Weiser Signal American's

Harvest Edition

Look inside this issue for stories on:

Wandering Pines Ranch
Kind-2-All Honey Store
Tractor supply delays
Strong Horse Care
Stock dog trials
New veterinarian
Sugar Beet harvest
Commodity prices

Dianne and Steve Wright started their alpaca ranch with two animals which quickly grew to 12 and a new business venture of raising alpacas on their Wandering Pines Ranch in Weiser. Dianne's love for knitting and crocheting led them into purchasing their first two huacaya alpacas so Dianne could make her own high-quality yarn. They now breed their alpacas and Dianne sells her yarn and handcrafted items at bazaars, craft shows and at Second Chance Consignment.

Wandering Pines Ranch raises alpacas for yarn

by Nicole Miller

Dianne Wright has been crocheting and knitting for years, but about eight years ago, she decided she was having too much trouble finding the right yarn.

She wanted a high-quality product with the right texture and colors, but nothing met her requirements, so she decided to make her own.

Dianne and husband, Steve, decided to buy two huacaya alpacas and purchased a new property to start an alpaca farm. They started out with two but ended up buying 12 more. Their all-things alpaca business, Wandering Pines Ranch, was off to an adventurous start.

The shearing season begins in spring, the couple gathering approximately two pounds of fiber from each alpaca. From there, the fibers go through a skirting (cleaning and filtering process), followed by washing and drying on racks. Then the fibers are picked apart. While the Wrights did the picking process by hand for a number of years, they now use a picking machine. Then the fibers are "carded" or layed out in a line to prep the wool for spinning.

Although the Wrights, at times, get enough wool to send out for mill processing, Dianne said she enjoys taking sheared fiber and finishing it by hand. When she wants specific colors, she will dye the lighter colors, or tint the brown wool, but she has found she likes her wool best in the all-natural colors. They also raise sheep and sometimes combine the two wools for a stronger and softer texture.

From there she can sell the yarn in natural or hand-dyed shades, or she can use the yarn to make her own hand-knitted and crocheted products.

The Wrights also breed their alpacas. Males are ready for breeding at 3- to 4-years-old, and females need to be at least 3-years-old. Alpaca gestation is 11 months long, so they try to plan the breeding for spring births. They did breed all their females, but it is too early yet to tell which ones will have babies this spring.

Wright sells her yarn and handcrafted items at bazaars and craft shows, as well as through a small display at Second Chance Consignment in Weiser. Before COVID, she was able to do 20 or more shows a year, but since then the number of shows has decreased significantly. She is hopeful to have a couple Christmas shows this fall.

Growing their alpaca ranch has been a true labor of love. The property took a lot of work to get the infrastructure of corrals and pastures ready for the alpacas.

Each year, the shearing takes them several evenings as there are only the two of them and they make sure to take the time to trim the hooves and teeth as well. They spend about half an hour with each animal, and as Wright also works full time, they only do their shearing work in the evening.

Alpacas played a key role in the Incan culture that was located on the high Andean Plateau and mountains of South America. They were first imported to the United States in 1984.

There are two types of alpaca – the Huacaya and the Suri. The difference is in the type of fleece carried by the alpaca. The alpaca's average life span is about 20 years.

Since alpacas were barely known in the U.S. in the 1980s, alpaca farming is a relatively young industry.

Native to the mountain regions of South America, most of the world's alpacas still live in Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. The appeal of this low-impact livestock is growing because of the animal's soft fleece and very cute faces. Alpacas are now successfully raised and enjoyed throughout North America and in many countries abroad.

Alfalfa hay is averaging around $200 per ton this year. Widespread drought and strong commodity prices have made this year anything but typical. Frank Fuller is pictured above baling his last cutting of hay. The demand for hay this year has been strong and most have already been sold. *Photo by Sarah Imada*

The Kindall family in Cambridge recognizes the benefit of honey bees and have been raising bees since the 1960s. Collin and Nathan Kindall, fifth generation beekeepers worked at creating the new store called Kind-2-All Honey Store. Collin's wife, Hannah, makes candles, lotion bars, soaps and many other items from the bee's bi-products. Come visit the store and enjoy the many benefits of honey. Pictured below is Collin and Hannah with their children Carter and Rainey.

