

## Extension Notes By Joe Leibbrandt

### Heifer development strategies to increase profit

I always find new things or ideas intriguing. Some new ideas are interesting. Some of them are just weird, and sometimes the same old way is the best way. No matter what though, always be ready to try new ideas. They just might work, and they just might make you money.

I recently attended the Range Beef Cow Symposium in Fort Collins. There were many interesting speakers that provided valuable information and challenged our thinking. One of those speakers was Rick Funston from Nebraska.

He spoke on heifer development and how it has changed over the years.

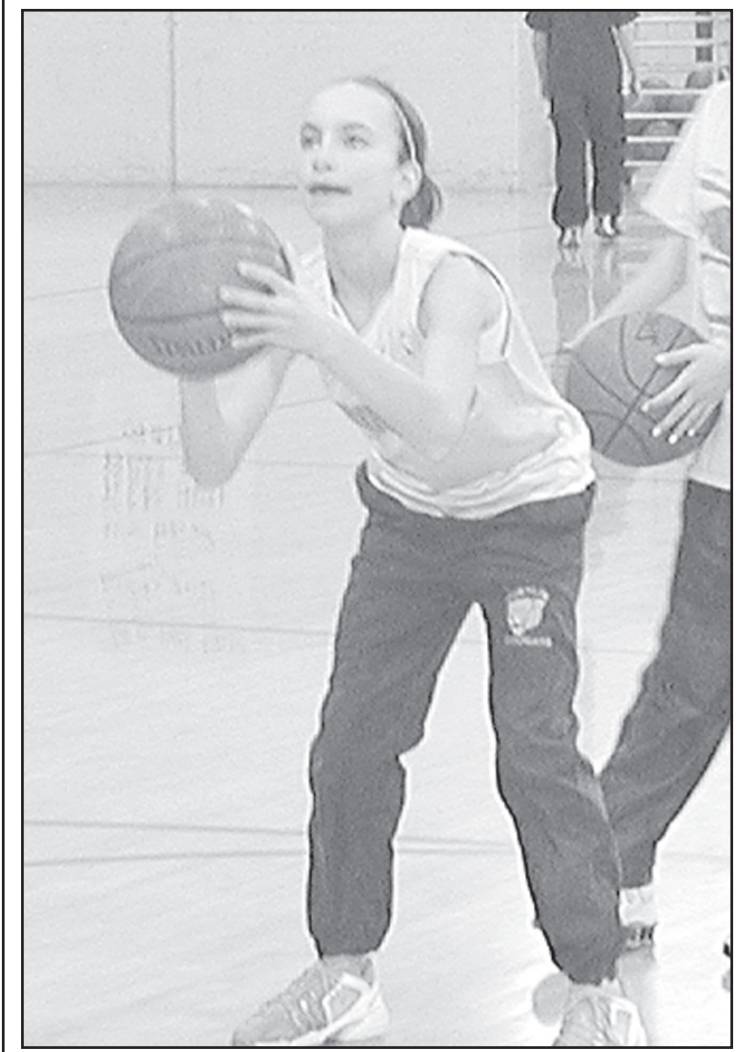
Much of the past work conducted in the late 1960s and early 1980s indicated that only when heifers reach their target weight can high pregnancy rates be obtained. This established the guideline (that many cattlemen have used for years) that replacement heifers should be developed to 60 - 65 percent of their expected mature body weight by the time breeding starts in order to reach puberty.

However major changes in cattle genetics and economy, indicate that traditional heifer development strategies should be reevaluated. In short, developing heifers to 60 - 65 percent of body weight may maximize pregnancy rates, but not profitability or sustainability. Record high corn and fuel prices have greatly increased heifer development costs. Aren't we in the cattle business to make money? As cattlemen, maybe we should consider changing some of our traditional practices.

Also, think about the change in genetics. Cattle have changed a lot in the last 50 years in some good and not so good ways. Nonetheless these changes have impacted heifer development. In the 1980's the association between scrotal circumference in bulls and age of puberty in their female offspring was identified. Since that time there has been great change in this area, and now heifers reach puberty at earlier ages.

There are other studies that indicate developing heifers to a certain body weight is not as important as once thought. I don't want to bore you with all the research. But, most studies showed that age at the beginning of the breeding season was more critical for a successful pregnancy than was body weight. Finally, the results indicate a savings of \$22 per pregnant heifer when heifers were developed under the restricted level of feeding. These studies indicate an opportunity to improve efficiency and decrease production costs by decreasing amount and/or quality of harvested feeds used for heifer development.

If you would like more information on heifer development strategies, please contact the extension office.



Shooting hoops during the Free Throw Contest was Shayla Hubbard of McDonald. Times Staff photo by Casey McCormick

## Club Clips

### Go-Getters 4-H Club

The January meeting of the Go-Getters 4-H club was held on Jan. 13, in the Lutheran Church basement.

President Caleb Keltz called the meeting to order and led the members in the flag salute and the 4-H pledge.

Secretary Aryn Sturgeon took roll call. Nine members answered to "Who do you want to go to the Superbowl and who do you want to win it?"

The minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Isaac Sturgeon read the treasurer's report. There was no new or old business.

There were two demonstrations presented. Aryn Sturgeon presented a demonstration on "Chewy Brownies" and Caleb Keltz presented a speech on Alternate Fuel Resources.

There were several announcements including County 4-H days which is at 5 p.m. on

Friday, March 14, in St. Francis.

