Vol. 64 4th Edition

—The Highland——HOOFBEAT

MISSION STATEMENT: North Central Highland Cattle Association shall protect the integrity and sustainability of the Highland breed by promoting education and social interactions of its members.

The Recipe Corner

It's cold out, this recipe is rib sticking goodness!

What I Wish I Knew

NCHCA director reflects upon valuable lessons learned.

Annual Farm Meeting

Dec 23

It is almost the end of another year, time to evaluate your farm's performance. Free tips!

<u>Page: 08</u> <u>Page: 04</u> <u>Page: 10</u>



Melinda Cowell President

Melinda and her husband Shawn own Beyond Hope Farm in Ellendale, MN. Where Melinda is a farm, home, kid and dog manager, and educator.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

read recently that farming is an act of faith. It often stretches us to our limits in good and challenging ways. As an association, I have appreciated the mentoring, networking and sharing of the good, bad, and ugly of farm life by many who share our beautiful breed. The triumphs are often top of the mountain experiences for us and we celebrate. The lows, death of an animal, an injury, or a mystery illness, stretch us physically, mentally, emotionally, and sometimes financially. It is in these times, that I am grateful for a group of like minded breeders who share their experiences to offset some of the challenges.

We may not agree on every little point, there are loads of variations in technique and execution, but we can all agree that the promotion and improvement of the Highland Breed is our end goal.

As we move into the holiday season, I would like to express my gratitude for each of our NCHCA members. It is a pleasure to do this life with you all! May you have a blessed holiday season.

-Melinda Cowell



NO COST TO

LOTS OF FUN
OPPORTUNITIES
TO MEET OTHER
PEOPLE YOUR
AGE THAT LOVE
THIS BREED OF
CATTLE.

The Juniors

The (North Central Highland Cattle Association Juniors) NCHCAj have been working hard over the last year to create fun and exciting learning opportunities for juniors of all ages. We want to allow everyone to participate in these activities as much as possible. On the North Central Juniors Facebook page, you can find lots of information on everything we offer as well as links and resources to participate. Here are some of the fun activities that the NCHCA juniors are offering this year.

2024 SWEATSHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

You have a chance to submit a design entry that could be chosen to be displayed on our 2024 NCHCA junior sweatshirt. The winner gets a NCHCAj sweatshirt with their design on it without having to apply. You must hand draw or electronically design it from scratch, and it must be designed to be put on the back of a sweatshirt.

You can find more in-depth directions as well as an email provided for your design to be submitted on the NCHCAj Facebook page.

2024 Sweatshirt Design Contest entries due 11/15/23

2024 JUNIOR SWEATSHIRT OF THE YEAR APPLICATION

Every year the North Central Juniors offer a sweatshirt of the year. All you do to receive a sweatshirt is go to our Facebook page and fill out the Google form application. Juniors of any age can apply to receive a sweatshirt. This year we are offering an application for 12 and under as well as 13 and up. There will be no sweatshirts shipped. They must be picked up at the Annual meeting, MJSC show, or the North Central regional show.

Applications open 11/16/23 and will close 1/1/24

Article Author Bio

Lauren Cowell is Junior Committee President and a senior in Highschool and owns and runs a small plant nursery business. She has shown highland cattle for 9 years.

2024 JUNIOR OF THE YEAR

The junior of the year award is a very important award to the NCHCAj committee. It is a traveling trophy and custom belt buckle given to one deserving North Central junior annually and the North Central regional show every September. Any adult can nominate any junior that they believe deserves recognition for their hard work inside and outside of the breed. The junior nominee must be a member in good standing of the NCHCA junior program. The nominator is asked to write an extensive nomination letter about the junior's accomplishment in the highland breed, school, extra-curricular activities, and community. You can find more in-depth instructions and an email provided to send the applications on the NCHCAj Facebook page

2024 Junior of the Year nominations due 8/31/24

2024 NCHCAJ COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

The NCHCA junior board offers \$500 scholarship annually to an enrolled/current college student to be used for tuition, books etc. On the NCHCAj Facebook page, you can find the application link. All you must do is fill out the application and email the complete application and your high school/college transcript to the email provided on the NCHCAj Facebook page, as well as 2 letters of recommendation sent directly from the references.