Bee Kind-2-All Honey Store opens in Cambridge

by Nicole Miller

The Kindall family has been raising honeybees in Cambridge since the 1960s.

Now fifth generation beekeeper Collin Kindall and wife, Hannah, have expanded the farm to open the Kind-2-All Honey Store in Cambridge.

Honey is harvested from bees all over the local area from Mann Creek, Midvale, Cambridge, and Council.

Collin Kindall began helping his grandfather, Joe Kindall, as a summer job from a very young age. He found his passion for agriculture through working each summer and knew early on he wanted to follow in his Grandfather's footsteps. Learning from generations of experience, Collin has been beekeeping full-time for three years.

Owning a honey stand had always been his grandfather's dream and when Collin's wife Hannah started making beeswax products, they realized it could become a reality with great potential.

Collin worked with his brother, Nathan Kindall, extensively as they have built this new business. Nathan is a freshman at the University of Idaho, majoring in ag business and he too hopes to return and help the family run the shop and expand the business down the road.

Nathan designed the website – www.kind2allhoney.com, and helped develop the name.

The name of the store is a play on their last name and two brothers going into business together. They like the play on words as well as the fact that the name sends an uplifting message.

"These days especially, we truly believe you should be kind to everyone!" Kindall said.

The store will carry not only local honey, but products created from the bee's biproducts. Hannah makes beeswax/honey products, including cold process soaps, hand rolled beeswax candles, lotion bars, beard balms, boot wax, chapstick, and honey sticks. These products are high quality, handmade, and reduce the waste of pollinating insects, helping to further serve the local environment.

As a special bonus to the consumer, they will also offer a variety of crafts, hand knitted hats, earrings, signs, and window paintings. Several vendors will add to the shop with handcrafted products.

"Our goal is to have an assortment of great products to keep customers intrigued," Kindall said.

The harvest is busiest in August and September, followed by a busy season of prepping and/or relocating the hives for winter. Throughout the harvest season, the family has also been preparing for the October opening of the new store.

The store will be open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. The hours will vary in the winter as the store will be a seasonal shop. Exact hours will be posted on Kind-2-All Honey social media pages found on Instagram and Facebook.

According to the Idaho Honey Industry Association, Idaho currently registers over 124,000 colonies of bees and is viewed as a major honey-producing state, producing 3,300,000 pounds of honey each year.

Not only is the honey a valuable crop, but beekeeping is also incredibly important to the agriculture industry as honeybees are responsible for pollinizing 80 percent of all fruit, vegetable, and seed crops in the U.S.

Buying local honey not only helps local small businesses and local farms, it's also healthy for the consumer. Raw honey has antibacterial, anti-viral, and anti-fungal properties, and promotes digestive health. Raw, local honey also contains a blend of local pollen, which can strengthen a person's immune system, and reduce pollen allergy symptoms.

Campbell Tractor store manager, Jared Wiersma, above, says his store has been busy planning for shipping and transportation delays ahead of spring planting season by building up stock. More shipping delays, he says damaged or missing parts have been a problem. *Photo by Philip A. Janquart*

Campbell Tractor staying stocked as supply chain continues to bottleneck

by Philip A. Janquart

Supply chain bottlenecks have caused shipping delays nationwide, everything from toys to car parts taking weeks to arrive, if at all.

It's why local companies like Campbell Tractor are taking precautions ahead of spring planting season.

"We are seeing a lag in shipping right now, but we are still getting product," said Campbell Tractor Store Manager Jared Wiersma.

Campbell Tractor, a full-on ag dealer for John Deere, has six branches from Burns, Ore. to Wendell, Idaho.

The company also offers short-line brands, manufacturers specializing in certain products.

Wiersma manages the store in Fruitland, located at 2050 Hwy. 30 West.

"John Deere has been really good about that," he said, lauding the company's efforts to keep up with demand. "There are some things we still can't get unless we do an emergency order, like machine down, for parts. There are certain things we just demand and certain things we have to wait on a little bit."

A more pressing problem, Wiersma said, are parts that arrive damaged or missing.

"I will say that on the shipping side, whether it's turnover on the shipping company side or new employees, we've seen more damaged parts come in than we ever have," he told the *Weiser Signal American*. "We've had a lot more claims in whole goods and things like that, stuff getting lost; it just disappears and that's been frustrating. It's more frustrating than not having it because you are expecting it and it comes damaged or it is totally missing. That's been the biggest struggle."

