



NJHA members with the Barber family at the Barbers' operation near Channing, Texas.

PROGRESSING LEADERS ★★★★★★ IN THE ★★★★★★ TEXAS PANHANDLE

National Junior Hereford Association members gather in Amarillo, Texas, for the annual Faces of Leadership-PRIDE Convention.

by *Katie Roberti*

Amarillo by morning was the trend for many National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members as they headed south to the Texas Panhandle to attend the seventh-annual Faces of Leadership-PRIDE (Program for Reaching Individuals Determined to Excel) Convention, Aug. 6-9.

More than 80 NJHA members ranging from 14 to 21 years old participated in the three-day event focused on leadership. They listened to nationally known speakers, attended workshops and gained beef industry knowledge through ranch and industry tours.

Members arrived Saturday morning, and the event officially

started in the afternoon with a series of icebreakers organized by the NJHA board. With youth from 22 different states at the event, these games gave attendees an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

Making friends

"Participating in the icebreakers has helped me be able to talk to people easier," says Rylee Barber, Channing, Texas, third-time attendee and NJHA member. "I'm not one of the most outgoing people in the world and getting involved in the icebreakers has been neat in getting to know people."

In addition to the Junior National Hereford Expo, Faces of Leadership is a unique networking opportunity for juniors to meet other members and active American Hereford Association (AHA) members, as well as to learn more about the beef industry as a whole.

"Attending Faces of Leadership I've met new people from all across the U.S., but I've also gotten to know some of the California people better outside of just showing," says Wesley Woolery, Hat Creek, Calif.

This year's convention was the second time Woolery has participated in Faces of Leadership. Woolery is an NJHA member and active in the California/Nevada

Junior Hereford Association. He recognizes the state and national connections he has made from the event.

“At the Junior National Hereford Expo you’re focusing on your cattle and showing, and you’ll go interact with people but not as much as with Faces of Leadership,” says Woolery. “The convention is really focused on meeting other people and not so much about cattle, so you get to know people better.”

Welcome to West Texas

After meeting new people during the icebreakers, the juniors loaded up on the buses and headed to Palo Duro Canyon, where they received a bus tour and a Texas BBQ dinner before watching the TEXAS Outdoor Musical. In addition to the entertainment, lights, fireworks and a water work show, the production focused on the history of the Panhandle and the struggles settlers faced in the 1800s.

Chesney Effling, Highmore, S.D., attended Faces of Leadership for the first time this year and says, “I’ve learned a lot about the history of the Panhandle, and I’ve learned things are a little different down here. There are different ways of handling the cattle down here than there are up



Wesley Woolery, Hat Creek, Calif., enjoying participating in the icebreakers that kicked off the event.



Stran Smith, world tie-down roping champion, and his wife, Jennifer, a well-known rodeo commentator shared their tips for success with the group on Sunday morning.

north. It’s really opened my eyes to the different parts of this breed and this industry.”

Rising early to beat some of the Texas heat before a full day of ranch tours, day two was kicked off by attendees hearing from Stran Smith, defending world tie-down roping champion and his wife, Jennifer, a well-known rodeo commentator. The couple shared their advice for excelling outside the showing and their 10 secrets to success.

Following the Smiths’ motivating advice, members partook in a day of tours hosted by the Barber Ranch, Pérez Cattle Co. and Copeland & Sons LLC, all located in the Texas Panhandle and eastern New Mexico. These Hereford operations are well-known for high performance and quality genetics.

“I think it’s pretty cool that we’ve got two other families here that are basically neighbors to ours,

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There was plenty of time to explore Palo Duro Canyon prior to watching the TEXAS Musical.



Lots of laughter filled the room as members from 22 states participated in icebreakers on the first day of the conference.

10 SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Stran Smith, world tie-down roping champion and his wife, Jennifer, a well-known rodeo commentator, share their 10 secrets to success.

- 1 Be real, be you
- 2 Be a note-taker
- 3 Get up early
- 4 Face your fears
- 5 Think the right thoughts
- 6 Be coachable
- 7 Surround yourself with the right people
- 8 Stay hungry
- 9 Give everything you got
- 10 Have balance





Everyone had the chance to judge four classes of cattle at the Barber Ranch.



Rylee and Mary Barber conversing during the judging contest.



Michael Pérez discussing his operation and cattle with participants.



A few of the cattle featured at Pérez Cattle Co. near Nara Visa, N.M.

and we can share genetics and be really competitive in a global and a national scene,” says Terri Barber of Barber Ranch, Channing, Texas. “We’re obviously privileged to be next to these operations and kind of share the same genetics and philosophies.”

