

## LOCAL 4-HERS HONORED AT GOLD STAR BANQUET

Twenty-five outstanding 4-H members from the Panhandle were honored at the 59<sup>th</sup> annual Gold Star Banquet which was held on the campus of WTAMU University in Canyon at the Alumni Banquet Facility on Monday, November 14. Dallam County 4-H had 2 Gold Star recipients and Hartley County 4-H had 1 recipient.

The Gold Star Award is the highest county achievement award and will be awarded only once in a member's 4-H career. The member must be at least 15, completed three years of club work, be an active member and complete a record book. "The award is intended to stimulate winners to higher achievement and to encourage other young people to participate in the county 4-H program," said Shawnte Clawson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service 4-H specialist.

Rylee Barber is the Hartley County recipient of the Gold Star award. She is 18 years old and the daughter of Brett Barber and Nicole Barber. During her 4-H career, Rylee has participated in many projects such as Beef, Swine, Clothing & Textiles and Veterinary Science but her main project has been Beef. She has traveled all over the state and nation showing cattle and she feels that this project has had the most impact on her. Success in the show ring was definitely a highlight of her 4-H career. Rylee held various officer positions including president of her local 4-H Club as well as Hartley 4-H Council. Community Service projects she has participated in include collecting school supplies, donating baby items to the local pregnancy resource center and assisting with her school's fall carnival each year. One of her most rewarding accomplishments was advancing with her team to State 4-H Roundup two years in a row in the Food Challenge Competition. Rylee has received a Hartley County 4-H Scholarship and a Texas 4-H Opportunity Scholarship and she is now attending Texas A&M University in College Station.

The Dallam County recipients were Sarah McDaniel and Ben Bezner.

Sarah is the 16 year old daughter of Shad and Jennifer McDaniel. Sarah has been involved in 4-H for nine years and has carried various projects including Rabbit, Consumer Education, Leadership, Recreation, Clothing & Textiles and Foods & Nutrition. She has participated in Livestock Judging and Horse Quiz Bowl. Currently, Sarah is serving as the Dallam 4-H Council President and she has served in the capacity of Treasurer, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-Presidents and Council Delegate. State events that Sarah has participated in include 4-H Congress as well as State 4-H Roundup competing in Consumer Decision Making Contest, Public Speaking Contest and the Entomology ID Contest. A major highlight in Sarah's 4-H Career was being selected to participate in Texas 4-H Congress. She, along with over 300 other 4-Hers from across the state, traveled to the State Capitol in Austin to learn about the legislative process. Sarah was assigned to the House of Representatives and she participated in mock legislative sessions, witnessed numerous bills on which she voted and learned the importance and difficulties of trying to pass legislation.

Ben is the 15 year old son of Mitchel and Ashley Bezner. He has been in 4-H for 8 years and has held various officer positions in his local club as well as Dallam 4-H Council. He is a teen leader for the Wildlife & Fisheries Project. Ben's most memorable 4-H experience was receiving the honor of attending State 4-H Roundup this past summer. He and his sister competed in the highly competitive

“Share the Fun” competition and received 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Community Service projects that Ben has participated in as well as helped facilitate include M.A.G.I.C. at the Dalhart Area Childcare Center, filling Operation Christmas Child boxes, delivering cookies to 4-H supporters, and sending Valentines to CASA kids. After completion of his 2015-16 4-H year, Ben was awarded the State Recordbook Award in Wildlife & Fisheries. The reward of his State winning Recordbook is a 4-H Leadership Trip to Washington DC and that trip will take place later this month. He will travel with the delegation from Texas made up of all State Recordbook winners.

The annual banquet is sponsored by Rita Blanca Electric, Deaf Smith Electric Cooperative, Greenbelt Electric Cooperative, Lighthouse Electric Cooperative, North Plains Electric and Swisher Electric Cooperative.