Growing on social media
West Holmes grad brings new perspective to fair’s Facebook page

By CHRISTINE L. PRATT Staff Writer Published: August 11, 2016 4:00 AM

1 of 1 Photos | Wanting to stay involved in the Holmes County Fair, Mandy Taylor stepped into a major role this year as an administrator for the fairs Facebook page, which features updates, photos and videos from the fair.

MILLERSBURG -- As a 2014 West Holmes graduate, a past Holmes County Fair queen, the daughter of the fair board president and an Ohio State University student studying agricultural communications, Mandy Taylor wanted to find a way to stay involved with the Holmes County Fair, while maintaining a permanent residence in Columbus.

She found that in heading up this year’s social media campaign, with the help of several others, for the Holmes County Fair at Harvest Ridge.

The fair’s Facebook page was launched a few years ago by fair board member Scott Stallman.

"This summer, I really needed something to do while at the fair, and I asked my dad (Kerry Taylor) if I could help with the Facebook page," said Taylor, noting it was a task in which she could put to use some of what she’s learned in college and during her internship with Ohio Corn and Wheat.

Several of the classes, as well as her work at Ohio Corn and Wheat, have had a strong focus on social media.

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"I grew up in Holmes County and got to show as a kid. I really wanted to help, and this was a way I could be involved in the fair without being on site doing manual labor (while living out of county)," said Taylor.

From her home in Columbus, and while visiting Holmes County, she started posting on the page during the summer, with pictorial documentation of the construction progress.

In addition to pictures and schedules, she said, she’s also introduced Facebook live video streaming to the page -- filming and broadcasting live the flag raising ceremony, the opening ceremony and the champion market hog drive.

Since getting involved in the effort, Taylor said she’s watched the number of followers jump to more than 3,000, with the number of views of the videos, in particular, reaching into the thousands.

"People are watching, even if they’re unable to make it to the fair," said Taylor, noting she’s heard from several -- because of health reasons or physical distance -- who expressed thanks for being able to watch the opening ceremony without having to visit the fair.

"They can still go watch it and be part of it," she said.

Taylor’s ability to be dedicated to posting on the page has helped to give it depth, while taking the burden off other administrators, whose fair week duties are focused on other areas, said Stallman.

"She's been a big help, very beneficial. The general public gets a lot out of it too. They get additional pictures and information coming out of the fairgrounds."

And, he said, "it was good to get a young perspective and that kind of a slant. She's around a lot of the younger crowd and blends in that way."

Taylor said she hopes to expand on the social media outreach of the fair in the future, and already has started looking at the possibility of establishing accounts on SnapChat, Instagram and Twitter.

Doing that, she said, is likely to draw greater numbers of younger people into the mix. "I feel I can entertain younger age groups and bring in a whole lot of content."

In the meantime, she said, she’s enjoyed reading the posts and messages and "seeing what people are thinking."

She said all comments and suggestions will be forwarded to the fair board for future consideration.

Reporter Christine Pratt can be reached at 330-674-5676 or cpratt@the-daily-record.com.