

Denton County rancher donates longhorn calf to fund-raiser for children

Silent auction proceeds to help feed children at high risk of hunger on weekends

Bidding continues through March 26, 2010

FORT WORTH, TX (March 10, 2010) – Pilot Point (Denton County) resident Bruce Thomas, owner of Rockin' LZ Ranch, is donating a Texas Longhorn calf to raise funds for BackPacks for Kids, a feeding program that provides backpacks of nutritious, nonperishable foods to school-aged children who will not get enough to eat at home on the weekends.

BackPacks for Kids is offered by Tarrant Area Food Bank, the regional nonprofit food bank that provides donated food to 300 charities in 13 counties including Denton, Cooke and Tarrant counties.

Mr. Thomas has become involved with BackPacks for Kids and Tarrant Area Food Bank through his daughter, Tyler and her husband Brian Crumley. The couple is one of two sets of parents who are co-chairs of the fundraising event benefiting the BackPacks program, a children's festival titled "Breakfast with the Stars."

A silent auction of the Rockin' LZ Ranch calf is being held now through March 26. The final highest bid will be announced at Breakfast with the Stars on Saturday, March 27, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Tarrant Area Food Bank warehouse in Fort Worth. The winning bidder does not have to be present at the event. More details are at www.tafb.org.

"This calf is a show quality Longhorn," said Mr. Thomas. "He could become a champion. Or, he could be a great piece of Texas lawn art, or a couple of great steaks. It's the winner's choice."

The calf was born in mid-November and raised by Elizabeth Thomas, an active member of the Texas Longhorn Association. He is a direct descendent of Highly Critical and PCC Generator, both of the famed G&L Cattle Company of Van, Texas.

A retired advertising and television executive who came to Texas to have a place where his kids and their families could enjoy the outdoors, Mr. Thomas said he and his wife "realize everyday just how lucky we are, so we thought what better donation to the Food Bank than a Longhorn."

"The Longhorn is a living symbol of Texas history that has fed people in this area for many, many years," he explained. "In donating our Longhorn to Tarrant Area Food Bank, we are guaranteed that this calf will carry on the tradition of feeding school kids regardless of where he ends up," he said.

In addition to donating the Longhorn calf, Mr. Thomas will join the cast of imaginary childhood storybook characters at Breakfast with the Stars as Captain Hook with two of his grandchildren who will play Peter Pan and Tinker Bell.

Other childhood favorites and stars at the festival will include, among others, Batman, Spiderman, Snow White, Cinderella and Prince Charming, Darth Vader, Jack the Pirate and Raggedy Ann. Festival activities range from singing, dancing and tumbling through bean bag tossing, beading and balloon artistry to interactive science demonstrations by the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

Tickets for Breakfast with the Stars are \$20 for children 12 and under and \$40 for adults, and may be purchased at www.tafb.org or at 817-332-9177, ext. 132. Adults may also purchase raffle tickets for a \$1,000 Master CardGift Card. For more information about the event or the silent auction of the Longhorn calf from Rockin' LZ Ranch, visit www.tafb.org or call Tarrant Area Food Bank at 817-332-9177.

BACKPACKS FOR KIDS supplies backpacks filled with nutritious, child-friendly, nonperishable food to students and their siblings who are at high risk of hunger on the weekends. Currently, Tarrant Area food Bank provides food to the program in 15 schools in three counties serving an average of 1300 to 1400 children per week during the school year. Because the food must be in single-serving containers and not need refrigerating, most of it must be purchased.

TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK, founded in 1982, provides groceries for emergency pantries, soup kitchens, after-school programs, senior centers, low-income day care centers, emergency shelters and other social service centers offering hunger-relief. Counties served are Tarrant, Bosque, Cooke, Denton, Erath, Hamilton, Hill, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, Somervell and Wise. Last year, the Food Bank distributed more than 19.6 million pounds of food to its 300 partner charities and other regional food banks; that is equal to approximately 15.3 million meals.

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