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Chiefland exhibitor wins Grand Champion in Feeder Steer Show



Grand Champion Feeder Steer exhibitor Rieley Beauchamp shows off her steer. Pictured (from left) are Lint Jerrels, Bailey Beauchamp, Kelly Beauchamp, Jeff Beauchamp, Show Judge Deron Rehberg and Rieley Beauchamp.

By Terry Witt, Senior Reporter © March 22, 2017 at 3:37 p.m.

FANNING SPRINGS -- Chiefland Middle High School ninth grader Rieley Beauchamp earned the title as the person who raised the Grand Champion Feeder Steer on Tuesday (March 21) at the Suwannee River Fair (SRF) and Livestock Show and Sale in only her second appearance as an exhibitor.

Caleigh Robinson, a senior at Chiefland Middle High School, won Reserve Grand Champion with her homegrown steer that she named Cash, one of three calves born to a heifer she received in seventh grade from her Uncle Benny Jerrels.



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Reserve Champion Feeder Steer exhibitor Caleigh Robinson is pictured with her steer. Shown (from left) are Lint Jerrels, Caleb Robinson, Aaron Robinson, Show Judge Deron Rehberg, Caleigh Robinson and Julie Robinson with Charleigh Robinson.



Sam Mills of Chiefland Sr. FFA competes for the title of Feeder Steer Grand Champion along with a ring full of other hopeful exhibitors.

The two Chiefland girls were among 82 exhibitors competing for the top two spots in the feeder steer show. The competition as judged by Deron Rehberg of the University of Georgia.

Rielely, a Chiefland Junior FFA Chapter exhibitor, dubbed her 630 pound steer “Tag Number 44,” the steer’s sale number, noting it wasn’t the most expensive feeder steer in the show.

But Judge Rehberg wasn’t looking at the steer’s price tag. He was looking for a top flight feeder steer.

“You don’t have to spend a lot to get a grand champion. You need a good eye,” said Rielely.

Her father, Jeff Beauchamp, said Rielely took exquisite care of her show steer, working with him, feeding him and washing him every day.

“She’s taken better care of the steer than any of the pets we’ve had –dogs or cats,” Beauchamp said, noting the family’s schedule revolved around the feeding, grooming and training the gentle steer.

Rielely, who gets mostly “A”s for her grades at CMHS, said she has begun a small herd of show cattle on her granddaddy Jerry Beauchamp’s farm. She had the heifers artificially inseminated and she wants to eventually exhibit a homegrown grand champion from her herd before she graduates from high school.

She would like to continue raising show cattle in college. She said the show cattle business wouldn’t be her main job but would likely be a sideline because of her love for agriculture.

Her plans are to graduate from college and take a job as an advocate for Florida agriculture working as a lobbyist.

Caleigh, who has a 4.11 grade point average as a CMHS senior, said she hopes her feeder steer Cash lives up to his name at Wednesday’s sale and brings in plenty of money.

(That story, photos and video are in production now.)

The Chiefland FFA Senior Chapter representative has been accepted as a student at the University of Florida and will major in agriculture education and communications this fall. She plans to be a sales representative for a feed and seed company.

While Caleigh looks forward to the next chapter in her life as a university student, she said she will miss raising show calves and competing in the Suwannee River Fair.

“That’s why I’m all teary-eyed. I’m not ready for it to be over with,” she said.

She said she would advise any student to get involved with exhibiting at the Suwannee River Fair.

“It is the most rewarding thing,” she said. “These are my babies. This one (Cash) came from my house. I care for them. I love them. I’ve learned so much about the industry.”

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Caleigh had a good head start on her college education. She has taken enough dual enrollment courses in high school to give her half the credits needed for an Associate of Arts Degree.