

Fall/Winter 2022

Backbone

STORIES OF PEOPLE IN AGRICULTURE

4-H and the Nebraska State Fair

Seeing double

Vavricek twins
showcase talents
at state fair

And more stories
from Platte, Colfax
and Butler counties

A Lee Enterprises publication



Butler County
Health Care Center

BCHCC AUDIOLOGY



Kristin Scheele,
Au.D, CCC-A

- Adult & Pediatric Services
- Diagnostic & Screening Hearing Exams
- Hearing Aid Fitting & Programing
- Hearing Aid Repairs
- Custom Hearing Protection & Musician Plugs
- Aural Rehabilitation
- Auditory Brain Stem Response
- Cochlear Implant Evaluation & Follow Up
- Tinnitus Assessment & Counseling
- Auditory Processing Assessments
- Newborn Hearing Screening Follow-up
- Visual Reinforcement Audiometry
- Veteran Community Care



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FALL/WINTER 2022



M4



M6



M8



M10



M12



M14

M4 // A YEAR OF FIRSTS:
NATALIE DEWISPELARE
SHOWS SWINE, FASHION

M6 // DOUBLE THE TALENT: ALLISON AND
ADDISON VAVRICEK
SHOWCASE SKILLS

M8 // VARIETY OF SKILLS: DELANEY
CHELOHA ROCKS IN
THE STATIC EXHIBIT

M10 // A FAMILY AFFAIR:
JACE PRINZ COMES
FROM A LINE OF 4H'ERS

M12 // SHOWING CATTLE:
BRODY WIESE LOOKS
TO FUTURE GROWTH

M14 // SIBLING DUO:
KALEIGH AND GARRETT
RUTH SHOWCASE
SWINE, RELATIONSHIPS

**M16 // NEBRASKA STATE
FAIR 2022**

Backbone

REGIONAL PUBLISHER

Carrie Colburn

MANAGING EDITOR

Monica Garcia

ADVERTISING TEAM LEADERS

Columbus, Schuyler and David City

Kelly Muchmore: (402-563-7554)

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jared Barton

Hannah Schrodt

COVER PHOTO

Jared Barton

Backbone is a Lee Enterprises publication
produced by The Columbus Telegram,
Schuyler Sun, The David City Banner-Press.



Natalie DeWispelare is pictured with one of the pigs she showed at the Nebraska State Fair this year.

HANNAH SCHRODT, THE BANNER-PRESS

A NEW experience

David City's Natalie DeWispelare showed swine, fashion at state fair



COURTESY PHOTO

Natalie DeWispelare poses with her pig and ribbons she won at the Nebraska State Fair.

my class of 10 for one of my pigs and then from my other one I got fourth out of 10 and then seventh out of ninth," she said.

Natalie said that showing at the Nebraska State Fair is quite a different experience than a county fair — it's more hectic with the amount of people there.

"There's two show arenas, so pretty fast paced," said Natalie's mother, Brit-tany. "They just keep the shows moving. Definitely a lot bigger than she's ever had to deal with before. She did pretty well for her very first year showing at the state fair. I think she was pretty confident, too, pretty proud of it too."

The process for showing at fairs starts in the spring.

"The beginning of March, and I had to feed them two times a day and then when we got closer to fair I had to feed them three times a day," Natalie explained.

She also had to wash them every other day and walk them daily. These days, she is washing them every day and continues to walk them.

The family lives on farmland and has swine, chickens and a rabbit. They've owned other livestock previously.

HANNAH SCHRODT
The Banner-Press

2022 was the year of many firsts for Natalie DeWispelare. Among these new adventures, the 12-year-old, showed swine for the first time at the Nebraska State Fair.

Natalie, who lives in rural David City, has been involved in 4-H ever since she was about 5 or 6 years old. She shows pigs and chickens and also takes part in the fashion show, as well as other 4-H projects.

Natalie showed her two crossbred gilts at the state fair — Dolly and Baby.

"For swine, I got second purple out of



Natalie DeWispelare is pictured with one of the pigs she showed at the Nebraska State Fair this year.

HANNAH SCHRODT, **THE BANNER-PRESS**

A NEW experience

David City's Natalie DeWispelare showed swine, fashion at state fair



COURTESY PHOTO

Natalie DeWispelare poses with her pig and ribbons she won at the Nebraska State Fair.

my class of 10 for one of my pigs and then from my other one I got fourth out of 10 and then seventh out of ninth," she said.

Natalie said that showing at the Nebraska State Fair is quite a different experience than a county fair — it's more hectic with the amount of people there.

