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LOVE IS...  
*getting the gate.*



THANKS A  
BUSHEL



## GREETINGS FROM THE FARM

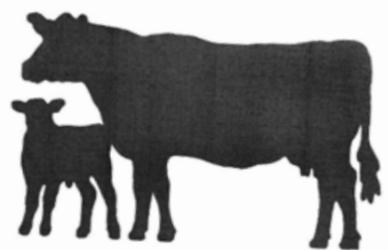


IOWA ENTREPRENEUR  
DESIGNS AG-THEMED CARDS

PAGE 6



NEW TO THE HERD



Discover Iowa's fan favorite  
for the best pulled pork  
page 10

From beer to gummy worms,  
how cattle prevent food waste  
page 16

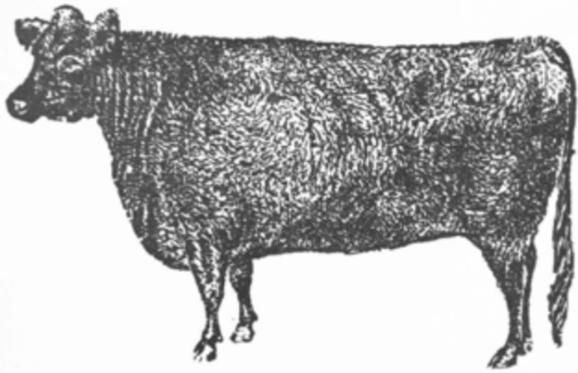
MAY 2019



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IOWA FARM BUREAU

thank moo



STORY BY TERRI QUECK-MATZIE

PHOTOS BY GARY FANDEL

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF HUNGRY CANYON DESIGN

Melissa Nelson, who raises cattle with her husband near Moville in northwest Iowa, turned her hobby into a greeting card business, Hungry Canyon Design. Nelson, a former ag educator, says her goal is to create accurate ag-themed greeting cards.

# MOO-VELOUS GREETINGS

## IOWAN CREATES AG-THEMED GREETING CARDS

Hungry Canyon Design offers super-cute greeting cards heavy on the farm puns.

"Will you love me for heifer?"

That's just one of the slogans appearing on Melissa Nelson's line of Hungry Canyon Design greeting cards. The cards are created with farmers in mind: farmers who know the difference between a bull

and a heifer or a dairy or beef cow. Nelson enjoys a good play on words, an attractive visual design and agricultural accuracy. So do her customers.

IT STARTED WITH HER making homemade valentines for her husband when they were dating. She would post them on social media and friends would take notice and ask for some of their own. In the past year, that effort has grown to a business with greeting cards, prints and other items for sale

online through her Hungry Canyon Design website [www.hungrycanyon-design.com](http://www.hungrycanyon-design.com), as well as select retail establishments. There is even a line of children's valentines for budding farmers who want to be "farm" correct.

"You go into a store and see cards about cows that picture a dairy

*"I have a passion for sharing information about agriculture to help overcome (the) disconnect. I'm amazed at people who have lived here their entire life and don't know what we do."*

Melissa Nelson, Farm Bureau member and creator of Hungry Canyon Design

cow," says Nelson. "That's not what beef producers want." Nor do they want a chart showing cuts of meat that is wrong, or the wrong piece of equipment in a field, or a wheat field if they live in central Iowa and certainly not a red tractor if they drive green. "I wanted to make something that both men and women throughout the farm and ranch world could relate to."

NELSON UNDERSTANDS the farmers' sensibilities, and sense of humor. Who else would so understand a "Mooney Christmas" with a cow in a Santa hat? Or a sheep singing, "Baa la la la la"? Or a pig featured with "Merry Christmas you filthy animal"? "You're a cut above" features a steak. And "Love is getting the gate" rings true with a certain audience.

Hungry Canyon Design offers birthday, Christmas and all-occasion cards along with special messages for the one you love. Nelson's "Thank Moo" thank-you notes are new on the market and already a hit.

ALONG WITH CARDS, she offers prints suitable for framing with mantras like "Home is where the herd is" or "I'll love you till the cows come home."

She and her husband, Mark, and 10-month-old son, Roy, live near Moville in northwest Iowa on the edge of the Loess Hills in the Hungry Canyon Watershed. They grow corn and soybeans and have an Angus-Hereford commercial cow herd known as Hungry Canyon Cattle Company. Mark's dad is part of the farming operation that

Continued on page 7

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Continued from page 6

includes a feedlot and honors its Hungry Canyons location with an emphasis on conservation.

**COMING FROM HER** family's purebred Angus ranch in Nebraska, Nelson says she sometimes struggles with the mostly Hereford herd at Hungry Canyon, but she's adjusting. She makes greeting cards for both.

Nelson's day job is as externship coordinator for the School

of Applied Agricultural and Food Studies at Morningside College. It's a change from the last five years working with elementary school students in a seven-county area through Ag in the Classroom, an experience she calls "eye-opening."

"Reaching the kids is so important," says Nelson. Her line of Farm Kid Valentines was a huge hit when it was launched this year. The cards feature farm animals, hay bales and tractors with cute sayings like "You're a Deere friend" or "I'm Clucky to know you."



**GROWING UP NEAR OMAHA**, she still finds it surprising that the need to educate is so pronounced in the midst of farm country. "I

Clockwise, from left: Farm Bureau member Melissa Nelson started Hungry Canyon Design to create greeting cards that farmers can relate to, such as cards featuring beef cattle of different breeds. Nelson and her husband, Mark, raise cattle and grow corn and soybeans near Merville. Her greeting cards include both red and green tractors, for farmers who might be partial to a certain tractor brand's signature color.

guess you could say I have a passion for sharing information about agriculture to help overcome that disconnect. I'm amazed at the people who have lived here their entire life and don't know what we do."

She insists her cards be agriculturally accurate, part of conveying

the real story of ag.

They would like to expand into more farm and western-style

gift items. And, with sights on expanding her young family, she would like to develop a line of baby clothes and other items.

**SHE'S GLAD TO BE ABLE** to capitalize on the current attitude of supporting local artists and the small-town mindset of supporting one's own.

"I guess my husband and I are entrepreneurs at heart. We understand that small business dream," says Nelson. "We're full of great ideas. We'll just have to see what happens next." ■

Quack-Matzie is a freelance writer from Greenfield.

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