Barber Ranch was the first stop of the ranch visits. At the ranch, a judging contest was put on featuring the ranch’s best cattle. In addition

to evaluating four classes of cattle, members got to see one of their peer’s operations. Rylee Barber worked with her family to plan the tour as well as the judging contest and says, “It was fun getting to show everyone our program and what we stand for.”

Following the judging contest, Pérez Cattle Co., Nara Visa, N.M., invited the group to sort through its best pens. Members had the opportunity to talk

with the Pérez family and to discuss the cattle they were viewing.

After a toasty morning of sorting through and judging cattle, the group enjoyed an authentic enchilada lunch hosted by the Pérez family at the Nara Visa Schoolhouse.

During a discussion panel at lunch featuring a representative for each of the host ranches, Drew Pérez shared how he thought it was special the event



Cliff Copeland welcoming the group to the ranch.



A full day of ranch tours ended with a chuck wagon dinner at Copeland & Sons LLC.



Members enjoyed a view of the best herds from Copeland & Sons LLC from the coach buses.



Eddie Slowikowski spoke at the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum as the event's closing keynote.



The group learned more about a cloned bull project at The Nance Ranch at West Texas A&M University on one of their stops.

was hosted in the Panhandle of Texas and eastern New Mexico, an area most people don't often visit. "It really is neat to have you guys get to experience it and for us, it's an honor as well," Drew says.

Finally, as the sun was just beginning to set, the buses pulled into a pasture so that the passengers could view cattle which were being moved by more than 15 horseback people at Copeland & Sons LLC., Nara Visa, N.M., for the final ranch tour of the day. After examining cattle in the pasture, the group ended the day at the homestead of the ranch.

Matt Copeland explained what each animal contributed to the ranch's operation and the success of the genetics and performance of these cattle as members viewed them. The long day of touring operations and evaluating cattle concluded with the Copeland family providing a fun evening, featuring a chuck wagon dinner along with a cowboy singer for entertainment.

Thinking about the future

Each year during Faces of Leadership, various land grant universities are visited and activities are planned with the goal of sparking an interest in members about attending college.

During last year's Faces of Leadership Conference, visiting Colorado State University (CSU) inspired Woolery to attend CSU as a freshman in the fall of 2016 and to pursue a degree in agricultural business.

"Visiting Colorado State University helped me make my decision of where I wanted to go to college, and I decided to go to CSU because of the tour

we did there last year during Faces of Leadership," says Woolery.

Juniors spent the final morning at the West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) Nance Ranch and the afternoon on campus at WTAMU, engaging in workshops held by AHA staff members. The group learned more about the agriculture programs WTAMU has to offer its students, and current WTAMU students held a workshop focused on group dynamics. In addition, they learned about a cloned bull project at WTAMU.

Advice on how to select a college and a program was also a topic of conversation during the discussion panel featuring a representative from each of the host ranches for the event.

Kyle Pérez, Pérez Cattle Co., and Kansas State University alumnus, encouraged members, when considering where to attend college, to look into their hearts and to decide if they want to be in the Hereford breed in the future.

"Wherever you choose to go, stay involved, whether it be in leadership, other breed associations, school

activities or the junior board, and when you get out of school to get involved again," says Pérez. "The more you're involved, the more your face is out there, the more your boots are pointed forward, the more productive people you are going to be in life."

Participants also saw multiple feedlots in the area and David Baumann, chairman of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, gave a tour while driving through the Dawn Custom Cattle Feeders feedlot.

The group ended the day at the American Quarter Horse Association Hall of Fame and Museum.

The three days were packed with stops and activities encompassing the theme of this year's conference "Our Brand Is Beef."

While the knowledge of the beef industry and the miles these juniors gained from attending the conference will continue to help them as they stay involved in the breed, the connections made will be irreplaceable.

"Yes, you are here to look at Hereford operations," says NJHA member, Trevor Johnson, Centerville, S.D., "and look at the cattle, but Faces of Leadership is more about the friends you'll meet and the places you'll go."

The NJHA members experienced firsthand the phrase "everything is bigger in Texas" during their time in Amarillo, but, more importantly, because of their involvement in the association and the Faces of Leadership Conference, their connections, knowledge and futures just became a little bigger as well. **HW**



Members wrapped up a fun trip in Amarillo at the Big Texan Steak House, known for its 72 oz. steak.