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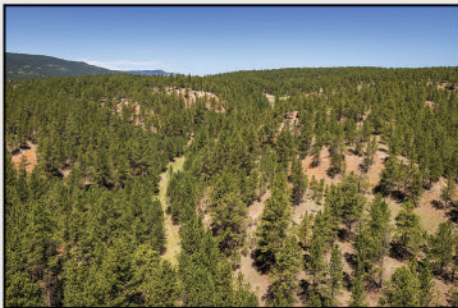
Simon Homestead – Newcastle, WY

23-acre property with $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of highway frontage and no covenants. Country home with commercial potential. 3-bedroom home, garage, shop and several sheds. North of Newcastle close to Black Hills recreation and just 10-minutes to National Forest lands. **\$439,000**



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785 acres situated in a wide swept valley between the Bear Lodge Mtns and the Black Hills. Solar well and a spring development. A mixture of big grassy hills, gypsum rimmed buttes, rough draws, red dirt knolls, and rolling meadows with awesome vistas. **\$1,100,000**



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TRI-STATE LIVESTOCK NEWS

What Ranchers Read.



Hereford cattle crossing a river in Tri-State Livestock News region. DON HIGHT PHOTO.

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Editorial

This special edition celebrates 60 years of Tri-State Livestock News. We mark this milestone by highlighting the legacies and people that continue to make our region great.

We have spent 60 years telling the stories of the livestock industry, rural communities, and the individuals they are composed of. We've shared the highs and the lows, the learning and the mistakes, the good years and the tough years. We've told the stories of chasing cows and windrows, counting sheep and pennies, watching weather and markets, and praying for rain. We've celebrated unsung heroes, strong women, hard-working kids, great horses and good cattle.

Six decades reflect our commitment to you. As readers, dealers and advertisers, this is your paper. It is our passion and privilege to tell your story, provide quality content and showcase your livelihood. We have always said, "It's your ranch; it's our business."

On behalf of all the staff, allow us to say thank you. Thank you to each staff member, past and present. You have given much of your time and talents. Thank you to each advertiser; we would not be here without you. Thank you, readers. Stories are meant to be shared. We are proud to publish Tri-State Livestock News each and every week and we look forward to telling your stories for the next 60 years.

Your editors,

Kaycee Cortner
Carrie Stadheim
Ruth Wiechmann



Sixty years strong

Tri-State Livestock News is still here to work

BY CARRIE STADHEIM

Sixty years ago, Morris Hallock was presented with the need for a regional livestock publication and he forged ahead with the concept, never once looking back. The industry demanded and quickly grew to require up-to-date market reports from livestock barns as well as the news-worthy stories informing and educating the region's producers.

The paper really was born out of necessity, Hallock said, and he credits Jim Madden, then owner of Madden's Livestock Market, with the publication's start. "Jim Madden built the auction market in St. Onge," Hallock said. "I did a lot of advertising for him. He always came in on Saturday mornings and we built his ad. Times

weren't good. Times weren't good for anybody. Madden stopped in and teased, 'I'm looking for a smart publisher but I don't think I'm in the right place.' I told him to come into the office and spill his guts." Madden, who according to Hallock was "straight as an arrow," was worried that, although he advertised with radio, eight or 10 newspapers and even television, that he still wasn't reaching his customers.

"He said he'd buy a full page ad on the back page of every issue as long as he lived and then he said 'and you don't need any damn contract.'" Hallock went on: "That's the way we did business back then."

Hallock said he asked Madden what they should call the paper and was told "I don't give a damn what you call it, just print it. When are you going to start?" Hallock responded, "Next week. Get your ad ready."

Staff members threw their ideas for naming the paper in a hat and the name "Tri-State Livestock News" was pulled out, with the intention of representing South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming.

Upon the paper's launch, Sturgis Livestock quickly saw the value of the paper and came aboard as the second auction barn to advertise.

Later, after some stern discussion, Hallock struck a deal with then owner of Belle Fourche Livestock and their ad was placed in a prominent location in the paper.

At one time, Hallock said, over 40 auction markets regularly published their market reports in the paper.

Hallock enjoyed getting to know rural mail carriers and said he was always proud when the paper had several sections. The post office staff would tell him that they liked the papers with several sections because folks would come in while they were

sorting mail and everyone would “tear it apart” and steal a section.

One March paper was over 200 pages, “just before that last bust in the 80s,” Hallock said.

Hallock was involved throughout the years in what is now called the Livestock Publications Council and his paper won awards “time after time after time,” for speaking up and out for the upper Midwest’s cattle producers. But he never “wasted space” in the newspaper with his own personal opinions or agenda. “We’re not talking about me, we’re talking about a better newspaper for the people we want to reach,” said the man with an unmatched passion for publishing a high quality news product for the people he cherishes, the American cowman.

Utilizing the power of the paper, Hallock was able to help jump-start and grow the Black Hills Stock Show and was recognized with their “first and biggest” award in the early years.

Hallock said he appreciates all the Tri-State’s readers and staff for the good maintenance of his pride and joy. “You look onto Main Street and a business closes up. A newspaper doesn’t close up.”

Hallock died in 2018.

Ogden Publications currently owns Tri-State Livestock News, which is today published by Bree Poppe.

Livestock markets and cattle producers continue to be some of Tri-State Livestock News’

most cherished advertisers and news sources.

The livestock industry changes but the people remain the same.

Tri-State Livestock News strives to bring readers pertinent local, state, national and global news. The team also works hard to entertain and encourage our readers. We see them, we appreciate them, we know them, we are them. In an industry where being tough and independent is natural

and often revered, we are aware that outside, and sometimes inside forces make everyday life ugly at times. “Environmental” bullies, politicians with agendas, meat processing consolidation resulting in restricted markets can make for long days. Tri-State Livestock News’ goal is to serve as an advocate, a friend to enjoy over coffee - and a source of needed information and most of all to celebrate the ranching way of life and the people who are the cattle industry. 🐾



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ANNIVERSARY 60th YEAR Thank You

The partnership between Tri-State Livestock News and those who market cattle celebrates 60 years this fall. Not only was the paper created to help those buying and selling cattle, we are honored to have stayed true to that original goal. Every week, our readers find sale reports from many of the nation's biggest and best auction markets.

A fair, open and competitive market is crucial to the existence of the independent cattle industry as we know it.

Thank you to our friends in the auction business for your dedication to a transparent market and a viable cattle industry.

Thank you for trusting Tri-State Livestock News to deliver your market reports week in and week out to our readers, anxious to see the latest cattle prices and marketing data.

Thank you to all of our friends in every facet of the livestock industry for sharing with our readers your bulls, your equipment, your pharmaceuticals, your horses, your veterinarian services, your feed, your supplements, and so much more.

We thank you for advertising in Tri-State Livestock News yesterday, today and tomorrow.

—Tri-State Livestock News sales staff

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What Ranchers Read.



Justin Seim dragging a calf to the fire.

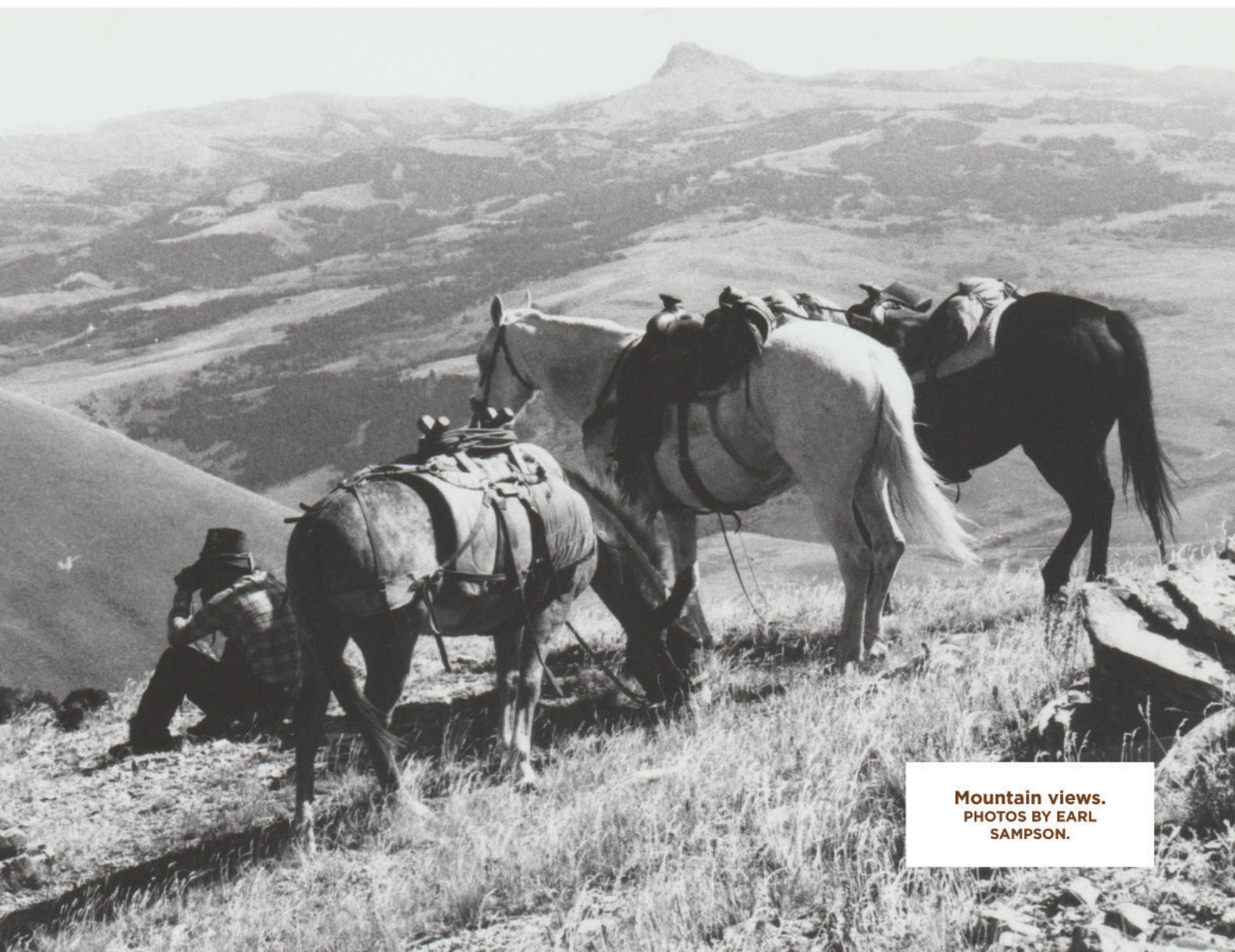




Captioned, "The Maude Mule."



Joe Painter.



**Mountain views.
PHOTOS BY EARL
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The 1955 World Champion lineup, with Fort Pierre's Casey Tibbs front and center.



