



# THE CATTLE CALL

## Newsletter for Alumni of the TCU Ranch Management Program

Summer 2021

## FROM THE PRESIDENT, JEFF MITCHELL 'O2

(806) 680-0325 [JMITCHELL@TOOTNTOTUM.COM](mailto:JMITCHELL@TOOTNTOTUM.COM)

I hope that this finds everyone well and enjoying this unprecedented amount of moisture across the southwest. I am sending this to you all today as a quick update to maintain transparency and to improve the communication between our alumni and TCURM. To date, our Alumni group has made great strides and continues to grow and stay on a trajectory that will only make us bigger, better, and stronger than ever before. Thank you for your trust and encouragement thus far, it is greatly appreciated and I am looking forward to the many great things ahead!

I would like to begin this update by thanking Mr. Johnson for his service and dedication to TCU and the Ranch Management Program. His time at TCURM was hugely beneficial to so many students and families across the country. Thank you.

Since our last meeting, all officers have been put into place for the newly developed Board of Directors and they have hit the ground running. Within the last month, they have had in-person meetings with TCURM administration and TCU administration including the new Dean of the College of Science and Engineering. All meetings have been very productive in establishing relationships and creating avenues for communication and future collaborations. These meetings have been beneficial to allow a close working relationship with all areas of TCU that can benefit the TCURM Program.

The Board of Directors, along with other Alumni and Industry Leaders, have begun the process of reviewing the TCURM program/curriculum in order to prioritize the areas of need for students, our industry, alumni, and professors. From these meetings, several short- and long-term goals have been discussed relating to recruitment and vetting of potential students, the interview process, curriculum, faculty succession, mentorships between alumni and students, and internships – just to name a few.

The Alumni Association has worked closely with the Board of Directors and TCURM faculty and staff to prepare for this year's incoming class and welcome them to TCU and the Ranch Management Program. We are looking forward to a great year of growth and change. We need help from YOU. It is instrumental in creating a vast network that our Alumni confirm and update contact information. We are looking ahead to Fall Tailgate and Winter Round Up and would like to make sure that we have

\* continued on page 2

## J. MITCHELL CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

connected with as many of our Alumni as possible. Additionally, you might be in an industry or field that TCURM needs to draw from your expertise.

Again, there are many exciting and great things happening right now and this is just the “60,000 foot view.” I am looking forward to what is to come and hope to see as many of you as possible on Saturday, July 24 for the TCU Alumni Reception from 5:00 to 6:30 pm at the Omni Ft. Worth Hotel during TSCRA Convention.

Go Frogs!



Please join us for the  
**TCU RANCH MANAGEMENT  
ALUMNI RECEPTION**

*Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres*

Saturday, July 24, 2021  
5:00 - 6:30 PM

Omni Fort Worth Hotel  
Third Floor, Sundance Room  
1300 Houston Street  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

---

*Hosted by: Texas Christian University  
Ranch Management Alumni Association*



**Kerry Cornelius**  
 Director  
 Burnett Ranches Professorship  
[k.cornelius@tcu.edu](mailto:k.cornelius@tcu.edu)

# KEVIN JOHNSON

Earlier this month, I received a resignation letter from Mr. Johnson to be effective July 31. He has been a tremendous asset to the program the last ten years. He has certainly given a lot to the students and alumni. I appreciate his dedication to the program; it has been a pure pleasure to have Mr. Johnson on our team. I know I will keep his name and number in my phone because he truly is a wealth of information. I want to wish Mr. Johnson well in his future endeavors.

Please join me in wishing the Johnson Family *happy trails*.



**Kneeling:**

Carcy Clinton, Pete Weber, Johnny Dickinson, Paul Hicks, Mark Halsell.