Although the numbers vary depending on the source, as of Sept. 6, there were approximately 100 cargo ships anchored off key U.S. ports in southern California waiting to unload over 500,000 containers of product – much of it made in China – meant for retailers and businesses across the nation.

It has helped to create supply chain chaos and it's only going to get worse, according to industry experts who are urging people to buy Christmas gifts early while there is still product to be had.

They blame worker and equipment shortages, as well as a general lack of coordination across the transportation industry that has caused a ripple effect.

In terms of ag industry parts and products, Wiersma said there are some things that are manufactured in China but that those products are already here.

"Most of the stuff from China is already in the U.S. from a distribution standpoint," he said. "If we have to wait for anything, usually it's coming from Europe, from Germany because there are some of our tractors that are made there and then are brought over in containers."

Trina Flores, parts manager for Agri-Service in Fruitland, said her company is experiencing difficulties in keeping up with demand for parts.

"It's been very hard, depending on what it is, but we have a lot of backordered parts, some with 'unknown availability' and things coming out of Europe. It's just been very hard," she said.

As for the situation in southern California, Wiersma said they are in preparation mode.

"We haven't seen a huge shortage on that yet, but we are expecting the worst in a lot of ways and kind of building our stock ahead of time," he said, referring to spring planting season. "All in all, we are sitting well and looking optimistic into the future as far as having a good supply of stock, ordering ahead to help mitigate whatever might happen this spring. We don't know what will happen, so we like to keep things heavily stocked."

Oil and air filters for tractors could pose the biggest problem if supply/transportation woes continue to escalate.

"Right now, we are telling people not to change their oil until they have a filter in hand, Wiersma said. "Sometimes we have to emergency down a machine so we can get that filter. We haven't run into any major hiccups with that, it's just fair warning that this is what you should do. It might be delayed."

Crop Consultant, Brooke Hilliard, and Dana Maxfield are shown standing in front of thousands of tons of sugar beets. Hilliard, who recently graduated from the University of Idaho with a bachelor's in crop management, is only 21-years-old but is responsible for several beet dump sites in the Valley. She explained the beet harvest and processing operations during the harvest season. The beets are sold to Amalgamated Sugar Company where they are processed and sold as White Satin Sugar. *Photo by Philip A. Janquart*

Sugar beet process

by Philip A. Janquart

Brooke Hilliard once had a desk job, but pushing papers wasn't her idea of a fulfilling workday.

The alternative, she reckoned, lay outside – somewhere in the fields of rural Idaho where things grow, and the soil is full of life.

"I got into farming when I was 16," said Hilliard, a University of Idaho graduate who earned a bachelor's degree in crop management. "My first job was an office job and I absolutely hated it, so I went the opposite direction and started working for a farm over in Notus at a little fruit stand. I was introduced to farming through that."

She later went to work for her sister, Bre Onna Hungate, and her husband, Cole, who own Hungate Custom Hay, a custom haying operation aimed at swathing, baling, or raking crops for farmers.

"I worked for them for five years, operating equipment and that kind of stuff," Hilliard said. "I wanted to stay in farming and crop consultant was my main goal when I went to college."

She ultimately traded a desk for a hard hat and, at the age of 21, was hired by Amalgamated Sugar Company last July as a crop consultant responsible for several area beet dumps, including Weiser, where she oversees operations, and farmers fields where she analyzes crop conditions.

"I don't know too much about the contracting, planting and all that yet, that'll come this spring, but from the time I started, I'd set my own schedule, how many fields I was going to go look at that day, and what area."

Aside from Weiser, she oversees beet dump stations in Nyssa, Apple Valley, and Buckingham, which is in Fruitland.

"So I'd see everybody's fields and I was walking 25 to 30 fields a day, just looking for disease and keeping them updated on if they needed spray for fungicides or pesticides and all that kind of stuff."

She got her first taste of harvest season, beginning with early harvest, on Sept. 13. Amalgamated Sugar, a co-op that operates processing plants in Nampa, Twin Falls, and Paul, Idaho, sets an allotment for each station, or "beet dump," controlling how many sugar beets farmers deliver for early harvest.