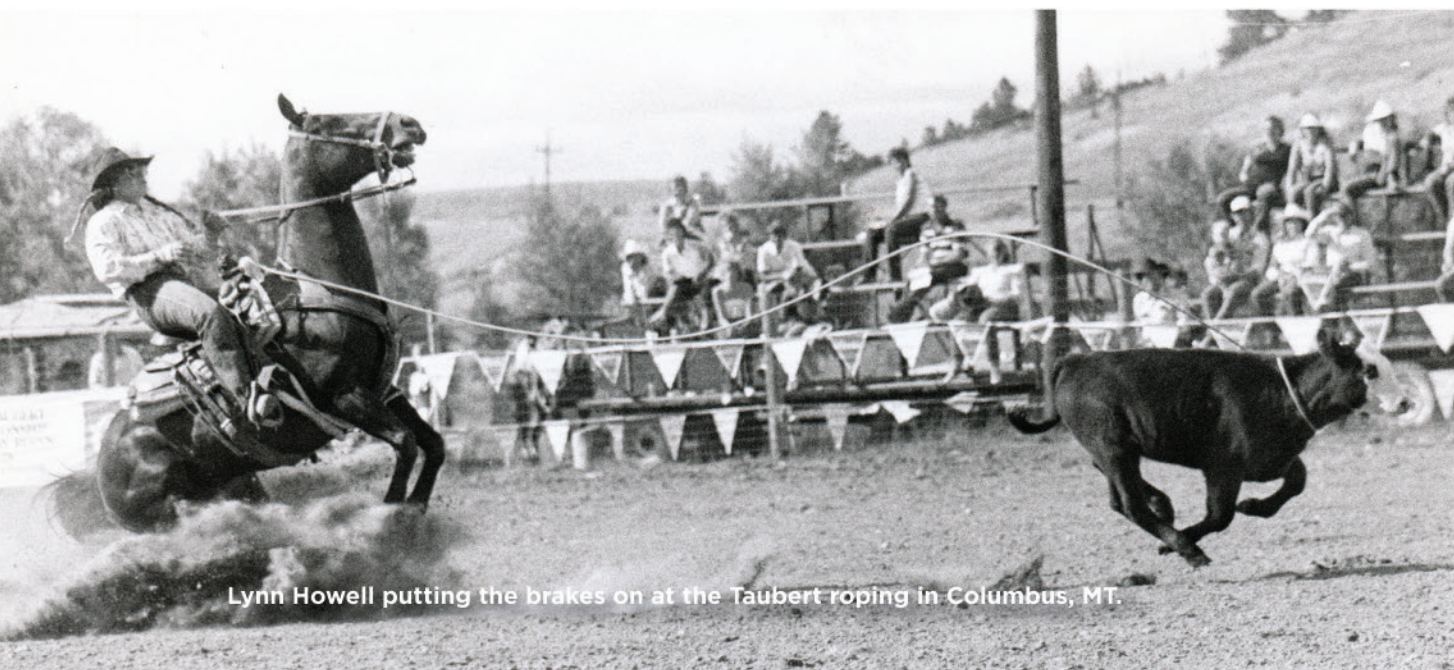
Northwest Ranch Cowboys Association goat tier.



Brian Fulton, Sturgis Rodeo.



Ray Hunt demonstration at the NILE.



Lynn Howell putting the brakes on at the Taubert roping in Columbus, MT.

TRI-STATE LIVESTOCK NEWS

60th Memories

What Ranchers Read.

BY CARRIE STADHEIM, EDITOR

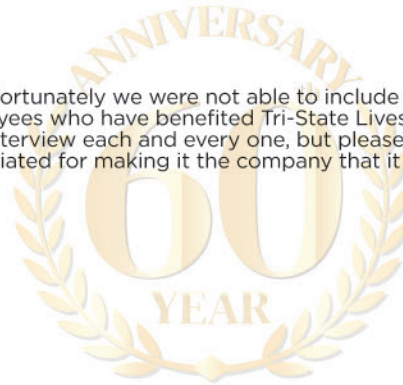


Editor's note: Unfortunately we were not able to include nearly all of the great past employees who have benefited Tri-State Livestock News. I am sorry I couldn't interview each and every one, but please know they are all greatly appreciated for making it the company that it is today.

Tri-State Livestock News.

Oh, the memories, the emotions that name conjures up.

For sixty years, through turmoil, strife, hardships and highs, an ever-changing team has stepped up to meet the challenge of promoting and informing the region's livestock producers.



Dan Piroutek

Dan Piroutek, Milesville, South Dakota, has provided ring service for Tri-State Livestock News for over 30 years. He said he has made many good friends in the industry over the decades. He credits many people including auctioneers Lynn Weishaar, Reva, South Dakota, Craig Conover, Baxter, Iowa, and the late Jim Baldridge, North Platte, Nebraska, and others for mentoring and helping him get to know the auction business.

"The newspaper is every bit as important today for getting bidders at sales," said Piroutek. "The commercial cattlemen read it because they want to know what their cattle are worth. And I think people bid more when they can see someone else bidding."

Piroutek knows the industry inside and out, as a long-time auctioneer himself. He sold cattle and hogs at Philip Livestock for many years, as well as calling bids for his own auction business.

"We have such a nice variety of market reports from a wide variety of markets. It's always been one of the best sources for sale barn reports," he said.

The salebarn continues to be a premier method for marketing livestock in the Tri-State Livestock News region, he points out. "The competition makes the market. It's the people who operate them. They are competitive by nature. They want to have the best report, everyone wants the best market."

"The salebarn makes the community. It brings a whole lot of life to the town," said Piroutek. "All you have to do is look at Sturgis and how that town has changed since the livestock market has been gone."

Jay George

Jay George, Lebo, Kansas, who worked for Tri-State Livestock News for many years shared a few memories.

"Tri-State was unique because of the customer service they provided

in terms of coverage of various events through their field representatives," he said.

George, who simultaneously worked for Tri-State Livestock News and also operated United Livestock Brokers, came on in the early '90s.

At that time, Tri-State Livestock News transitioned from a unique "story" coverage of purebred bull sales to the more traditional ring service and sale report coverage of today.

"Tri-State didn't use traditional ring men so to speak," said George. "Wally Thiel and Bob Anderson were key players. They were involved in the sales and customer service."

Thiel and Anderson would sell advertising to purebred cattle breeders and horse breeders, and part of the larger advertising package would include a full-page story following the sale, complete with a number of photographs of high sellers, buyers, and details of the sale.

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Bob Anderson

TSLN caught up with Bob Anderson who spent three to four full years employed with the paper, helping shape Tri-State Livestock News' sale coverage strategy in the 1990s.

Publisher Morris Hallock "insisted I come to work for him," said Anderson. "We just sat down and visited about what needed to be done and went from there."

When he was first employed with the paper, the current advertising manager didn't understand the value of ringside service so Anderson and his co-worker Wally Thiel were told to attend sales, but not to provide ring service.

Anderson and Thiel eventually convinced Hallock of the importance of working ringside, and soon Tri-State Livestock News was in the game.

"It's important to provide ring service. I fought for it all the time and finally won the battle."

Anderson said TSLN needed to provide the service in order to compete with other publications. "You need to be out there, among the people. It's a whole different deal. It really helps you become acquainted with a lot of people," he said.

"I can remember, I had an office upstairs in the (Sturgis) Main Street building. I remember working past 10 pm, and I'd get in the car and drive to Billings for a sale. It was 360 miles away. There was a motel that would always keep a room for me. I'd go to the sale and come home that night. I had a lot of narrow escapes with deer, antelope, everything else, but never was in an accident."

He remembers one specific time when North Platte, Nebraska, auctioneer Jim Baldridge called him before a particular bull sale.

"He said are you going to that sale? You just stay put and we'll go together," said Anderson.

The two traveled to the Montana sale in Baldridge's black Lincoln together and Anderson had his work cut out for him, convincing Baldridge - "an Irishman and a good one... he

liked to eat and have a little drink after the sale” – to head east for their next sale, the following day.

“We had a long trip ahead of us, and I got him out of there so we could leave. He said ‘you drive.’ So I did,” said Anderson.

“We ran into a freezing March rain, and it was terrible slick. I was driving about 30 miles per hour. The wind would push you over onto the shoulder, you’d hit gravel and grass and then keep going. He was sleeping in the back seat. He woke up and asked, ‘Where are we?’ I told him and he said ‘pull this damn thing over and let me drive.’ He opened the door, stuck his feet out, his feet went right out from under him and plop, he was on the ground. I was still sitting in the drivers’ seat. He crawled back in the back seat and said ‘You’re doing a good job, just keep going.’”

The two made it to their destination, slept three or four hours, attended the sale and made it home.

“I drove a lot of miles alone, too,” said Anderson.

Retired from ringside service now, Anderson continued to do contract work for TSLN for many years even after moving on from his employment there.

“I had some good auctioneer friends and they taught me the ropes of being a ring man,” he said.

Being a ring man is a “people job,” he explained. “Be on the ball and pay attention. Pick up bids and turn them in immediately.”

“From the time I was a little kid, I’ve been in the cattle business,” said Anderson. “I’ve worked with some of the toughest and some of the best. If you can’t communicate with people, you’d better get out of the business.”

Anderson serves as a field representative for both Belle Fourche Livestock and Philip Livestock, and said selling “the auction way” is good for the producer.

“It’s good competition. Salebarns are good for the industry, they set the price for livestock.”

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Mrs. Jack Campbell, Leo Perino, A.J. "Jack" Campbell, Wally Thiel. BRENT THIEL | COURTESY PHOTO



Wally Thiel

The late Wally Thiel was a legend to those who remember Tri-State Livestock News in the earlier days. Thiel was hired before Anderson, and handled horse and purebred cattle sale accounts.

His son Brent Thiel shared some memories.

"My dad had been a journalism major and was drafted into WWII so he didn't finish college. He had a desire for journalism and he met Morris Hallock through his involvement in politics," he said.

Wally farmed and raised his family south of Aberdeen until beginning a second career in agricultural journalism after Brent graduated high school.

"He helped elevate Tri-State into more of a regional publication from a local hometown paper," said Brent. "He started a column called 'Hoss News'. He loved writing that. He would write about local

or regional rodeos, cowboys, cowgirls, horse sales, upcoming horse events. He covered anything that had to do with horses in the five-state area."

Brent worked as an intern one summer for TSLN. He recalls his dad's office on the top floor of the building, Morris Hallock and the editor on the main floor, and the press in the basement. "There was a lot of running up and down the stairs when it came to press time," he said. "Dad loved it. It was his life's dream. He had farmed and ranched for 30 some years and loved that, but he really loved being involved in the purebred side and horse side of the industry."

Thiel said that over the years, his father bought a lot of stud horses for different buyers who were unable to attend horse sales.

He tells of unique way his dad sometimes collected a commission.

"My dad grew up in a very poor household in the depression. As an adult, he really liked nice boots.

Sometimes when he would buy a stud for a customer, they would pay him with a pair of boots," recalls Brent. "There were bootmakers in Denver who would measure his feet. Then he would pick out the material – elephant, alligator skin, things like that. And then the rancher bought the boots for him. That meant a great deal to him. At one time, he had 20 pair of those nice boots."

Wally was "a real student of the auction" said Brent. "He had great admiration for the purebred auctioneers that he worked with the most."

Wally especially enjoyed and respected Jack Campbell and Lynn Weishaar, two popular and well-traveled auctioneers in the area.

Jay George, Brent Thiel and Bob Anderson all spoke highly of a variety of other employees they worked with including Barb (Glaus) Walker who preceded all of them.



Wally Thiel was well known for his Hoss News column.

BRENT THIEL | COURTESY PHOTO

Barb (Glaus) Walker

Walker, who now lives in Piedmont, South Dakota, worked in the sales department of TSLN from 1984 to 2002.

She felt privileged to work for the paper that she had grown up reading, and would even seek it out at the SDSU library as a college student who wanted to keep up with the happenings of the cattle industry.

