

# MORE THAN JUST A CATTLE SHOW

*Humpert family takes advantage of the opportunities offered outside the show ring at NJAS.*

*by Megan Silveira, assistant editor*

His name is called, and he takes a deep breath before standing and pushing his chair in. He leaves behind a pencil on the tabletop, but a crisp sheet of paper with a few of his carefully written notes held in his hands.

He journeys down the hallway behind a green coat, entering the room and listening with a small smile as his name is announced to the judges. He takes the time to shake each of their hands before starting his speech.

Brantley Humpert completes the steps of the National Junior Angus Show's (NJAS) extemporaneous speaking contest with quiet confidence. The 13-year-old has been speaking in front of a crowd since he joined the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), but it hasn't always come easy to him.

He recalls his first NJAS prepared speaking contest and laughs.

"I wasn't memorized the best," he admits.

He had his paper in hand even back then, but Humpert found himself crying until National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) member Will Pohlman gave him a pep talk and sent him to stand before the judges. It might not have been an award-winning performance, but Humpert says the experience gave him motivation to practice for next year. In his second



**Brantley, Brenlen and Briella Humpert**

attempt at the event, no tears were shed, and a second-place ribbon brought home.

Though Humpert says the NJAB member played a large role in his resolve to compete that first year, it's really his family that keeps him eager to return to the contests of the NJAS.

Daniel "Brenlen" Humpert is just two years older than Brantley, but he was the first of his family to fall in love with the contests the NJAA offered. His first year of eligibility at the NJAS was in Tulsa, Okla. His mom and grandma encouraged him to participate in the extemporaneous contest.

"I didn't know the rules the first time," Brenlen laughs.

Despite the nerves he felt the day of, he says he was proud to come

home with the third-place title. Since that initial year, he's grown in his skill set and his love for the Angus industry. It's a love that's influenced more than just his brother.

The third Humpert kid hit the floor at the NJAS this year, as the boys' 8-year-old sister, Briella, added her name to the list of competitors.

There's no doubt the trio will have another familiar face in the room once their youngest sister, Bristol, is

old enough to compete as an Angus junior — the 7-year-old has already presented to a group of more than 120 Texas Angus breeders.

While every member of the Windthorst, Texas, family enjoys time spent around Angus cattle, they've come to truly appreciate the opportunities that exist outside the show ring just as much.

## From competition to passion

Between the brothers and their sister, the Humpert family was entered in nearly every contest offered at this year's NJAS besides team fitting and auctioneering — Brantley says he hopes to add those contests to the list in 2023.

"We compete in almost all the

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same contests every year,” Brenlen adds.

The Humpert kids are sixth-generation cattle breeders but first-generation Angus breeders, and the competitions at the NJAS are allowing them to find more than just a passion for the show ring. From prepared speaking and cattle judging to graphic design and photography, all three are discovering avenues they might want to pursue further down the road.

“I enjoy programming and know technology is the future,” Brenlen says. “I want to be a part of that when it comes to agriculture.”

With a vision focused on a future career, it’s no surprise the oldest sibling most enjoys the career development contest.

His younger brother is known as a chef at home, spending a lot of time in the kitchen trying new recipes that utilize their home-grown beef. Brantley’s love for cooking combined with his passion for public speaking, is why he lists both the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Cook-off and prepared speaking as his preferred contests.

Briella says time spent with the livestock or sharing her experiences with others is her favorite. As she hopes to show cattle at the collegiate level, she says her favorite contests are cattle judging and prepared public speaking.

Though all look forward to exhibiting their animals at the NJAS, it’s really these competitions that draw them to each location of the show year after year.

“I think they’re like the main part of our trip,” Brantley says. “It’s just a

staple for us.”

## Not just a ribbon

“I like to tell other people that I got a better place than my brothers.”

It’s a sassy comment Briella says with a smile. For her, the friendly family “trash talk” is what she finds the most thrilling.

Her brothers say she has a competitive spirit.

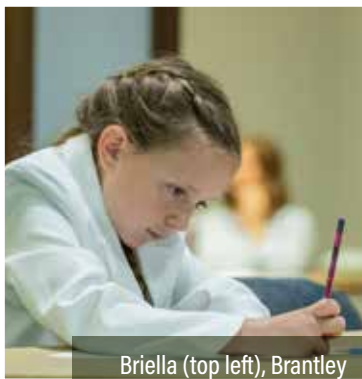
The boys, however, can see what the contests at the NJAS offer them beyond bragging rights at the dinner table. When they were Briella’s age, Brenlen says their mom tried her best to convince them how beneficial the contests were. Now the boys say the same without parental prompting.

The Humperts currently in the NJAA have aspirations of attending college, and Brenlen says in addition to stockpiling events to add to a résumé, they’re building skills that will serve them long after they’ve aged out of the association.

For now, Brenlen says he’s just happy to be surrounded by people who love the cattle industry just as much as he does.

“I’ve met a ton of my Angus friends through contests,” he explains. “That’s my favorite part about this — I love meeting new people.”

The boys have their sights set on a green coat in the future. They say they want their opportunity to help younger NJAA members make the most of the NJAS whether they have



Briella (top left), Brantley (center) and Brenlen (bottom) enjoy the friendly competition of competing in the same NJAS events.



cattle entered or not.

For Brantley, it’s a chance to do for an Angus junior what an NJAB member did for him at his first prepared public speaking contest.

Until that day when a Humpert steps into a competition room wearing a green coat, they’ll all continue to don their best blazers and put their best foot forward in any and every competition they enter at the NJAS. **AJ**