

KC STOCKYARDS IT'S A BUG'S LIFE STROMMEN ALONG

WORKING RANCH

PENCILING OUT PIVOTS

The question is, can you afford not to increase productivity?

TRICHY BUSINESS

A WR Special Report

GET UP
& GO ON
THESE
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ATVs

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Now it's up to you to collect the water properly

PIECE DE RESISTANCE?

MAYBE NOT IF YOUR VET HELPS GET THE HERD'S WORM LOAD UNDER CONTROL





SHEYNA STROMMEN

Strummin' Along on the Strommen Ranch

Aaron and Sheyna Strommen began ranching in 2001, with a wedding gift of three Angus heifers from Aaron's grandfather's last heifer crop. Shortly after they were wed, the couple purchased fifteen head and throughout the past 17 years have grown their herd to roughly 200 registered Angus females and 50 commercial Angus cows they use as recipients for their embryo program. Their moderate-framed, balanced-trait Angus cow herd has allowed the couple to transition from two full-time off-the-ranch jobs and realize their dream of ranching full-time.

A wedding present turns into a sweet cowherd, which leads to hosting cattlemen from Argentina, showing a 4-H pig named AbrahAM Lincoln with a clear disdain for marshmallows, and tossing the restrictor plates off Clint's awesome wheels.

Strommen Ranch sells 75 yearling and two-year-old Angus bulls through sales they host at their ranch the last Saturday of February and new this year, they will host the Badlands Angus Alliance bull and bred female

sale, Dec. 4th in Dickinson, N.D., along with their friends and fellow ranchers Best Angus of Watford City, N.D., and Talkington Angus of Belfield, N.D. The sale will feature coming 2-year old Angus bulls as well

Rancher's Journal

SHEYNA STROMMEN

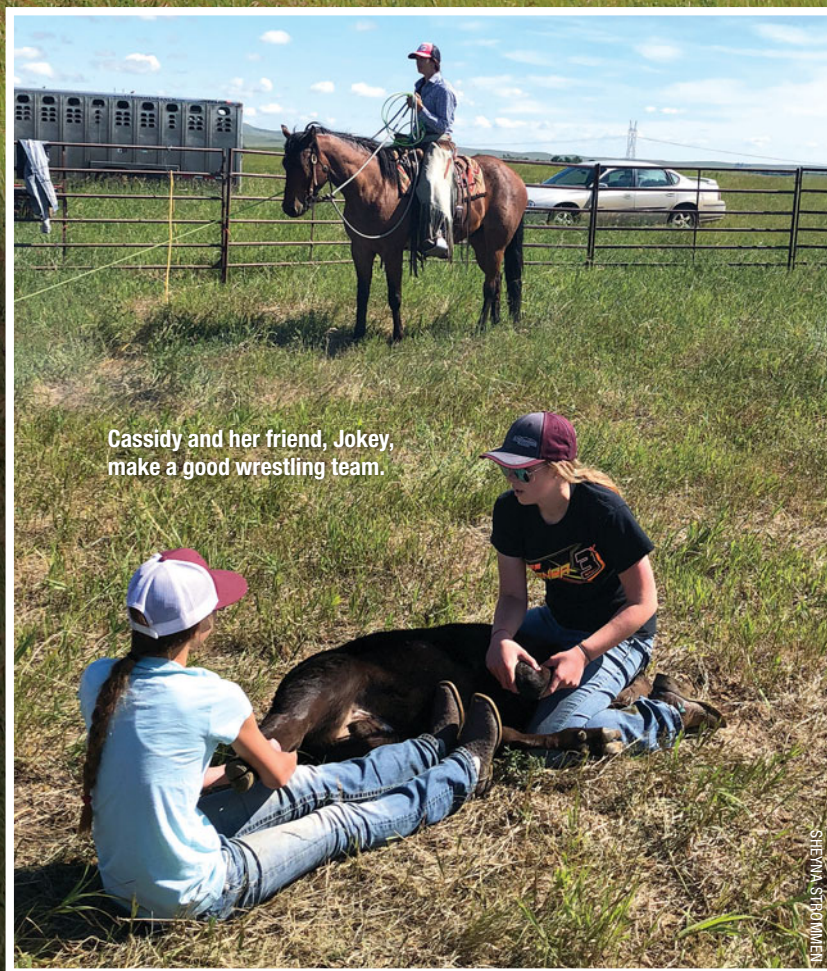
Gathering pairs for the last branding of the year.

as elite, source-verified, bred females from their customers' herds.