Morris Hallock approached Barb's father, John Glaus, at a South Dakota Stockgrowers Association event about Barb working for him, and after visiting with her on the phone several times, hired her "sight unseen" to work for him.

Walker recalls the atmosphere of the TSLN team.

"We were like family. We all worked together," she said.

If the production team needed a hand, the sales staff would jump in and help stuff papers, bundle papers, whatever needed done.

"Even though we were on a commission, it didn't matter who you were, what you did there, we were a team and worked at it together," she said.

In her early years, Walker would create ads for customers, sometimes first traveling to the ranch to photograph bulls, then building the ad on graph paper.

Throughout her tenure, technology evolved, and some breeders hired ad agencies to

create ads, while others continued to rely on the paper for that service.

In addition to selling and creating ads for purebred breeders, Barb would travel to sales, take photos, and write a sale report following the sale.

Walker was involved in nearly every facet of advertising. Compiling and typesetting catalogs was another responsibility.

She also worked with salebarns.

"That was a huge part of Tri-State," she said. "Market reports – that's what most ranchers were looking for when they opened the paper."

"Salebarns are important for our industry and for main street. It was sad when Sturgis Livestock closed its doors. It was a huge hit to Sturgis. I still feel bad when I drive by there," she said.

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**These are some of the awards accumulated
during Barb Walker's employment. BARB WALKER |
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Walker said that the greatest part of the job was the people.

"Because of how I grew up, I knew a lot of people already," she said. "My dad was involved in the industry, was a former president of the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association. Everywhere I went, people would ask, 'are you John Glau's daughter?' I'd say 'yes, I am,' and I was proud to be."

"I met people from all over," she said, recalling one time that she flew to the National Beef Cookoff in Seattle, Washington, and another time she covered a bull sale in Missouri.

"I wish I'd logged how many thousands of miles I put on for that paper. I drove across some pretty desolate land in a lot of cases. It would be cold, foggy, all kinds of weather. I only had one flat tire in all my travels and it was in Sioux Falls, half a block from the station. I guess I had angels watching over me," she said.



MORRIS HALLOCK CELEBRATES 80 YEARS

Morris Hallock, co-founder of Tri-State Livestock News, celebrated his 80th birthday on Feb. 17. Pictured are, from left, Pam Buhler, former Tri-State employee; and Tammy Lorenz and Dianna Palmer, current Tri-State employees; and Hallock. He remains active within the Sturgis community selling real estate and managing numerous properties around the area. Friends and family from around the region attended the celebration held in Sturgis. Photo by Larry Gran.

Scott Dirk

Past staff members speak highly of long time employees Dianna Palmer and Scott Dirk who remain employed with TSLN and Dan Piroutek who continues to contract for the paper.

Scott Dirk, who has helped cement Tri-State Livestock News' position as a leader in promotion as well as ring service, said that as technology has evolved, the paper has evolved with it.

"We've added more and more services to fit the customers' needs," he said. "Great content combined with great advertising keep the paper relevant and well-read."

A staff with close ties to the cattle industry has been a benefit to keeping the paper authentic and focused on the industry's needs.

"Nearly everyone is involved in the industry on a personal level. They know what it takes and they know the lifestyle," he said.

The current team includes publisher Bree Poppe, the sales staff, circulation, classifieds, editorial and of course the field representatives, who are as customer-focused today as ever, said Dirk.

Dianna Palmer,
Special Projects Coordinator

As the current employee with the longest tenure at TSLN, Dianna Palmer said that while she's been in the media business for about 35 years, TSLN is the only publication she's worked for where the customers, readers and co-workers have become like family.

"With our publication, it has become a community," she said.

Dianna recalls one Saturday many years ago when she headed

to the Leo and Marilyn Baker ranch (LeMar Angus) to visit about the upcoming year's advertising campaign.

Dianna said the paper was going to through some challenges and she had been working long hours, dealing with a lot of "stress and headaches."

Because it was Saturday, Dianna's middle school-aged daughter accompanied her on the visit.

"Two hours later, after coffee, cookies, pie and the ad campaign conversation, we left. My daughter said to me, 'Mom, now I see why you go through what you go through.' She realized my customers were the best customers in the world. We were there two hours gabbling, and those two (Leo and Marilyn) were truly the best. It is customers like that kept me there," she said.

While she has been offered many jobs throughout the years, she has never thought seriously about changing careers.

"I want to work for the best paper, and I do work for the best paper," she said.

Dianna said that Tri-State Livestock News sales and editorial team around the year 2000 was a very strong team. She credits current publisher Bree Poppe for putting together a team today that rivals that group. "If you look at our team, we've got longevity, commitment. We've earned a lot of respect," she said.

Palmer added that in 2000, TSLN was a weekly paper with two special sections. Today, the paper boasts 14 special sections and three programs.

"We have a staff that is directly involved in the cattle industry. We all genuinely care about it and want to do our part to help," she said.

Tim Todd,
Green Mountain Angus

Tim Todd, Green Mountain Red Angus, Rygate, Montana,

said his family has advertised with TSLN since 1973.

"This is our 50th anniversary this year. Back in those days everyone advertised in Tri-State Livestock News and KBHB. That's what we did," Todd said.

With their purebred operation originally headquartered near Spearfish, South Dakota, and now in Montana, Tri-State Livestock News has been a fit throughout the decades.

"I know my dad worked with Wally Thiel in those earlier years," Todd recalls.



During a changing era, the original still horsepower proves superior.



Todd and his family have continued to work with TSLN because "It's a great paper. It's got the reputation of having good articles, it's got a great circulation, you get a lot of bang for your buck," he said. "I don't think we'll ever drop the Tri-State."

Morris Hallock

Each past employee we talked to had praise and respect for TSLN founder and long-time publisher Morris Hallock.

"Morris was a very customer driven man and an entrepreneur," said Jay George.

"Tri-State Livestock News went through a lot of trials, tribulations, financial adversity. Some ownership didn't understand agriculture, didn't understand the type of customer service that was going to make an agricultural publication successful and in spite of all of those challenges, Morris Hallock had established that newspaper on a strong enough foundation that people were going to stay loyal to it. Not only the readership, but advertisers. It was a very necessary venue to the agricultural community. Morris Hallock built it right and the employees always followed through with the way they handled themselves and their business."

"Morris Hallock was not a man to say 'whoa' in a horserace. He was always going to take an idea presented to him and make it even bigger and better, and I respected him for that," said George. "That's why everyone liked him."

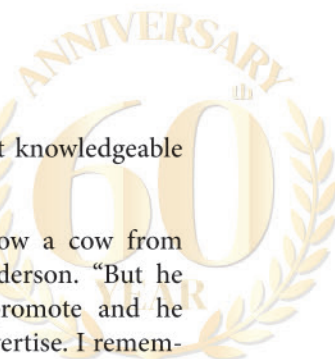
That's why people liked working for him. He treated people well, he identified people's talents and abilities and put them in a place to succeed. That's the kind of guy he was."

Anderson said Hallock "could get along with anyone."

Hallock was passionate about the newspaper business as well as the livestock industry, even

though he wasn't knowledgeable about ranching.

"He didn't know a cow from a bull," said Anderson. "But he knew how to promote and he knew how to advertise. I remember one time he said, 'One thing I hope we've done is that we've helped the industry.' I told him 'You don't have to worry about that. That's darn sure the way it is.'" ♡



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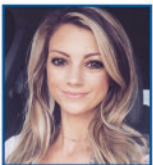
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Sustaining a Legacy

The Edoff Family of Hermosa, SD



**Arthur and Alice Bale
in later years.**



From 1938 (left to right): Arthur Bale, John Campbell, Georgiana Bale Campbell, Alice Bale, Wilma Bale, Bartlett Bale and children, Wanda and Marvin Bale.



FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND RESILIENCE

BY LINDSEY LANGEMEIER

Across Generations

For Scott and Veronica Edoff and their family in Hermosa, South Dakota, their ranch is more than a livelihood — it's a legacy.

With roots dating back to 1888 when Scott's ancestors, the Bale family, first settled in the area, this family has spent generations nurturing their land, livestock, and values. Scott and Veronica first moved to where they live today after they married in February 1983 and when Scott's grandparents, who were on the property, moved into town. Scott and Veronica leased the land from Scott's mother, Wanda (Bale) Edoff, and eventually purchased the ranch from her. Meanwhile, Scott's dad, Lorence "Larry" Edoff,

lived on a neighboring location where he also worked and Scott and Veronica and Larry eventually purchased this land together as well. Larry still lives on this property. Today, Scott and Veronica Edoff continue to uphold a tradition of hard work, community and a shared passion for their ranch — which is mostly cow/calf but some alfalfa. They raised their four children, Rachael, Kyle, Georgia, and Olivia, on their land and though their children are grown now, they all still have ties to the ranch in some way.



Scott's father, Larry Edoff.



Scott Edoff rides horseback as their family use horses for working cattle.

COURTESY PHOTOS





Scott's father, Larry, on the family ranch.



"I really can't say that one person influenced us along the way," Scott said. "It's been a lot of people. You can learn a little something from everyone."

Their community has been and continues to be a big influence on the Edoffs.

"Over the years, there have been a lot of people that have influenced us on both sides," Scott said. "Yes, our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents have been a big part of this, but this has also included the good neighbors we have. They have helped us through good times and bad."

"We have a great community and neighbors helping neighbors," Veronica said.

"We've been really blessed with the people around us," Scott said. "And we've been able to give that support back when needed. They're here for the long haul and it's nothing I wouldn't do for them either. And that's what a community is about — people helping people."

Branding has been one example of support and influence in the ranching community and to the Edoffs.

"People come to work to help you brand, but it has really become a celebration between everyone who comes and that you made it another year," Scott said.



Three generations branding: Scott, his father, Larry, and Scott's son, Kyle.



BELOW: Scott's dad, Larry, on the ranch.





Rachael and daughter, Addison, on the family ranch.

“We’ll have 65-70 people here,” Veronica said. “One year we had over 110.”

“We have 10-year-old kids coming with their folks and learning and then the next year they’ll be vaccinating and doing even more,” Scott said.

It really has evolved into a community event, with neighbors joining hands and inspiring future generations.

For Scott and Veronica, community and industry involvement have been an important part of their history. Scott served as past president of the South Dakota Stock Grower’s Association, past president of the South Dakota Public Lands and past fire chief. Veronica is involved in the industry and

community as well, serving as the current president of the Folsom Ladies Club, a club that is over 100 years old and raises funds for the local community.

With ranching, you must learn to be resilient and resourceful.

It’s no secret that ranching isn’t always easy. There was a time when Scott worked three jobs at once and then would come home to do what was needed around the operation and on the weekends too. Veronica worked hard with the children around the place while Scott was working. Their children attended a nearby rural school until eighth grade, and then a community school in high school, which was about 30 miles away. While their children were



young, Veronica fit in attending the rural school board meeting once a month to help keep the rural school open for their family and others in the community. Scott continued to work for many years as health insurance is one of the biggest struggles about being self-employed.

"We just kept working at it year after year," Veronica said. "When we first started, we didn't even have a horse trailer and we do all our work on horseback and still do. To feed cattle, Scott

would pitch hay off the back of the pickup while I would drive. And the kids were all with us too."

This same work ethic, self-reliance and responsibility was instilled into their children.