"There's two show arenas, so pretty fast paced," said Natalie's mother, Brittany. "They just keep the shows moving. Definitely a lot bigger than she's ever had to deal with before. She did pretty well for her very first year showing at the state fair. I think she was pretty confident, too, pretty proud of it too."

The process for showing at fairs starts in the spring.

"The beginning of March, and I had to feed them two times a day and then when we got closer to fair I had to feed them three times a day," Natalie explained.

She also had to wash them every other day and walk them daily. These days, she is washing them every day and continues to walk them.

The family lives on farmland and has swine, chickens and a rabbit. They've owned other livestock previously.

HANNAH SCHRODT
The Banner-Press

2022 was the year of many firsts for Natalie DeWispelare. Among these new adventures, the 12-year-old, showed swine for the first time at the Nebraska State Fair.

Natalie, who lives in rural David City, has been involved in 4-H ever since she was about 5 or 6 years old. She shows pigs and chickens and also takes part in the fashion show, as well as other 4-H projects.

Natalie showed her two crossbred gilts at the state fair — Dolly and Baby.

"For swine, I got second purple out of

When asked what she likes about showing swine, Natalie said, “probably the experiences that I make and the people that I’ve met.”

For the 4-H fashion show, Natalie made a dress this year. Last year – she had also taken part in the fashion show at the state fair – she crafted a romper.

The amount of time it takes to make a piece of clothing depends on what type of clothing it is, Natalie said.

“The dress that I made for this year took me like two months. But it’s because my sister and me rotated days with my grandma,” she added, noting her grandmother taught her and her sister how to sew.

Natalie modeled her clothes at the fair. “For the fashion show, the modeling judge chose one representative from Butler County to model at the state fair. Natalie was chosen and she was chosen last year too. This year, she was definitely a lot more comfortable on the runway, knowing a little bit of what it was about,”



COURTESY PHOTO

Natalie DeWispelare shows the purple ribbon she received during the 4-H fashion show held at the Nebraska State Fair this year. She is also wearing the dress she made.

Brittany said.

Brittany added that Natalie had to learn to walk slowly and pivot. She also needed

to wear comfortable shoes. Natalie practiced a lot for her runway walk last year since it was her first year, Brittany said.

“Last year, she got a blue ribbon at the state fair in the fashion show and this year she got a purple ribbon so she improved and she did well,” Brittany said.

Brittany noted that 2021 was the first year the family had gone to the state fair since it moved to Grand Island.

“This year she kind of talked us into showing her pigs at the state fair and we were a little hesitant at first because we just weren’t familiar with it,” Brittany said. “I showed pigs growing up but I never showed at the state fair level. It was definitely fun to learn about the state fair and what that’s all about.”

For the first time, Natalie showed swine, Dolly, at the Aksarben Stock Show.

“That’ll be a whole new experience too, she’s never shown at Aksarben,” said Brittany in September. “But the good news is that is in the same place where the State Fair was held, so at least she’ll be familiar



COURTESY PHOTO

Natalie DeWispelare shows one of her pigs at the Nebraska State Fair over the summer.

with the facility.”

Natalie said she hopes to talk her parents into letting her show two more pigs next fair season and may take part in the fashion show again.



WHEN YOU NEED
SPECIALIZED CARE,
HAVE FAITH.

SEEING PATIENTS IN COLUMBUS.

CARDIOLOGY

Ajay Chander, MD
(402) 564-9610

ORTHOPEDICS

Jared Rickert, DO
(402) 564-9610

ENDOCRINOLOGY

Enas Al Zaghal, MD
Kaitlin G. Brau, MD
(402) 844-8680

**PHYSICAL MEDICINE
& REHABILITATION**

Mahmut Kaner, MD
(402) 844-8078

frpsclinics.org |    

**START YOUR
FUTURE AT
BEHLEN.**

Production and office positions available!

We provide on-the-job training, as well as tuition reimbursement programs. Behlen offers competitive wages and an outstanding benefits package. *Visit our website to see the full list of opportunities!*



Apply Online Today! www.behlenmfg.com/careers

Behlen Mfg. Co. is an Equal Opportunity Employer



Above: Ally, left, and Addy, right, Vavricek pose with their animals and prize belt buckles at their family farm while their father, Brian Vavricek, holds their recent state titles. JARED BARTON, **THE SCHUYLER SUN**

Top: Addy Vavricek, left, and Ally, right, pose with their recently-won Ellis County Fair banners from Ellis County, Kansas. COURTESY PHOTO

A POWERFUL DUO

Schuyler twins take state fair showmanship titles

JARED BARTON
The Schuyler Sun

For Allison (Ally) and Addison (Addy) Vavricek, animal showmanship isn't just a hobby, it's a way of life. And, they have the awards to show it.

