyalty, and good healthy competition.”

Coming to the fair is (Continued on page 12)
Preparing the next generation

By Lindsay Allen

Throughout the 24-day run of the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) over 9,600 exhibitors and contestants will compete, over 100 interns will show up for work, plus another 3,500 youth are expected to visit for educational reasons. But before those thousands show up, there are five full time interns helping make it happen. Beginning in mid-July and sticking around till November, five college students or recent graduates, who have been named the official SFT interns, will prepare and plan for the show and learn more about the fields they love.

The internships used to be reserved for just one individual, then three and now the growth of the fair has led to the growth of the program and five interns will show up to work for over four months. They will learn as much as they can and gain the real-life experiences needed for the future careers in the agricultural industry.

The roles they will fill include agricultural education, livestock operations, youth development contests (two total) and entry assistant/office intern.

MaKayla Cromwell, livestock director for the fair, oversees the hiring and program guidelines for the interns and said she tries to structure the day-to-day activities as close to real-world experiences as possible. “Four of our five interns this year have already graduated and I want them to be able to leave this work experience and feel prepared for the next season of their careers. This program is designed to set our interns up for their next step. We put a lot of responsibility on them and give them an opportunity to work with a big team and work together,” she said.

In addition to their daily tasks, the interns are asked to prepare the way for the following year’s interns. They develop what has now been nicknamed the “intern Bible” which is a binder filled with responsibilities, advice, suggestions, lessons learned and any other pertinent notes to help future year’s crop of interns.

Through the use of social media and targeted email blasts, the fair is able to reach their desired audience of students seeking internships and thus receive applications. After submitting a résumé and cover letter, the fair conducts phone interviews with many of the applicants and makes decisions from there. “I enjoy the phone interviews and sometimes I see where an applicant may have applied for an internship with one department, but is better suited for another internship area. At the end of it, the interns are selected and placed where we think they best fit and they end up being great friends when it is over,” Cromwell said.

Applicants have till the end of spring to submit their materials for application. This year the fair had students from seven states apply for an internship! “My hope is that when the internship is complete, they have all taken advantage of the networking opportunities and resources available and are able to turn it into a career. It’s always fun to see where the interns move to after the internship is complete!” Cromwell noted.

In addition to the five full time interns, there are over 100 interns that swarm the fair during the 24-day reign. These interns are on the grounds for a varying amount of time, usually three to seven days and work in media, with livestock shows, agricultural education and in the livestock office.

“We truly could not do it without interns. They are our best representation of what we stand for and truly make it all happen. They are the boots on the ground helping with shows, fielding questions in the farm yard, filming our shows, etc.” Cromwell stated.

These interns usually work 12-hour shifts, doing anything from helping with the shows directly (at the gate calling classes, working the ring, handing out awards, and anything else the superintendents may need), assisting media with results, press releases, livestreaming the shows, taking photographs and (Continued on page 8)
Prepared by
(Continued from page 7)
capturing video content or
caring for animals in the
SFT Farmyard and Grand
Champions Row. “They
help educate the fair-going
public and field questions
as they come through the
Farmyard. They are the
eyes and ears across
grounds, but their primary
role is to represent and
educate folks about our
industry,” Cromwell ad-
ded.

Agricultural Educa-
tion Intern - Helps facili-
tate the agricultural edu-
cation displays (i.e. Big
Tex’s® Farmyard, Little
Hands on the Farm, Livestock
101 and Home on the
Range). From facilities to
set up to daily oversight
of the areas, visitors and
employees at these loca-
tions, the intern serves as
the main point of contact
for all these displays.

Youth Development
Interns - Managing 18
contests in a little over
three weeks requires
double the helping
hands. Two interns are
selected to oversee and
coordinate with the

Livestock Operations
Intern - Serving as the
assistant to the general
livestock superintendent,
the intern helps direct
trailer traffic, offers help
in the arena, sets up for
incoming livestock, coor-
dinates the grounds crew
and is part of the awards
distribution and even
handles the audio/visuals
for the shows, along with
ensuring the small
details, like making sure
water and microphones
for the judges are always
available.

Every small detail is
important in making the
bigger picture come to
life. The fair environ-
ment alone made it easy
for me to grow as a per-
son and absorb so much
information. There were
daily challenges that built
my character and skills,
but it made me stronger.

