

CONNORS STATE COLLEGE

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Wildlife Education at
Connors State College

April 2012



CONNORS
— STATE COLLEGE —

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CONNORS

STATE COLLEGE

Building Futures One At A Time Since 1908

the Legacy of Connors



With over 100 years of history, Connors State College has a lot to talk about, from the first class of fifteen students in 1909 to the over 2000 students that are enrolled at Connors today. Many things have changed but the traditions and morals have stayed the same. Sixteenth President of Connors State College, Dr. Tim Faltyn and a committee of approximately 20 people have been working on a project to celebrate this long-standing history. "When I arrived, we had nothing showcasing the rich history of the college. Four years after our centennial celebration, it is time to turn the page to a new chapter of Connors State College history and these projects are the first steps toward highlighting our triumphs and challenges that made us what we are today," said Faltyn. The hall will be located outside the President's current office located in the Carl O. Westbrook Conference Center. The Legacy Hall will include over 15 panels celebrating each decade with a brief overview and pictures of the times. In order to get the full story, people will have the opportunity to buy a coffee table book, set to be out in October 2012. The book will include over 150 pages of text and 220 pictures documenting the legacy of Connors State College. CSC Librarian and Historian, Margaret Rigney has been collecting articles and pictures for over 39 years just waiting for an opportunity to put it all together and let everyone else know about the wonderful history of the college. Both the book and the Legacy Hall will be completed by October 2012. Future plans include turning the current President's Office into a conference center. With the location of the Legacy Hall, visitors will be able to learn about Connors State College in the First and Second Centuries.



Connors Legacy Committee Members



Legacy Hall 1908-1959

First Lady Serves on Muskogee Red Cross Board

First Lady Kelly Faltyn has taken the opportunity to serve on her first advisory board as a member of the Muskogee chapter of the Red Cross. "As a member to the local Red Cross my duties include many different aspects. Fundraising and volunteering at local events are a major part of my duties. Another main duty is to help publicize local and online Red Cross events in the many communities that the Red Cross supports," said Faltyn. The local chapter that she will be involved in is responsible for the Muskogee, Adair and Cherokee counties. The organization is responsible for raising money to help assist victims of disasters including, fires, floods, tornadoes and snow/ice storms. They also offer health and safety courses such as first aid, CPR and AED training, water safety and community disaster education.

Mrs. Faltyn has been in the medical field for the past ten years with experience as an EMT, CNA and has worked the last eight years as a Surgical Nurse in the Operating Room and as an RN in the Emergency Room. "I think my background as a nurse helps me understand the importance and need for the Red Cross. During just the months between July 2011 and December 2011, 88 families that were victims of house fires were helped with a total of over \$54,000. As a nurse I often help those who are victims of disaster with their health needs, but during those times they have many other needs as well, that is where the Red Cross comes in."

The advisory board will meet six times a year to discuss and develop a vision for the year and keep members informed about upcoming events. The local chapter hosts approximately 20 fundraising opportunities throughout the year, including chili and hot dog feeds, Dodgeball Tournaments,



Kelly Faltyn pictured in her scrubs.

Fill-the-hat at the local Wal-Mart and several concerts. The Red Cross is always looking and accepting new volunteers and invites everyone to join this organization. Faltyn believes that, "Being a part of the Red Cross gives me a wonderful opportunity to be of service to my community, supporting something that is close to my heart...helping others in their time of need. Especially in difficult financial times, charity is one of the first things to be cut out of the budget, but it is when others need it most."

Dr Grady Receives Awards

Connors State College psychology instructor Dr. Gary Grady was honored on March 23 at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City as a recipient of a 2012 DaVinci Fellow.

The DaVinci Fellows award was established in 2006, acting on the premise that creative thought and insight are fundamental components of extraordinary scholarship across academic disciplines. This award recognizes higher education faculty whose accomplishment reflect a creative approach and a high degree of innovation to complex issues and have a significant contribution to their academic discipline.

At the banquet, where Dr. John Feaver, president of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma was the keynote speaker, each recipient received a monetary prize as well as a medallion which depicts Leonard DaVinci's Vitruvian Man.

