

# SOUTH POLL GRASS CATTLE ASSOCIATION

**SOUTH POLL**  
The Southern Mama Cow Breed

SUMMER NEWSLETTER, 2012

## The Kiss System

By SPGCA President: Teddy Gentry

My good friend, Frank Felton, from Maryville, Mo. told me one day that he used the KISS system.

When I asked what the KISS system was, he laughed, slapped his leg and said, "Keep it simple stupid."

I found out that what Frank meant by that was that the cattle business is not rocket science.

Cows are meant to convert grass or forage to meat. The cow size that makes the most money at the end of the year is the cow you want to multiply in your herd. Keeping good, accurate records on your cows, and then letting those records dictate your breeding direction is a sure way to move forward. The beef business is so fragmented, it's easy to fall into the old mindset of reaching

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## People Attend South Poll Field Day

About 200 people from 17 states attended the fourth annual South Poll Grass Cattle Association field day held Friday and Saturday, June 22 and 23 at Voss Land and Cattle Co. in Linn, Missouri.

Teddy Gentry, SPGCA president and founder of the South Poll breed welcomed the group to the farm located in the Ozarks foothills and explained how and why he formed the breed.

The two-day event featured a management practices forum put on by association members Greg Judy, Dr. Bruce Shanks and Ralph Voss. Judy spoke on the art of high stock density grazing and characteristics of the South Poll breed as it relates to mob grazing. Shanks spoke on multi-species grazing with an emphasis on sheep and Voss spoke on spraying various soil amendments including raw milk, molasses, sea salt and liquid fish.

Friday ended with a grassfed beef wiener roast and wagon tours of the Voss farm.

Saturday saw the third annual seed stock cowboy auction that included 21 lots of the best South Poll cow/calf pairs, bulls and heifers the breed has to offer. All the animals were consigned by association

members and were purchased by buyers from Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri and Illinois.

Nationally known grazer, Greg Judy, led a pasture walk Saturday that pointed out grazing paddocks both before and after grazing to estimate the percentage of residual forage and also the forage still available for grazing. Judy discussed options for farms that are going through a drought period, as Missouri currently is, and gave options on how to handle similar situations.

On Saturday, guest speaker Dr. James Horne, CEO of the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Poteau, Okla., discussed how to make small family farms sustainable and the importance of small farms in today's economy.

Board members Dave Roberts and Jerry Voss were the first two inductees into the South Poll Hall of Fame and were honored at the field day. Gentry, who chose both award winners, said, "Without Roberts there would be no South Poll cows and without Voss there would be no South Poll association." He said a person would be inducted into the Hall of Fame

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South Poll board members Dave Roberts and John Lyons watch some of the activities at Friday's field day.



People interested in viewing the 21 lots offered in Saturday's sale went into some of the six pens to get a close-up look at the animals. The bidding Saturday was spirited, with the top cow/calf pair going for \$4,500 and the top heifer \$4,200.

All Photos by Kathy Richburg, Toyah McGrady and Judy Freeman



## **KISS** from page □

for extremes in growth, milk, ribeye, marbling or whatever. Lean to resist that temptation as it will only lead to extreme problems later.

Learn how to use the best average bull calves each year out of those old cows that are the right size and shape and have never missed a year giving you a good calf. Way too often we look at the biggest, stoutest calf and say, "Wow!" I believe it's better to study fertility records of the mamas and then say, "Wow!" With patience and good records the good ones will be obvious as time passes.

So, when I learned what Frank meant by the KISS system, all I can say is "Amen."

Thanks to Frank and all the other good cowboys who took the time to teach us all what a cow should look like as well as what a cow should do.



Vendor Rick Bonnot of Miller Farm Supply explaining to a lady about the benefits of SEA-90.



Master grazer Greg Judy kept the attention of his audience, whether at the management practices forum or his pasture walk.



Teddy Gentry fixed brats Thursday evening for those who came early.



A large crowd attended Friday afternoon's management practices forum.



Both the management practices forum Friday and Dr. James Horne's address Saturday took place under a tent-full of people.

## **Field Day** from page □

each year and their names would be placed on a plaque to hang at Bent Tree Farms, the home of the South Poll breed, in Fort Payne, Ala.

Next year's field day will be held on Friday and Saturday, June 21 and 22 at Merritt Farms, the home of board members Randy and Yvonne Whisonant, in Warrior, Alabama. Watch the website and future newsletters for details of next year's field day.

For more information about South Poll cattle view the association website at [www.southpoll.com](http://www.southpoll.com).





The ultra-gentle South Poll animals that sold Saturday loaded late that afternoon without incident.



Board member Dr. Bruce Shanks spoke at the management practices forum and explained how sheep complement cattle in a livestock operation.



Heading up the registration effort were office manager Kathy Richburg, standing, and Yvonne Whisonant, who along with her husband Randy will be hosting next year's field day at their home in Warrior, Alabama.



Vince and Cole Rice handled the grilling of the hamburgers for Saturday's lunch.



Friday afternoon master grazer Greg Judy explained how mob grazing can be beneficial, especially in dealing with an acute drought.



Teddy Gentry named Jerry Voss to the South Poll Hall of Fame for her efforts in getting the association off the ground.



