

The folks at McCoy's Building Supply understand that it takes a lot of hard work and the whole family pitching in to get things done on a farm or ranch. That's why we'd like to take some time out to salute Texas High School Rodeo Association families who are farmers and ranchers. In our monthly Farm & Ranch Family Spotlight, we'll feature one family, sharing their story of how they work together as a family to make their farm or ranch successful. The spotlight will run for 10 months; each month will feature a different region. One of the spotlighted families will be selected to participate in a McCoy's Building Supply Farm & Ranch photo shoot in San Marcos, Texas. Each Regional McCoy's Farm and Ranch Family will receive a \$100 McCoy's Gift Card. The McCoy's Farm and Ranch Family of the Year will be receive a \$500 McCoy's Gift Card and will be announced at the 2009 THSRA State Finals.

The Thompson Family from Region III

by Cassandra Bennett

Congratulations to Chace Thompson and his family of Region III!

The Thompson family has been named Region III's McCoy's Farm and Ranch Family. The Thompson family includes Todd and Kelly Thompson, and their children Chace, Tori, Tyson and Kreece. Both Chace and Tori are involved in Texas High School Rodeo, competing in Team Roping, Calf Roping, Goat Tying, Breakaway, and Ribbon Roping. Together, as a family, they enjoy rodeos, team roping, and all of the sport activities the kids are involved in.

The Thompson family lives in Munday, TX, where they've owned and operated the Thompson Ranch for 75 years. This family business is a Cow Calf operation, Stocker Cattle on wheat, and a feedyard. The statistics of the livestock are 15 head of horses, 200 cows, and 3,000 yearlings.

"We are also very involved with our grandfather's and uncles' ranching operation. So lots of the day to day business is spent helping one another."

What does work on the Thompson Ranch entail?

"In the Fall, we start with weaning of the ranch calves and buying stocker calves to go to wheat. November through December is spent riding young horses and doctoring the wheat cattle, which encompasses running 2,500-3,000 head. We usually start branding around the end of March, which lasts about a month. In May we begin shipping the yearlings to the feedyard. Finally, the summer is spent preparing the wheat ground for the following year's crop."

The Thompson family work together to run the business, but the children do take a large part in the responsibility. Every day, the kids are responsible for the feeding of the horses, and roping the cattle. They are also in charge of maintaining the upkeep on the barns and arena. On days when they are not at school they help with whatever needs to get done. After school, between the hours of 4 and 8, time is spent in the arena roping and conditioning their horses.

As Todd and Kelly note, "This is how we were raised and enjoyed it very much. We wanted to raise our kids in a small town and we feel that it is a wonderful way for them to learn responsibility because they have animals that they have to care for daily. We feel very blessed that the Lord has provided us this opportunity to make a living doing something we love."

Not only has the family business provided important and rewarding time for the family to spend together, but THSRA has done the same.

"Both give our family more time to spend together because all four kids loved rodeo and the people involved in it. The competition of High School Rodeo also drives them to work harder for their goals."

Congratulation again to Chace Thompson and his family for being chosen as this month's Region III's McCoy's Farm and Ranch Family!



The Gay Family from Region IV

by Cassandra Bennett

Congratulations are in order for the Gay family of Terrell, Texas for being chosen as Region IV's McCoy Farm and Ranch Family!

The Gay family consists of Jim, Brenda, Megan and Summer. Being involved in the Texas High School Rodeo Association is a family affair. Jim was a THSRA member in high school, and was the Texas High School All Around pick and Bull Riding champion in 1981. His eldest daughter, Megan, is a 10th grade THSRA member, while his youngest daughter Summer is a 7th grade THSRA Wrangler Division member. Both girls compete in Barrel Racing and Pole Bending events. Being involved in the Texas High School Rodeo Association is very important to this family. "Being THSRA members is just another part of our rodeo life." Not only does it bring their family together, but it helps motivate the girls to practice more, even though they ride everyday anyway. "It is a good way to prepare them for rodeoing later if that's what they choose to do."

The Gay family own and operate Rafter G Rodeo Company, and have since 1957 when Jim's dad, Neal Gay, started it. A Rodeo and Ranching company, Rafter G Rodeo Co. operates by taking

livestock to rodeos, raising bucking horses and bulls and producing rodeos. It is comprised of 1,044 acres, 200 bucking bulls, 150 bucking horses and 50 saddle horses. "We have had bulls and horses at the NFR every year except two since 1957."

The family business entails taking care of and checking the livestock every day, gathering bulls and horses for rodeos and for doctoring, working, branding and ear tagging cows, and maintaining tractors and trucks that are of daily use. "We do a lot of work as a family, from working at the ranch to working at an actual rodeo." As for the daughters, responsibility lies in helping gather bulls and horses for rodeos, gathering and sorting cows, ear tagging babies, and exercising saddle horses so that they can perform their jobs at the rodeos. "Both girls since they were young have carried flags at various rodeos and have taken part in many rodeo openings. They work stock with their dad at rodeos and on the ranch, and are a big help when needed to do anything horseback."

All around, work on the ranch is long and hard, but since the family is together most of the time, they don't actually consider it work.