2024 NCHCAj College Scholarship appliation due 1/1/24

JUNIOR ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

President - Lauren Cowell

Vice President - Olivia Moore

Secretary/Treasurer - Clarisa Palmer

Hoofbeat Reporter - Autumn Schaar





Photo Credit: Flatland Farms



Wouldn't it be great to go back in time and give your yourself some advice? For example, if I could go back to when I was in my twenties I'd tell myself, don't take out the student loans. Instead, travel and find a good mentor, and, most importantly don't get that hair perm! What was I thinking?

The first day we ever laid eyes on Highlands, we thought that maybe we could buy some cattle to eat the grass in our 10 acre field and they'd have calves and we'd probably be able to produce some of our own meat or milk down the road. We knew practically nothing. Our only experience with cattle had been feeding out some steers. We had very little fencing and infrastructure and even less knowledge, but we really wanted to make this work because we loved everything about what we saw that day.

We only had enough confidence to buy 2 cows. One just calved and the other one was going to calve in a month. We regularly lament that we didn't buy the entire herd being offered, but in reality 2 cows with new calves was the perfect place for us to begin. We had to start somewhere.

There are so many things that we wish we could go back and tell ourselves that day. The honest truth is we have barely scratched the surface four years into this venture and we hope to stay teachable as long as we own cattle. We've had some big ah-ha moments along the way. Here are just 5 things we wish we'd known when we started.

First, Realize the value of a willing mentor.

You know that saying, that you don't know, what you don't know. This was and still is especially true for us. I remember when we were trying unsuccessfully to get a first calf heifer rebred. Our AI tech told us that she might be in a negative energy balance. In our ignorance, we thought he was trying to tell us that she had a "negative vibe" and we thought he meant the solution was to be very calm around her, brush her more and try to get her to be more positive so she would come back into heat. That sounds ludicrous now.

Go ahead and laugh. But, seriously, if we would have asked more questions and spent more time really understanding what he was saying about her mineral and nutritional needs, we may have been able to solve the rebreeding problem much sooner. There are other highland owners that love to share from their years of experience, vets, AI techs and other farmers that you can learn from. There are good people around you that have information about what good confirmation is and why it's important, what good mineral is, feed needs, lice treatments and vaccinations, good bulls, weaning techniques, preventing fly strike, showing or marketing your beef, etc. When they take the time to open up and share information with you it is like opening up a treasure chest of knowledge. Be curious and make sure you understand the terminology. Don't be shy. Ask lots of questions.



Identify and establish specific goals and objectives.

As unromantic as goal setting sounds, it actually requires a lot of creativity to identify what your aspirations and dreams are for the future. The beauty of each farm, ranch or homestead is that, it is a place to exercise your imagination and express yourself. It is important to research the different approaches that you might be interested in and find out what will be the best fit for you. The strategies needed to excel in showing cattle and raising breed stock will be very different from what is needed to host people for agritourism events, or provide quality highland beef. This target will be an especially valuable guard rail for you in the face of uncertainty. When we started Little House and Farm Highlands, we had not yet realized what it was we wanted to do with our Highlands. We didn't even know what our options were. Going to the NCHCA shows and business meetings were one of the best ways to connect

with others and see how others in your area have turned their passion for Highland Cattle into a business that they are intentional and passionate about. We can't recommend enough that you get connected with other highland owners through associations, but especially getting together in person. The insights we've gained have been invaluable and helped us map our path forward.

"WHEN THEY TAKE THE TIME TO OPEN UP AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH YOU IT IS LIKE OPENING UP A TREASURE CHEST OF KNOWLEDGE."

You'll never seem to have enough gates.