Hayden Brown, 2015
SFT Intern. Texas Tech
University graduate and
currently employed by
Judge 2 Win.

Participating in the
SFT internship program
was a truly invaluable
experience both per-
sonally and professionally. I
currently work as the
inventory and operations
manager for an oilfield
company and the work
ethic and multi-tasking
skills learned in my time
at State Fair directly con-
tribute to my success. I
would encourage anyone
to invest in their future
by teaching me to juggle
many tasks at once and
giving me the ability to
excel in high stress situ-
tions. One of the biggest
things I took away was
the ability to work with
different people effec-
tively to achieve a com-
mon goal or resolution.

SLS
This year marks the 133rd anniversary of the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) and for the first time in the event’s storied history, a woman is at the helm of the board of directors. Gina A. Norris, a volunteer and ardent supporter since 2004, was selected by the board of directors to lead the nonprofit organization for 2019-2020.

Norris brings passion, commitment, enthusiasm and strong work ethic to her position as board chair, as she has served in a number of capacities in her 15 years of involvement. She sees the State Fair as the “soul of Dallas” and describes the fair as a kaleidoscope of Texas culture, people, ideas and fun. “Five years ago, Mitchel Gleiber, SFT president, and the board adopted a strong mission philosophy that we now uphold. That mission statement includes three main areas of focus—agriculture, education and community involvement. For 24 days out of the year, the SFT is a fundraising event and the other 341 days we are giving to those three components,” she explained.

Norris has strong ties to agriculture as her childhood was spent on the family dairy farm in downstate Illinois. She and her five siblings worked alongside her parents and throughout her teen years she was heavily involved in 4-H activities. “I had a wonderful upbringing on the farm and for us, 4-H was a family affair. It was also my window to other towns, counties, the state of Illinois and other regions of the country, through the various competitions and experiences. The county fair each year was one of the most exciting times for me,” she said, adding that her grandfather was a very active volunteer in the local county fair and his passion for it greatly influenced her.

“To my knowledge, the State Fair is the only institution in Dallas which has a core mission to support agriculture. It’s the only place that emphasizes giving back to our rural neighbors. It’s easy in a city to get busy with the needs and projects of that urban area, but the SFT helps remind us all of our roots. It gets us back to the basics and helps people understand the vital role agriculture plays each day in our lives,” she said.

Norris is also quick to applaud the fair’s work in education, which again is part of the SFT’s mission statement. Last year, more than 200 scholarships were awarded to youth across the state and in Dallas, plus youth who sell in the auction can utilize their monies for their education. To date, the SFT has awarded more than $27 million in auction awards and scholarships to students across the Lone Star State pursuing higher education.

“The other part of our mission statement relates to community. This is really an important piece for us as we strive to be a good neighbor with the other resident organizations at Fair Park and to the actual surrounding neighborhoods. This is very enriching to me and we are building great relationships in this area. We’ve been able to expand our scholarship program to schools in our neighborhood and work with the North Texas Food Bank, sponsor local community programs, provide free admission tickets to teachers and students of local schools, provide seasonal employment and add significant dollars to the North Texas community,” she said.

Norris sees her role as board chair as one to support the management team, which includes 52 fulltime employees, and to provide direction to continue implementing the mission statement of the SFT.

“We host more than two million visitors annually during the 24 days of the SFT and that provides a great way to showcase agriculture and to highlight our work in education and the community. The people of Texas need to feel good about the work the SFT is doing,” she stressed.

(Continued on page 13)
Better Together
By Caitlin Richards

For every event, attraction, show and contest at the State Fair of Texas (SFT) there are at least 10 people behind it making it happen. Anne Kimmey is one of the many behind the activities in and around the barns, as well as many of the agricultural exhibits.

“Really, I am the blessed one,” says Kimmey, “that I get the opportunity to work for somebody who is like family and has had such an influence in my life.”

For 19 years, Kimmey has been a part of helping the fair share their story that is rooted in agriculture. Through managing agricultural related publicity and media requests to developing the agricultural education exhibits, Kimmey and her public relations agency, Cultivate Agency, have made an impact on the way the SFT shares their story with thousands of fairgoers each year.