"We go around and ask who wants to go early and it's kind of a diseased-beets-first type of deal, so they aren't sitting in a pile causing problems," Hilliard explained. "We get those tons out of the way and then October hits and it's main beet season. They like to call it 'free-dig' so anybody who wants to go can go."

The beet dump, or station – however you choose to term it – in Weiser is set this year to bring in 41,000 tons of beets. As of Wednesday, Oct. 13, there was approximately 20,000 tons delivered by 12 area beet farming operations in the Weiser area, accounting for 960 total acres, according to Hilliard.

She figures the dump can receive around 4,000 to 6,000 tons a day "if we are really pushing it."

Farmers receive an incentive if they deliver directly to the factory in Nampa, which doesn't pencil out financially, hence the dump stations.

The price farmers receive for their harvest varies year by year, but Hilliard says they are paid in the range of $44 to $56 per ton.

Once at the dump, the beets are checked for sugar content while they are offloaded by farmers onto a large machine with a cross conveyor that transfers them into an enormous pile. This time of year, you can drive by the Weiser Veterinary Clinic and see the large mounds

"Then, we have the tare shack, which is responsible for taking samples from trucks on a set schedule, sometimes 100 percent sampling rate, sometimes down to 25 percent. The samples let us and the farmers know what their sugars, nitrates, and temperatures are when they deliver," Hilliard explained.

"The samples are labeled with the grower's contract and field number so we know what samples belong to who. They are then taken to eastern Idaho to the beet quality lab every night and the results come back within one to two days.

"Transystems, [a trucking company], picks up tons depending on factory needs, so the amount varies day by day."

At the processing plant, they slice the beets into what they call "cassettes," and extract the sugars. The biproduct of the pulp is sold to feed lots, and there is wastewater because, like humans, beets are about 70 percent water.

Another biproduct is brown sugar and molasses.

The optimum range of sugar content is between 16 and 19 percent.

"So, if you have 13, there's really nothing for them to extract," Hilliard said.

The sugar, marketed as White Satin Sugar, is then shipped all over the world.

As for a 21-year-old managing a crew of mostly grizzled older men, Hilliard said it's been a mixed bag.

"Haha, yeah it just kind of depends on who it is," she said.

Dana Maxfield, who is filling in for Weiser Beet Dump Manager Joe Malay while he is away, said she's good at her job.

"She's a wonderful boss," he said smiling.

The hot summer weather conditions this year hurt onion yields which were down 40 percent from a 10-year average. The size of the onions were also affected. In a normal crop year medium size onions account for 10 percent of the total production but this year onions ran between 30 to 40 percent mediums. Onion farmers were also hit last year with the 2020 pandemic when restaurants were shut down and onions had to be dumped.

Local commodities this year suffer blow

by Philip A. Janquart

Local growers this year have watched market prices skyrocket following a tough season of abnormally high temperatures and very little rainfall.

It's all about supply and demand, of course, and if the supply is low, without any decrease in demand, sellers are forced to raise prices to cover for lost revenue.

In Weiser, alfalfa crops were not seriously affected by the weather. However, drought in most other areas of the west were not so lucky, causing an overall shortage and prices to go up.

"We were fortunate to have a full season of water here, but a lot of places in the west were short. They ran out of water and couldn't irrigate hay – say, after their second cutting when normally they get three to four. So, yields were down and when yields are down, it affects the market," said local farmer Dan Carlson.

Carlson said that on average, feeder hay went from $135 per ton in 2020 to over $200 per ton in 2021, representing a 35- to 40-percent increase since last year.

Although local farmers had enough water this season, it was by the skin of their teeth. The Weiser Valley Irrigation District reportedly shut off water coming from Crane Creek Reservoir in early September, farmers depending on what was left in Weiser River to continue watering their crops.

Crane Creek water is normally shut off in late September or early October, according to the District's Jay Edwards. Last spring, District Chairman Vern Lolley, now retired, reported that there was ample snowpack to meet water demand.

The extreme heat, however, increased usage while a portion of the reservoir water evaporated, and there was no rain to recharge it.

While local alfalfa farmers saw little effects of the drought, onion growers were hit hard. Temperatures beginning June 20 and running through the end of August were 10 to 20 degrees hotter than normal.

"That was extremely hard on growing conditions," said Herb Haun, co-owner of Haun Packing in Weiser. "Most plants shut down at certain temperatures and just flat don't do anything but survive, and when they do that, for that long a period, your yields are going to suffer."

