

Helm Cattle Company

Pride
In The Past...

Confidence
In The Future

BY: KEVIN TRIGUEIRO/JOHN HELM

The first sunny day after a welcome soaking rain could not have been more beautiful. And, the time spent with John and Debra Helm and their wonderful family, on their ranch just south of Dallas, Texas, could not have been better. The fields were full of Longhorns, whose pedigrees more than matched their natural beauty. Each had earned its place here as a result of careful planning and research, along with selective buying and breeding.

When asked to reflect on the journey to this point in their Texas Longhorn career, here is what John Helm of Helm Cattle Company had to say, in his own words.

- KEVIN TRIGUEIRO

Growing up in Waco, Texas, the nearest I ever came to a real Texas Longhorn (other than the orange jerseys from Austin) were some Holsteins at a relative's dairy where I stayed, while my Mom recuperated from an illness. While those cows did not resemble what J. Frank Dobie described as, "the mightily antlered, wild eyed" ones, that farm left an impression that I can still recall in distinct detail, even though a half a century has passed. There was saddling up in wide open spaces, simultaneously taking in the fresh smell of manure and sunshine, accompanied by the early morning sizzle of bacon and eggs with farm fresh milk, all made a deep imprint on that city boy's heart. Debra, my wife of 36 years, was introduced to the pleasures of country living a little earlier in life. Her dad, a country boy himself, settled in Leroy, Texas and gave the family as much as he could in the way of horses, emus, chickens and miniature ponies, but

no Texas Longhorns. The love and admiration for the Texas Longhorn would come later in our lives.

It's funny how single events can affect the course of one's life. A couple of years after high school, a seemingly chance meeting with an old friend turned my enthusiasm and the course of my career from law enforcement to the Fire Protection Industry. Not long after, Debra and I met at a local church where we married in 1976. With the Good Lord's help, we didn't waste any time in getting our family off the ground. Coming first in 1977 was our daughter Christel, in 1979 our son Josh, followed by son Nathan in 1982. During that time, I remembered the advertising campaign for a company who said they made their money, "The old-fashioned way...we earn it." With that philosophy at our core and a simple faith from above, we started our own fire protection design and



The *Helm* Family:

Sydney Boggs, Tanner Boggs, Christel Boggs, Caleb Boggs,
Joshua Helm, Brandy Helm, Jayden Helm, Bailey Helm, John Helm, Jensen Helm,
Debra Helm, Amber Helm, Paris Helm, Nathan Helm, London Helm

contracting company. Through the coming years our company would grow from a few employees to well over 125.

We were able to purchase 141 acres near Red Oak, Texas. It was nothing but old fences, weeds and overgrown ponds, littered with cattails and reeds. We mowed the weeds, baled some hay and built a barn. Since we had no animals, we began turning the barn into a house. Then the local county tax guy showed up, looking for the old barn. By the time he left, he seemed a little confused about turning a barn into a house. But he sure figured it out by tax time the next year!

In 2007, 20 minutes from our 'barn' in the small town of Ovilla, Texas, we found one of the prettiest small pieces of property we had seen. Pipe rail fence surrounded the entire property while an old windmill, rolling hills, pecan trees, pond and cattle pens graced the interior. Three gated entrances had Texas Longhorn emblems nicely centered on them and one had a "FOR SALE" sign on it. The owner had turned the property into a showpiece, with Texas Longhorns as its crown. We made a deal on the property, but soon encountered a problem, somewhere between the signing and closing. As we looked at the Longhorns he had for sale, we thought the place still needed some. The problem was that we couldn't make up our mind on which ones to buy. So, to make things easy, we took them all.

We never would have guessed that most of those girls were pregnant, and we soon had a lot of calves hitting the ground. Within the next year, we became pretty attached to those Longhorns. Yes sir, a little Texas Longhorn calf will get and keep your attention, and they did just that to our family. Who can watch a Texas Longhorn calf hit the ground running and not be excited?

By 2009, we were full swing into the Texas Longhorn business and kept working both places. My sons grew in their interest and excitement for pedigrees and horns, and we were talking about them 24/7. Back home in Red Oak we were fencing, designing lanes, building corrals, buying chutes and attending auctions. I still remember the first cow we ever bought at auction. Jim Curry was our bid taker, and we quickly found one that we wanted. The bidding started out brisk and steady and then all of a sudden the cow decided to take out everybody in the sale ring. We sat in amazement at the commotion in the ring as the auctioneer and the crowd became silent. When Jim Curry looked up and asked for our bid number I turned and said to my son Nate, "Did we just buy that cow?" He said, "I think so." And I responded, "Oh Dear Lord, I can't believe we just bought that crazy cow for our first purchase." Jim didn't know it, but for a long time we held it against him that we got stuck with that crazy cow. Well, that didn't stop us, and the cow calmed down nicely once she was at home in our newly fenced pastures. We came to forgive Jim for sticking us with that crazy cow.