Remember back to the beginning of this story? The peaceful pasture scene? Brushing cattle? It was pretty naive to think that perimeter fencing was all that was going to be needed. Part of the journey for us has been understanding how to move cattle effectively and safely. We eventually learned how to use gates to make an adequate, homemade cattle working facility with a tub, alley ways and a squeeze chute. This is an area that is a work in progress on our farm. I mention this here though, because someone new to cattle like we were, might not understand why having that infrastructure is so important. We wish that we had visited more farms and understood how to use these pieces of equipment. If you are new to cattle please visit other farms and ask questions. If you have a lot of experience think about how you might be able to mentor someone new to the highland group. So whether you are an avid do-it-yourselfer and want to design your own set up or prefer to purchase the equipment just know that it makes all the difference in the world once you understand the philosophy of moving cattle and it makes working your cattle more enjoyable for everyone, even the cows.

Quality tools make a difference.

Over the last few years we have found that Rotational Grazing is a vital component in our cattle feed management. We rely heavily on portable electric fencing so that we can maximize productivity on our little farm. Recently there have been some great improvements to the gear creating some new solutions to old problems. These are a few of our favorites:

A geared reel. We like the Teragate geared reel because it's heavy duty, well built and has a 3:1 ratio for faster reeling.

Poly braid, Not poly wire. Poly braid is a superior construction over poly wire. It's less likely to be damaged and consists of individual strands of plastic and wire that are braided together to create a tight weave making it more durable, less prone to tangles and overstretching. It also carries a better charge.

O'Brien step in posts with tough stainless steel spikes that won't rust and can be sharpened. We love the big foot treads for stepping in the posts. They felt about half the weight of the other brands yet yield superior strength. They are more expensive than the cheap ones at your local feed store, but they are not the same. The cheap ones will break because

they are too brittle. These can last 10-15 years. We like these best and they are the only step in posts we would recommend today.

Timeless insulated fence posts for permanent perimeter fencing along with 170k PSI high tensile electric is a game changer. 220k is most common and 170k wire is hard to find but Kencove is a reliable source. The Timeless fence posts are a rigid and yet flexible pvc post designed to last for many years with minimal upkeep, they never need painting and won't rot. Almost unbelievably, when trees fall on them we have cut the trees off the fence line and the posts and wires pop back into place by themselves.

And finally, don't be cheap go ahead and get a good 3 joule or greater fence charger and make sure it's well grounded.



Photo Credit: Tony LeTourneau Little House and Farm

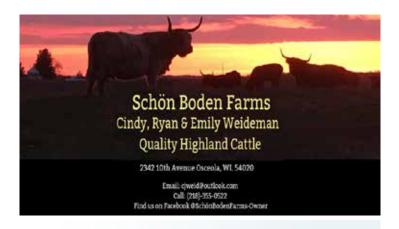
The last thing I would tell myself is, It's going to be alright.

You are going to love learning to raise Highland cattle. If we could go back to those early days when we were wondering if we were making a big mistake, we would of course reassure ourselves that this was indeed going to be a very rewarding experience. Cattle have not only made our land more fertile, but they have become the centerpiece of our farm. Few activities in life have been as rewarding as learning what our cattle need, watching them respond to our care and building relationships with them. This past January we got back our first beef that was born and raised on our farm. What a beautiful pay off. The meat was better than we ever imagined it could be. This confirmed that we were on the right path and had made the right decision to invest in the Highland breed.

So go ahead and dream big dreams and ask yourself what you would do if you weren't afraid. Even now after we have had our fold for a number of years; we need to remind ourselves and stay inspired as to our next steps. What do you want this next year to look like for you? I hope you go for it and have great success! We are rooting for you.



Photo Credit: Tony LeTourneau Little House and Farm



Forest Bluffs &

Prairie Kettles, LLC.

FB&PK

39841 176th Street Canton, MN 55922

43942 132nd Street Grenville, SD 57239

Phone: 507-743-0201 Cell: 507-269-9376 E-mail: fbpkllc@gmail.com

Custom Grown Groceries Program - vegetables, small fruits, forest products, eggs, dairy products and meats.
Contact us for additional information.