Kimmey’s connection with the fair began way before her professional role, though. Growing up in Grapevine, Texas active in 4-H and FFA, the SFT was one of her favorite shows because it was right at her back door. Kimmey recalls showing nearly every year at the fair. Then, while earning her bachelor’s degrees in agricultural communications and animal science at Oklahoma State University, Kimmey interned with the fair as an agricultural media intern. After starting her career in public relations in Georgia, Kimmey moved back to Texas to start Cultivate and began her partnership with the fair.

Her connection with the fair continues today through her work and family. Some exhibitors are second, third or even fourth generation exhibitors at the fair, because of the State Fair of Texas’s deep roots in Texas agriculture. Kimmey and her family are part of that tradition, with her two sons both having showed at the fair.

“It is very special, and I am glad I can pass on that legacy to them,” says Kimmey. “Having them experience something that I got to experience growing up as a child, like showing in the same exact ring, is nice and it is special to pass those traditions down.”

Continuing the fair’s legacy in agriculture is something Kimmey is equally passionate about. She understands firsthand the strong values agriculture stands for. While she grew up in the metropolix, Kimmey had the unique experience of being involved in agriculture through 4-H and FFA and starting her own cow-calf herd.

“My dad left the family farm when he went to college,” says Kimmey. “He was the first person in his family not involved in agriculture – he was a banker – but he was very instrumental in instilling our roots in agriculture from his upbringing on the family farm.”

Passionate about agriculture at an early age, Kimmey naturally shared her agricultural story with her urban classmates. Her passion for sharing agriculture’s story started with her classmates, and she has been an advocate for agriculture, and specifically the beef and dairy industry ever since. Besides the Fair, Kimmey works with several other clients at Cultivate to help them tell their stories as it relates to agriculture.

“It doesn’t matter what sector of agriculture you are involved in, whether it is row crop or production agriculture, and specifically the beef and dairy industry,” says Kimmey. “We are still a community and we are still a family and we have a great story to tell.”

Looking back at the fair’s beginnings, it was all (Continued on page 11)
Kimmey’s love for the State Fair of Texas started early, as she was an exhibitor in her youth.

The fair is full of partnerships, and the fair’s partnership with Kimmey is special to everyone involved. Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Livestock for the SFT, Daryl Real says Kimmey and her team have been an integral part of the agriculture and livestock programming at the fair.

“They have been a great partner,” Real says. “Specifically, Anne’s talent and commitment to serving the agricultural industry bleeds through everything they’ve done for the 15 years that I’ve been here.”

Kimmey’s commitment to agriculture is ever present. Besides her professional roles, Kimmey spends her spare time still impacting the next generation in agriculture. She enjoys working with children and youth, and volunteering at different 4-H, FFA and breed association events and activities. Any other free time she has, she enjoys spending with her husband, Kelley, chasing her two sons down the show road, and tending to their purebred Red Angus operation.

Kimmey’s love for agriculture now extends to her sons. Tyler is on the halter in this photo and Zach is on the far right.
daughter who will be helping out at the fair’s dairy show for the 27th time this year said. “With dad being an ag teacher, combined with his love for dairy cows, it was a love that he passed on and instilled in his three daughters! He taught us to work hard every day and to love what you do. We love volunteering as a family, but not only is it the family time, but the time we get to spend with the families that we have met over the 36 years since I started showing.”

Carrie Cherney, one of his other daughters who is a current superintendent as well echoed Laura by saying, “Our entire family looks forward to the fair each year. We have developed life-long friendships from being a part of the event each year and that all started with my dad.”

As the dairy superintendent for more than five years, Lennon is responsible for putting together the classes of dairy cattle that will be judged by the 4-H and FFA teams. No stranger to dairy judging from his time as a coach with his own girls and his FFA students, he knows how to put together classes that will provide judges with cattle of similar age, but also a challenge.

When dairy cattle start rolling into the barns, Lennon goes to work. The dairy judging contest uses the cattle in the dairy show for the judging contest. His first duty as superintendent is to look at the cattle entering the show and select females, both heifers and cows, to be used in the six classes for the contest. “On the day of the contest we have two classes of cattle being judged at the same time. My main focus that day is to ensure that the right cattle are walking out together for the right classes. It is important that we have the right cattle out there at the right time,” he added, “But above the ability to put together classes and oversee the contest, you have to have a heart for these youth.”