"They drove 30 miles to school, so they knew how to change a flat tire," Scott said. "They knew how and where to get help."

All the Edoff children had a variety of animals to care for and showed in 4-H growing up as well. And then, through



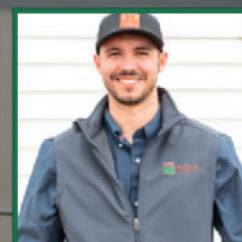
Pictured from left to right are the Edoff girls from left to right: Georgia, Veronica, Rachael holding her daughter Addison, and Olivia.



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The Edoff family's land dates to the late 1800s when the family first settled into the area.



Scott's dad, Larry, on the Edoff family ranch.



scholarships and the proceeds from their calves, the Edoff children earned their college education.

Maintaining a legacy means making an impact.

Just like when the young kids are out at a branding and watching and learning from others, Scott said that watching and seeing what other people in the industry are doing has made a big impact on him and his wife over the years.

"I also learned a lot watching others at brandings growing up," Scott said. "In this industry, I think we're always watching to see who has the best cows, what are they doing and how are they managing them. You're influenced by one of the neighbors because they have a great set of cows and take care of them well. Or maybe this neighbor has a better hay

program or a better nutrition program. We're all trying to take every good quality we see and learn from everybody to make our programs better."

Scott also worked for the sale barn in Sturgis where he saw and watched a lot of cattle.

"I really learned that the disposition of the cow was by far one of the most important things in raising cattle," he said.

As Scott and Veronica continue and look toward the future, they are eager to share their way of life with the newest generation. This includes five — three grandchildren, Rachael's two children and Georgia's son, and two extra grandchildren, Scott's cousin's two children, who enjoy spending time around the place.

**From 1904,
Arthur and
Alice Bales'
home near the
Cheyenne River.**



Arthur and Alice's
home near the
Cheyenne River
(c. 1904)

IT WAS AT THE SAME Churchill House that Bartlett Ar joined the family two years later on August 21, 1907. Alice obs husband as his face reflected such joy. Arthur was so proud he ha

Georgiana Dent f the arms of her lo ents. It was a ve day for everyone.

Alice looke baby girl in her ar flowed down her she realized the and hope she held given her anothe and she felt so gr



Scott and Veronica Edoff continue to uphold a tradition of hard work, community and a shared passion for their ranch — which is mostly cow/calf.



Scott with his mother, Wanda.



“Every inch of this place is our home.”

SCOTT EDOFF OF HERMOSA, SOUTH DAKOTA.

**Scott and
Veronica have
worked hard to
raise cattle on
their land for
many years.**



“We enjoy having them all here and showing them around,” Veronica said. “They’re out here working with us and learning skills and they might not even realize it. This is everything from putting out minerals or salt or just out checking cattle in the truck. We hope this inspires them to continue with agriculture like us if they choose to. We never said our kids had to, but if they choose to, hopefully this will become their passion too.”

“I tell them, and I would say this to any other young people in the industry, don’t get discouraged and don’t think that the world’s going to go too fast because a lot of times they just need to slow down a little bit and try to enjoy yourself,” Scott said. “I think a lot of people give up and try to jump to something else or sell. When I was growing up, I always wanted things to go faster. I wish I had slowed down and taken in even more. You don’t have to have everything perfect immediately — I mean, we didn’t — but it should come if you keep going forward, you have the work ethic and live within your means. It takes time.”

Scott joked that he heard from an old man that we all might continue with this business because we’re just too foolish to try to do anything else.

“In all honesty, we know having this land is a big deal and there has been a lot that has gone into it,” he said.

“There’s a lot of blood, sweat and tears here,” Veronica said. “We appreciate what we have more because we bought and paid for everything. Neighbors and our folks helped us out and got us started, but we didn’t get anything handed to us. It can be done, but we had to make some sacrifices along the way and had to work hard.”

Many might be able to relate to the fact that family vacations often included things like a day to the 4-H rodeo in Pierre, but Scott and Veronica always tried to prioritize important family time — even if it was as simple as a couple of hours fishing.

Through trials and triumphs, the Edoffs have forged and continue to shape a legacy that spans generations.

“Every inch of this place is our home,” Scott said. 🐾



Spud Lemmel owned sheep for roughly 78 years—starting when his step-dad traded him ten ewes worth about \$9 each for ninety days of herding sheep at a dollar per day.



Spud Lemmel has spent his lifetime on the family ranch near Mud Butte, South Dakota.



BY RUTH WIECHMANN

Louis “Spud” Lemmel has lived for eighty of his 94 years on the same place, a ranch near Maurine, South Dakota. He owned sheep for roughly 78 years—from the time his step-dad traded him ten ewes worth about \$9 each for ninety days of herding sheep at a dollar per day.

His childhood was not very stable. His father worked for various neighbors in the area and the family moved nine times before Spud’s parents divorced. Spud attended several area one room schools, including the Monroe School and the Red Top School. His mother remarried when Spud was 13, and the family moved to the ranch he still calls home a year later.

“Those were rough years,” Lemmel recalled. “When my mother married Chuck Russell he bought this place. Chuck offered that if I’d herd the sheep for 90 days he would give me 10 ewes. The range wasn’t fenced yet, so I never went nowhere.”

Spud Lemmel spent decades working to promote the sheep and wool industries. He joined the fledgling Farmers and Ranchers Cooperative wool pool in 1962 and served on the board for a total of 47 years, both before and after it became Center of the Nation Wool. He was a director of Farmers and Rancher Cooperative/Center of the Nation Wool for 38 years and received a Lifetime Service Award from Center of the Nation Wool in 2022. He is also a recipient of the South Dakota sheep producer of the year award.





Spud Lemmel says that sheep may be more labor intensive than cattle, but he's always gotten along well with them. "Sheep are good weed eaters and will eat what the cows don't. And you get two crops a year from sheep: the lambs and the wool."

Chuck Russell was a hard worker, a good teacher, and a builder. Spud still has the sheep wagon that his stepfather built in 1938.

"I lived in the sheep wagon for several summers," Lemmel said. "I also had a sleeping cart that I could pull with one horse and go to where the sheep were bedded for the night and sleep in it. One night there was a bad storm and the wind was so strong that it switched the cart around. I hoofed it for the wagon as fast as I could, even though it was about a mile away."

The sheep wagon had chains on the sides so it could be staked down, and two by fours on the sides that folded down on hinges so that it was more stable and didn't rock when the wind blew hard. Chuck had built it well.

Fencing was one of the main jobs in Spud's high school years.

"We put in eight miles of fence on our summer range in 1947," he said. "The whole eight miles was all white cedar posts, they were light and treated on one end. They came from Bonners Ferry, Idaho to Vale on the train and then we hauled them out here. That was the most tamping I ever did in my life. We did have a digger. It didn't work real well but if you kept it greased it was better than digging all those postholes by hand."

Scabies came through the sheep in the area shortly after they put up the fence, and Lemmel said that the fence paid for itself quickly.



"Everyone had to dip their sheep in a vat to get rid of the scabies," he said. "Chuck said that it paid for the fence because our sheep didn't commingle with any else's and we didn't have to dip them."

Their flock was spared.

There wasn't much for entertainment in Spud's childhood days beyond listening to the radio or going to the occasional neighborhood dance. The children invented their own fun and spent lots of time exploring the wide prairie.

"You learned how to take care of yourself," he said. "But we were never bored. We invented our own things to do and learned how to enjoy nature and life. I was always horseback—if you weren't on a horse you went on foot."

Sometimes when Spud and his friends went to dances they didn't get home until the sun was coming up, but there

Center of the Nation Wool board of directors at the time of incorporation included then President John Niemi, Buffalo, SD, J.P.. Cook, Belle Fourche, SD, Spud Lemmel, Mud Butte, SD, Jw Nuckolls, Hulett, WY, Lawrence Capra, Boyes, MT, Richard Owen, Hammond, MT, and Larry Pilster, Alzada MT, who is chairman of the board today. Many of these ranches still bring wool to Center of the Nation Wool for marketing.



The Lemmel family and the sheep wagon during the Faith Centennial celebration.

was no going to bed and sleeping in. They had to go to the hayfield or to the barn no matter if they'd been out dancing all night!

"Why does a guy go out the night before?" be-moaned one friend, halfway through a day of setting up sheep after a sleepless night.

Lemmel attended several country schools in rural northern Meade County, and attended Sturgis High school with his lifelong neighbor and friend, Hugh Ingalls.

"He graduated and I didn't," he chuckled. "I tried to get out for lambing but they said no so I quit."

Sheep were Lemmel's main source of income. After helping to lamb his family's flock, he would travel around the neighborhood helping other folks lamb.

Sadly, Chuck died of polio in 1952, leaving Spud's mother a widow with several children still at home to support. Spud had been drafted, and he got the

call about his stepfather's illness while he was in Mankato waiting for his orders.

"I had passed my physical and had been called to go to the Army," he said. "I came home right away and got to see him, but he passed away shortly after. A bunch of the neighbors got together to get me deferred so I could stay home and support my mother and siblings. I never went back. I have managed the ranch since 1952."

Lemmel broke several horses over the years, and said that they frequently bred a few mares to a neighbor's good registered stud.

"My mother loved horses and milk cows but we had too many around the place," he said. "It was quite a job to milk six or eight cows every day after coming in from the hayfield at night. And then you had to separate the cream."

The cream was sold in Newell, roughly a 60 mile trip from the ranch. Spud finally talked his mother

into getting rid of the milk cows, and she bought some good horses with the money. One of the foals they raised out of those mares grew up to be Spud's good roping mare.

Spud met his wife, Bernice, when he was in Sturgis for a dance. The two didn't start dating right away, but Spud remembered the cute girl with the spunky smile. The two married on August 2, 1953.

Bernice didn't grow up on a ranch, nor did she have much experience with livestock before she married Spud.

"She was a city girl, but that soon changed when she came here," he chuckled. "She milked cows and raised chickens and worked hard."

The couple raised their three boys and two girls on the ranch. Their first home was with Spud's mother, and then he and a neighbor built a block house that the family lived in for ten years until the creek came up and flooded the house.

The family was very involved in 4-H and rodeo. Spud even built an arena where their children and the neighbor kids could practice. Bernice spent years in 4-H leadership,

and received her 50 year award in 2016. The couple celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary before Bernice passed away in 2018.

Lemmel said that they typically ran around 1,000 ewes, and eventually started running about 100 cows in addition to the sheep. He said that sheep may be more labor intensive than cows, but that he always found them pretty easy to get along with.

Spud and Bernice Lemmel with the sheep wagon built by Spud's stepfather.





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L-R, Steve Marchant, an Australian who lived with the Lemmel family for a few years, Ronna Burke, Ronny Lemmel, Spud Lemmel, Bernice Lemmel, Ricky Lemmel, Roxie Tetrault, Rory Lemmel.

"If they take to you, you can handle them pretty easy," he said. "It doesn't hurt as much if you get run over by a sheep, but an old cow can be pretty tough if she gets on the fight. Sheep are good weed eaters and will eat what the cows don't. And you get two crops a year from sheep: the lambs and the wool."

Lemmel spent decades working to promote the sheep and wool industries. He joined the fledgling Farmers and Ranchers Cooperative wool pool in 1962 and served on the board for a total of 49 years, both before and after it became Center of the Nation Wool. He was a director of Farmers and Rancher Cooperative/Center of the Nation Wool for 38 years and received a Lifetime Service Award from Center of the Nation Wool in 2022. He is also a recipient of the South Dakota sheep producer of the year award.