When asked about their cowherd Sheyna says, "They have to work for a living. Since we buy all the supplemental feed we need for winter, we know the exact cost associated with feeding cattle in the winter months." The Strommens cut their feed costs by making them work at grazing as long into the winter as possible. "The ones that can handle it stay and the ones that don't, leave; it's that simple. If you pamper them and never place any pressure on them, you will never find out who is or isn't earning their spot," says Aaron.

"You won't find cattle with outlandish EPD's or \$ indexes here," Aaron said. "We select for the traits there are no numbers for, like calf vigor at birth, cows with tremendous maternal instinct, fertility in the first cycle, udder and feet quality and also for traits you can measure like percentage bred in the first 30 days, disposition and weaning weight – the traits ranchers need first to be profitable."

Good dispositions are also a must



Cassidy and her friend, Jokey, make a good wrestling team.

SHEYNA STROMMEN

for the family-owned and operated ranch, whose crew consists of Aaron and Sheyna, their daughter Cassidy (14) and sons Cooper (12) and Clint (7). "When you're raising your kids around cattle – and expecting them

to work on the ranch alongside of you – good dispositions are not negotiable," Aaron says.

The Strommens artificially inseminate their cowherd for two cycles every year, drawing from Aaron's 15 years



SHEYNA STROMMEN

The tour group gathers around Aaron and Sheyna to learn about the history of Strommen Ranch and to visit about genetic and management goals.

Strommen Ranch

experience as a Beef Representative for Genex Beef in North Dakota and eastern Montana.

In addition to the ranch, the Strommens own Strommen Livestock Services, a graphic design and free-lance

writing business Sheyna manages from their home office.

This ranch journal chronicles the days that transpired during the second cycle AI, as the family completed an EQIP water pipeline project through the Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCS), hosted an international tour and completed bull deliveries for the season.

12-Day Journal of Sheyna Strommen

MONDAY, JUNE 18

Sunrise came early, and Aaron, Cassidy, Cooper and Kolton (our summer intern from Kansas State University) were in the AI pasture gathering cows. They sorted off 70 pairs of Genex Beef-sired

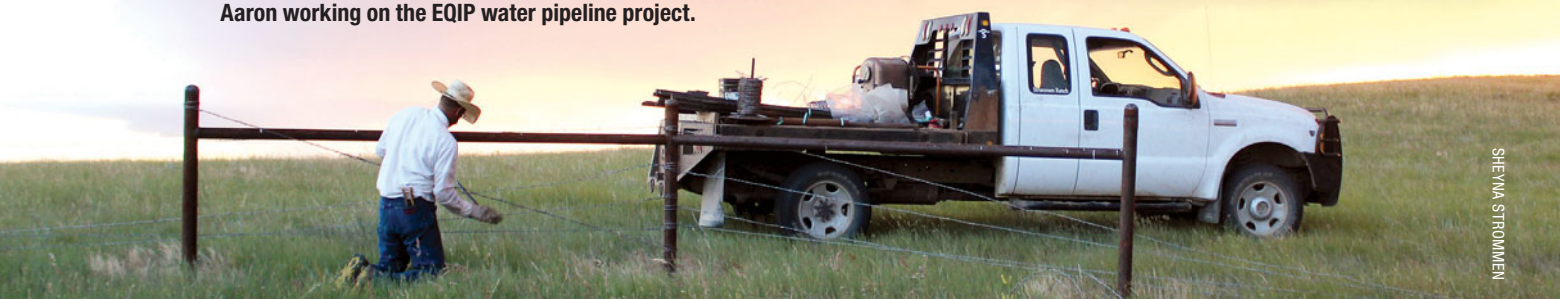


STROMMEN RANCH ARCHIVE



SHEYNA STROMMEN

Aaron working on the EQIP water pipeline project.