In addition to Grady, other scholars were Krystin Tavard, Oklahoma Christian University; Taylor Sawyer, Northeastern State University; Sarah DeToy, University of Central Oklahoma; Mollie Reid, Oklahoma City University and Dr. Tim Hubin Southwestern State University. Dr. Grady, also recently received a Citation of Commendation from Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin.

The commendation cites Grady for being named Outstanding Educator by the Muskogee Education Consortium and Educator of the Year by the Connors State faculty.

The commendation was signed by State Reps. George Faught, Republican from Muskogee, and Jerry McPeak, Democrat from Warner and State Sen. Earl Garrison, Democrat from Muskogee. Dr. Grady spoke last summer at the British Association for the Teaching of Psychology meeting in London and will speak at the Southwestern Psychological Conference in Oklahoma City in April.



Group picture of all who attended from Connors State College, from left to right: Dr. Ron Ramming, Mrs. Kelly Faltyn, President of Connors State College, Dr. Tim Faltyn, Award Recipient, Dr. Gary Grady, Yvonne Grady, Jimmie White, Ryan Blanton and Julie Dinger-Blanton.



President of Connors State College, Dr. Tim Faltyn and Dr. Gary Grady after receiving his award.

Student Presents at Capitol

Sophomore Jessica Monks represented Connors State College on March 15, 2012 at Research Day at the Capitol in Oklahoma City. Research Day is sponsored by the Oklahoma Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the National Science Foundation. This event showcases ambassadors of undergraduate research from colleges across the state and makes legislators and the public aware of how the research can positively impact our state. Student participants were hand-selected by their institutions to present scientific research posters during the prestigious event. Monks' project was titled "Alternative Energy in Southeast Oklahoma; Socio-Demographic Opportunities and Challenges," which focuses on Oklahoma promoting and utilizing its energy industry across the entire state, and particularly for Southeastern Oklahoma. Monks received two commendations for her work, one from State Senator Richard Lerbance and one from State Representative Ed Cannaday.



Jessica Monks is pictured with Representative Ed Cannaday.

MICHELLE BOYD GRADUATES THROUGH REACH HIGHER PROGRAM



From 2004-2006, Michelle Boyd was a CSC student and a work study for the business office. She received her Associates in Business Administration and was immediately hired full time as an accounting assistant. September of 2006 Michelle was hired and continues to be the Connors State College purchasing agent. Anyone who has had to purchase anything for the school has had the pleasure of working with Michelle. She is never late on greeting people with a smile and a helpful attitude. Even though Boyd doesn't have direct contact with the students she feels that, "What I do affects their learning at CSC. Whether it is helping an instructor order supplies they need to teach the class or helping getting the heat and air fixed in the buildings. It all affects the students and I like knowing I had a hand in it." The purchasing agent has the responsibility of receiving and processing all purchase orders for the school. They also must be highly organized and efficient because not only do they process numerous orders a day, but they also must have them accessible and orderly for audits each year. In 2009, Boyd had reached a point that she felt comfortable going back to school to obtain her bachelors. "I had a job with a set schedule that I could work around and my boys were at the age where they could take care of themselves. Her two boys, Matthew (17) and Ryan (15) did not take her serious about going back to school until she started kicking them off the computer at night to finish her homework. "I think they were all relieved when I finally graduated." Boyd took full advantage of the new "reach higher" program, which is specially designed for working adults who want to further their education. She enrolled at NSU and was able to complete her studies through on-line courses. At times it was tough balancing work, family and school says Boyd, "It was hard work to keep my GPA up and make sure my family was taken care of too. I know there were times my family was feeling neglected and there were times I felt like I was neglecting my school work. It all worked out in the end, the boys are happy and I am very happy with my GPA. Boyd received her Bachelors in Organizational Leadership and finished the program with a 3.83. With the completion of her degree, Boyd will have more time to do the things she loves. She enjoys camping and spending time with family and friends. She is also excited and active in the new employee wellness program on campus. "I see quite a few employees in the fitness center and walking around campus. We are all very supportive of each other in my office and that helps a great deal. I like that the program includes gardening and other tips that are beneficial."