The size of an onion is an important factor for farmers who harvest medium size onions, which are ultimately sold to grocery stores, and large onions that are sold to restaurants.

"I would say on average, the onion yields this year are down 40 percent from a 10-year average," Haun said. "It was pretty devastating – not only in yield, but in size. Normally, you have 10 percent medium sized onions, and this year between 30 to 40 percent were mediums. Therefore, the mediums were $4 to $5 a bag, and the jumbos and colossal onions are $12 to $15 a bag, so that is quite a difference."

The drought this year was preceded by the 2020 pandemic when restaurants were shut down.

"We ended up dumping quite a bit of last year's crop because we had nobody to send it to," Haun said. "Even some of the last loads that we shipped, we didn't get paid for because once they got them back to eastern cities with restaurants shut down, they couldn't sell them. That's why growers needed to have a pretty decent year this year."

Onions are an expensive crop to grow, the seed alone costing around $2,000 a pound or more, which only plants three acres.

"If you put your labor and fertilizer, pesticides, everything into growing an onion and then harvest, it's over $5,000 an acre just to crow a crop of onions, so it's a huge investment," Haun said. "Then, you have a year where they dump part of the crop and don't get a very good price for what you do have, and it's pretty tough."

Quinn Strong, of Strong Horse Care, uses an anvil and hammer to custom fit shoes for a horse at a ranch located in Midvale. The shoe is first heated with a propane-powered forge. Strong, like all farriers, works out of his truck, his tools and equipment located on a sliding bed that pulls out, giving him access to everything he needs. *Photo by Philip A. Janquart*

Weiser farrier just getting started and is quickly building clientele

by Philip A. Janquart

He might be the youngest farrier in the Treasure Valley, but Quinn Strong, of Strong Horse Care, is advancing quickly.

Strong, 21, graduated from Pacific Coast Horseshoeing School, located in Plymouth, Calif., in October 2020, founding his Weiser-based business in February 2021.

The 2018 Weiser High School graduate now has appointments booked through December. He recently visited a ranch in Midvale where he showed the *Weiser Signal American* what shoeing horses is all about.

He started by alerting the horse of his presence and position, running his hand along the backside of a 10-year-old mare named Black Betty, a solid black quarter horse that owner Jamey Harman, 17, uses for barrel racing.

"I'm taking off the shoes she has on right now. I'm going to trim the foot and put new ones on," he explained.

Sounds pretty simple.

But as any farrier knows, there is more to it than meets the eye.

Strong then carefully ran his hand down the animal's leg. Touching the horse in this way lets the animal know there is someone behind it, preventing it from kicking or making other dangerous movements out of fear.

Strong then squeezed the tendon above the ankle and lifted the hoof between his legs as he inspected its condition.

"On normal horses, probably every six to eight weeks they need to have it done; that's a good schedule, but sometimes if they have problems, I'll shorten it depending on what's wrong with the horse," he said. "Sometimes you can stretch it out to nine or 10 weeks, just so you can get full use out of the shoes."

Strong said some shoes become so worn that they are like razors when he takes them off.

He spoke reassuringly to Black Betty, using a clinch cutter and hammer to straighten the nails and pull off the shoes. He then inspected the bottom of the hoof, using a hoof pick to clean out any compacted debris.

"The hooves are like finger nails the way they grow," he said. "What I'm cutting out is all non-sensitive. This would be the sole, it protects all the veins and arteries that are in the hoof and the hoof structure."

He continued by cutting the hoof down with a pair of hoof nippers.

"Right now, I'm just nipping out the excess hoof and bringing it back down to where it should be," he explained. "It can grow back pretty quick. Some horses' hoofs grow faster than others. Her (Black Betty's) hooves didn't grow back a lot from the last time I was here. The other day, I was doing a horse and probably took off a half inch."

Strong then took a large file called a "rasp" to flatten the level of the sole, making sure the hoof was smooth, flat, and level. He then used a knife to slightly bevel the sole away from the hoof wall.

"I'm adjusting any flares the hoof might have. A flare is where the hoof will grow outwards, so we want to bring that back underneath the limb for the structure of the hoof," he explained. "Flaring depends on the confirmation of the horse and how it grows."

Confirmation refers to the shape or structure of a horse.