**Standing:**

Terry O’Neal, Steve Lipp, Tex Vestring, Billy Cole, Jim Parker, Elizabeth Schenkel, Rick Klentzman, Mark Hemphill, Frank McClelland, Beaumont Boyce, Jeff Geider, Paul Turney

CLASS OF 1981 MAY 2021

## JOHN L. "CHIP" MERRILL (OCTOBER 14, 1932 - APRIL 5, 2021)



"John Merrill wasn't a tall man, but he was a giant in many ways. He was a leader, conservationist, teacher, mentor, rancher, and advocate for the ranching industry and for conservation of the land." (Dr. Larry Butler)

For the many of us who were privileged to know Mr. Merrill, this statement is precisely accurate; and inadequate, all at the same time. To read the lengthy list of accomplishments worthy of including in his obituary, he was larger than a giant; and that excerpt does not include the "smaller" accomplishments, regardless of their impact.

A progressive man with a heart of gold, Mr. Merrill was celebrated on May 15, 2021, by over 180 friends and family members in the Will Rogers Memorial Center, in Fort Worth, Texas. The celebration was directed by Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers, Mr. Jason Skaggs. Attendees heard personal accounts and testimony to Mr. Merrill's first-rate character from Mr. Jim Link (former TCU Ranch Management Program Director), Mr. Pete Bonds (TCU Ranch Management Class of 1973), and Dr. Larry Butler ([www.outontheland.com](http://www.outontheland.com)).

Listening to these influential men speak so kindly was inspiring, and one couldn't help but reflect and wonder, "How will I be remembered?"

Further testament to Mr. John Merrill's character and grit is how he took on the role of director with the Texas Christian University Ranch Management Program—he took a fledgling idea into a reality. Mr. Merrill took the helm of a program that had tragically just lost their leader (the first director of the program, Mr. Arthur Cortade) in a car accident on the East Texas field trip. At the beginning of his tenure, the program was held in the basement of the TCU education building and travel was in with four station wagons. Before his retirement, funds had been raised and a new building had been constructed for the program, complete with 36 seats, and five Suburbans for travel. Additionally, a night class was hosted with anywhere from 40-100 students present, depending on the current lesson.

Mr. Merrill constantly promoted what he believed in; and he believed in the TCU Ranch Management Program. He taught common sense and self-discipline, preaching the importance of punctuality and professionalism in dress, looks, and actions, regardless of the audience. Thus, the "three strikes" rule and mandatory suit and tie dress code were enforced for many years. He was a cheerleader for all who tried— constantly encouraging others to do your best in whatever you pursue, especially learning. He was always "firm, fair, and friendly" and a man of integrity... but rules were always to be followed and you had to "understand what NO meant."

Mr. John Merrill's character and ideals will stand the test of time. Many students have been impacted by the principles and practices and will continue his legacy for many years to come. Here are few of the learning points that Mr. Merrill lived by:

- "It's more important to know the questions, than to find out the answers."
- "Always have something to write with, something to write on, a pocket knife, and a handkerchief."
- "Make a flight plan and stick to it...until you need to make an adjustment."
- And most importantly, "Always be firm, friendly, and fair."

# NCBA TRADE SHOW AUGUST 10-12



Jason Faubion  
Assistant Director  
John Biggs Professorship  
j.faubion@tcu.edu

We are excited to continue our booth at the NCBA Tradeshow and I could definitely use lots of help! In past years, you have been so gracious to stop by the booth to visit with prospective students, family, and friends. In addition to that, many have brought prospective students by the booth to meet with our network and learn more about TCU Ranch Management. And of course, it's always fun to enjoy some of the fellowship that goes on when we have a few alum stop by to share stories from TCU Ranch Management days gone by!

The Tradeshow will kick off on Tuesday afternoon (August 10) from 4:30-8:30 pm, then continue Wednesday from 9:00 am - 6:00 pm and Thursday from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Remember! TCU Ranch Management Alum are by far our best recruiters! And you won't have to make a speech or get all dressed up! Just stop by the booth for a brief time slot and talk to folks about what the program meant to you and your career. Simple enough, right?

Please take a look at the sign-up sheet linked below, open slots are blank boxes. Swing by the booth anytime to check on us! If you find a little free time while you are in Nashville, shoot me a text (817)304-8063 and let me know when you want to signup!