Michelle Boyd



Julie Dinger-Blanton Starts

"Lights Out Cowboys"

Julie Dinger-Blanton started off at the University of Oklahoma receiving her Bachelors of Arts in 2004 and completing her Masters of Arts in 2007. "I have always had the drive to understand ideas and worlds larger than my own. I think this inquisitiveness is how I came to the field of sociology." Receiving both degrees in Sociology and currently working on her Ph.D in Environmental Sociology and Global Stratification, Dinger-Blanton did not always know that she wanted to be an educator, "Throughout my schooling I had many aspirations, at points pursuing music, at other, preparing for law school, but once I was in the classroom I was hooked. Being with students made me a better scholar, often helping me discover assumptions and questions that I have overlooked."

Dinger-Blanton is a full-time faculty member at Connors State College teaching classes from Intro to Sociology to Social Problems, as well as being a major part of undergraduate research and "lights out cowboy," a service learning project for students to promote a campaign to reduce energy usage on our campuses. Dinger-Blanton started this project in the fall of 2011 with her Principles of Sociology Class and the Behavioral Science Club and just carries the project over each semester to the new students. "Going green is not about hugging trees and drum circles. We are given the right, and obligation to be stewards over creation. Going green means that you see yourself not just as an individual, but you recognize that your choices affect your community, the nation, and the globe. It is about promoting sustainable choices, as individuals, and as a community, to make sure that the quality of life we enjoy today is at least the same, and (we hope) better for future generations," said Dinger-Blanton. As an avid learner herself she understands the importance of education and students excelling. "Our staff and faculty are invested in our students in a way that I have not experienced at other colleges. If a student has a gift, or interest in some field, or activity, you can bet that there is a member of the Connors family who will work to help that student realize their potential. A student at Connors is more than just their student ID number, they are a member of our Connors family, and we want them to succeed," stated Dinger-Blanton.



Julie Dinger-Blanton

Connors Focuses on Wildlife Education

A campus farm since 1912, two ranches with over 1600 acres, and a passionate wildlife professor with over 20 years of experience is ideal credentials for an institution to become a regional leader in wildlife education and that is just what Connors State College wants to do. “We have assets other institutions do not. Our Agriculture programs are ‘second to none’ and our science faculty and partnerships are professional and diverse,” said science faculty member, Dr. Stuart Woods. The program can utilize the South Ranch, which offers wetland areas, endangered species, lakes, livestock, a vast variety of wildlife, different soil types and diverse plant and animal species. This opportunity can also be used for CSC to become a frontrunner in Undergraduate research, especially among two-year colleges. The expansion of the wetlands is one of the first projects to get this goal off the ground. The project is a joint venture with CSC, NRCS and USF and Wildlife. “We are developing the wetlands for more waterfowl populations, census, food preferences, Hydroponic soils and Hydrdophillic plants, which provide nutrition and nesting cover for the waterfowl and other animals, insects, birds etc,” said Dr. Woods. Connors will offer an associate of science degree with an emphasis in wildlife starting in the fall of 2012. Classes will include hands on research components for students and with all of the availability to the different aspects of wildlife students will be exposed to lots of practical experience. In addition, 100% of the credits earned in a CSC Wildlife degree transfer to the OSU and NSU Wildlife Management Bachelor of Science degrees.

CSC Instructors, Dr. Stuart Woods and Greg Broussard use Connors State College Ranch to take students to explore the outdoors.



Connors State College is one of only two institutions to be the recipient of a \$50,000 grant from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Gear-Up summer program. This program is geared for public high school students under the direction of CSC Biology Instructor, Dr. Stuart Woods. The camps will be offered June 10-15 and June 17-22 which will have 40-42 students each week. The camps activities include wildlife research, ornithology, herpetology, entomology, fisheries, archery, compass/orienteering, endangered species research, dissection and much more. For more information on this camp, contact Dr. Stuart Woods at (918) 684-5475.



Coach Perry Keith Passes 1300 wins

KEITH MILESTONE

Perry Keith has been head baseball coach at Connors State for 27 years and on March 10, 2012 at Biff Thompson Field, Keith reached a milestone. The former Connors State graduate, player and NJCAA Hall of Fame coach posted his 1,300 victory as the head coach of the Cowboys. It was Connors' 15th win of the season and 11th consecutive at the time. Since that feat, Keith has guided the Cowboys to an 18-4 record at the Spring break.