"A lot of times people will ride their horses barefoot, but they take breaks on when they ride them," Strong continued. "It really just depends on the horse. If your horse has a really thick hoof wall, you're probably not going to have too many problems, but the thinner the hoof wall, the less likely you are of being able to ride that horse barefoot."

Wild Horses

So why don't wild horses need shoes?

"Wild horses typically run around for a day or two and then they'll take a rest at a watering hole, or pond, or river and they'll let their feet soak," Strong said. "Domesticated horses – we ride them; we ask them to ride every day without a break, so the shoes allow padding to keep their feet strong and keep them from cracking.

"Out in the wild, horses get rid of excess growth by running. You'll also see them paw at the ground, and that helps them take their feet down, too."

Sizing the shoe

Strong pulled out a sliding workspace from the bed of his truck that included a propane tank that runs a small forge used for heating the shoes. Once the shoe is red hot, he customizes the fit using a hammer and anvil, and then burns it onto the non-sensitive part of the hoof.

"Some horses don't like the smell, so we'll see if this is going to be a train wreck," he quips.

After a few seconds, smoke begins billowing upward, the smell of burnt hair filling the air, but Black Betty remains calm.

Strong finishes up by nailing the shoe into place against the edge of the horse's hoof. He then bends the nails against the hoof wall and nips the tips off.

There, one finished and three more to go.

The whole process, which takes Strong about a half an hour to complete, will be repeated on the other three hooves.

"Right now, it takes me about two hours," he said. "When I got out of school, it took me about three hours just to do fronts. I'm getting quicker as time goes on. Some guys who have been doing it a long time can get it done in about an hour or less."

Strong said the job sometimes means getting bitten or kicked, but so far, he hasn't sustained any serious injuries.

He charges $90 for all four feet, $50 for fronts, and $35 for a basic trim for horses going barefoot.

For more information on Strong's services, call (208) 718-8539, or visit www.stronghorsecare.com.

Nine local stock dog handlers competed in the Mountain States Stockdog Association's 2021 National Finals in Afton, Wyo. Dan Cant and Patch won first in the nursery sheep category and he also brought home third place in the intermediate sheep and fourth in nursery cattle. Cant is pictured in the middle with Mountain States Stockdog Association representatives who are presenting him his first place prize.

Weiser has some amazing stock dogs and handlers

by Zane Davis

Weiser and surrounding areas abound with farms and ranches, and with that comes stock dogs. Within every yard, or in many pickups, you will find a loyal, hard-working companion Border Collie, Australian Shepherd, Blue Heeler, or any combination of the above ready to go to work for their owner/handler.

These stock dogs are more than just a companion pet to their human counterparts. They are devoted to protecting their humans and their livestock while also providing a vital service in moving and gathering livestock, ranging from poultry to large animals.

These devoted farm and ranch workers are unfailingly loyal, always on time to work, never have excuses or family issues, work long hours with no complaints, and only expect payment in the form of love, food, a periodic game of fetch, and a good scratch behind the ears.

Every farmer or rancher has stories of their dogs bringing in the herd with little assistance, saving their lives from an angry bull or mama cow, or protecting their flock from marauding predators.

Just like parents that love to see their children compete in sports to showcase their talents, stock dog owners also enjoy showing off their dedicated canine helpers in the form of stock dog trials.

Stock dog trials can take on many forms and the competition can involve herding ducks, sheep, goats, or cattle.

Dogs and handlers compete at different levels based on the age and experience of the dog and/or the handler and range from the nursery class (young, under 3 years old, inexperienced dogs), intermediate (older, more experienced dogs), novice (beginning handlers), juniors (handlers 14 and under), and open (any age dogs or handlers).

There are also varying degrees of obstacles that the dog and handler must maneuver the stock through smoothly and efficiently, and every run is timed and/or penalized for infractions during the run.

In recent years numerous Weiser and surrounding area residents have become heavily active in stock dog trial competitions around the country, and these same people have proven to be very successful in their breeding, training, and competitive programs.

The Mountain States Stockdog Association, based in Ontario, Ore., held its 2021 National Finals July 12-17 in Afton, Wyo.