The pair, 15-year-old twin sisters from Schuyler, have filled a glass display with animal showmanship awards spanning their careers.

"We started showing when we were 9 years old. I remember my parents just asked if we wanted to do 4-H and I didn't really know what it was," Ally said.

Brian Vavricek, their father, said he had been involved with 4-H when he was younger, but more on the craftsmanship side of things, so it was something of a new world for him when his daughters expressed interest in the activity.

"I was involved in 4-H. I didn't show any animals, my wife never did either, I was more involved in woodworking and welding projects I brought to the fair. We didn't bring any experience," Brian said.

The sisters took to showing animals,

they said, and even found coaches along the way in Brodie Mackey and Tessa Shaw, animal experts from Wyoming who the pair have come to know well.

"There was a couple who moved here from Wyoming that were friends with our 4-H leader. Our leader asked if anyone needed help, we said yes and they still help to this day. They're kind of our second parents, in a way," Addy said.

Ally and Addy set up their livestock in a corrugated metal shed on the family farm and started working with their animals every day, hours before school and hours after, something every animal showman knows to be a routine.

"Sheep need to be treadmilled (the walking of livestock on treadmills designed for animals) more than goats. I'm up before 6 every day. I treadmill them, sometimes practice showing them," Ally said. "We're usually out here for two to four hours every day at least. Consistency is key"

Addy took a short break between the intermediate and senior levels, but came back with a desire to work with goats rather

than sheep. Despite their showing different species, the sisters are able to work together a lot and help each other out.

“Sheep and goats are pretty similar. We work together, on days we alternate so one day we wash them, do their hair,” Addy said.

“The other days, we’ll practice showing them and every day we treadmill them, walk them. We help each other out but we do have our own way of doing things,” Ally said.

At the Nebraska State Fair, Addy took the title of Overall Goat Showman Grand Champion with Future Farmers of America (FFA) for her goat, P Diddy. Ally got 4-H Grand Champion Sheep Showman for her Hampshire sheep, Little Moe.

In terms of the girls’ work ethics, Brian said, they work hard for their animals and for their titles, of which there are many.

“A lot of families that show have multiple siblings that show together, they’re not unique in that. With them being twin sisters, they really motivate each other,” Brian said.

Brian added that with the sisters’ long list of activities including basketball, volleyball, softball and soccer, they have reason to be tired or to maybe take a break from their duties, but they instead choose to do their jobs every day.

“There’s times they’ll get home from volleyball late and it would be easy to skip out on chores or whatever they need to do but they encourage and motivate each other. When both can go, it’s easier than just one going out and doing that at night,” Brian said.

Ally and Addy agreed that working together keeps them motivated and that some times they prefer spending time with each other or with their animals to going out and doing things with friends.

“We’ve gotten a lot better this year because I love sharing what I love most with the person I love most, which is Addy, so it’s gotten a lot better, getting to spend time in the barn with her,” Ally said. “I’d rather be in the barn working with the animals than going out and



Left: Addy Vavricek scratches P Diddy’s head after taking him outside for a few minutes. **Right:** Ally Vavricek unwraps Little Moe’s leg wraps to brush him.



JARED BARTON PHOTOS, **THE SCHUYLER SUN**



COURTESY PHOTO

Addy and Ally Vavricek hug after their wins at the Nebraska State Fair

doing something at night.”

Ally and Addy said being involved in showmanship has taught them a lot, aside from the practical aspects of showmanship and the raising and training of animals.

“I really encourage people to show livestock because it’s really built my character by showing me hard work and sportsmanship,” Ally said. “It’s really built up my confidence too because with sports, I can sort of get down on myself but livestock has really built my confidence and relationships all over the nation.”

Addy added that her love for the industry comes from the people they’ve met and things they’ve learned through programs like 4-H, like discipline, responsibility and the values Ally mentioned.

“It’s not like a sport, you have a living animal that you have to water, feed and take care of every day, make sure they’re healthy,” Ally said. “You can learn a lot of things from that. I love meeting new people who share the same values I do, working with Ally and I just love my goats so much.”

Brian said that while his arena is more in sports and coaching, he enjoys watching his daughters succeed at something they love in addition to their already heavy schedule of school and sports is enjoyable for him.

“When you work hard at something, even when you put work in and time, you sometimes don’t come out on top in the end but to see how dedicated they’ve been to it and the time they’ve put in it and how much they love it, for them to see that success is amazing,” Brian said.