Elizabeth and Rachel Keltz led the club in singing "Five Little Monkeys."

The meeting adjourned.

Trevor Sturgeon led the club in a game of "Mother Day I?"

The next meeting is at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 10.

Reporter, Aryn Sturgeon

### McDonald Garden Club

The McDonald Town and Country Garden Club met on Wednesday, Jan. 9, at the McDonald Senior Center with 13 members present. Betty Knapp opened the meeting with a poem and a prayer. Roll call was answered by naming "A Favorite Foliage Plant."

Report were accepted as read. Several notes of "Thanks" for Christmas cookies were read. Reports were given from the following committees: McDonald Area Development, Yearbook, Smokey Bear, Regional Unified Project and Sunflowers. Margie Hubbard, the Yearbook Chairman passed out the 2008 yearbooks to all members. As always the books are beautiful and everyone thanked Margie for all the work she does on the program books.

Betty Knapp gave a report on Sunflower facts. The 50th anniversary celebration for the club will be held on June 22 at the Senior Center.

Helen Frisbie gave a very interesting lesson on "Indoor Gardening."

Co-hostesses for the meeting were Betty Knapp and LaVina Waters.

## First baby of year to receive many gifts

The first of the year is here and the contest for the First Baby of the Year 2008 has begun. The contest began Tuesday and will end when the first phone call comes in and the baby/parents meet the rules of the contest.

Actually, there is only one requirement and that is the baby must be born to parents living in Cheyenne County for one month or more. These parents and their new-born infant will be awarded gifts from sponsors.

The Saint Francis Herald office must be notified as soon as possible following the birth. The Herald's number is 785-332-3162 or call 785-332-3246.

The parents of this year's first baby will receive a \$25 gift certificate from St. Francis Super's, a \$50 bond from Western State Bank, a \$50 bond from

First National Bank, Bird City/St. Francis, a baby photo album or frame from Schultz's, a baby gift from Owens True Value, a baby gift from Krien Pharmacy, two bottles of champagne from Burr Liquor, and a year's subscription to *The Saint Francis Herald* or *Bird City Times*.

The first baby of the year will also received a special quilt from the Prairie Piecemaker Quilt Guild, Goodland. Bonnie McQuillen, member, said the quilt may be picked up at *The St. Francis Herald* office.

The parents of the new baby will need to pick up their gifts or claim their services within 60 days after the birth.

Since most babies are not on schedule, it's hard telling when the first baby of 2008 will be born.

## McDonald News By Vera Kacirek

Rod, Lisa and Josh Johnson were Wednesday supper guests of Kenny and Phyllis Wilkinson.

On Saturday night, Kenny and Phyllis Wilkinson; Greg and Cheryl Wilkinson; Rod, Lisa and Josh Johnson; and Shawn Wilkinson enjoyed supper

together at Big Ed's to celebrate the January birthdays of Greg Wilkinson, Rod Johnson and Shawn Wilkinson.

Laddie and Vera Kacirek were Sunday dinner guests of R.J. and Susie Sabatka to celebrate the Kacirek's wedding anniversary.

Lanny DeGood and Marie Holzwarth were Saturday night visitors of Amelia Banister and Karlyne Atchison and took them to the Frosty Mug for supper.

Gail and Kay Miller attended the basketball tournaments in Colby last week.

### Club Clip

#### McDonald Lions

At noon on Sunday, the McDonald Lions served a Benefit Dinner for the Educational fund for the Steven Balik children. The Lions should be commended for doing so many good things for the people of the community.

### South of McDonald

#### By Sandy Benning

Mark and Catina Montgomery, Jadon and Lindi of Denver were weekend guests of Lindon and Diane Montgomery.

The George Banister family attended the Liberty League

basketball games Tuesday in Sharon Springs and Friday and Saturday in Colby.

Ryan and Diane Shay and family of St. Francis were Sunday guests of Joe and Charlene Kramer.

## Coming Soon:

**Sweetheart Deals**

"Don't Gamble with Love" promotion coming for Valentines Day



## Conservation Section



This section will feature the Conservation Award Winners in Cheyenne County.

BANKER'S AWARD DINNER FEB. 8TH

## WORKING WOMEN'S SECTION

Coming the first of February!

THIS SECTION IS PACKED WITH ADS FEATURING WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE.



For more details, contact Casey McCormick at the Saint Francis Herald at 785-332-3162

The Saint Francis Herald Bird City Times

## CHEYLIN JUNIOR HIGH BASKETBALL TEAMS



**JUNIOR HIGH BOYS** — Back row: Roberto Ponce, Joshua Keltz, Ethan Young, Miguel Navarro; middle row: Blaine Burns, Cory Rucker, Adam Orten, Heath Churchwell, Kenan Reeh, Grant Shrader, Caleb Frink, Jeremiah White, Wil Orten; front row: Casey Vandike, Martin Veleta, Fernando Muniz, Walker Janicke, Connor Hazuka, Ty Carmichael and Eddie Frisbie. Not Pictured: Dalton Magnani, Max Keltz, head coach; Laurie Leonard, assistant coach.



**JUNIOR HIGH GIRLS** — Back row: Dan Carson, head coach; Nakita Schneider, Stephanie Busse, Forrest Burr; front row: Ellie Pochop, Shayla Hubbard, Ilianna Reynoso, Cintia Navarro, Cassie Rucker and Shayna Johnson, manager.

Photos courtesy of Jennifer Kastens

## Jennifer Kastens Photography

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