

Ripping the painter's tape off the 18 ft. utility trailer constructed in the ag welding shop, **Seth Wilkerson**¹² prepares to add the finishing touches on the project for competition. The trailer, built for a customer who preferred it be painted red and with a cost effective wood flooring, was entered in livestock show competitions across the state. The trailer, which took a month and a half to build, placed 2nd in San Antonio and won a blue ribbon at the Houston Livestock Show. Others who worked on the trailer included **Dylan McKeever**,¹² Ashton Paup¹¹ and Joe Salinas.¹¹ "It helps when working together and you get the experience and the practice of building, welding, wiring and painting on a project. It can help you get a job because you already have the experience," ag teacher/FFA sponsor Derek Sims said.



Livestock Show Moments

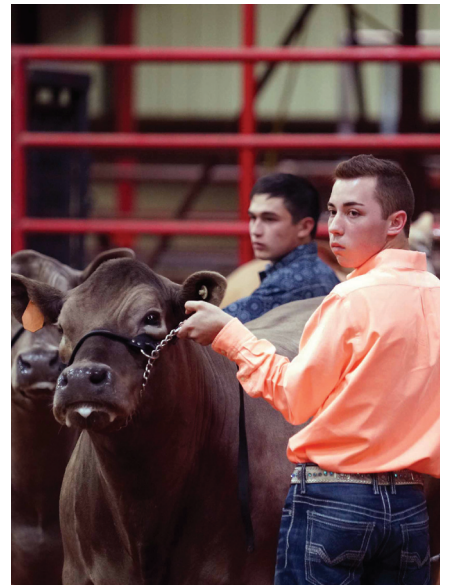
Chelsea Shelton¹⁰ steps in to the Henderson County Livestock Show arena with her suffolk lamb. Shelton placed 5th but did not make the sale in her first attempt with a lamb.



Alyssa Hooks⁹ shows her award-winning Holland Lop rabbit named Poppy. Hooks placed 1st in class at both Fort Worth and county show.



In the arena for the heavy weight class, **Kelby Lawson**¹² has his Charolais/Maine Anjou steer, named Wayland, in the best position for the judges at the county show. Lawson and Wayland placed 6th in their class. The two placed 3rd at the East Texas Fair in Tyler last fall.





HOOKED ON BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Before stepping on to the stage, Alyssa Hooks⁹ made the last minute finishing touches to her hair and make-up before the nerves started settling in. She looked at herself one last time and stepped out of her trailer and made her way into the arena.

The freshman decided to run for Henderson County Livestock Show Queen even though the finalist is usually an upperclassman. Hooks competed against nine other girls, but she was the youngest of them all.

"It was probably the most nerve-wracking thing in my entire life," Hooks said.

All of the girls were under the constant pressure to look and act perfect and Hooks said that was hard for her.

"I know I'm far from perfect," Hooks said. "I tried my best and I'm glad I got the opportunity."

As the finalist lined up in the arena, and the announcer called their names, the winner ended up being a four-time competitor who finally donned the crown.

"I felt like she deserved it, she had worked so hard for it for so long," Hooks said. "I was glad she won."

Trading in her sparkled shirt and fancy hat, Hooks had to make a quick change. She had to juggle the competition for stock show queen and show her livestock at the same time.

Hooks showed her Holland Lop rabbits and received first place at the Fort Worth Livestock Show and at the

Henderson County Livestock Show. Along with her rabbits, Hooks showed breeding poultry.

"Chickens are less work because all you have to do is feed them," Hooks said. "You have to 'set' the rabbits (position them), clean them and their pens, and mess with them every day. But, the rabbits are easier to show. You just put them in a box and the judge does everything. Chickens you sometimes have to hold upside down."

Hooks is an active member in FFA and has been involved in the 4H club for three years.

"4H actually prepared me for FFA because it got me ready for competition and taught me responsibility and how to take care of the livestock," Hooks said.

Hooks got interested in showing through friends and family.

"My cousin Hannah Reeves shows chickens and my friend Kyle Brown shows rabbits," Hooks said. "And I just followed their lead. It looked like fun."

Hooks plans to enter the queen contest as well as show

her chickens and rabbits next year, but she wants to add the speed events.

"I want to enter the barrel racing. I used to ride when I was little and I just want to start it up again. It takes a lot of practice to go full speed and keep your balance. It's all about bonding with your horse," Hooks said. "As for the livestock show, I just love it all!"

>Mallory McCallie



Firing up the fajita cooker, **Brandon Penland**¹² inspects the project he just completed, making sure the surface is heating correctly for some hot, sizzling fajitas. An experienced welder, Penland worked on many projects for competition, including a coffee table and two end tables.



Matthew Smith¹² and **Abigail Valentine**¹² attach the ties to the wire cage built to house a couple of guinea pigs. The massive welding project was a group effort by Ms. Jamie Dildine's class to make a new home for the classroom pets Dixie and Otis. The guinea pig couple will be setting up house royal style, since the students built them an \$80 two-story mansion with room to roam.

STEPS IN MAKING HOMEMADE ICE CREAM

IN MS. DILDINE AND HARVEY'S FIRST YEAR AG CLASSES

1. Ingredients: milk, sugar, vanilla extract, rock salt, ice, small and large Zip Lock bags.
2. Mix milk, sugar and vanilla in a small Zip Lock bag. Close bag.
3. Place small bag in larger bag filled with ice and rock salt.
4. Shake bag until contents in small bag are firm.
5. Enjoy your delicious homemade ice cream!