The sisters also compete in other states, such as South Dakota, Wyoming, Iowa, Kentucky and most recently Kansas, where they took home Grand Champion Market Goat and Grand Champion Market Lamb titles at the Ellis County Fair. Brian said that with success being difficult to come by in team sports, these

kind of titles mean a lot.

“When they’re able to compete in something like this that they really love, winning senior showmanship at the state fair is equivalent to winning a state championship in a sport so I was excited for them when they did that,” Brian said.

In addition to animal showmanship, Ally and Addy are also learning to judge, in hopes of doing it in college or beyond. In addition to the personal enjoyment they get from it, judging presents some scholarship opportunities.

“We’ve already met judging coaches from colleges because I want to judge in college. Seeing you show and win and getting to meet them, getting recognized is really good for scholarship opportunities,” Ally said.

That ability to carry over into college and probably a career, Brian said, is one of the bigger differences between livestock showmanship and other extracurricular activities.

“There are tremendous opportunities for scholarships and the percentage of kids who compete in livestock showing or judging who go into that industry is far greater than that of people who become professional basketball or football players,” Brian said before turning to Ally and Addy with a piece of advice.

“But don’t give up on those sports.”



Delaney Cheloha shows off her 4H ribbons and project.

MONICA GARCIA, THE COLUMBUS TELEGRAM

A 'jack of all trades'

Platte County's Delaney Cheloha participates in various fair activities

MONICA GARCIA
The Columbus Telegram

Jam, decorated tables, growing vegetables, photography, creating a cutting board, baking ... when it comes to participating in the static competitions in the county and state fairs, Delaney Cheloha, 13, has done it all.

And when she talks about it, her shy demeanor melts away and a confident smile takes over.

Six years ago, Delaney joined 4H participating in a variety of static competitions including gardening, baking and more. As a Platte County resident, she is

part of the Dandy Bakers 4-H Club from Platte County.

As in years past, Delaney's submissions have grown. This year she has a big entry – a steampunk decorated mannequin. This year, for this project, she earned Grand Champion at the Platte County Fair and a purple ribbon and earned a green ribbon which was a special recognition called the 4-H Design Gallery in the Nebraska State Fair.

Her mannequin falls under the home environment 3-D non-string art part of the competition. This wasn't her first go at a project like this. Delaney said other

projects include: a windchime, a "stained glass" table using various pieces of broken glass and a key holder that used silverware shaped into sign language gestures.

"I get inspiration from a lot of different places," Delaney said.

This year's project came to her when she spotted this mannequin in a Goodwill store in Lincoln. At the time, she was watching "Locke & Key." It had the same feeling to it, she explained, a steampunk fashion.

"I was like – oh my gosh, I really like this, and this seems like a really cool project. So I thought I would try and incorpo-



COURTESY PHOTO

rate an idea that I really liked at the time with the mannequin I found," Delaney said.

This year's project was very complex.

After buying her mannequin, she went to finding charms, gears and other odds and ends to add on to her project. She found these items in her family's garage and various stores.

The leather was then added to the mannequin in different shapes giving it a very textured look. Stretching the fabric was tough, Delaney said, and so was the addition of the chains.

Delaney used bottles and bottles of glue, and jokes nothing is coming off her finished product.

Along with chains, charms, gears and more, Delaney added some leather details to the side showcasing her talents of measuring and laying out complicated designs.

To finish, black leather paint was added and then covered with a copper, bronze and gold paste. The paste was dabbed on and then a blue color was added to give it a rusty look. The finishing spray sealed in all the hard work.

This project was started last fall, taking a bit longer than projects in the past.

"All of it was pretty hard," Delaney said of the most difficult part of her project. "The motivation was difficult."

It took the teen about 160 hours to complete. There were times, Delaney said, she didn't want to even look at her project. But to help get her through, she thought, "when it was done, I didn't have to work on it anymore," she said with a smile.

"But then when it was finished, and I saw it, I was like – I want this," Delaney said.

Her prize project is displayed in the family's living room, but Delaney would like to see it in her room.

"I'm quite proud of this one," said mom, Barbie Cheloha. "No matter what she places, I'm proud that she goes out there and tries, and does her best."

So far, this is her favorite 4H project. Delaney enjoys this project most because of how much time she put into it, all the elements involved and, of course, the prize earned.

This was Delaney's third trip to the state fair, but this was the highest she has placed in that competition.

"(It was) very overwhelming and excit-

ing," Delaney said of being recognized.