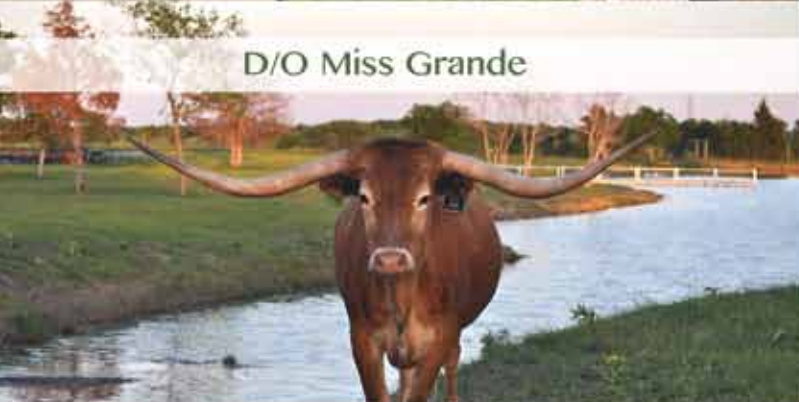
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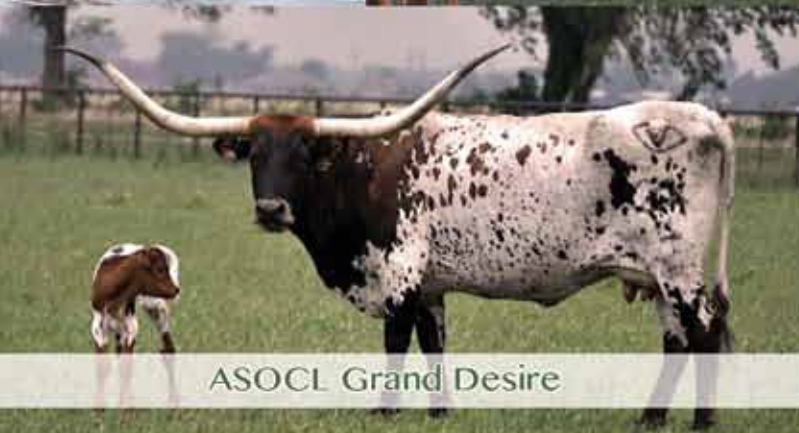
Hunts Grand Command



The Helm Hacienda



D/O Miss Grande



ASOCL Grand Desire



LLL Lucky's Cinderella
Mills / Helm Partnership

Our entire family enjoys auctions and we attend as many as we can together. Some of our greatest impact foundation females have been purchased at major auctions like the premier Texas Longhorn Legacy Sale. Wiregrass Laura who is now over 80" Tip to Tip, ASOCL Burning Desire, nearing 80" Tip to Tip and SL Selenas Ace, nearing 74" Tip to Tip, are just a few of the great females that we have bought. But as much fun as the auctions were, we quickly became serious about improving our herd through our own breeding.

In 2009 at the Horn Showcase event, Doug Hunt invited us to partner on a great young herd sire prospect named Hunts Grand Command. Then, we decided to try our hand at utilizing IVF and ET to gain some ground in our program. We paired our best female by using great herd sires such as JP Rio Grande, Hunts Command Respect, WS Jamakizm, Top Caliber, Drag Iron and the late Temptations the Ace. At the same time, we A/d selected females to Respect me, Drag Iron and Rodeo Max ST while using Hunts Grand Command for cleanup and natural service breeding. We are certainly pleased with the results. We own a number of great females in the 70's and future 80's who we believe will prove to be producers through our past and future breeding efforts. The great thing about IVF and ET is that you can take a fertile cow and quickly prove her against a number of the best sires in the breed and see the immediate results. We believe the effort is well justified. These females have all bred back through natural service to our young Hunts Grand Command bull. He is now near 75" Tip to Tip, and his progeny are impressive. We have recently sold some progeny out of that ET effort by private treaty, and we are so excited to see our brand positively impact our fellow breeders and the industry.

We continue to buy the best cattle we can, because you can still sell them and their offspring for a good price. Although we reduced the herd with the 2011 drought, we are still just as excited about this great breed of cattle as in the beginning. With breeding now our primary concern, we hold on to and secure the best females that we can afford and pair them with the best sires in the industry, including our own, to produce the best that we can to carry our brand into the future.

You don't have to be rich to own Texas Longhorns but the experience of owning Texas Longhorns is certain to be life enriching. Growing up, we did not have much in the way of material things, but we now know we were rich beyond comprehension. We owe a debt of thanks to many successful breeders who have earned their breeding success "the old-fashioned way," through patience and doing their homework. Many have now become our friends and contributed greatly to our program.

We started with great advice from great breeders, and built on that with good and thorough genetic homework. Today we are

at an advantage with the additions of successful ranch websites, social media, and great interconnecting software like Hired Hand. You don't have to have all the cattle on a thousand hills to be a success; actually they all belong to the Creator anyway – you just need the Good Lord to lend you a few for a time and be good stewards over what He has given.

Both Debra and I enjoyed the influence of faithful God and loving parents. And now we have our own family complete with eight beautiful grandchildren and the Texas Longhorns that we all have come to love so much. Today we are thankful for the Heavenly Father and His promise of Life, Family, Friends and this Great Country that has afforded us the opportunity to own and breed these magnificent cattle, the Texas

Longhorn. We have been forever changed by this unique, God-created being.

All of this came from what seemed to be a chance meeting with a friend that led me to my career, wife, family and a love for Texas Longhorns. Now it is all summed up for me in a familiar passage of scripture, "For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome." Jeremiah 29:11.

May you all be blessed, and we are sure to see ya'll down the road at a ranch or at the next auction. And remember, there are really no crazy cows. Which reminds me... "Debra, can I have the checkbook, please?" 