Mark, Randi & Joe Johnson 651-674-7395 mail@climbingstumpfarm.com

CLIMBING STUMP FARM

46065 Evergreen Ave Harris, MN 55032 www.climbingstumpfarm.com Registered Scottish Highland Cattle



Registered/Sovereign Highland Cattle & Club Calves

The McConnell Family 2425 U.S. Hwy. 14 Balaton, MN 56115 P: 507-829-2558 E: pellcreek1875@gmail.com Find us on Facebook

The Recipe Corner

SHEPHERDS PIE TWICE BAKED POTATOES

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs lean ground beef
2 cans cream of mushroom soup
1 can of corn
Slap ya mama seasoning
9 large potatoes
Olive oil
Butter
Heavy cream
Season salt
Shredded cheese
Pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 400

Wash and dry your potatoes then place them on an aluminum lined baking sheet. Coat your potatoes with olive oil and sprinkle salt on top. Bake potatoes for 1 hour at 400.

While your potatoes are baking, brown your ground beef and season with slap ya mama seasoning. Add two cans of cream mushroom soup and one can of corn, season to taste.

When your potatoes are done, let them cool for 10 minutes before slicing them open. Scoop out the potato into a mixing bowl. Add in butter, heavy whipping cream, seasoned salt and pepper. Use a hand mixer to mix it all together. Stir in shredded cheese.



Photo Credit: Jessica Lipke

Scoop in some beef mixture into each baked potato shell, then top with the potato mixture. Sprinkle cheese on top and put back in the oven for 5 minutes

> Recipe submitted by Jessica Lipke of Nordic Pines Farm

THERE MIGHT BE A GRANT FOR THAT

By Julianne Motis

I opefully your hay is stored, show season is over, and you have time to relax indoors. If you have ever thought about submitting a grant application, put your downtime to good use and start researching. There are federal, state, local and specialty grants available every year.

So where do I start, you may ask? Well, you could start by visiting the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) website that describes their current grants and how to apply (Applying for Loans and Grants | USDA). Your state's Department of Agriculture's website is another place to poke around. In Minnesota for instance, you could apply for a cost-share grant for the purchase of new, used, or retrofitting of equipment for adopting pasture soil health practices (think no-till) and there is a grant to cover costs of approved practices (new fencing!) to prevent wolf-livestock conflicts. Water quality, historic preservation, environmental stewardship, There are many grants available. Find them!

Another great place to research is your local agricultural extension office and/or your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office. Give your local staff a call and they can often point you in the right direction. Make this relationship, it will pay off.

There are also special interest organizations which support smaller farmers and local food producers such as the Farmer Veteran Coalition (FARMER VETERAN COALITION (farmvetco.org)) which focuses on military veterans who farm. They even give away tractors!

As you set 2024 farm goals consider a grant application. You never know, perhaps a grant can make your dreams come true.

Board Member Spotlight- Jessica Lipke

Jessica and her husband Steve own and operate Nordic Pines Farm in northern Wisconsin. They fell in love with highlands back when they first met. One of their first dates was to the farmers market in Rochester, MN. They purchased highland beef from a farmer and fell in love with the beef. It has always been a dream to have a farm and to raise highlands for beef since then.

During covid they had an opportunity to purchase an 80 acre farm in northern Wisconsin. They purchased the farm site unseen and moved with their three children.

They purchased their first registered cows a couple months after moving in and have been living what they dreamt about years ago. They joined NCHCA at that time and have been soaking in all the information and advice they can from longtime breeders with the goal of raising high quality animals for beef along with high quality breeding stock.

"We are excited to be raising cattle that we are proud of, and for our children to get involved as well. It has been such a joy watching their joy and excitement unfold with the cattle. We're so thankful to the NCHCA for their guidance and support and for the genuine friendships we've made along the way."





ick the right time, mornings are usually a good time to review your farm's annual performance, you know, before the cares of day weigh us down, or something breaks.