Along with her mannequin, she participated in a group project alongside her peers in Dandy Bakers 4-H Club for state fair. This year's group project was barn quilts. The team earned a purple ribbon.

But, as we have learned, it doesn't stop there...

She entered a quilted pillow, lemon lavender scones, strawberry jam, a hand-made purse and dress, and she modeled her dress. All these items were part of the Nebraska State Fair. Other placements include: a blue ribbon for her purse, a purple ribbon for her jelly and a blue ribbon for her modeling.

Delaney also made asiago cheese bread, which is a bit of a sore spot. Barbie explained it did not make it to fair because it was undercooked. Delaney seems to think otherwise as it technically on her table.

The teen said she enjoys making different things. With a big grin, Delaney explains as people ask if she wants to try



COURTESY PHOTO

Delaney Cheloha is pictured working on her 4-H project.

something new, she just says "yes!" Every year her list of projects grows. This year was her first year for modeling which was

a bit nerve wracking for Delaney.

Her confidence grew from the experience, Barbie said.

"Some of these projects, I'm scared to take on with her. ... It can be (expensive, too)," Barbie said. "But it's fun seeing what she creates. I do like that. Her creative mind can be out here sometimes. I'm like, how are we going to make this work, but it all turns out in the end."

Doing things like modeling and participating in the interview aspect of her projects has helped her become a better public speaker, Delaney said. Baking has boosted her math skills.

"It was very fun," Delaney said of participating in the state fair.

She hopes to use her creative experiences in the future and would like to be a kindergarten teacher when she grows up.

Next year's project is top secret, Delaney said. The hint – the project falls under home improvement string art.

"We don't want to give others ideas," she said.

Overlooking nothing. Ready for everything.

Farmers and ranchers, the world relies on you. And you deserve a bank that's rooted in the details and dedicated to helping you do more.

fnbo
Agribusiness

fnbo.com/agribusiness

Member FDIC

CVA Central Valley Ag
GROWING AGRICULTURE TOGETHER

OUR PLANET IS HUNGRY. TOGETHER, WE FEED IT.

cvacoop.com



COURTESY PHOTO

Jace Prinz's cow waits patiently for instructions at the Nebraska State Fair.

CROWN PRINZ

Clarkson's Jace Prinz takes reserve champion intermediate showman title

JARED BARTON
The Schuyler Sun

Animal showmanship is a family affair for Clarkson's Jace Prinz.

Recently, Prinz, 12, along with the support of his family, took the reserve champion title at the Nebraska State Fair for his Simmental Heifer, Josie. He also took home the title for Champion Intermediate Beef Showman at the Colfax County Fair.

For the Prinz family, 4-H is ingrained in their history, going back to Kenny Prinz, Jace's dad, doing showmanship every year he could before aging out at 19.

"My dad used to do it, he raised show calves until he couldn't do it, so I started doing it. I started when I was 8," Jace said. "Just spending time in the barn with the livestock and my family helping and showing is just really fun. That's all I can say."

Jace's own history showcases his commitment to the craft having competed at other shows, at other levels, and in other categories. Last year, Jace placed 13th at the state level for public speaking and his cow won fifth overall at the national level for its class.

"You have to work with them a lot, get them used to you and used to being in the barn a lot. You have to put a lot of work into them so they'll work better for

you," Jace said.

In addition to public speaking, Jace occasionally competes in other categories outside of livestock. He is learning how to be a judge himself some day.

"I do public speaking and I sometimes do a couple projects like photography and woodwork. I also do livestock judging contests."

That dedication isn't just during fair season either, Jace and Kenny said. Jace added he'll be in the barn as early as 5:30 a.m. and out late into the night. Kenny agreed adding, that it's a long process with cattle.

"The cattle we have, we start on the calves in September or so and work with them until the next August or September, basically year round," Kenny said. "Pigs, we start late March, early April and go until the county fair."

Kenny said the family is obviously proud and happy to see Jace's hard work pay off, after the many days of working with the heifer to get her show-ready.

"I've been involved my whole life pretty much and I've met a lot of people and learned a lot of things from people all over the country and it's fun and neat to see him doing that and learning those same type of things," Kenny said.

Those kind of experiences and interactions, Kenny said, wouldn't be possible without the livestock shows Jace participates in. For the past two years, Jace has gone to about 20-30 shows.

"The show ring and competing is a part of it but the other part is he gets to meet people from everywhere and make friends that in normal circumstances he would never meet or run across," Kenny said.

Jace also shows pigs, which is a different level of competition altogether, he said, with a different approach to training, gaining trust and getting them in shape.

