

Ross Fogle, Camp Hope

It was a privilege to be part of Camp Hope and the John Romine Memorial Show in Joliet, IL to honor John Mark Romine of Hope, Indiana. John was a young man who raised Belted Galloway cattle and began showing Belties at age 11. He showed at many national shows and went to all 3 camps at the UT Martin. It is a known fact that John was a hard-working individual who did *all* the work associated with caring for and showing his cattle. He was an 11-year member of the Beltie Youth Group Area 5.

My most profound personal realization about John's character happened near his time of passing. His mother, Carol, emailed us that his doctors had exhausted all methods of treatment to fight the lymphoma that had invaded his body. Their recommendation was that they should stop treatment. John got mad and told everyone *that he would not stop*. You see, that is true grit ... to never give up hope.

Many people came together to make the camp a reality. Special thanks to The Belted Galloway Foundation Inc. for funding the educational portion of the event. Area 5 BYG leader, Kathi Jurkowski (IL) hired Chuck McCullough (IA) and converted her home office into *Camp Hope Central* for the past 6 months. She and Area 5 Leader, Lisa Lovett (IL), made trips to visit me at Joliet, IL so that we could discuss the layout of the facility and make additional plans. The Terry Willis family brought equipment and cattle for all to use at the event. Many farms donated cash, food, equipment and their time! Each camper received a bucket of supplies to care for their animals during camp. It was fun to see the excitement on their faces when they were given their supplies, scotch comb and a new show stick..

Forty-three head of cattle, 18 farms, and 7 states were represented at Camp Hope. Twenty-one junior campers with fifty people total were there for the weekend. We had several boys between the ages of 8-13, so we had a lot of energy at Camp Hope. The Wahl Clipper trailer came for the event, allowing everyone to see the display and demonstration of different types of blades and clippers used for Belted Galloway cattle.

It was fun to see the little ones (and the young at heart) working on their calves. I stopped and reflected, watching families working together. But more importantly, remembering a few years ago, John and Amy Romine working on their calf ... and it truly was a moment of serendipity.