

NEW MEXICO NEWS

Route 66 "Gate to Plate" tour promotes state beef

By LAURA L. BREWER
The Chronicle-News

The Route 66 "Gate to Plate" tour, organized by the New Mexico Beef Council, is a two-day, jam-packed event that highlights the New Mexico Beef industry to members of the media, restaurants, farmer's markets, and other individuals that may help

dairy products and the economic importance to the state to a much larger population through newspaper, television and radio.

This year's tour followed Route 66 east from Albuquerque to Tucumcari and several points in between. The bus, filled to capacity with more than fifty passengers, stopped in



Several pens were full of cattle that were up for auction at the Clovis Livestock Auction



Nancy and Charlie Rogers welcome the tour group to the Clovis Livestock Auction

Charlie Rogers explained that every employee at the facility is charged with reporting any animal that may be in distress, and that

the auction house is responsible for the proper care and treatment of animals while in its care. According to Rogers, "If you take care of

the land and the livestock, it will take care of you," a sentiment heard more than once on the tour. After a great meal at Mom's Café on the premises, the group continued the tour with a visit to a local dairy.

The family-owned Ragen Dairy provided a glimpse into the daily operations of the largest dairy in New Mexico, consisting of 21,000 cows that are milked twice a day, requiring a 24-hour working day. Those among the group who appreciate recycling and green practices were pleased to learn that the dairy re-uses the water for cleaning the cows and stalls, for irrigation of the alfalfa that is grown on

ality to the land owners for power generated and used by PNM when needed.

Owners stated that the footprint used by the windmills was very small, and that they have not done any harm to the cattle on the ranches, or to the birds in the area.

The first day of the Route 66 "Gate to Plate" Beef tour ended at the T4 Cattle Company, a sixth-generation family ranch that was established in 1902 by Yetta Bidegain, whose namesake, her granddaughter, still resides on the ranch today.

The tour bus drove out to one of the corrals on the ranch to witness the brand-



Photos by Laura L. Brewer

Several cowboys brand a calf on the T4 Ranch.

promote the industry.

According to Dina Chacon-Reitzel, NMBC Executive Director since 1991, the tour had humble beginnings in 2002, but has grown to be recognized as a very effective marketing tool used to reach a number of New Mexicans whose jobs are to inform the public of the local, regional, and national news and other issues.

By educating this small focus group the NMBC hopes to combat negative press and encourage a better understanding of the beef industry, especially as it affects New Mexico. Those who take part in the tour are expected to eventually carry the message of safe practices, cost efficiency, and nutritious beef and

Santa Rose to enjoy the hospitality of the Martinez family and the Comet II Restaurant.

Scrumptious cinnamon rolls and hot coffee, served by Cowbell members, provided the tour participants with a quick glimpse into what to expect in the next two days - great food, and wonderful service.

The next stop on the tour was the Clovis Livestock Auction, which is owned and operated by the Rogers family; Charlie, his wife, Nancy, and their four children. The group learned of the auction and regulatory practices of buying and selling beef and horses, saw the auction process in action, and walked on the cat-walk over the cattle pens.



Tour members view the hand constructed tower of the windmill that pumps water for the cattle on the ranch. The ranch has one hundred such windmills on the land.

the dairy land, and the manure is collected and used as natural fertilizer. Owners cited the constant practice of monitoring the ground water as an example of proper management of the land.

Next stop on the tour was a wind farm located on ranches northwest of Tucumcari, which showed the diversification that many ranch owners take in order to stay on the land. The windmills are owned by PNM and they pay a roy-

ing, castration, and inoculation of several calves.

Later, the group inspected a windmill that pumps water for the cattle on the ranch, and then returned to the ranch barn where they were treated to a great chuck wagon dinner and barn dance. Yetta's son, Phil, echoed the sentiment that they are stewards of the land, and without caring for each cow and calf, and the land that they live

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Raton High hosts 4th Annual Poetry Marathon

Celebration in new John Krivokapich Media Center marks National Poetry Month

By Tim Keller
The Chronicle-News

Raton High School celebrated National Poetry Month with its 4th Annual Poetry Marathon Friday. From 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., a podium was available in the new John Krivokapich Media Center as classes came and went, with students and teachers taking to the podium to share favorite poems.

First-year teacher Quincey Burkhalter served as a master of ceremonies, incorporating his talents not only as a published writer of fiction and poetry, but also as a stand-up comic who has performed in various venues around New Mexico.

RHS English teacher Margarita Saunders created the Poetry Marathon in her first year at RHS, hav-



Tegan Thompson



Sarah Marchiondo



Jessica Fiorino



Kelli Ortiz

what are good lyrics, and what are not-so-good lyrics."

The majority of poems read Friday were original poems written by each student. Of the other poets represented, Tupac Shakur was the one most commonly represented. Burkhalter pointed out that Shakur was a published poet before he became a famous rapper. Among the many other poets represented were Walt Whitman, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Tim Seibles, Sandra Cisneros, and Tim Burton.

As the annual program grows in participation and popularity, plans are already under way to bring a pair of young professional poets from New Mexico CultureNet for a three-day residency next year, culminating in the 5th Annual Poetry Marathon.



Austin Johnson



Joey Strohn

ing come from Oñate High School in Las Cruces where a similar event was co-sponsored by the English and Art Departments. "I want kids to realize that poetry is fun and interesting," Saunders said. "It's all around us. It's not just for 'school boys'."

Saunders and other teachers offer class credit points to students who get up and share poems. This year all four English teachers brought their classes; they were joined by several other classes during the day.

Original work was encouraged, but students were welcome to share favorite poems by other authors, whether from their textbooks or the pop charts. "We analyze pop songs in my class," Saunders said. "Students don't realize what goes into writing lyrics for a song -



Teacher Margarita Saunders



Teacher Quincey Burkhalter



Teacher Barbara Riley