SHEYNA STROMMEN

females and calves to showcase for an International Beef Tour from Argentina hosted by Genex. Clint and I prepared snacks and refreshments. The tour bus arrived around 9 a.m. and we welcomed 38 Argentine ranchers to Strommen Ranch. Tour participants are searching for new genetics to take back to their own operations. "It is always fun to find the similarities between our management styles and learn from our differences," Aaron said.

We differ in the facilities we use for AI projects. The portable ice-fishing house we converted into a small in-pasture office where we prepare for AI and Embryo Transfer and the two-stall breeding barn we use are always points of interest that generate some discussion during the tours.

That afternoon, Aaron, Cooper and I placed Estroject heat detection patches on cows and heifers in preparation for second cycle AI. A light rain began about the time we started working cows and quit about 30 minutes after we placed the last patch, totaling 0.15" of rain.

TUESDAY, JUNE 19

Tuesday morning, Aaron and I both spent time in the office. Aaron contacted sponsors for the North Dakota Angus tour that will be stopping at the ranch on September 25th. I balanced checkbooks and visited with a new design customer about his upcoming bull sale. Cassidy, Cooper and Clint worked on 4-H projects and registered their animals for the Morton County Fair.

Tuesday afternoon the guys worked on the multi-tank water project by constructing a barrier around the first water tank so that NRCS could approve the design. With NRCS's approval, we will continue construction of this barrier design on all of the water tanks on this project.

Early Tuesday evening, a trucker called to let Aaron know he'd be in Sioux Center, Iowa on Thursday at 2 p.m. with one of our herd bulls, Bruin Torque 5261, that was coming from our partners in Alabama. That evening, Aaron, Cooper and Kolton heat detected cows and heifers and sorted and penned the ones in heat to breed in the morning.



Tour participants walk through and photograph Strommen cows.

SHEENA STROMMEN



In 2017, guests from Argentina gave Clint an authentic "Gaucho" beret, which is the cowboy hat of Argentina. He was proud to wear it for the tour and enjoys meeting the guests.

SHEENA STROMMEN

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20

This morning, Aaron and Kolton watched cows for heats; nothing this morning. I brought the boys in for doctor's appointments. That afternoon Aaron and Kolton put in eight corner H-Braces and worked on a cross fence for the EQIP project. Aaron stopped to bring Cassidy to the neighbors to catch the car pool to open gym at the school they attend, approximately 40 miles away.

That evening while heat detecting, Aaron put a ride on a colt we

purchased from a bull customer, then he and I met up with the Argentine tour group, representatives from Genex Beef and neighbors, Kelly, Marti Jo and Kelsie Schaff, and Bob and Kathy Watkins for supper.

THURSDAY, JUNE 21

Aaron and Kolton saddled horses at 4:30 a.m., gathered the cows that showed heats the night before and AI'd them. Aaron then struck out for Sioux Center, IA to pick up Bruin Torque 5261, who we own with partners in

Strommen Ranch

Alabama and California. While on the road, Aaron visited with a few customers about the Badlands Angus Alliance bull and bred female sale.

Aaron and Torque returned to the ranch at roughly 9:30 p.m., just in time to do some heat detection and AI cows that were sorted off this morning.

While he was away, a couple semi loads of gravel showed up and Kolton sprayed leafy spurge and watched cows a couple times. I helped serve lunch at a funeral then returned home to mow grass and do some yard work while the kids worked with their 4-H animals.