Larry Prager, CEO of Center of the Nation Wool, has worked with Lemmel for decades.

"In addition to providing leadership and support to the region's sheep industry, Spud was always a true friend of the community," Prager said. "Young folks in 4-H clubs, youth rodeo events, or anyone who just needed a helping hand knew he could be counted on for whatever was needed."

Lemmel saw many ups and downs in the sheep industry over his lifetime, and many changes in how people live, work and spend their time.

"The dry years were the hardest," he said.

Before the family had a well for watering livestock at the barns and corrals, they hauled water from a dam in barrels in the wagon to water the ewes when they were in for lambing.

"We had nine barrels in the wagon and a three gallon bucket fastened onto a pitchfork handle that we used to tip in the dam and fill the barrels so we could haul water to the sheep at the barn," Lemmel said. "If you asked a kid to do that today he would draw his pay and be gone."

When he was young, his stepfather bought Staley's grain in 100 pound sacks to supplement the sheep over winter.

"My stepdad was a big, strong guy and he hefted those sacks around just fine," Lemmel said. "I wasn't very big but I had to be strong to help feed the sheep!"

Always the innovator, Chuck eventually built a cart with a trapdoor that they could use to feed the sheep out on the buffalo grass when the snow blew off. When it didn't, Spud had to do a lot of shoveling to clear the snow out of the feed troughs.

Less than a month after Bernice passed away, a long-time family friend and fellow sheepman, Jw Nuckolls, also passed away. Spud and Jw had served together on the Center of the Nation Wool board for many years. Spud and Jw's widow, Thea later married.

"Have you ever heard of anyone getting married at 90?" Spud asked with a laugh. "Well, we did!"

"Spud never met a stranger," said Thea Nuckolls Lemmel. "When he meets you for the first time, he is quick to get your full name, where you come from and any connection you may have to anyone else he knows. All that information is stored in his memory bank to this day. Spud has a history on everyone he knows."

Thea said that Spud's generosity is unmatched.

"At any event, you'll find him buying lunch for everyone in his sight," she said. "When a neighbor falls on hard times, Spud's wallet is always open. In days gone by, broke cowboys down on their luck would seek out Spud for a loan because they knew they could 'win' the next _____ rodeo." 🐾



Spud and Thea Lemmel with the sheep wagon that Chuck Russell built in 1938.

Dyed in the Wool



Larry Prager



Larry Prager explains wool grading at a wool judging contest. He has spent his lifetime in the wool business from shearing to CEO of Center of the Nation Wool. PHOTO CREDIT: LISA SURBER



BY RUTH WIECHMANN

Larry Prager has spent a lifetime involved in the sheep and wool industries. A recipient of the 2022 University of Wyoming College of Agriculture, Life Sciences and Natural Resources Outstanding Alumni Award. He calls himself a “product of the system” but his career has been anything but run of the mill.

Growing up on a ranch in the mountains fifty miles south of Douglas, Wyoming, Prager had sheep for 4H and FFA projects, and tagged along with his older sister who was going to 4H wool judging contests.

“She was quite a bit older, but in those days, where one person in the family went, we all went,” he said. “I was judging wool before I was ten years old.”



Rural and remote aptly describe Prager's childhood. He attended the Prager School through eighth grade before going to Douglas for high school.

"The Prager School was my grandma's homestead cabin, which stood in our yard," he said. "Our neighbor lady was our teacher. She came over every day to teach school; it was about like being homeschooled."

Larry's great-grandparents were early day Wyoming pioneers.

"You had to be an adventurer to live in that environment," he said.

His grandmother, Ellen Amanda McFarlane Prager, grew up near present day Wheatland, Wyoming, and married Frank Prager, Jr. in 1910. She received her land patent in 1915. When Larry was a boy she

Larry Prager has worked at Center of the Nation Wool for forty-five years. From his first job in the warehouse handling and core testing wool to a field position that took him to shearing pens across the region to his current position as CEO of Center of the Nation Wool, he has built relationships with sheep growers and wool buyers, weaving connections between the shortgrass prairies and the ever changing textile industry.



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still lived in the house she had shared with her husband and raised her family in, about five miles from her homestead site.

"They built that house around 1920," Larry said. "Grandma was a true Scotch lady, she grew up in a rural environment, in hard times, and in a part of the country where you made do with what you had. Very seldom did they make a shopping trip to town. She lived a very rich life. You learn to enjoy the things you have, and appreciate people more than possessions. The Scotch heritage is what made the difference; I think it is one of the major reasons they survived the depression years and all that has come since. They either did without or found a way to do what they needed to without leveraging the ranch or borrowing money."

The ranch started by Frank and Amanda Prager is still in the family, and is still an active ranching unit.

"We were past the end of the road where the snowplows went," Larry said. "At 8000 feet elevation, we were snowed in from somewhere between Thanksgiving and Christmas until about Easter. We didn't know any different. We had a pretty good time. We had snow to play in, and had sheep and cattle and a few horses to take care of."

When Larry was very young they still fed with a team and bobsled, pitching loose hay onto the hay rack to feed the stock. Later they fed with a little snow cat, but still often times pulled the same bobsled they had used with the team. Although the family primarily raised cattle, Larry said that his father, Lawrence really liked sheep.

"Between my dad and our county agent, Orville Nichols, my interest was sparked," he said. "Orville was truly a key person in my life. He definitely influenced me, between 4H and later FFA, and my further education in high school. My dad and Orville encouraged me to attend a shearing school when I was fourteen, and I started shearing a few sheep after that."



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Amanda Prager with some of her grandchildren. Larry Prager is in the center.



Prager sheared sheep through high school and while he attended the University of Wyoming, earning a degree in animal science. He sheared full time for three years after college.

“Those were tough years in the cow business, and cattle were the lifeblood of the ranch I was part of,” he said.

As a young husband with a family to support, Prager took the opportunity when he found out that a wool warehouse in Belle Fourche was looking for help. At the time it seemed like a temporary solution to the tough times on the ranch, but he’s been working there for forty-five years. From his first job in

the warehouse handling and core testing wool to a field position that took him to shearing pens across the region to his current position as CEO of Center of the Nation Wool, he has built relationships with sheep growers and wool buyers, weaving connections between the shortgrass prairies and the ever changing textile industry.

Larry has helped COTN weather some major changes in the wool business, including a decline in sheep numbers in the region, the shift of the textile industry from the US to overseas, fluctuating and volatile markets, and covid related export issues. Through the years he has helped ranch families



One of the big changes in the sheep industry over the last few decades is a decline in sheep numbers both in the upper great plains and even around the world. But Larry Prager says that sheep are able to utilize resources that cattle may not be able to and they fit the role of grassland conservation and sustainability very well.

learn about industry innovation and kept growers up to date on changing trends and standards within the industry, all with the goal of helping to increase the marketability and value of their wool.

He has worked with some of these families for three generations, and believes that the best wool in the nation is grown in our region.

“We take the quality for granted,” Prager said. “We have dense soils that help keep the wool clean. We have rangelands that are especially well suited to sheep operations. Sheep run on native prairies are cleaner, and their wools are higher yielding. I’ve had the opportunity to market the best wools in the US.”

Prager markets approximately twenty percent of all wool produced in the US annually. COTN handles 4.5-5 million pounds of wool each year, and the US Military is by far their biggest customer.

“We provide over half of the wool used each year to make uniforms and other military gear,” he said. “In

this region, we have the genetics and environment to produce the right type of wool for their needs. We’re fortunate to have the fineness and staple length to meet the requirements for the type of wool it takes to make that cloth.”

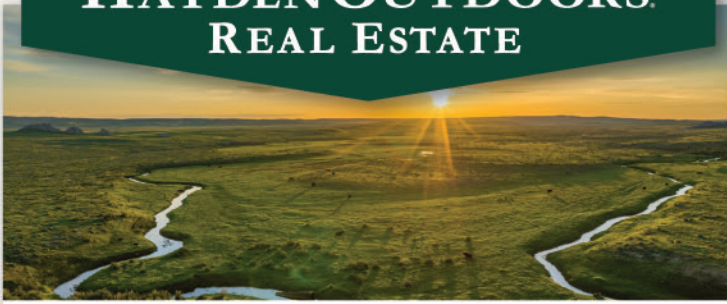
Larry Prager has been a leader in the wool industry, keeping the pioneer spirit of his ancestors alive as he has navigated the challenges of the changing landscape of the wool market. From helping with wool judgments and shearing schools and contests across the region to dealing with international customers, he has been committed to serving the people who make up the sheep and wool industry. Other leadership roles include serving as past president of the US Wool Marketing Association and the UW Alumni Association.

Larry and his wife Karen have been married forty-nine years and have three grown children and several grandchildren. ♡



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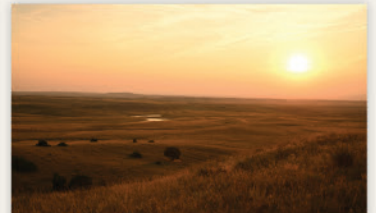
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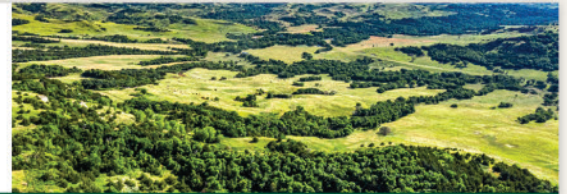
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At the recent Rambouillet National Show and Sale, Estelle Cook of Glad Valley, SD was awarded the legacy Award. Estelle Cook has been breeding top quality Rambouillet sheep for decades and is recognized for her contribution to the breed and the sheep industry. Pictured L to R: Beau Chapman, Bison SD, Rambouillet Assoc. President and American Rambouillet Sheep Association director, Parker Munz, TX, Junior Rambouillet President, Chase Swanson, TX, Junior Rambouillet VP, Estelle Cook, Glad Valley, SD.



Estelle Cook *Sheep Rancher*

Estelle Cook was awarded the Legacy Award from the National Rambouillet Association in June 2023. She is pictured here with a leatherwork picture of a ram and a shepherd's cane that she received from the Association.

BY KAREN HOLZER

In June 2023, Estelle Cook was awarded the Legacy Award from the National Rambouillet Association in Huron SD. The award recognized her years of raising purebred Rambouillet sheep, her membership in the Association

for 65 years, along with being a long tenured member and past chairperson of the South Dakota Sheep Growers Association. Estelle has worked tirelessly with the organizations to champion the sheep and advocate for their causes.



The Rambouillet breed is known to adapt to hot and cold climates and a variety of forage conditions. They travel to find forage and have good gains on grass.

And then, in September 2023, Estelle Cook, as the Cook Sisters Rambouillet, was awarded the Master Lamb Producer, South Dakota Master Lamb Producer award at the South Dakota Sheep Growers Association Convention in Rapid City, SD.

Surrounded by prairie, near Thunder Butte Creek, Estelle Cook lives on a small sheep ranch, with her flock of Rambouillet sheep. Thunder Butte rises above the prairie to the east with only prairie and sky visible for miles. When traveling to the Cook Sisters Rambouillet Ranch in western South Dakota, a south turn off the highway becomes a gravel road for about 9 miles. At a Cook Ranch sign, the gravel turns into a dirt road laid out flat across the prairie

for the next 6.5 miles. The tracks of the dirt road wind up and down, as it meanders up the slopes of sidehills and back down, weaving its way through nature's landscape. In part, the dirt road originated as a fire break and the dirt trail continues to serve as the road.

