

## **Dedication — 63rd Annual Bexar County Junior Livestock Show**

### **Honoring the Jeff and Amber Tondre Family**



The 63rd Annual Bexar County Junior Livestock Show is proudly dedicated to the Jeff and Amber Tondre Family — a family whose roots, values, and service have shaped youth agriculture in Bexar County for generations.

Agricultural involvement in the Tondre family runs deep. Jeff's father, Norman Tondre, exhibited livestock even before the founding of the BCJLS, showing animals under tents at the very first San Antonio Livestock Show. His mother, Sarah Mae Knibbe Tondre, was a Gold Star 4-H'er from Bandera County, passing on a lifelong belief in the importance of 4-H values, community service, and youth leadership. Together, they instilled in their children the principles that still guide the family today.

Jeff grew up on the family farm in southwest Bexar County — land that has remained in the family since 1891. Following in his brother Michael's footsteps, he showed swine at BCJLS throughout his nine years as a member of the Southwest Roughriders 4-H Club and four years in Southwest FFA. His projects included swine, rabbits, turkeys, arts and crafts, and livestock judging. Jeff's commitment and leadership earned him recognition as a Bexar County 4-H Gold Star Award recipient and State Record Book winner in Swine, honored nationally at the 1989 National 4-H Congress. In FFA, he earned his American FFA Degree and was named the Western U.S. Swine Proficiency Winner in 1989.

Agriculture and education continued as a family calling. Jeff's brother, Michael Tondre, served as an agricultural science teacher in Bexar County for 34 years and, along with his wife, was honored with a BCJLS Show Dedication several years ago. Their long-standing public service has made the Tondre name well recognized throughout the agricultural community — a legacy Jeff continues in his own quieter but equally devoted way, through mentorship, leadership, and technical support to the show.

After graduating from Texas A&M University in 1994 with a degree in Agricultural Engineering, Jeff became a licensed Professional Engineer and has practiced civil engineering for more than 30 years. Throughout that time, he continued giving back to the BCJLS, often seen volunteering as a ring man in the swine show or working behind the scenes to help the next generation of exhibitors. Jeff met Amber (Kelly) Tondre of Corpus Christi in College Station in 1998. Married in 2000, they built their life together on the Tondre family farm, raising their daughters, Kellie and Krystal, in the same agricultural traditions. Their first livestock project began with pigs when Kellie was just five, but two years later she convinced her parents to add rabbits using Jeff's old cages — a small decision that soon reshaped the family's daily life as three rabbits became hundreds.

Jeff joined the BCJLS Board in 2012, serving as Rabbit Superintendent beginning in 2013, Assistant Treasurer in 2014, and Technical Superintendent since 2020 — handling entries, class paperwork, and auction documentation.

Amber Tondre has been the steady and devoted heart of the family's efforts, balancing the work of raising two driven daughters, caring for countless animals, and quietly supporting the show in every way possible. While Jeff was often busy in the ring or show office, Amber was behind the scenes keeping projects organized, animals cared for, and children encouraged. She is a licensed ARBA Registrar, the current Secretary of the Alamo Area Rabbit Club, and past Secretary of the Texas Rabbit Breeders Association. Amber also served as Secretary of the Southwest Area Buyers Club, supporting both FFA and 4-H youth exhibitors across Southwest Bexar County, and devoted nearly 10 years of service on the Bexar County 4-H Adult Leaders Association. Together, Jeff and Amber served as Club Managers of the Southwest Roughriders 4-H Club for 15 years, mentoring hundreds of young people and families and helping instill the same values of responsibility, leadership, and service that have long defined the 4-H program. Amber's kindness, attention to detail, and willingness to help anyone in need have made her a trusted mentor to new families and a respected friend to many across Texas.

Their daughters carried on that same spirit of excellence and service. Kellie Tondre, a 2020 Southwest High School graduate, earned her Lone Star FFA Degree, 4-H Gold Star Award, and twice won the State 4-H Record Book before college. She later attended Texas A&M University, where she was a senior majoring in Agricultural Systems Management. Kellie was a devoted volunteer, returning each year to help at BCJLS and to judge county rabbit shows during college. She was preparing to become a licensed ARBA Judge at the time of her passing in 2025.

Krystal Tondre, a 2025 graduate of Southwest High School, is now a freshman at Texas A&M University majoring in Animal Science with plans to attend veterinary school. She, too, has earned her Lone Star FFA Degree, 4-H Gold Star Award, and is a two-time State 4-H Record Book winner. Both Kellie and Krystal served in leadership roles at every level — each as a Vice President of the Alamo District FFA, and both on the Bexar County 4-H Council, where Krystal served a term as President.

Jeff, Kellie, and Krystal were each awarded Texas 4-H Foundation Scholarships, a distinction recognizing academic excellence, leadership, and service to agriculture. As a family, they have supported nearly every aspect of the BCJLS — from volunteerism and mentorship to fundraising and event organization. The Tonder's also played key roles in the BCJLS Barbecue Cook-Off Committee, an event that ran for about four years and concluded roughly six years ago, where Jeff assisted with coordination, Amber oversaw judging, Kellie served as a runner, and Krystal prepared pickle-packet "palate cleansers" for the judges. Beyond that, Jeff and both girls regularly participated in BCJLS workdays, contributing time and effort to ensure the show's continued success.

The Tondre family's lifelong commitment to agriculture, youth development, and community service exemplifies the mission of the Bexar County Junior Livestock Show — teaching responsibility, leadership, and the value of hard work through agricultural experience. Their devotion has touched countless young exhibitors, volunteers, and families across Bexar County and beyond.

It is with heartfelt appreciation and respect that the 63rd Annual Bexar County Junior Livestock Show proudly dedicates this year's show to The Jeff and Amber Tondre Family — honoring generations of service, tradition, and love for agriculture.

