

RUMINANT DIGEST #19

APRIL 2012

Since a calf has a small ruminant this is going to be a small digest. For those that are calving it has been one of the best calving seasons people can remember. It has been very mild and warm. My guess is that it might have been the warmest March on record. Our grass is about 3 weeks ahead of normal and cattle are starting to look longingly towards the hills. Even with the early spring I still have more to do than I can keep up with. I just have too many irons in the fire. I don't know if I'm getting older and slower or both. Maybe I just haven't learned to say no! Well anyway, on with the updates.

The cattle market has stayed strong and appears that it will stay that way for a while yet. I sure hope so because we have bought a bunch more bred cows that will be calving on the way to the mountain and on the mountain. Should create some great stories and more than a few laughs. Anyway, at what the bred cows cost, if the market doesn't stay strong it will push us out of the cow business in a very short period of time.

RANCH UPDATES:

For the most part, everything is fine in this neck of the woods. I guess the only thing to report on the health front was that during Christmas break Taylor was opening an old bottle of Gorilla glue with his pocket knife and slipped and severed the tendons in his right index finger. We made a trip to the ER and they said sure enough, it's going to need surgery to repair it. This was a Saturday so they scheduled surgery for Monday. The surgery went well enough and they had his hand and arm in a brace for a couple weeks then Taylor started physical therapy for a week before going back to school at the University of Wyoming. Taylor had taken ROTC the first semester and was planning on taking it the second semester. He was able to do all the running but several of the other things he couldn't do because of his hand. After several weeks of physical therapy, without much improvement the physical therapist said "I think you have scar tissue in there because she could move the finger manually but Taylor couldn't move it independently. She suggested meeting with a surgeon and the surgeon felt there was a need for another surgery. When they had opened Taylor's hand the first time they had to open it up from the second joint to almost the base of his thumb to find the tendons that had snapped back when severed. They had done all this with just a local with Taylor adding color commentary the entire time as they were looking for the tendons. The surgeon in Laramie wanted to do a general instead of a local, due to some nerves in the palm of your hand and he wasn't really sure what they would find until they were in there and they didn't want Taylor twitching all over the place if they hit a nerve.

They were operating on a Friday morning around 5:30am so Alice went down the night before. (You know how mothers are".) Well, they knocked Taylor completely out and were monitoring his heart rate and noticed it was getting lower and lower but assumed it was due to his age and ROTC. When it flat lined they started emergency procedures and revived him. They told us many times later that day "He didn't die, his heart just stopped for a very brief time"! They administered another drug of some variety and his heart started beating again but it didn't come up over 30 beats per minute. So they gave him another dose of something else and brought his heart rate to 80 where they then proceeded to operate on his hand. Everything from that point was rather normal and uneventful. I did receive a phone call from my wife about 8:00am right after she had met with the surgeon and that call did ruin my day. It's funny how things turn out and things are put back in prospective for you. I'm the 7th grade basketball coach and we had the 8th grade district tournament the next day and of course I was supposed to go with the team. I called the 8th grade coach, left a message that I was headed to Laramie. Turns out we had a really great weekend. The held Taylor overnight with a heart monitor on and then let him out the next morning as everything checked out just fine. So Taylor, Alice and myself had a great unplanned

weekend in Laramie! However, Taylor does have a \$14,000.00 index finger as of today. We are convinced this was a blessing in disguise though. Taylor was supposed to have his wisdom teeth pulled this summer and would have had the same reaction and maybe they aren't as well prepared for something like this. We were never aware that Taylor had any allergies to anything, but we know one now!

Now that dad, who will be 80 the 12th of May he has decided to retire, somewhat. He is now helping me with some of the office work for the cattle drives. I just have more irons in the fire than I can keep hot. Dad will be doing the final billing and putting together the many different lists that we put together as well as coordinating the travel plans. He will take care of the ordering of merchandise so that you don't have to wait 6 months to receive what you order. Since he has always kept up with what is going on, feel free to ask him any questions you might have, if I'm not available.

FOREST SERVICE:

We have our annual Forest Service review this Friday and of course, we are not looking forward to it. Seems we have been naughty again. One of the issues seems to be a range improvement (a water tank) that was not properly installed or maintained. It is in the 2009 field notes according to the Forest Service. This is where the hitch comes in, it is in the new allotment and we didn't own it in 2009. We purchased it in the spring of 2010 and have never seen the 2009 field notes until we were written up for it this winter. Matter of fact it was the Forest Service that installed the tank about 15 years ago. Anyway, Kathleen Jackowski the executive director for the Guardians is going to the meeting with us. I feel very certain things will work out as the Forest Service is going to have a hard time standing there ground on this one. We have requested the head of the Tongue District be present at the meeting and he has said he will be. Even though he is Forest Service he is one of the rare ones that actually has a little common sense and leaves his green bible in the office. Anyway, the summer is going to be action packed again, of that I am sure. With 200 yearlings and 165 new cows being added and some of them with baby calves at side it will keep us on our toes or we will blow the whole deal, but then I wouldn't want it any other way! I'm sure with the addition of the new cows we will have to have another branding on the mountain this summer, probably the Aug Beef Roundup!

GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE:

Last year the Guardians of the Range had our first annual fundraiser to assist us in our battle with the federal government and the tree huggers. Thanks to many of you, it was a huge success. We made just over \$31,000.00. Well we are having our 2nd annual fundraiser again in Sheridan at the Historic Sheridan Inn the 11th of May. We will start off with social hour at 5:00pm, the auction at 6:15pm, then the dinner followed by the speaker. This year's speaker is Jim Owen who is the author of "Cowboy Ethics" and "Cowboy Values" both excellent books and dealing with a subject very dear to my heart. Teaching the values that many today have forgotten in society, politics and entertainment. As I read his book, Cowboy Values it really hit home, because the lessons he preaches are the same ones I was raised with and have tried to instill in my 3 boys. Taylor bought me the book for Christmas and as soon as I read it I said to my family, "I've got to see if he would be interested in being our speaker at our Guardians fundraiser this year. We are so very lucky that he said yes.

Anyway, we are still looking for more auction items to add to the auction and I just thought I might mention that if anyone had a unique item that you might be interested in donating we would love to have it. The auction will again be done on proxy-bid so bidders can bid online, or any of you who have been past guests that would like to bid directly live, I will have a crew member(probably Brendon, Trent, or Taylor) get on the phone with you. Proxi-bid charges 2% of the sale as their commission. I will have the auction items listed on proxy-bid sometime next week.

Some of the auction items we have this year that might interest you include: Trophy Mule Deer hunt with SNS outfitters #6. We again have a trip to Las Vegas for a couple days which includes airfare.

A pair of chaps that are very classy looking and would look great on some of you women! We have \$4,000 dollar credit at Mercer's next bull sale if any of you are wanting more bull than you got here! We have a handmade Cherry wood Hope Chest that is absolutely stunning and of course, Double Rafter Cattle Drives is donating 2 spots again for any trip that has room for the summer of 2013. We also have a Safari Hunt in Africa. On the African Safari, you do need to call me or email me for the details as there is a lot more to it than just purchasing it. You can go hunt everything from a monkey to a Water Buffalo! Anyway I would love to have your support again. Of course if none of you are busy, fly out and join the night, it would be fun to see you again. Thanks again and I will be sending out one more auction notice around the 1st of May to you and hopefully I will have more time to write. Anyway all is well here and we are looking forward to seeing some of you again this summer.

Dana