Estelle moved to the remote ranch near Thunder Butte with her husband Leonard in 1957, living there and raising their six children. Her mailbox is 15 miles from the homestead and the nearest small town is 40-50 miles. Estelle has been heard frequently quoting, "We are out in the country, at the end of the road."



L-R: Dan Anderson, Estelle Cook, Sharon Anderson. Both family ranches received the Master Lamb Producer Award at the South Dakota Sheep Growers Convention in Rapid City. Andersons said, "It's an honor to share the spotlight with you, Estelle!"


Sitting at her kitchen table with the summer heat sifting through the open window, as the eighty-five years young, Estelle relaxes as she shares stories of the first time she arrived at her home on the prairie. She tells about the bum lambs she is currently feeding, and what they like to eat. Through the window, the sounds of cackling guineas are heard as they cross the yard. The guineas, along with chickens, have been Estelle's companions for nearly seven decades on the ranch. She talks about the hearing the coyotes, along with other familiar nighttime sounds through her open bedroom window each night.

Estelle not only excels at raising premium sheep, she also excels in preparing the meat for a meal. If you happen to be at the ranch at mealtime, you may very well likely be served roast lamb, lamb chops or cold salami processed with lamb meat. Estelle has always worked with the sheep on the family ranch, which also raised cattle, chickens and guineas. Her beginning in the sheep business was with a small batch of bum lambs in the 1960s gifted from their neighbor, Reed Simon. After raising the bum lambs, three yearling ewes were kept. The ewes were shown as 4-H projects by the three oldest daughters. It is from that beginning that the name "Cook Sisters Rambouillet" originated. Throughout the years, their sheep were shown in county, regional and state shows, winning enough blue ribbons to cover the wall in their living room.




Cook Ranch Sign
directs the way
to Estelle's ranch
on Thunder Butte
Creek. It is at this
point that the nine
miles of gravel turns
into six and a half
miles of dirt road.




**This dirt road winds
through the prairie with
Thunder Butte on the
horizon traveling to
Estelle's home.**




**Bum lambs shelter
in the shade. Estelle
provides a little
extra tender loving
care to her bum
lambs each year,
feeding and caring
for them.**

Bum lambs remain a huge part of Estelle's daily routine. She diligently cares for every lamb born on the ranch. Lambing season is a busy time, as she repeatedly checks on the ewes and is ready to help any bum lamb that may require her TLC. Her tried and true feeding program for her bums is meticulous down to the ounce of milk and the time of day.

There are many reasons Rambouillet sheep have been successfully raised by Estelle on the open prairie land of the ranch. The Rambouillet breed is known to adapt to hot and cold climates and a variety of forage conditions. They travel to find forage and have good gains on grass. The ewes are good milkers with strong maternal instincts and have fewer lambing difficulties. The Rambouillet sheep have an instinct to band together in open areas and are easy to handle in yards, chutes and sorting facilities. They have a resistance to internal

parasites and disease. When grazing, the sheep require minimal labor.

Estelle is no stranger to hard work and long hours. Her dedication to the care of the animals on the ranch remains, as always, exceptional. This includes not only the sheep, but also over the years -cattle, chickens and horses. She even brought her horse, Dixie, with her to the ranch from her childhood home near Timber Lake.

Estelle has always bred purebred Rambouillet sheep staying with the traditional horned rams. In 1979, Leonard and Estelle won the National Rambouillet Purebred Producer of the Year. Raising good sound ewes has always been a consistent goal on the ranch. It is a goal that carries on today. Estelle has won Grand Champion Ewe and Pair of Ewes at the Newell Ram Sale in 2010, 2015 and 2021. In 2016 at the 71st Newell Ram Sale she received the Premier

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Estelle Cook celebrating the Days of 1910 in her hometown of Timber Lake, South Dakota.

Pen of Range Rams award. Since 1997 Estelle has entered rams into The Dakota Performance Ram Test in Hettinger, ND. Since then, she has had 33 rams in the top 1/3 of all breeds. In 2021 she was awarded the Top Certifying Rambouillet Ram.

Breeding for fine wool has always been a priority for Estelle. She typically sells her wool in a regional market for a premium due to its fine quality and cleanliness. In 2010 Peace Fleece, a company geared towards creating unity through wool purchased its first ever native Rambouillet wool from the Cook Sisters. They then spun the wool into DK and worsted weight yarns.

Burt and Laura Anderson of Highmore SD, have been friends with Estelle for close to 50 years. Their friendship has grown through the years with their experiences together at state and national Rambouillet sheep shows and sales.

Burt sums up Estelle's life and accomplishments, commenting, "Estelle has a passion for sheep that is seldom seen, from bottle lambs to yearling rams. She's not one to follow fad or fashion, but over the

years has developed a line of sheep you can't beat. Big, rugged, open faced, fine wool that gets the job done on very little grain. She has wide range of acceptance from both commercial and seed stock producers - Hats off to you Estelle, for being Estelle."

"And she makes a really mean chocolate chip cookie," he adds, chuckling. "She owes me a couple dozen, and I am waiting for the next time we see her to get them."

Estelle still manages the Cook Sisters sheep herd. Her family helps now and again, but only Estelle oversees the "official" head count which she keeps close to her heart. She will tell you the count is around 150 head but magically more ewes and lambs show up around lambing time. She has recently updated her bum house to provide the utmost comfort to any lamb in need of a bit more care. Estelle shares her love of sheep with several of her grandchildren and children. Carrying on these traditions and maintaining the highest quality of purebred sheep is Estelle's legacy. 🐑



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Saturday, February 18, 2023 Volume 60 - Issue 7 3 sections

America is 'not for sale'

By Curtis Stadler
Editor

According to USDA, 40% of land in the United States is owned by the federal government. That's a lot of land. And it's a lot of power. But what if that power was used to protect the land for the people of the United States? What if that power was used to protect the land for the people of the United States?

USFS aerial gunning will begin Feb. 23 in Gila Wilderness

By Rachel Gabel
Photo Editor

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TRI-STATE LIVESTOCK NEWS

Saturday, April 15, 2023 Volume 60 - Issue 15 3 sections

Secure Beef Supply Plan

Or flirting with disaster?

By Rachel Gabel
Photo Editor

The USDA has unveiled a \$1.5 billion plan to advance the Secure Beef Supply plan, intended to show the spread of BSE. The plan is a response to the growing concern over the potential for a BSE outbreak in the United States.

National Bio and Agro Defense Facility

By Rachael Nelson-Lindberg
For Tri-State Livestock News

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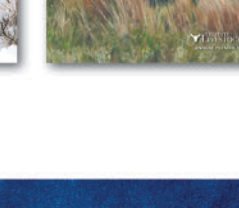
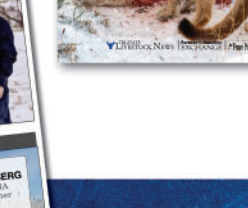
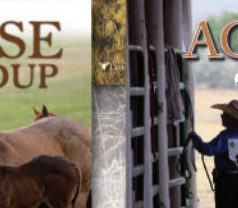
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Horace Seim's brothers, Wilford and Shelby, trailing steers to the railroad to be shipped to market.
SEIM COURTESY PHOTO

Bring Them Beef

*Well it's early in springtime we round up the dogies,
We mark 'em and brand 'em and bob off their tails,
Round up the horses, load up the chuck wagon,
Then throw the little dogies out on the long trail.*

*Whoopee ti yi yo, git along little dogies
It's your misfortune and none of my own
Whoopie ti yi yo, git along little dogies
You know that Wyoming will be your new home.*

—TRADITIONAL COWBOY BALLAD



BY RUTH WIECHMANN

Getting cattle to market has always been all about bringing the beef to the table. From the days of the West Texas Trail cattle drives to today's video sales, the Tri-State region has played a vital role in putting beef on consumers' plates.

With more cattle than people in each of the original three states that gave Tri-State Livestock News its name: Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota, as well as neighboring Montana and Nebraska, the region is well set to supply beef to hungry consumers.



Branding smoke.

MOORCROFT PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WEST TEXAS TRAIL MUSEUM, MOORCROFT WYOMING.





Moorcroft photos courtesy of the West Texas Trail Museum, Moorcroft Wyoming. They were originally from the Robinson family who homesteaded in 1893 near Moorcroft. Lou Robinson built the first general store, Robinson Mercantile, and was very influential in Moorcroft's early days.

Times change. In the later 1800s, cattle were trailed a thousand miles, horseback, to get them to grass or to market. Then shipping livestock on the train became the transportation method of choice. As local livestock sale barns sprang up across the region in the 1930s and 1940s, cattlemen suddenly had the convenience of a market close to home. Trucking became an option as vehicles grew larger and more powerful. The stock rack in the back of a pickup gave way to trailers; now semi trucks with drop deck trailers move most of the cattle across the Tri-State region.

But good beef is still in demand.

There is no 'one size fits all' model for how to market cattle. Ranchers are constantly forced to be resilient and innovative, whether it's rebuilding a herd after devastating losses from a storm or cobbling a fence together with whatever happens to be in the back of the pickup at the moment.

For some, it's incorporating the best genetics possible into their herd to push weaning weights and

carcass quality. For others, it's investing in local processing plants. Sometimes it means a trip overseas to represent U.S. beef to potential export markets. It's going the extra mile to make it possible for your school to serve locally grown beef to your children. It's figuring out which marketing options work for your family and your cattle, from video sales of calves to building a brand to market your own beef.

For most, it means treasuring traditions from the past such as handling cattle horseback or roping calves at brandings, while stepping fully into the future of the livestock industry.

Here's a look back at the beginnings of the cattle industry in the Tri-State region.

They Came Through Moorcroft

Cindy Mosteller, director of the West Texas Trail Museum in Moorcroft, Wyoming, said that bringing cattle through the area was then as now about getting beef to hungry people. She said that initially, the West Texas Trail went further west across Wyoming, going up to Bozeman, Montana, and the



Early day Perkins County cowboys, including Willie Seim (3rd from right) and Henry Seim (far right.) SEIM COURTESY PHOTO

Judith Basin, with the purpose of feeding the miners in that area.

By 1870, as Native Americans were being pushed onto reservations, the government needed beef to feed them. Then gold was discovered near Deadwood, South Dakota, and hungry miners flooded the area.

“The West Texas Trail started coming through Moorcroft in the early 1870s,” she said. “Everyone needed beef. The men bringing cattle north from Texas discovered that this country had a lot of grass and water; a lot of Texas ranchers and cowboys stayed and started their own ranches here, homesteading between Moorcroft and Miles City.”

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad built a line west into Wyoming from South Dakota, coming through Moorcroft in 1891. In his autobiography, Bob Fudge described bringing cattle through Moorcroft, along the way from Texas to Montana.

He said that the cattle would not cross the freshly graded dirt prepared for the railroad. The cowboys

had to bring their horses around and cross it first before the cattle would go across.

“After the railroad came through, they would bring cattle north in the spring; they would summer here and then put them on the rails in the fall. From Moorcroft they shipped both east and west. By 1894, Moorcroft was the largest cattle shipping point for that rail line,” Mosteller said.