Nine local handlers qualified to participate in the National Finals by earning enough points through the season at various sanctioned trials. The handlers from the Western Treasure Valley are Jeannie Biggers, Cindy Coleman, Darla Johnson, Dan Cant, Shauna Moser, Katrina Shippy, Rex Shippy, Derek Westover, and Trevin Moser.

Many of these talented individuals and their dogs performed very well, placing at several levels and livestock categories. However, two Weiserites came home with the grand prize in their divisions, Dan Cant and Trevin (Trev) Moser.

Dan Cant has been a long-time resident of Weiser, and many rural folks in Washington County know him through his horse shoeing side business or because he delivered bulk fuel for Grant's Petroleum and Valley Wide Cooperative for 25-years, until his recent retirement.

Cant has used stock dogs "cowboying" his whole life and claims he always had "above average" dogs, but only recently became involved in the competitive side of stock dog trialing about two and half years ago.

Cant began his stock dog journey as a hobby to train his own dogs and improve their skills. Through assistance from "more people than I can name." Cant decided to enter his first trial in La Grande, Ore., which he states was "a real disaster."

Cant, being competitive by nature, focused on his skills and worked really hard with his dogs, taking advantage of all the stock dog clinic and training resources that he could find.

Cant continued to enter trials with his two young dogs, Sid and Patch, and with every competition, Cant and his dogs had increasing successes. Such successes qualified Cant for the National Finals event in July, where all his hard work paid off with

Continued on Page 10

"Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness."
–Thomas Jefferson

from page 9

Nine local stock dog handlers qualify for National Finals

big returns.

Patch, a two and half-year-old Border Collie, and Cant won the National Finals in the Nursery Sheep category, and Cant and Sid brought home third-place honors in Intermediate Sheep and fourth in Nursery Cattle. Cant added that in the week-long event, he had several go-around wins and banked eight checks total.

Cant has relocated to the Cisco, Texas area in the past 6-months to be closer to his three daughters, Kaeyla, Bailey, and Holly, and he is building a thriving business training dogs and will eventually breed his champion lines. If you are interested in stock dog training or looking to procure a Border Collie of your own, Dan Cant can be found on Facebook at dancantbordercollies.

Another Weiser champion is 11-year-old, Weiser Middle School sixth grader, Trevin Moser.

Moser has been a "ranch kid" his entire life with both his parents, Shauna and Quentin Moser living and working their respective cattle ranches in the Weiser area. Moser is completely aware the value of a good stock dog on the ranch when you are covering hundreds of acres of rangeland looking for cattle, but he is very new to the competition of stock dogs.

Trevin's mother, Shauna, has been trialing her talented Border Collies for several years, and Trev has attended numerous trials with her and her dogs, Jude and Sophie, but never competed himself until May 2021 in Winnemucca, Nev. Trev didn't intend to compete, but he states, "I was sitting, talking with my mom's friends, and they talked me into running." What a run it was! Moser used his mom's dog, Jude and took second place in the Ranch Division, which qualified him for the National Finals.

At the National Finals, Moser had a stellar week, and captured the first place Junior Handlers honors with 30 points and a 24-second run. Moser said, "I got $100, 2 collars, and a leash." When asked about trialing, he said that at-first he was nervous to compete, but "now it kind of gets in your blood and you want to keep doing it."

While stock dog trialing is now a part of young Trev Moser's life, he can add that activity to his already busy schedule of ranching with his families, school, 4-H, football, and wrestling (of which he is also a champion.)

Local stock dog competitors shouldn't let their guard down around Moser in the trialing arena. He states that he has his own puppy, Dude, that is out of his mom's dog, Jude, that he is in the process of starting to train. With his fierce competitiveness and work ethic, Moser and Dude are sure to be a successful duo in the future.

Trev Moser,11, has been a 'ranch kid' all his life helping his parents Shauna and Quentin Moser on their ranches in the Weiser area. Shauna has been stock dog trialing for several years. Trev took a shot at his first competition with his mom's dog Jude at a May 2021 competition in Winnemucca and took second in the ranch division which earned him a trip to the national finals. Trev had a fantastic run at nationals and took first in the junior handler division.

Working with animals was something Weiser veterinarian, Holly Hopkins, above, knew she always wanted to do. She has worked at Weiser Veterinary Clinic a total of eight years, first as a technician. Now a full-fledged doctor of veterinarian medicine, Hopkins, is helping people and their pets. *Photo by Philip A. Janquart*

New veterinarian at Weiser Vet Clinic

by Philip A. Janquart

It was clear by the way she led her horse with gentle ease that she had been dealing with animals most of her life.