Use the link below to sign up. Close the document when you have finished, it will automatically save.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1TeE13vJzDS34pwlcnqj2ZCipHgHOYnfv/edit#gid=1930121595>



# CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2021



Front Row, Left to Right: Chris Tydings, William Fisher, Joel Reimer, Jeremy Buehner  
Middle Row, Left to Right: Blair Hesse, Reagan Helburn, Peyton Mainwaring, Laura St. John,  
Kendall Kulhanek, Livia Lavender  
Back Row, Left to Right: Tate Powell, Jackson Daube, Jeff Bloskey, Tex Monk, Cort Marley

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements deleted for privacy -  
contact [ranching@tcu.edu](mailto:ranching@tcu.edu) to receive a  
complete copy of the Cattle Call newsletter.



- **OCA Convention and Trade Show**--Embassy Suites & Convention Center, Norman, OK--**July 23-24, 2021**
- **TSCRA Convention**--Fort Worth Convention Center, Fort Worth, TX--**July 23-25, 2021**
- **TCU RM Alumni Reception**--Omni Fort Worth Hotel, Fort Worth, TX--**July 24, 2021**
- **NCBA Convention**--Gaylord Opryland Resort, Nashville, TN--**August 10-12, 2021**
- **9th Annual Reunion and Recruitment Tailgate**--TCU RM, Fort Worth, TX--**October 23, 2021**
- **TCFA Annual Convention**--Omni Oklahoma City Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK--**October 24-26, 2021**
- **WRCA**--Civic Center Complex Coliseum, Amarillo, TX--**Nov. 11-14, 2021**
- **Alumni Round Up**--Fort Worth, TX--**January 22, 2022**

## TCU RANCH MANAGEMENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President: Jeff Mitchell '02**

(806)680 – 4325 [jmitchell@tootntotum.com](mailto:jmitchell@tootntotum.com)

**Wayne Cockrell '98**

(817)946-4465 [flashcockrell@gmail.com](mailto:flashcockrell@gmail.com)

**President Elect: Matt McLelland '12**

(806)778-8679 [mjmclelland1@gmail.com](mailto:mjmclelland1@gmail.com)

**Paul Hicks '81**

(817)917-2523 [phicks@swbell.net](mailto:phicks@swbell.net)

**Secretary: Amanda Dyer '08**

(432)386-6642 [amanda.j.dyer@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.j.dyer@gmail.com)

**Chad McCormick '06**

(620)952-9927 [chad.mccormick@5rcattle.com](mailto:chad.mccormick@5rcattle.com)

**Treasurer: Patrick Murray '02**

(214)679-4341 [prmurray76@gmail.com](mailto:prmurray76@gmail.com)

**Bryan Morris '02**

(940)257-5654 [bryan.l.morris@live.com](mailto:bryan.l.morris@live.com)

**Treasurer Elect: Dustin Valusek '15**

(832)788-5610 [dustinsvalusek@gmail.com](mailto:dustinsvalusek@gmail.com)

**Gilly Riojas '02**

(361)231-2279 [grijos@silverventures.com](mailto:grijos@silverventures.com)

**Communications Director: Jessen Tucker Cowen '13**

(806)376-3993 [jtcowen89@gmail.com](mailto:jtcowen89@gmail.com)

WHO DID WHAT:

- mail: TCU Box 297420,  
Fort Worth, TX 76129 OR
- call: 817-257-7145 OR
- email: [ranching@tcu.edu](mailto:ranching@tcu.edu)



THANK YOU!!!

We are pleased that so many of you take advantage of this form to indicate change of address, marriage, birth, or job.

You are helping us keep up with you and that's what we want to do!



As a reminder, due to the rising cost of postage, printing, and budget cuts, **Cattle Call will ONLY be sent via email.**

You are able to view past issues on the TCU RM website <https://cse.tcu.edu/ranch-management/alumni/cattle-call-newsletter.php> or <https://www.facebook.com/TCU-Ranch-Management-269381929485>

*Please make sure we have your most recent email address.*

If you do not have access to a computer or email, let us know and a copy will be mailed to you.

Grad Year \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL**

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB CHANGE**

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**WEDDING**

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date Married \_\_\_\_\_

**BIRTH**

Baby's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date Born \_\_\_\_\_