By 1898, cowboys quit bringing cattle up the West Texas trail. Moorcroft continued to ship livestock, both cattle and sheep, for several years, but the boom was over.

“They just ran out of free cattle,” Mosteller said.

The great cattle drives of the late 1800s were in fact partially caused by the War Between the States.

“In the pre-civil war years, Texas cattle ranchers sold their cattle to the southern states,” Mosteller said. “When the Civil War broke out and the Union took control of the Mississippi River, Texans couldn’t ship their cattle.”

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By the end of the war, there were some five million cattle running loose in Texas.

"If you could round them up and ship them they were worth \$80 per head. There was a lot of profit in that, as they paid the cowboys next to nothing. Westward expansion brought it north, as did a Missouri ban on Texas cattle a few years into cattle drive days. They blamed it on the ticks that brought Texas Fever to the cattle in Missouri, but it may have been more about controlling the riff raff that the cowboys brought to town. But it was also a factor in driving the trails farther north; cattle coming through Kansas City to Chicago couldn't get off trains for feed and water and they died before they got there."

The Stockmens associations of Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado and Oklahoma proposed a national cattle drive trail; a 20-mile wide stretch of land running from Texas to Canada on which there would be no development, set aside solely for the purpose of trailing cattle.

"It was on the president's desk to be signed into law in 1897, when they ran out of free cattle," Mosteller said. "They basically said, 'We don't need it.' But they had a good run while it lasted."

Lou Robinson started a general store by the railroad tracks in what soon became the town of Moorcroft in the spring of 1892. He kept track of all of the cattle coming on and off the train. Mosteller now has these records at the museum.

"It averaged around 65,000 head per year," she said. "We also have records of cattle coming through on the great western cattle trail; the most was 112,000 in 1887. It is even broken out by ranch: in 1889 the XIT brought 15,000, the 101 ranch brought 10,000 head of cattle."

By 1897, the tally had fallen to 2,500 head. But not before Moorcroft, a tiny 'stop in the road,'

had seen hundreds of thousands of cattle pass through.

Boot branded cattle made the cut.

Horace Seim grew up on the South Grand River in Perkins County, South Dakota. His grandparents, Hans and Kari Seim, came to the area when it was still open range, even prior to homestead days.

Seims came to the Capitol, Montana area just west of Camp Crook, South Dakota, in 1888. At this time, the Continental Land and Cattle Company--- known as the "Hashknife" for the brand they used, had a contract with the U.S. government to supply beef to the Standing Rock Indian Agency at Fort Yates, North Dakota. Hans hired on to help trail the cattle to Ft. Yates, and some of his cattle were gathered and sold along with the Hashknife cattle.

In 1891, Hans and Kari moved their family east and established a ranch near the Grand River. Now they were within the range of the Cresswell Cattle Company, called the "Turkey Track" because their brand resembled the track of a turkey.



Horace Seim's parents, Willie and Blanche Seim.

Hans worked as a cowboy and surveyor for the Turkey Track, and plowed fire guards for them across what are now Perkins and Harding counties and well out into Montana.

"It was all free range at that time," Horace Seim said. "If they moved into the free range and put up a place it was theirs if they stayed on it. Their cattle

would go right along with the big outfits wherever they went, and they would get the money when they were shipped and sold because their brand was on them."

Until Horace was in his teens, his father shipped three- and four-year-old steers, selling them directly to the Chicago Stockyards. The first step was gathering up the cattle and trailing them approximately 20 miles to the railroad.

"We would sort off the steers ready to sell and then trail them to White Butte," he recalled. "We started from the home place with our cattle, and by the time we got closer there would be quite a herd. Each man would keep his cattle separate; they would set them on Flat Creek a little ways



Branding, then as now, provided legal proof of ownership of cattle.

MOORCROFT PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WEST TEXAS TRAIL MUSEUM, MOORCROFT WYOMING.





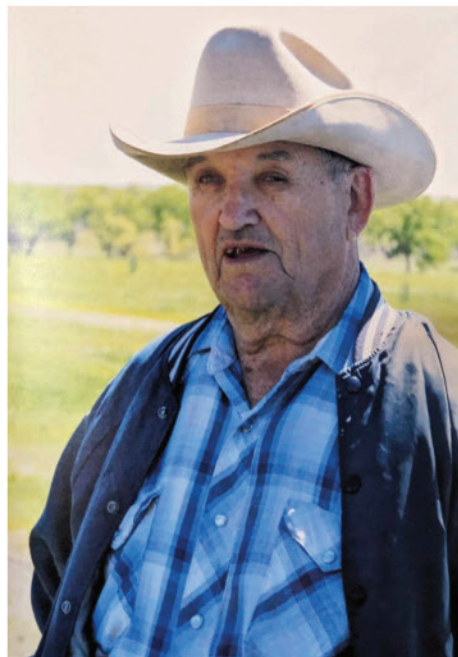
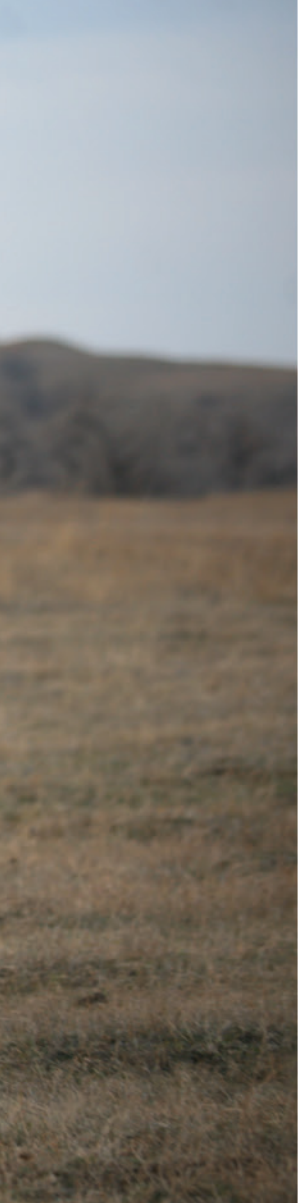
On the Seim ranch, the Hereford cows still have their horns, a nod of respect to the big steers that frequently topped the market in Chicago.

apart where each bunch had a water hole. Some would stay and watch the cattle while some would be loading.”

A group of neighbors shipped their cattle together every year: Willie Seim, Henry Seim and W.D. Longwood were close neighbors, and Roy Humphrey was up closer to White Butte, where they loaded the cattle on the trains. At times other neighbors joined but these were the ones that shipped together every year.

Seim described the art of getting the rail car in place to load the steers.

“They would leave so many cars on a side trace, and we would get a car rolling by hand and coast it down; if we were lucky we’d catch it at the chute with the brake. The cars were heavy but we could generally get them rolling by hand. It took somebody really good to get it braked down and stopped at the chute. When we would get them all loaded up then a big train with nothing but cattle cars would come out of Montana, hook onto ours and head for Chicago.”



Horace Seim.



The Chicago Stockyards would send a letter to sellers whose cattle topped the market in a given sale or year. Willie Seim's three- and four-year-old grass finished steers frequently did.

The men with cattle going to Chicago rode in the caboose; for every car load of cattle a man could ride for free. Horace doesn't recall the exact year when his family quit shipping cattle on the railroad, likely sometime in the later 1940s or early 1950s, but he said that changes with the way the railroad managed the shipping had a part in that decision.

"It was nice to see a bunch of big steers like that," he recalled. "If you topped the market they would write and tell you. They liked our boot branded steers; you could tell by the horns that they were real grass cattle. Restaurants back east wanted grass fattened beef, and the only way to tell that for sure was that they still had

their horns. If cattle went to a feed yard they took their horns off first thing. Places in Boston would pay a premium for cattle that had been raised and grown out on grass, so that was how we came to top the market."

A lot of things have changed in the cattle industry over the years. What has not changed is the hard work that ranchers put into taking care of their cattle and land to produce tasty, nutritious beef.

And on the Seim ranch, the Hereford cows still have their horns, a nod of respect to the big steers that topped the market in Chicago. 🐮

Hard work made it work



Volk Family *keeps ranching tradition alive*





Arsenius and Fanny Volk, 1927.

BY TAMARA CHOAT

Ron Volk will be the first to tell you he's not a fourth-generation rancher in the sense many are, with the same people on the same land. His great-grandfather, Michael Volk, immigrated as a German from Russia and homesteaded south of Raleigh, North Dakota, in 1905. His grandparents Arsenius and Fanny Volk and parents, Bert and Shirley Volk, were farmers and ranchers, but Volk set out on his own after high school and eventually ended up putting together his own operation. Today he runs black Simmental-cross cattle near Sentinel Butte, N.D., with the help of his three children, Mariya (Schnieder), 27, McKenzie, 23, and Kaden, 20.

The Volks still do as much work as possible on horseback, including traditional rope and wrestle branding. PHOTOS COURTESY RON VOLK



The Volk family: Kaden, McKenzie, Mariya and dad Ron, 2022.

PHOTOS COURTESY RON VOLK

“When we talk about multi-generational ranches, that isn’t our story,” Volk says. But how he got where he is today – hard work, a passion for cattle and the land, and passing down a way of life to the next generation – are all the same.

After his father died from cancer the year Volk graduated in 1991, he set off on his own without a clear idea of what he wanted or where he wanted to do it. He went to autobody school for a while, and then ended up back home ranching with his older brother. “We have a great relationship today, but not all families are good working together,” Volk said.

He leased part of the home place for several years, and then in 1999 purchased his uncle’s ranch between Shields, N.D., and the Standing Rock Reservation, the same place where his grandmother on his mom’s side was raised. Volk’s maternal grandparents, Joe and Barbara Kraft, were also in agriculture, primarily as dairy farmers. “My grandpa was a very well-respected farmer and also a county commissioner, I come from it on both sides,” Volk said.