Keith's No. 13 came in the opening game of a twin bill against Central Lakes, Minn. 11-0, followed by win No. 1,301 in the nightcap 9-1. The personable head coach said that it felt like yesterday that he stepped onto Thompson as head coach of the Cowboys.

"I never thought I would get 1,300 wins," said Keith. "It has gone so fast, it seems like yesterday in the spring of 1985 that we won our first one. It has been a blur, but it's been a good run. It has been fun."

Keith, however, doesn't take all the credit for the Cowboys success over the years. "My record is all about our players and the good people who have contributed to the program," said Keith. "I have been blessed with good assistant coaches and I haven't had too many. I have had Bobby (Foreman) since 1998, and I have had Wes Goss and Rod McCune before him, along with Brian Biggers and Butch Simpson. Those guys were all hard workers and played a big part in my success. I haven't made a hit or a pitch all those years...it's the players. We've had good players, but more than that they are good people." Keith has had three former players that are doctors, and eleven big leaguers. Keith says, "I am just as proud of those guys that are good husbands and fathers. That's my biggest reward." Keith continues to stay in touch with many of his players. "That's the biggest reward of all. Knowing what they have accomplished after leaving here, both on and off the baseball field," said Keith.

The current Cowboys team had been pointing toward victory No. 1,300 for Keith this season. "They were probably more excited about it than I was," said Keith. "It really kind of snuck up on me. But in this business you are always pointing to the next one. That was kind of fun to see them enjoy it. I think it's important for them to be a part of something like that. The one thing we talk about here is the tradition, the people who have been here and the success they have had. Here, not only on the field but in life. For them to be a part of that was kind of neat," said Keith.

The one thing we talk about here is the tradition.



Cowboys and Cowgirls Receive Honors

Eight Connors State Cowboys and Cowgirls were named to the Region II and Oklahoma Collegiate Athletic Conference basketball All-Conference teams for the the 2011-12 season.

Both clubs reached the Region II basketball tournament losing in the semi-final rounds. The Cowboys completed the season 22-8 and the Cowgirls 18-13.

On the men's side, Connors State's Jared Harrison, 5-10 sophomore point guard from Slidell, La. was named to the Region II and Oklahoma Collegiate Athletic Conference first teams.

Named to the OCAC third team were 6-1 freshman guard Josh Cameron from Racine, Wis., 6-8 sophomore forward Terrance Walker from Jonesboro, Ark., and 6-3 sophomore guard Shaquille Shannon from Philadelphia, Pa.

Harrison averaged 12.4 points a game for the Cowboys. He shot 82 percent at the free throw line, 49.2 percent from the field, including 43 percent from behind the arc. Harrison is averaging 3.2 assists per game and 1.3 steals.

Cameron is scoring at a 15.1 clip and is a 42 percent field goal shooter, while connecting on 81.6 percent of his free throws. On three-point shooting Cameron averages 43 percent.

Walker averaged 10.8 scoring with a 63 percent shooting mark from the field.

Shannon averaged 11.8 scoring, 75 percent at the line and is a 43.3 percent shooter from the field. He has averaged 1.5 steals per contest.

Cowgirls Tiffanie Abrams, 5-10 sophomore forward from Detroit, Mich., was named to the Region II and Oklahoma Collegiate Athletic Conference first teams.

Named to the second team was Nikki Lewis, 5-foot, sophomore point guard from Tahlequah with Tiara Hall, 5-11 freshman center from Paris, Texas, a third team All-OCAC selection.

Taylor Lloyd, 5-9 sophomore guard from Brooklyn, N.Y., was an honorable mention OCAC selection.

Abrams averaged 15.5 points, while shooting 47.2 percent from the field and 41.6 percent from behind the arc. She shot 68.7 percent at the free throw line.

Lewis averaged 12.4 points a game, while shooting 36.9 percent from the field, with 4.3 assists a game and 2.5 steals a contest.

Hall finished the regular season with a 12.3 scoring average and led the Cowgirls in rebounds pulling down 8.9 boards a game. She shot 54.2 percent from the field and was a 75 percent shooter at the free throw line.