Set the tone by starting out on a positive note. Start by telling your business partner wife/husband how nice she/he looks in her/his select one or more: coveralls/bathrobe/muck boots/nightgown/underwear. Top off your coffee, then consider the following topics to foster a robust discussion.

1. WHAT WENT WELL?

Opening with: "them calves sure were cute" is weak and smells of desperation. Everyone knows Scottish Highland calves are adorable. Occasionally, we will encounter an ugly baby but rarely is the Scottish Highland breed so affected like your second cousin's baby. "The herd is healthy" or "cattle handling improved" or "we met some wonderful fellow breeders and learned a lot" are stronger openings. If you cannot muster one example of something going well, consider re-purposing the meeting to a Herd Dispersal discussion.

2. IMPROVEMENT AREAS

It is important to be honest here. You both know what didn't go well and you might as well address these areas head-on. Did you experience failure, disappointment, frustration, the agony of defeat? Well, welcome to marriage farming. This part of the meeting is often where goals for next year are set. Don't belabor topics like "does Mother Nature actually hate us?" or "improper squeeze chute language whilst vet present" or "if I have to power wash manure off our front porch one more time..." simply note the topics and move on. This isn't even the hardest portion of the meeting, that comes next.

3. INCOME AND EXPENSES

Now is a good time to eat another breakfast hamburger. You are still trying to reduce the burger load in the freezer from the meat the Johnson's decided they didn't have room for and could buy cheaper at Walmart anyways. Time to gird your loins, (what does that mean, really). Please note: that pearls of wisdom I garnered from Stinky Fred at the feed store cannot be counted as income. Along those same lines, the gray hair, and permanent bags under your eyes from calving season cannot be counted as expenses. You may choose to skip this portion of the meeting altogether because does anyone do this for the money? Ha! If you skip this topic, keep the shiny brochure for the new tractor/barn/implement you want to buy in your back pocket, secure, and hidden from view.

4. CLOSING REMARKS

Quick meeting re-cap, jot down 2024 goals and projects, warm up the cup of coffee, have another burger, and shake hands/hug/laugh and start dreaming of them cute calves come springtime.

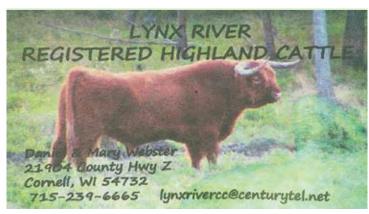


The Wilkinson's

19046 Irish Drive Richland Center, WI 53581 **608-647-3594**

buckcreekfarm@outlook.com

Scottish Highland Cattle





Windemere Farm

Registered Highland Cattle

John & Anne Proctor 3960 County Road HO Junction City, WI 54443 715-457-6748 www.WindemereHighlands.com WindemereFarm@TheProctors.com

Scottish Highland Cattle The Gruenerts Jean, Rich and Randy 8670 Fishman Road, Burlington, WI 53105 262-539-2725 greenearth.jean@gmail.com

YEAR-END CHECKLIST











CLICK ON THE QR CODE OR SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE TO REGISTER ONLINE



Mark & Jamie Schulz

18709 690th Ave. Eikton, MN 55933

(507) 481-7367

info@flatlandfarm.com www.flatlandfarm.com

The Hoofbeat Sponsers Bent Creek Farm

Scottish Highland Cattle

Greg & Joanne Peterson Cromwell,MN 763.370.4047



John & Tina Keep Bennett, CO www.highlanderheaven.com 303.644.5089



Partnering with Highland Farms in Minn. and Wisc. to market and sell grassfed Highland Beef.