"Cows, you have to work with a lot more, getting them in the barn every single day, making sure they get washed or rinsed at least once or twice a day," Jace said. "Pigs, you have to take them out,

rinse them and work with them a while to get them used to the stick you're using to work them."

No matter the category, raising and showing animals requires a lot of work. Jace and many other competitors put in long days with their animals getting them ready for fairs or shows.

"It's long hours, it's a lot of work, we do it as a family a lot of times. All of us are in the barn working together as a family and we have fun with it. It all cultivates in the show," Kenny said.

At the state fair, champions of the various divisions and classes participate in an animal parade of sorts — a champion drive — where the champion animals are shown off one last time, which Jace got to be a part of this year.

"It's fun to see him get out there and experience things, especially at the state fair, he won the division and got to go out to the grand champion drive," Kenny said. "Getting to see him experience that was really fun."



Jace Prinz, 12, and his family pose next to his cow at the 2021 American Junior Simmental Association (AJSA) Grand Slam National Junior Classic, where Jace took fifth overall nationally.

Jace doesn't really have any special techniques when it comes to showing animals, other than good old hard work and dedication. Kenny said showmen learn

over time what animals to bring to the competition and how to take care of them.

"It's no different than playing football. The more you practice, the harder

you work, the more chances you get to compete in games. It's similar with livestock," Kenny said. "You start with a good animal and it comes with experience, but you have to work hard and do little things some others don't."

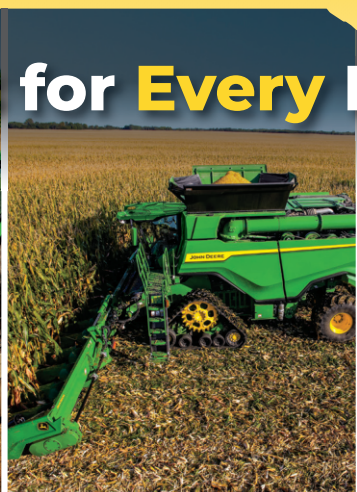
Jace said in terms of the competition between county and state fairs, he has noticed a difference in the level of effort put into the animals between the two.

"At the county fair, it's just not as high of a level of competition as the state fair. There's people who work really hard and get up really early before school and come back right after," Jace said. "There's definitely a big difference between the competition of the state and county levels."

Jace said the competition was close for the champion title, but that he knows what he'll need to do for next time.

"I feel really good the one who beat me was really good and they work a lot with that one so I just need to work a little bit harder, I was really close so I just need to work a little bit harder to get there."

Solutions for Every Field



JOHN DEERE



AKRS
EQUIPMENT



AKRS.com





Brody Wiese (left) was named the 2022 Supreme Champion Market Animal at the 2022 Nebraska Junior Beef Expo in Norfolk.

COURTESY PHOTO

Carrying on the tradition

Platte County's Brody Wiese showcases his cattle at various competitions

MONICA GARCIA
The Columbus Telegram

Brody Wiese, 12, and his heifer Liberty were state fair ready.

Brody's mom, Nancy Wiese, did as one does for the Nebraska State Fair: Made a stop in the extension office to register and receive Liberty's ear tag for the competition.

Those at the Extension went to the back and handed over the ear tag – 1776.

"Her name took on a whole new meaning when they gave me the ear tag number – 1776," Nancy said. "It gave me goosebumps."

Liberty. 1776. The year the United States became a country.

Little sister Landri takes all the credit for the name. Liberty's mom is named Sky after a "Paw Patrol" character. Landri wanted to keep it going and suggested "Liberty" after watching the "Paw Patrol: The Movie." A

new character, "Liberty," was added to the group of hero pups.

"Pretty fun," Brody said of the connection Liberty has with her tag number and showing her in competitions.

Brody has been in 4-H for five years, and is part of a long line of 4-H'ers. As a matter of fact, his parents met at a competition, the National Western Stockshow in Colorado. Showing, as Brody does now, cattle.

After growing up seeing his parent's involvement in cattle, Brody said he was ready to show when he was able to – at the age of 8. It was one of those things, he said, that felt like he was waiting for a long time.

"Helping dad with all of the cattle stuff, I've just wanted to do it forever," Brody said.

Before he was able to show in competitions, Brody helped his father wash and prepare the cattle for sale. His parents also helped older kids in Platte County show cattle. Nancy explained that their family sells show cattle – steers and heifers. The family would offer to help the kids who were purchasing the cattle.

Those kids became mentors to Brody as

he approached competition age.

In his first year, Brody showed both a steer and a heifer, and right off the bat, he was a success. Junior Nationals is held in different states each year with each breed having its own show. Brody participated in Maine-Anjou and Chiana.