Lloyd finished with an 8.2 scoring average this season.

ALUMNI Dinner a Hit

Connors State College held the Equine and Rodeo barbecue dinner and raffle for alumni and supporters on March 31 at Melvin Self Field House and it proved to be very successful.

Over 325 attended the event, the third such event and the largest, according to Jake Walker, instructor and assistant rodeo coach at Connors State.

“We had a lot of backing from our students, parents and alumni,” said Walker. “The response was outstanding. The most challenging thing we have is updating the mailing list and contacting people. We have done a pretty good job of that and once we contact them, they said they will attend and show up. That’s been very encouraging for us.”

The event included a silent auction and entertainment by Paul Bogart, a former Connors State graduate and member of the rodeo team, who is now lives in Nashville, Tenn., where he is songwriter and musician. Following graduation at CSC, Bogart attended Rogers State University and then moved to Nashville.

“We are very proud of Paul and his involvement in our program,” said Walker. “He has great character and is close to our hearts.”



The Connors State equine program began in 1979 with a horse program and then in 1998 a rodeo team was established.

The event helps raises assets to the rodeo and equine programs at Connors State, according to Walker. Over the past several years with the fund raising event they have built several buildings, which included horse housing for the rodeo team, and roping dummies.

Walker said they also hope establish monies for more scholarships for Cowboys and Cowgirls equine students.

“We want the fund raising to help the students while they are here at Connors,” said Walker.

“Everything that was raised at the Saturday event goes into the Fred Williams (former CSC instructor) Aggieequine Foundation Fund.

“We started the fund when he retired in honor of his name and for the last three years we have been adding to that fund from this event,” said Walker.

It was only the second year for the silent auction and Walker said the “response was tremendous last year. We made pretty good money and decided to add it this year. It takes a year to set it up and get the items donated. The community has responded and it has been overwhelming,” said Walker.



President of Connors State College, Dr. Tim Faltyn addressed guests at the Rodeo Alumni & Friends Gathering.



Over 325 in attendance at the annual Rodeo Alumni and Friends Gathering.



Students and guests danced to live music by Paul Bogart.

THE CIRCUS COMES TO CONNORS

The mud and thunderstorms were no match for the fun and excitement of the Culpepper and Merriweather Circus. On March 21st, the circus crew raised the big top in front of the Indoor Arena on the Warner Campus of Connors State College. The Warner Chamber of Commerce hosted the circus, and as part of the Chamber, Connors provided the space, parking, and security to help make it a success.

Area children were delighted to see pony rides, a moon bounce, and other midway attractions as they arrived at the circus, but the highlights of the show awaited them in the ring under the tent. Spectators looked in awe as the performers soared above them from the spinning rope, trapeze, and Russian Swing. The talented juggling, unicycle, balancing, and animal acts also kept children and parents alike entertained. The event also featured prize drawings, face painting, cotton candy, and roasted peanuts. No circus would be complete without a clown, and BJ the Clown provided plenty of antics to keep the children laughing. Indeed, a good time was had by all of the community.



TRIPLE DUTIES

mom, student, & work study

Melinda Shatto has much more to worry about than just her college homework. Her seven year old daughter, Braelynn is involved in brownie troop, basketball, softball and tumbling. "It is important for me to plan my class schedule and work schedule on learning how to balance school and family," said Shatto. Melinda is a general studies student at Connors with plans of attending NSU to pursue a career in Occupational Therapy. "Connors is a great choice for students with children because of the variety of classes they offer. It really allows a person to be at home with their children," commented Shatto.

Melinda started at Connors first as an employee working as the assistant to the Director of Residential Life, Aaron Wright. She thanks Aaron for his encouragement of going to college, "I had never attended college before and thanks Aaron for the advice of pursuing a degree." Melinda has been an excellent addition to Connors. She is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, has been named on the President's Honor Roll four consecutive semesters and has been a valuable work student for the admissions office for two semesters.

Melinda will graduate in May 2012 and is very excited in her next step in higher education but also says, "The thought of graduating and leaving Connors and Warner is bittersweet. It has become my home and is a huge part of my life."



Melinda Shatto has worked in the admissions office at Connors for the past four semesters.