People enjoyed looking at the 90,000-gallon-per-day Hollenbeck Spring during Friday night's farm tour.





Ezra Schrock and his family came from Moulton, Iowa (near Bloomfield) to attend his first South Poll field day.



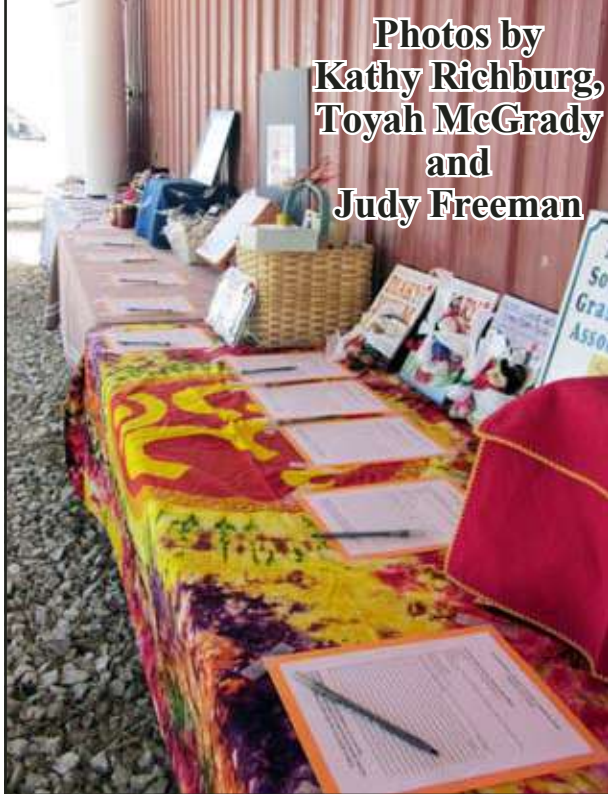
Dr. James Horne



South Poll display



Teddy Gentry



Photos by Kathy Richburg, Toyah McGrady and Judy Freeman



Teddy Gentry named Dave Roberts to the South Poll Hall of Fame. "Without Dave there wouldn't be a South Poll breed," Gentry said. Looking on is office manager Kathy Richburg.



Greg Judy

Silent auction offerings



Yvonne and Randy Whisonant will serve as hosts of next year's field day, to be held at their farm in Warrior, Alabama.



Blake Whisonant



J.A. Girgenti listens as Ralph Voss talks about soil amendments at the farm tour Friday. Voss explained some of the things he does in an effort to try to improve the performance of their grass and cattle.





Attendees had an opportunity to eat three meals during the two days of the event.



Two of the hosts' four sons, Sam on the left and Mark, along with grandson Nate.



Those who came early enjoyed brats and homemade sauerkraut along with lots of other good food Thursday. Shown here are Toya McGrady, Greg Judy, Dr. Will Winter and Bob Cain.



Ralph Voss explains to the audience Friday afternoon what occurred two years earlier at the raw milk field day headed up by the late Terry Gompert.



Ralph Voss talks about some of the relatively few dung beetles that are starting to show up after a near total absence of almost four years.



Dr. Bruce Shanks, who served as auctioneer, and Teddy Gentry at Saturday's spirited auction





One of the food attractions was homemade cupcakes, decorated by the hosts' daughter-in-law, Brenda Voss.

The hottest item at the silent auction (upper left) was this painting of Cow BTF 5430 8410, one of the foundation cows of the breed. The artist was long-time Bent Tree herdsman and South Poll Hall of Fame member Dave Roberts. The painting was purchased by board members for a total of \$675 and presented to Teddy Gentry (shown holding the painting). Below, board members Jerry Voss and Tom McGrady watch with amusement as Gentry could not understand why his bid on the painting kept being topped.



Hosts' son, Matt Voss, who worked preparing for the field day and two days of the field day along with his friend Karen and his daughter Destiny.



Jerry Voss with her favorite son-in-law, Vince Rice, who cooked the hamburgers for Saturday's lunch.



The bidding at the auction was spirited, to say the least. Here Gentry and Doyle Unruh of Georgia (in the straw hat) bid on one of the many outstanding animals offered for sale. For the second year in a row, Unruh went home with a great female.





On June 21 every animal in the sale was weighed and measured for top line, girth, etc. Here Dave Roberts and John Lyons measure and record girth.

**Photos by Kathy Richburg, Toyah McGrady and Judy Freeman**



Teddy Gentry measures the front girth of a heifer.



Teddy Gentry, Todd Churchill, Bill Roberts and Bill Totemeier chat -- more than likely about either cattle or the drought.



Andy Summers chats with two other men while looking at the livestock.



Some of those enjoying Friday's activities were Roy Libbert, Stanley Summers, Jim Brandt, Nathan Culver, Roman Miller and Steve Freeman.



Mark Voss, the hosts' son, throws hay to the sale cattle.



Board members Judy Freeman and Teddy Gentry





There was always a good crowd present to view the cattle.



Part of the Voss cow herd – in the background is the eastern part of Osage County and beyond that Gasconade County.



Board member John Eldridge and office manager Kathy Richburg



It took a people mover, a hay wagon and about three pickups to transport those going on the farm tour Friday night.



Yvonne Whisonant and Jan Judy



Early in the day the registration desk was a very busy place.