FRIDAY, JUNE 22

The boys saddled horses at 6:30 a.m., gathered and AI'd cattle. When they returned home, they loaded a bull sold in our February sale to deliver to a customer north of Bismarck, N.D. On the way, Aaron visited with a couple of customers to make sure their bulls were performing well and he picked up 150 small square bales to put in the calving barn for next spring's calving season. Everyone got in on stacking the bales in the hay loft that evening.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23

Aaron and I helped the kids with their 4-H projects. Cassidy and Cooper have showed pigs for a couple years. This is Clint's first year as a Cloverbud and he is trying to figure out how he can best show his pig, AbraHAM Lincoln,

from a powered wheelchair. Clint was born with Muscular Dystrophy and uses a power wheelchair to get around. Today we tried to entice his pig to follow the chair with marshmallows, but AbraHAM was less than interested!

Aaron and Kolton continued



Aaron preparing to AI. This is inside the portable ice fishing house we use to get supplies ready for AI and Embryo Transfer.

SHEENA STROMMEN



Good view of our AI pasture. To the left is the ice fishing house we converted into the office where we get supplies ready for AI and Embryo Transfer. The next building over is our breeding barn. These two facilities garner a lot of discussion among Argentine visitors at the ranch.

SHEENA STROMMEN

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Cooper and Cassidy have shown pigs in 4-H for a couple of years and this summer they are helping Clint, a Cloverbud, figure out how he can best show his pig from his power chair.

Strommen Ranch

installing the water tanks for our EQIP water project. It was looking like we were going to get a much needed drink of water but the clouds missed us and instead gave our neighbors a nice rain from 0.35" to 1.30".

After AI'ing a little early, Aaron and I celebrated our wedding anniversary

with a Certified Angus Beef supper at 40 Steak and Seafood in Bismarck. It is the only restaurant in the state that is equipped to dry-age steaks in-house, and wow, were they good!!

SUNDAY, JUNE 24

Aaron put in a couple hours work on the water pipeline before joining the family for Mass in St. Anthony.

That afternoon, I worked on designing a logo for the Badlands Angus Alliance sale and the kids brought a 1200 gallon water tank up to the house to use for a swimming pool!

MONDAY, JUNE 25

After AI'ing a couple cows this

morning, Dr. Pat Bierman of the Mandan Veterinary Clinic came to semen test the clean-up bulls that will run behind our commercial cows and replacement heifers.

The kids and I worked on the yard, mowing, weed trimming etc., then grilled pork chops and baked potatoes for supper.

Aaron and Kolton placed gravel around the water tanks and finished welding the wildlife ramps in each tank; I went to town to get more supplies for the EQIP project and get some groceries. Aaron and Kolton installed and welded nine H-braces and ran one Red Brand barbed-wire for a straight line for pushing in T-posts.

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12-DAY JOURNAL
AND THE
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AND SHIRTS!

FREE!

We're looking for down-home folks like yourselves to share your daily ranch life with the rest of us. It's fun to do.

Plus, each member of the family gets a pair of jeans & a shirt from the good folks at



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The Strommen family:
(L to R) Cassidy, Aaron with
Clint, Sheyna and Cooper.

Aaron worked on miscellaneous facets of the project until 11 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 26

The guys spent the entire day pounding posts and welding the NRCS-approved barricades around six water tanks so the cattle can't get at the floats and valves.

I worked in the office most of the day, doing book work and designing a logo for Elm Creek Ranch of Hebron, N.D.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27

This morning I brought Clint into Bismarck for therapy and a wheelchair tune-up. When he drove into the mechanic's shop, his wheelchair topped out at 2.8 miles per hour. When he left, the top speed was 3.5 miles per hour with the 'hammer down'. Look out AbraHAM! (On a side note, the little elderly gentlemen who offer to race him down the aisles of the grocery store have a slim chance of winning now!).

