



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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Cattle dog demo at Kansas fair

By NCTA News

CURTIS, Neb. – A demonstration of working stock dogs was a hit at the Norton County Fair recently in Kansas.

Student members of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Stock Dog Team were hosted by Kaytie Henrickson, an NCTA student from Norton.

The Aggies and their dogs showed the audience at the outdoor arena about how dogs can be used for safe, low-stress and efficient handling of sheep and cattle.

“Kaytie came up with idea to host the demonstration and orchestrated the event,” said Leighlynn Obermiller of Grand Island, an NCTA graduate and active member of the NCTA Stock Dog Team. She and her border collie, Gryff, were part of the evening presentation last month.

The stock dog team is open to any student at NCTA. The student members train their dogs at the campus facilities and often work with a volunteer coach, Kelly Popp, of Curtis. He is one of the founders of the Outback Stock Dog Association, a regional group of livestock owners and stock dog handlers.

Henrickson and her teammates joined Popp, who provided the sheep and cattle, for the public demonstration at Norton. Throughout the year, at the NCTA campus in Curtis, the two clubs also host stock dog training clinics and dog trials which draw competitors from several states.

Outreach at the county fair in Norton was a new experience, and a welcome exposure to a new audience, said Obermiller.

“The girls took turns demoing dogs and talking with the audience about the dogs and the stock dog team,” she said. “We had a very good turnout and enjoyed the evening.”

Henrickson was joined in the arena by four of her classmates, all who are beginning their second year in the NCTA veterinary technology division.



Border collie Gryff and four members of the NCTA Stock Dog Team are, from left: Breana Derr of Friend, Emily Hubbell of Lexington, Alexandra Hazuka of McDonald, Kansas, and Kaytie Henrickson of Norton. (NCTA photo)

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Alexandra Hazuka of McDonald, Kansas, is focusing on the animal husbandry option within the Vet Tech program, while Henrickson, Breana Derr of Friend, Nebraska, and Emily Hubbell of Lexington, Nebraska are studying to become veterinary technicians who plan to be employed in veterinary clinics.

Judy Bowmaster-Cole, NCTA assistant professor of veterinary technology and the NCTA Stock Dog Team coach, said the stock dog team grew from dog obedience and agility classes taught at the college.

Then, livestock and animal science students also had an interest in using cattle or stock dogs for herding, sorting and handling cattle safely and with low-stress methods at corrals and farm pens, and at pastures and grazing areas.

Now, team members are traveling to dog trials and public venues such as the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island where they compete in a collegiate division on August 26 and 27.

NCTA students provide demonstrations each February at the Cattlemen's Classic in Kearney, and for the first time in January, 2019, four Aggie students competed at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

Exhibitors compete for point standings at trials. One NCTA graduate, Kendra Marxsen, a Schuyler native, qualified with her border collie, Tank, to compete at the national finals in Wyoming this summer.

The NCTA Stock Dog Team and Outback Stock Dog Association will host a trial on September 28-29,

Information about the stock dog program is available from Professor Judy Bowmaster-Cole at 308-367-5282 or jbowmaster1@unl.edu.

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