

Colleen Hayes - 2006

She has served on numerous committees, including fourth grade field trips. She has been beef promotion and membership chairman and is currently second vice-president.

Colleen is the fourth generation of her family to carry on the agricultural tradition of the Carrisa Plains. Her maternal great-grandparents located on the Plains in the late 1880s and their large house served as the stage stop, post office and boarding house for visitors to the area. Her late grandfather, Elmer King, was born on the Plains in 1898 and with his brother, Walter, pioneered the first irrigated farming in the 1940s. Colleen's mother, Kathleen, and aunt Elinore grew up on the American Ranch, which is now part of the Carrizo Plains National Monument. After the family home burned down on the American Ranch, Elmer and Frances King purchased the current King Ranch lands near Simmler, where they farmed and had a small cow-calf operation. They also had a small herd of sheep and pigs. Much of the surrounding property is still owned by descendants of the King and Cooper families. Colleen's father, Edwin Cooper, came to the Carrisa Plains as a young boy in 1930 to join his older brothers, Rowland, Alfred and Maurice Cooper, in their ranching. Colleen attended the two-room Carrisa Plains Elementary School. All eight grades included two people in her class; the other person being her cousin, Deanna Cooper Tomasini. Later while attending Atascadero High School, Colleen lived in the dormitory as did her mother and aunt. The "dorm" was provided by the school district, as it was too far to commute every day.

Colleen and her husband, Gordon, reside on a portion of the original ranch where Colleen grew up. They raise cow horses and hay and also operate their custom bit and spur business. Their son, Wade; and daughter-in-law, Susan; with two grandsons, Ian and Reed; live in San Miguel. Son Clint lives in Templeton and daughter Staci lives in Santa Monica. Both sons are active in the agriculture community and Staci works in the movie industry.

Colleen loves the rural life, the outdoors, promoting the beef industry, spending time with her family, gardening and riding cutting horses. Congratulations, Colleen!