Aaron moved mineral feeders around at home and took bulls to clean up behind our commercial ET recipient cows. Those cattle are at a custom grazer's operation approximately 180 miles away. While driving Aaron checked in with multiple bull customers to see how their bulls were doing and called a fellow Angus breeder for a progeny report from a new sire that we are interested in using in our AI program next year. He returned home about midnight by the light of a full moon. It was a gorgeous night.

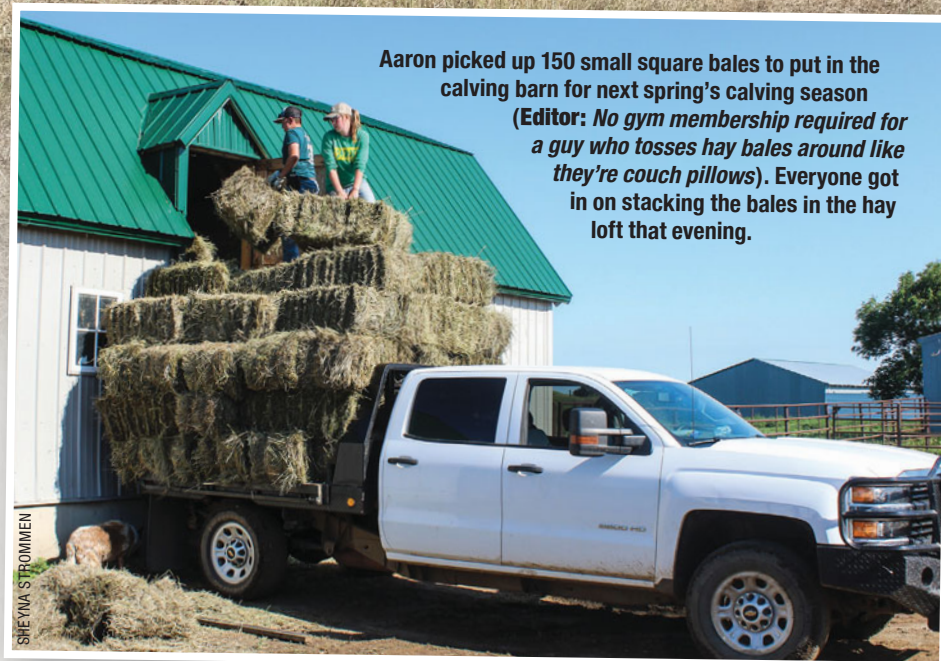
THURSDAY, JUNE 28

It's a big day on the ranch! Clint turns seven. He had another check-up in the morning and then Cassidy, Cooper and I surprised him with a trip to the movies with neighbor kids Stran and Stray Ressler. Afterward, we picked up an ice cream cake and celebrated with cupcakes and ice cream back at the ranch with Kolton and Aaron, who had pushed in T-posts on a ¾ mile section of cross fence for the EQIP project.

When the birthday celebration was over, Aaron called one of the farmers we buy our hay supply from to see how his first cutting is looking. He said it looks good and definitely better than last year but certainly not going to break any records. During the night we received 0.85" of much



CASSIDY STROMMEN



Aaron picked up 150 small square bales to put in the calving barn for next spring's calving season (Editor: No gym membership required for a guy who tosses hay bales around like they're couch pillows). Everyone got in on stacking the bales in the hay loft that evening.

SHEYVA STROMMEN

needed rainfall – possibly the best birthday gift of all!

FRIDAY, JUNE 29

Aaron went to town to get more fencing supplies, T-posts, Red Brand barbed wire and heavy wood posts. On the way home he visited with one of our partners about our December 2-yr-old bull and bred female sale to discuss some of the planning still needing to be done.

SATURDAY, JUNE 30

Helped our neighbors with the last branding of the year. It was a laid back day with a few kids having their first time in the branding pen. I vaccinated, Cassidy and Cooper wrestled calves and Clint happily played with the neighbor kids. Afterward, we ate a wonderful lunch, had a few drinks and told stories while the kids went swimming and played football. It was a beautiful day. **WR**