This ranch was home until 2004 when economic development programs on the reservation prompted the

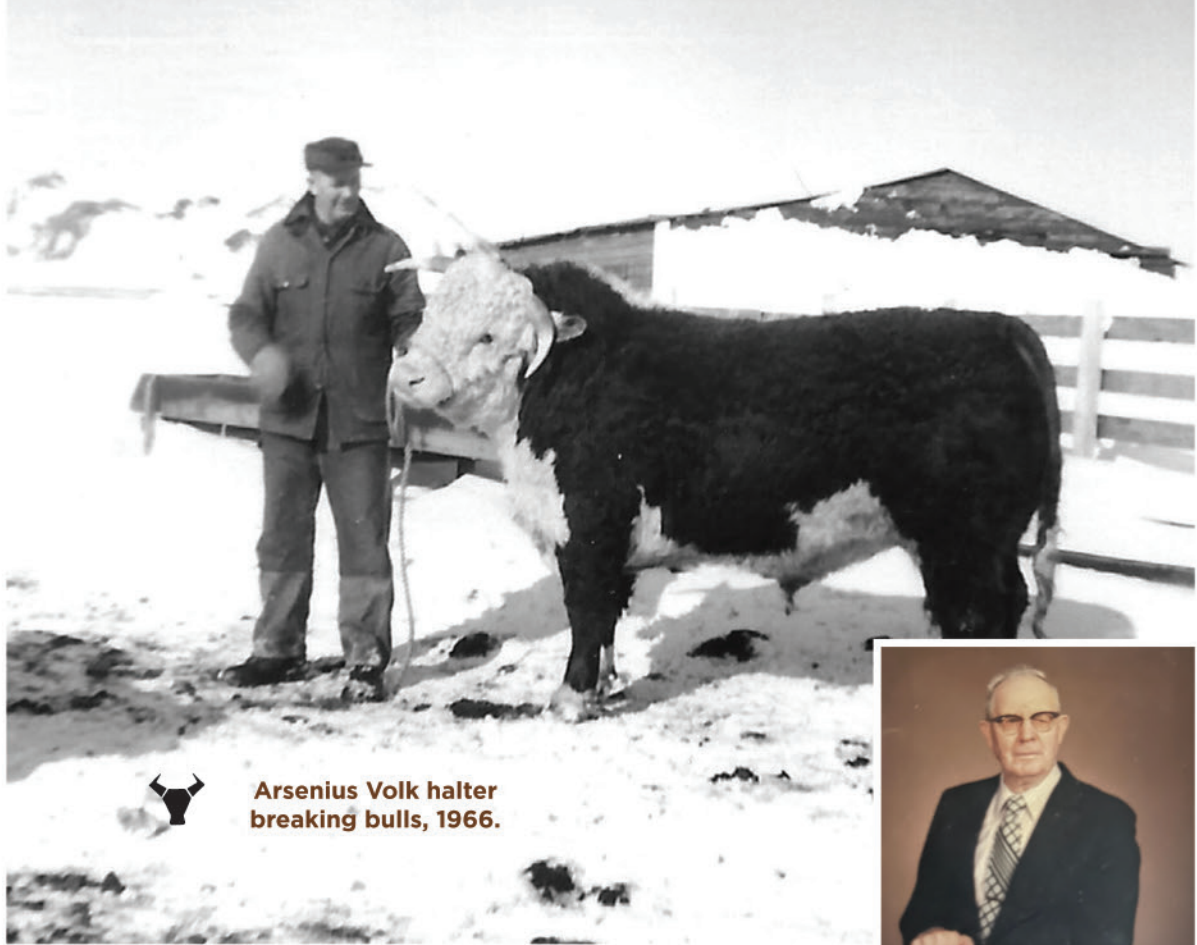
tribe to purchase it. They sold and bought a place near Sentinel Butte. “This has become my home – I left there at 30 years old. We took a chance and moved our whole operation to a place where we really didn’t know anybody or have family, and then worked hard to make it work,” he said.

It wasn’t always easy and Volk took side jobs over the years: in the oil field, driving water truck and as a school bus driver, to make ends meet. “We just did whatever we had to do.”

Volk said his legacy is the survivability that was passed down to him. “The ’30s were hard years, and my grandpa did the work he had to do to make it work. He passed that on to my dad, who probably went through some of the toughest times in agriculture in the ’80s.”

Unfortunately, Bert wasn’t able to see things through, when he died at age 52.

“I consider myself fortunate to be able to look at the example they set,” Volk said. “We’re not on the same place, but I’ve also had to blaze a bit of my own path. You take those lessons you learn and hopefully pass them on.”



**Arsenius Volk halter
breaking bulls, 1966.**



Arsenius Volk



Generations of Volk ranchers.



The Bert and Shirley Volk family, c. 1983. PHOTOS COURTESY RON VOLK

Does he want his children to follow the tradition?

"I'd be lying if I said I didn't want them to ranch, but I want them to do what they want to do – I'll support them 100 percent in whatever career path they choose," he said. "For now, I consider myself very lucky to have three children who are all involved in some aspect of the ranch."

Oldest daughter Mariya trains cutting and cow horses in Wisconsin but helps out full time at home for several months of the year. McKenzie is "living her dream" of becoming a vet; after excelling in 4-H and FFA and getting a degree from North Dakota State University. She just started her first year at the University of Missouri vet school. Son Kaden graduated high school last year and is now home on the ranch.

If they choose this path as fifth-generation cattle producers Volk has helped make sure they have a solid start. "All my kids have cattle in some capacity or another," he said. "My philosophy was to have my kids start out building a cow herd when they were younger."

They can always sell the cows if they want, but if they want to ranch, they will at least have some equity in the business.

"It's impossible to get started today the way I did," he said. "I took out a loan for everything I did."

Volk said his primary goal is to leave something better for them, so they have the opportunity. "That's been my driving force. I've been lucky, I've been fortunate to have people who have mentored me through the years. If I can pass that on to my kids, it's about leaving it better than you have it."

Volk said he continues ranching not just because it's a family legacy, but because he has a passion for the cattle industry.

"If you don't have the passion, can you succeed? Maybe yes, but without passion it's just a job."

This passion has led him to involvement with the North Dakota Independent Cattlemen's Association



Englebert (Bert) Volk high school graduation, 1956.



Bert Volk, 1938.



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Volk branding; cattle have switched from 1960s Hereford to modern black Simmental cross cattle.

and R-CALF USA, where he lobbies for changes in the cattle industry state- and nationwide.

"I can tell you that when I leave this earth, I will not be a rich man money-wise, but I hope to leave it better than I found it," he said.

Even in the hard times, Volk said he knows he's doing what he loves and understands there are ups and downs. "Sometimes we get caught up in the lifestyle and we forget the business aspect of it, and sometimes we get caught up in the business aspect and forget the lifestyle. The key is balancing the two, and it's different every day."

In 2021 they went through the worst drought he can ever remember, and then through two terrible spring calving blizzards in a row in '22 and '23.

"Those are the days you go out there and you feel like you should quit, but you don't," Volk said.

"It's part of this lifestyle that we chose. You don't quit because it's tough – that's not how most ranchers are made. We're out there because it's what we love to do. You beat yourself up over every calf you lose, but you never pat yourself on the back for every one you save."

The Volks continue to raise cattle and do their work "the old way but using new technology" as much as possible. They retain their own heifers and background their calves, using all natural and NHTC programs. They "neighbor" with a group of likeminded ranchers, some as far as 40 miles away, and do as much horseback as possible.

Volk said this is going to be a good year.

"We have good grass and good cattle prices. We went through '21 and '22 and then we got '23. Who knows what '24 is going to be like. You just have to take the ups and the downs."

Volk said if he has some advice to give to the next generation coming up, it's don't just sit there and wait to fail.

"There's more than one way to do this thing. You've got to be willing to fight, dig in and get the job done. That's what we've always done."

The eternal optimist in him says there's always next year. And maybe this is that year. ♡



Spring branding on the Volk Ranch, 1972.

Ron Volk and girlfriend, TC Miceli.

The Volks rely on neighbors and friends to help with big work days.

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Justin and Rhen. COURTESY PHOTO

Six Generations have called the Robinson Ranch home

BY CALLIE HANSON

Nestled just outside Moorcroft, the Robinson family has called the historic depot town home since 1892 when Lucian Holbrook Robinson came to the growing railroad town. For six generations since, the family has tended the land, cattle, and the occasional flock of sheep.

Shortly after Lucian's arrival, he opened Moorcroft's first store in a small tent. According to "A History of Crook County" by Helen R. Zimmerschied, Lucian, often referred to as Lou, became heavily involved in the town. He wore many hats including postmaster and president of the Bank of Moorcroft.

His small store eventually became the Robinson Mercantile and according to Zimmerschied, "In the early 1900s, the sales from the Robinson Mercantile often exceeded a quarter million dollars per year. The store handled everything a farmer would need."

"Anything from food to barbed wire and sheep wagons, and also livestock feed and seed for farming could be bought at the store. These items were shipped in on the railroad in carload lots."

Lou died in 1956 and the ranch was purchased by two of his grandsons, Alden and Lucian. According to Alden's son Justin, the family expanded the original 160 acre plot by picking up homesteader land from families who could not pay their bank notes.



The Robinsons are proud to continue to work all of their cattle horseback just as generations before.
COURTESY PHOTO



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Rhen Robinson makes the sixth generation of the family on the ranch. COURTESY PHOTO

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Alden made a name for himself raising cattle, sheep, and horses and was inducted in the Wyoming Cowboy Hall of Fame (WCHF).

According to his induction profile in the WCHF, “Alden was a long-term member of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association serving on the board many of those years.”

Alden’s legacy is still felt throughout Crook County.

“In 1963 he was part of a Crook County group who founded the Crook County Horsemen’s Association, an organization still vital to youth in Crook County encouraging horsemanship skills,” according



Cole and his wife Devon are busy raising the sixth generation of Robinsons ranchers, Rhen. COURTESY PHOTO



Callie and her dog Oakley hard at work training horses. COURTESY PHOTO

to WCHF. “Alden’s participation has continued through the lineage as Robinson family members are still involved.”

“As a long-term 4-H horse leader in Crook County, he helped organize horse judging events, horsemanship clinics along with assisting in grooming, hoof trimming, and countless other horse related trials, tribulations and jublations.”

Alden’s son Justen remains on the ranch with his wife and two adult children, where they continue to run cattle and pursue various business ventures in and around Moorcroft.

Justen and his wife Lori started out with a small herd of sheep when they first got married in the 1990s and bought their first set of heifers in 1992.

“Between the 1930s and 1950s, we were running Hereford cattle and having a regular bull sale. As the market shifted through the decades, we started running more Angus cattle.”

Over the years, the family has briefly raised sheep, but their roots in the cattle business continue to run deep.

The family currently runs a herd of commercial Angus pairs in addition to yearlings they have added to the ranch in more recent years. True to



Callie and her fiancé Matt Illies own the Crossfire Ranch Supply in Moorcroft and train roping horses.

COURTESY PHOTO



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tradition, they work all their cattle on horseback and look forward to yearly brandings with the help of their neighbors.

The family dabbles in multiple aspects of the cattle industry and sells bulls and replacement females through private treaty sales, though they have not engaged much in registered cattle according to Justen. Their kids have also branched out to continue to diversify the family's overall business profile.

Justen and Lori's children, Cole and Callie Robinson, have each made names for themselves in the community. With their extensive rodeo and ranching background, the pair of siblings and their spouses have not strayed far from their roots and continue to train roping horses and compete in rodeos.

Callie is a real estate agent and has followed in the business-owning footsteps of her great grandpa and owns the Crossfire Ranch Supply with her fiancé Matt. Cole has made a business for himself contracting rodeos and stocking calves to rodeos ranging from high school rodeos to PRCA-sanctioned events.

"We want to remain profitable enough to make sure this place can stay in our family for generations to come," Justen says. "Over the years we have diversified and added yearlings to our operation as well."

"I feel like our place is well kept and I am pretty proud of that," Lori says. "We have made a lot of improvements over the years to our rotation strategy to ensure we could relieve our pastures as best we could."

Justen notes keeping their ranching heritage going for the next generation is a top priority.

"Our kids would be generation number five and they both have kids of their own now, so there are currently three living generations on this ranch," says Lori. "Ranching is a family affair for us and that is why it means so much to us." 🐾



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Double-walled slat style walls are constructed using aluminum extruded tubes, interlocked and bonded together forming a strong and durable side wall. Vertical posts are not necessary so the slat style's walls are incredibly smooth and more bio-secure.

Contact This Wilson Trailer Authorized Dealer for More Information



Serving the Northwest Since 1971

Celebrating **56** Years as an Authorized Wilson Trailer Sales Representative

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1705 Old Hardin Rd, Billings, MT 59101

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Jim Graham. PHOTO BY STEVE URICK



Billy Etbauer at the 1982 SD High School Rodeo Finals.



1982 "Wrangler Bullfighters" at the Black Hills Stock Show.



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