"It was amazing because we went to Junior Nationals and I got reserve overall (Reserve Grand Champion Chi Progress Steer)," Brody said.

"So that was pretty cool for his first year to go to that and do so well," Nancy said.

The next goal is winning the state fair, Brody said. The 12-year-old is getting close.

Preparing cattle is a full-time commitment, Brody said. This involves very early mornings as well as late nights caring for the animal. Caring for these creatures involves bathing, brushing multiple times a day and monitoring their feed among other duties. It is very hard, Brody said.

To encourage hair growth, the barn where the cattle stay is cooled. The cattle are put in this barn before sun up and are not let out until after the sun has set and it's cool enough -- this is part of where the long days come in.

"Wanting to win state fair that bad, makes me go every day," Brody said of his commitment to his cattle.

Getting to know all the people involved in the 4-H community is what Brody enjoys most. He has friends all over the country. And of course, winning the various competitions.

This year's competitions included Platte County Fair, Nebraska State Fair and more – about 15 in total. This year they stayed in the state but in the past they have gone out of state including Kansas. The hope is that Brody will show at the stock show like his parents sometime in the future.

"I really don't know," Brody said how he keeps keeping up with all the competitions. But worth it, he added.

This is Brody's third year going to the state fair. This year he brought a steer and a heifer.

Brody and Liberty placed high, taking

part in the Grand Drive, and eventually being named Reserve Grand Champion Market Heifer. Unfortunately, his steer was having a hard time walking on the concrete. The steer placed third in his class.

At the Platte County Fair, he showed a different heifer. At this fair, the animals go through an auction where they then go to market.

Along with showing cattle, Brody showed one sheep at the Platte County Fair, placing third. This was really to help out his sister, who placed fourth in the competition. This was the first year the family showed sheep, Nancy added.

Showing a different animal had its differences, Brody said.

Aside from his animals, Brody also had an agronomy project. This was an end crop display, which shows the end use of the crop. He chose corn silage for his focus.

He received a purple ribbon at the county fair and a state fair entry. At the state fair, he received a purple ribbon and a special



COURTESY PHOTO

Brody Wiese stands with an animal at a competition.

judges' recognition.

"(It was) pretty fun just knowing that there were thousands of kids that took projects over there and I was one of the lucky ones that won that," Brody said.

Brody said he enjoyed doing this project because, as he says, he's a "nerd" for toy tractors. This was his second year creating a project like this.

"My grandpa owns a feedlot so I like to go down there a couple times with my dad and see what they do with the silage and all that," Brody said. "That kind of just interests me."

Looking to the future, Brody is looking to continue following in his parents' footsteps. This is something that he has always enjoyed with his family and friends, he said.

"My future plans are to go off to Oklahoma and go to college here and come back and raise show calves," Brody said. "This is something that I've always wanted to do."

Nancy is proud of her son. The award he earned his first year at Junior Nationals was the one she earned in her showing years.

"It's kind of what we've always hoped for, I guess," she said. "... It was kind of fun to share that experience with him. That he's following in the footsteps. ... This year he's taken a huge growth spurt. You can see he's maturing and taking a lot more ownership of it himself."

This being, a family endeavor, is hard work, Nancy said, but it brings the family together.

Next season Brody is looking forward to showing his animals again. Junior Nationals are coming back to Grand Island this year and that is exciting, he said.

"Just hoping we get a couple good cows that we can show and do (well) at a bunch of shows," Brody said.

**Improving agriculture,
improving lives.**

**Proud to Serve Area
Farmers!**

Rerucha Ag & Auto Supply
(Across from the fire station)
537 D Street, David City NE (402) 367-3086
Mark & Bev Rerucha, Owners



SUPER SAVER

Free in-town Pharmacy delivery
402-563-3349

www.Super-Saver.com • 3318 23rd Street
Open 24 hours per day 7 days per week.





Garrett, left, and Kaleigh Ruth visit some of their pigs on a recent day. The siblings have been showing swine and taking part in baking competitions at 4-H for several years.

HANNAH SCHRODT, **THE BANNER-PRESS**

Sibling bonding

Kaleigh and Garrett Ruth showcase swine, baking at state fair

HANNAH SCHRODT
The Banner-Press

Siblings Kaleigh and Garrett Ruth have been involved in 4-H since a young age and have been taking part in the Nebraska State Fair for several years.

Kaleigh, 13, and Garrett, 12, were about 8 and 7, respectively, when they started participating in 4-H. They both show

swine and bake.