Not long ago, her horse showed up at the fence on her parents' property with a gash in her leg. Holly Hopkins, who recently graduated from Washington State University Veterinary School, knew just what to do.

Last week, she walked the horse into a treatment area in order to check the wound to see how it was healing. After administering a mild sedative, she peeled away the bandaging, closely inspecting the progress.

"Ah, it's looking better," said Hopkins, who is the newest addition to the medical staff at Weiser Veterinary Clinic, located at 815 W. Idaho St. in Weiser.

"I don't know how it happened – maybe a fence – but she apparently tried to cut her damn leg off," she said. "She came up and had a big hunk of her leg missing and I was like, 'what are you doing?' but that's a typical horse for you. They are very accident prone. They need to be bubble wrapped."

Hopkins, 28, attended Ontario High School and grew up on a small ranch with her parents, who owned Bar-None Rodeo Company, which provided stock for Idaho Cowboy Association rodeos in Weiser, Cambridge, Council, and a number of other towns.

"I never got really serious about the rodeo side of things," she explained, while she applied fresh ointment and new bandages over the horse's wound. "I really preferred to be behind the scenes, bringing in the livestock and everything like that."

Her parents sold the rodeo company when she was 16 but was still exposed to animals. Her dad and grandfather owned a trucking company, hauling cows for area ranchers. Her family continued to keep horses, cows, and a variety of critters, many of them needing veterinary care at one point or another.

As a result, she became familiar with the doctors at Weiser Veterinary Clinic, so when she went looking for a job working with animals, she knew where to go.

"Since I was little, I always knew I wanted to be a veterinarian. I've always loved animals, having so many and growing up that way. I always knew what I wanted to do, to be able to help people with their animals," she said. "I do love people, but I didn't want to be a human doctor because people are gross. I can 100 percent deal with animal things, which is way better than humans."

Hopkins eventually began working as a technician at the clinic, taking time off for school. In all, she has been working at Weiser Veterinary Clinic for eight years.

She earned her pre-veterinary degree at the University of Idaho and took a year off to work and to make sure she really wanted to continue along her chosen career path before attending WSU.

"It was a good year and I'm glad I took it off," she said.

After eight years of schooling, she finally obtained her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and came right back to Weiser. She has been here since June.

"It's been a very good transition from working as a technician and doing those kinds of things, to being a doctor," Hopkins said. "It's been fun to be able to walk in and say, 'Hey, now I'm Dr. Hopkins.'"

She added that the entire medical staff served as mentors and were supportive of her becoming a veterinarian.

"The whole time I was in school, they were like, 'Hurry up and get finished! We want you to come back now.'"

The Clinic:

Clinic doctors serve a wide area, some clients traveling from as far away as Riggins and McCall, according to Hopkins who added that some even come up from Boise.

"Generally, we are seeing somewhere

Continued on Page 12

Holly Hopkins, right, finishes up re-bandaging her horse, which showed up one day with a nasty looking gash in her leg. Hopkins graduated from veterinary school at Washington State University and has been at Weiser Veterinary Clinic since June. ***Photo by Philip A. Janquart***

from page 9

Hopkins is new veterinarian

between 20 and 25 appointments a day," she said. "I think the national average for the U.S. is somewhere in the range of 13 to 14."

Hopkins says there has been a definite uptick in appointments due to the pandemic, a period when people spent more time at home and started noticing issues with their pets. The increased workload was one of the reasons the clinic was so anxious to have Hopkins on board.

This time of year, doctors are busy going out on house calls, doing things like checking ranchers' cattle for pregnancies using ultrasound or manual palpitation methods.

The clinic's two partners, Dr. Frank Coleman and Dr. Dennis Johnson, have already offered her a buy-in for the practice, but Hopkins says she isn't quite ready for that.

"I need some time to get my feet under me, but I would certainly like to own this place someday," she said. "That'll be like 10 years down the road. The partners are to the point where they are thinking about slowing down a little bit. They would like it sooner, but I'm just not ready yet, although that is the goal."

For more information on Weiser Veterinary Clinic, visit www.weiservet.net, or call (208) 549-0944.