One of the best parts of day is that at the end, as certificates are given to the top three individuals to help purchase a heifer that they can bring back to the fair the following year. While most people associate the fair with their favorite fried food or activity, Lennon said he sticks close by the dairy barn to be near what he loves. With his grandson showing and three family members serving as superintendents, there is always work to be done in the Lennon family.

Daryl Real, SFT senior vice president for agriculture and livestock said, “Lennon is ‘all dairyman, all the way through his family. They’ve been helpful for more than my 15 years here to make the SFT Dairy Cattle Show successful.”

Lennon grew up on a beef cattle operation and went to college at East Texas State University before spending over three decades in the classroom. Since 1971, he has been by his side for 48 years and they live in Hopkins County in East Texas. He grew up a student in the FFA and raised their three daughters in the organization, too. His daughters showed dairy cattle, which began his interest and eventually spilled over to his grandchildren. He spent his ag teacher days coaching dairy judging teams, which eventually led to his involvement with the fair as the dairy judging superintendent.

He is also the superintendent for the San Antonio Livestock Exposition’s Dairy Judging Contest and as of last year is also the superintendent for the dairy show there, too. You will also find him at the area FFA Dairy Judging Contests in Texas helping out, despite his retired status.

“It’s a lot of the same people at these events and you get to know them better year after year and sometimes your cattle are tied across from ‘new’ people and so you get to know them as well. As the superintendent I have the privilege of meeting a lot of people and it is something I always enjoy,” Lennon said.

When asked how long he plans to spend his retired days overseeing the dairy judging contest, he said, “as long as I can.”

somewhat of a coming home for Poe. She says deep down she has always been a cowgirl and that she has finally returned to her roots. She has always been passionate about the agricultural industry, and the many people who are part of it. For her, that is what her role is all about now, taking care of the people and families in agriculture who she respects so deeply.

That is part of what makes it fun to go to work,” says Poe. “To see these kids bring their animals to the fair with their families after all the hard work they’ve put in, and then they reap the benefits when they succeed and get the scholarships.”
Norris’ career spans 30 years in banking, oversight of operating businesses and real estate investment. Currently, she holds the title of senior vice president of partner relations at Matthews Southwest. She began her career in corporate banking, spending 18 years at First Chicago Corporation and Bank One Corporation (now both a part of JPMorgan Chase). In 2000, she became the managing director in charge of the private operating business portfolio of Crow Holdings, an investment fund focused on high growth corridors in the southern U.S. She is also very involved in several professional and philanthropic organizations.

She and her husband, Pat, have two daughters. Her oldest daughter is a fourth grade teacher in the Dallas area and the youngest is employed at Dallas based company Richards Group in the digital strategy field. She also has a 15-month-old grand-daughter whom she anticipates taking to the fair each year.

“The State Fair has always been part of our lives. Columbus Day became our favorite holiday because that was “State Fair Day” on my girls’ school calendar, when we would spend the whole day at the fair. Norris quickly suggests that everyone take in the Little Hands on the Farm exhibit, the Home on the Range Barnyard and the recent addition of the Birthing Center in the livestock area.

It’s easy to see that Norris’ involvement as a volunteer at the SFT has turned into a passion. She is always eager to discuss the fair, how people can become involved in its mission and enjoy the sights and sounds that are unique to Texas.

Norris...

(Continued from page 9)

(Written text continues here.)

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Fort Worth Stock Show, Fort Worth, Texas

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Texas A&M Judging Team to oversee youth judging contest

On Monday, Oct. 7th, youth from across Texas will be at the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) to compete in the livestock judging contest. This year the contest will be under the coordination of the Texas A&M University (TAMU) Livestock Judging Teams. TAMU team members and coaches will handle all the logistics, mechanics and supervise the contest in all phases. Their duties will include making animal selections and placings for the classes, developing the questions for the contest, maintaining the rules of the contest throughout and providing critique of the classes for educational purposes.

“We are very excited to have the TAMU Judging Team join us again this year to conduct the youth livestock judging contest. Annually this is one of our largest competitions and requires a lot of manpower to execute. It also allows us to help the team in their travels, as we make a monetary contribution towards their team judging expenses,” described MaKayla Cromwell, SFT livestock director.

The contest sees youth evaluate cattle, hogs, sheep and goats and answer questions about the classes they evaluated. They judge nine classes of four animals each. The SFT has two age groups of contestants in livestock judging. Junior contestants must be at least 8-years-old and in the third grade and no more than in 8th grade. Senior level contestants must be at least in the 9th grade, but not older than 19 and in the 12th grade.