There are multiple benefits to 4-H, they both noted.

For Kaleigh, it's the people she gets to meet.

"You get to meet a lot of new people and they become really good friends because you see them all the time during the summer. And just competing because then those friends you go against each

other but you still like each other at the end. And it's really fun," Kaleigh said.

Garrett added there's personal development as well.

"The kids that don't do 4-H have no idea what it's like to do it against the kids that have been in 4-H," Garrett said.

"A lot of what you learn is leadership, you learn new skills. With your family, you have teamwork and you don't get



COURTESY PHOTO

Garrett Ruth, left, and Kaleigh Ruth pose for a photo with the purple ribbons they received in baking at the Butler County Fair.

mad at each other if you're going against each other."

The siblings start preparing to show swine in the spring, when they get their pigs.

"When we first get the pigs in March or April, we usually start to whip train them and get them used to the spots where we hit them, to get them to do what (we) want. Wash them to get their hair and skin clean. Get them used to a brush," Garrett said.

Kaleigh added they also make sure the pigs get the nice, dark color that judges look for.

According to Garrett, they suntan the pigs for roughly half an hour a day in the early afternoon.

Their schedules for taking care of the pigs look different depending on if school's in session, and it can get a little hectic.

"For summer it's more like every day wash, walk. Clean their pens once every week," Kaleigh said. "But once school starts you just kind of go with it and try and get all the work done in as you can because you're so busy, especially with sports."

Baking is a fun time for the siblings



HANNAH SCHRODT PHOTOS, **THE BANNER-PRESS**

Left: Garrett Ruth, 12, poses for a photo next to one of his pigs. **Right:** Kaleigh Ruth, 13, has been showing swine and takes part in baking at 4-H. She took part in the Nebraska State Fair this year.

because it means quality time with their great-grandma, who lives near them.

Kaleigh said when fair time comes, she looks through recipes to decide what she wants to do.

“I’ll probably do rolls again this year,” said Kaleigh, whose croissant rolls received special recognition at the state fair. “I feel like rolls with Grandma are really special because she’s only taught like a couple people how to make them like that. A lot of people have tried and just can’t do it without our help.”

When The Banner-Press asked about their great-grandma’s secret to baking, Kaleigh responded, “she says that she puts love into each roll.”

Garrett, on the other hand, has a different favorite when he’s baking.

“I’m the pie guy,” said Garrett, who had a cherry pie for the fair. “I just do all the pies. And sometimes cookies.”

The state fair went well this year, Kaleigh noted.

“We met a lot of new people while we were there, like we do every year,” Kaleigh said. “We go round, we walk around with them and go to the vendor areas and



COURTESY PHOTO

Siblings Kaleigh Ruth, left and Garrett Ruth are pictured at the 2022 Butler County Fair.

get food. We rode rides this year, with another friend that we’ve had since we’ve been showing.”

The siblings didn’t slow down after the Nebraska State Fair ended; they were busy preparing for the Aksarben Stock Show in Grand Island, which was held the weekend

leading up to the Banner-Press interview in late September.

“This week has already been busy because it’s our homecoming week,” Kaleigh said. “But we’ve been going and checking on them and feeding them, make sure their feeding is right and stuff like that.”

BUTLER COUNTY FAIR AND NEBRASKA STATE FAIR RESULTS

State Fair

Garrett:

- Purple Ribbon Double Crust Fruit Pie
- Purple Ribbon Intermediate Swine Showmanship
- Purple Ribbon Crossbred Market Barrow Class

Kaleigh:

- Purple Ribbon and Special Recognition Specialty Rolls
- Purple Ribbon Intermediate Swine Showmanship
- Purple Ribbon Crossbred Market Gilt Class
- Champion Division II Market Gilt

County Fair

Garrett:

- Champion Junior Swine Showman
- Purple Ribbon Division 3 Barrow
- Grand Champion Division 3 Barrow
- Grand Champion Market Barrow
- Purple Ribbon Division 3 Gilt
- Grand Champion Division 3 Gilt

Kaleigh:

- Champion Intermediate Swine Showman
- Purple Ribbon Division 3 Barrow
- Reserve Champion Division 3 Barrow
- Reserve Champion Market Barrow
- Purple Ribbon Division 2 Gilt
- Grand Champion Division 2 Gilt
- Grand Champion Market Gilt



M16 • BACKBONE • FALL/WINTER 2022

Your **trusted partner** in life
& business.

Loans for every season of **growth**.



GPSbank
GREAT PLAINS STATE BANK

Columbus • Omaha • O'Neill • Petersburg



GPSbanks.com