Contact us to discuss how to become a partner farm.

www.WindlandFlats.com info@windlandflats.com (262) 617-4232

Josh Krenz Princeton, MN





Robyn & Allyson Spears (925)963-3870 (925)303-5817

Brentwood, CA junkndisordertyinfo@gmail.com www.junk-n-disorderly.com







SPEARFISH, SOUTH DAKOTA

605-584-9032





Boulder Meadows Highlands

Larry & Cindy Sassen

Breeders

Quality Highland Beef Registered Highland Cattle Rotational Grazed Grass Fed

20374-223rd Street Little Falls, MN 56345

Phone: 320-745-2444 Isfjfarm@brainerd.net





LAST CHANCE RANCH







Terry & Kay Clemans Hideaway Farm

AHCA Registered Highlands Breedingstock Available



630-924-8540 *OR* 630-460-3374 *T cell* -3375 *K cell* www.HideawayFarm.net terry@hideawayfarm.net *OR* kay@hideawayfarm.net

Creachann Gleann



Ben and Mary Schmidtke 7200 Platte Rd Platteville, WI 53818

Phone: (608) 348-4047

Email: info@creachanngleann.com Web: http://creachanngleann.com

THE COWELL FAMILY
SHAWN AND MELINDA
MARYN, ETHAN, LAUREN & SHAELYN



3 507.213.0235

beyondhopefarmmnllc@gmail.com

⊕ Beyond Hope Farm MN LLC

(7) Beyond Hope Farm MN LLC

@ beyondhopefarmmn

Order your 2024 NCHCA Calendar

Show off this high quality glossy stock and spiral bound calendar made up of member farm photos and support our Association. The pages are 9" high by 12" wide, and the calendar measures 12" wide by 11" high.

You can order online using the link, https://www.nchca.org/calendar.html or scan the QR code

Thank you to everyone who participated by submitting and voting on photos and to our calendar committee.

Congratulations to the following farms for their entires!

Blue Rayne Highlands, Kobe & McKinley Fisk, Searsboro, IA

Bluestone Ranch, Leif & Jenny Anderson, Sawyer, ND

Boulder Meadows Highlands, Larry & Cindy Sassen, Little Falls, MN

Climbing Stump Farm, Mark, Randi & Joe Johnson, Harris, MN

Cottonwood Acres, Jeff & Emily Moyer, Stoughton, WI

Flatland Farm LLC, Mark & Jamie Schulz, Elkton, MN

Glacier's Edge Farm, Heather & Joel Olson, Bloomer, WI

Glory Oaks Farm, Kyle & Katie Baker, Northwood, IA

Hidden Ridge Highland Cattle, Dennis Breneman & Maureen Mott, Loganville, WI

Highlands in the Hollow, Diane Clark, Waverly, TN

Limestone Lane Cattle Company, Jennifer & JeNeal Horning, Marion, IA

Little House and Farm, Anthony & Michelle Letourneau, Hinckley, MN

Quarter Section Run Highlands, Stacia Danielson, Janesville, IA

Prestige Farms, Sarah & Kyle Caskey, Pipestone, MN

Scotland Yard, Tom Morrissey, Gatzke, MN

Stepping Stone Acres, Paula Walker, Rolla, MO

Windemere Farm, John & Anne Proctor, Junction City, WI





\$20

Plus \$8.50 shipping



The North Central Highland Cattle Association (NCHCA) was formed in 1982 to promote Scottish Highland Cattle, form a marketing unit for breeders, and to provide a local organization closer to home. The organization has done this and provides opportunities for youth and families to have fun with their Highland cattle. Our association provides networking and educational opportunities for its members, has an active junior program for youth, and provides a local voice to the national organization, the American Highland Cattle Association.

Board of Directors

President - Melinda Cowell Tel 507-213-0235 President@nchca.org

Vice President - Katie Baker Tel 214-772-2050 Vicepresident@nchca.org

Treasurer - Julianne Motis Tel 218-576-3633 Treasurer@nchca.org

Secretary _ Randi Johnson Tel 651-491-5061 Secretary@nchca.org **Director -** Michelle LeTourneau Tel 320-279-1790 housenfarm@gmail.com

Director - Jessica Lipke Tel 605-277-5798 nordicpineswi@gmail.com

Director - Maureen Matt Tel 608-415-7641 hiddenridgehc@gmail.com

A.C.H.C.A. Rep _ Jan Larson Tel 262-539-3257 headacrez@yahoo.com