CSC Livestock Judging Team Concludes Season

The Connors State College Livestock Judging team concluded a successful year at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo on March 13. Competing against 22 other junior colleges, Connors finished 2nd overall. Along the way to their Reserve Champion honors, the team of Laine Martin, Claire Martin, Jordan Richburg, Blake Davis, Olivia Foster, and Hattie Anastasio was 2nd in the Cattle division, 3rd in Sheep/Goats, and 4th in Swine judging. Individually, Laine Martin was 9th High Overall while Olivia, Jordan, Claire, and Blake all finished in the top 25 out of 124 total contestants. L. Martin was also in the top 10 of Sheep, Swine, and Reasons, while Foster was 8th in Cattle and C. Martin 3rd in Placings. In the Alternates Division over 50 students competed. Connors State College members Lindsay Bowman was 2nd overall and Cameron Curry 9th.



At the awards banquet this year's All-American Team was announced. Fifteen students are selected out of more than 200 sophomores that compete all year for their respective schools. The selection is based on not only their performance in judging at all of the national contests during the year, but also takes into account the students' academic achievements. This year, Connors had three earn this great honor: Jordan Richburg, Claire Martin, and Laine Martin. This is a great achievement for CSC students.

Connors ends the year being the only team in the country to finish in the top 5 at every contest they competed in, quite a feat considering the level of competition at every contest! Other members of the judging team include Jessica Miller, Michael Arceneaux, Caleb Russell, Bradley Womack, Kristina Bautista, and Hunter McAlister.

Alumni from last year's CSC team are finding great success at the next level too. Conner Newsome, Kassadi Click, and Tanner Wiegat are all judging for Texas A&M University, winning both the National Western at Denver, CO and Houston's Intercollegiate contest. Conner was High Individual Overall at Houston.



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MUSKOGEE AGAINST TOBACCO (MAT)

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In an effort to make the new transition a smooth one, Connors State College will have resources available to help people who want to quit using tobacco the support to do so. Literature, health fairs and wellness programs will be available to all students, faculty and staff as we begin the movement towards a healthy campus.





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Building Futures One At A Time Since 1908

Connors State College Alumnus and former Livestock Judger for the Cowboys, Kassadi Click has won the intercollegiate writing contest for Drive Magazine for the March 2012 Journalist Spotlight.

Click, a junior at Texas A&M and a member of the A&M Livestock Judging team, was awarded \$500 for her featured story "I Believe... That I can Exert an Influence in my Home and Community Which Will Stand Solid for my Part in that Inspiring Task" Click writes about that horrific day in Joplin, Missouri when the deadly F5 ripped through the community leaving the town in shambles and how not just the town, but more specifically the FFA (Future Farmers of America) program is moving forward. "I wrote about this because in the fall I had the opportunity to represent A&M at the National FFA Convention where I met some Joplin FFA members and the Ag. Teacher, one of our assignments for the trip was to write about one of the stops we made so that's when I decided to write about Joplin. I also got a picture of the only Joplin FFA jacket left, so everything just fell into place." Click's professors encouraged her to submit her story to Drives contest and it's a good thing she did because it was selected, and it was her very first feature story she has ever written! "When I was selected, it was an absolutely incredible feeling. I feel like getting my very own story and photos in a magazine, like Drive, where all kinds of people will see it is pretty neat," said Click.

Click attended Connors State College after graduating from Muldrow High School in 2009. She was an active member of Connors Livestock Judging Team and received her Associates of Science in Agriculture in 2011. "Connors has helped me out an incredible amount, it is actually where I discovered what I wanted to do in life, and otherwise I would still be trying to figure it out. At Connors I had people who helped me discover my passion for livestock photography, Ag Communication and PR work."

Click is now an intern for ShowChampions along with being a full time student majoring in Agriculture Communications and Journalism and being a part of the Aggies Livestock Judging team. Click's article can be found in the March issue of Drive Magazine or online at <http://drivebyey.com/magazine/issues/march2012/journalist-spotlight.html>



Read Kassadi's feature at <http://drivebyey.com/magazine/issues/march2012/journalist-spotlight.html>

Kassadi Click pictured above (third from the left) with the 2011 Sophomore CSC Livestock Judgers.

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