In addition, contestants compete on an individual basis, as well as a team. Team competition requires one to four contestants, with the top three scores counting. All members of a team must be from the same county or chapter. The SFT awards cash, banners, plaques, trophies and gear bags in different combinations for the various placings.

The contest which starts at 2 p.m. will be held in the SFT Livestock Judging Pavilion.

Santa Gertrudis World Congress to visit State Fair

Attendees of the Santa Gertrudis World Congress 2019 (SGWC) will take in the sights at the State Fair of Texas® (SFT) on Friday, Oct. 11. Approximately 50 international attendees will be encouraged to enjoy a day at the longest running fair in the nation, beginning with the Santa Gertrudis Show at 8:00 a.m. The attendees will then have a free afternoon to enjoy the many fair exhibits and demonstrations and take a selfie with Big Tex. Santa Gertrudis Breeders International (SGBI) will have several committee meetings this day as well, including the youth activity committee, which attendees will be encouraged to attend. The day will conclude with a reception to honor the SGWC international guests, hosted by Fulton Farms.

SGWC intentionally chose the SFT as a tour stop to expose international guests to emerging technologies and production practices that are used by U.S. cattle producers and U.S. Santa Gertrudis breeders. It is also an opportunity to showcase how the Santa Gertrudis breed and genetics have improved and changed in the United States.

“The Santa Gertrudis genetic package continues to attract industry attention and there is no better venue to showcase the genetic improvements made by the data driven and profit proven breed than the SFT,” said John Ford, SGBI executive director.

Santa Gertrudis World Congress 2019, Oct. 4-19, will consist of 16 days of ranch tours, educational presentations, fun, cultural events, cattle sales and a ride through some of the most scenic and diverse country in the United States. Santa Gertrudis World Congress 2019 is hosted by SGBI and made possible by the work and involvement of many U.S. Santa Gertrudis breeders.

For more information, visit https://santagertrudis-wc2019.com/.

SLS
The 2019 State Fair of Texas® (SFT) will be livestreaming all livestock shows throughout the 2019 event. Friends, family and interested livestock enthusiasts who are not ringside will be able to watch from the comforts of their home or office or on their mobile devices. “We implemented live-streaming two years ago for just a handful of shows. It was very well accepted and it allows family members who can’t make it to Dallas to be part of the SFT. Plus, it is a way for breeders and others involved in the livestock industry to follow their breeding programs and watch their customers compete,” explained MaKayla Cromwell, SFT livestock director.

Cameras will be in place in both the livestock pavilions and swine barn to bring you all the action from the beginning to the end of the fair’s 24 day run. “We are pleased to offer this technology and see it as way to not only promote SFT, but also as a service we can provide for our exhibitors. We’re excited about adding livestreaming for all shows this year for the very first time and if you’re not at the fair, we hope you will join us online,” added Cromwell.

For information on the livestream and how to access it visit www.bigtex.com/livestock.

SLS

A boot scootin’ event for Texas youth

The State Fair of Texas® (SFT) is hosting its first-ever Big Tex Barn Dance Social. This fun and fund-raising event on Thursday, Sept. 19th will benefit youth from all around the Lone Star State.

“Proceeds from the dance will be added to the Big Tex Youth Livestock Auction funds and the Big Tex Scholarship program,” said Susan Brosin, SFT director of development and special projects.

The evening will include a celebration with food, drinks and dancing. Attendees will have the chance to enjoy a variety of fair-favorite snacks, before the fair even opens the following week.

Adding to the fun of the night, the event will host performances by two homegrown Texas musicians, Frankie Leonie and Eleven Hundred Springs. Leonie, who is just a teenager, carries the label of a country artist and was named the “2018 Best Country Act” by the Dallas Observer. Eleven Hundred Springs is a very popular group in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex and across the state. The group is recognized for its old-school country sound, playing both songs made famous by stars of the industry and original pieces that are sure to make you want to dance.

The event was designed with young professionals, couples, and friends of the State Fair in mind. It will be held in the SFT Livestock Judging Pavilion and starts at 8 p.m., continuing to midnight. Parking is free and tickets are $150 per duo or $75 per person. Head to BigTex.com/BarnDance to learn more and buy your ticket today!