As I set here reflecting on the 2020 Hodgeman County Fair, I am amazed that by several things.

One thing is the amount of help from many of our county departments: from providing personal protective gear to helping move or set up items to creating clips for personal protective gear and for being supportive during this challenging year.

The amount of volunteers needed to make an event like this successful is enormous. In the swine show alone, there were nine or ten volunteers and many parents helping in the show ring, announcing, keeping records, opening gates, getting the pigs for each class to the arena and others getting the pigs from the arena back to the pens.

Another thought is, how we missed the public during this time. This usually is a time to gather, swap stories, spin yarns, enjoy fellowship with friends we do not have the opportunity to see very often and make new friends. Our missing friends, changed the Fair experience for us.

Because of this alternative year, we wanted to try to get the public access to the fair experience. For the first time, we went Facebook Live. There were some obstacles, mainly yours truly not knowing how to do it. Through the help of some 4-H parents, we have some of the events up on Hodgeman County - K-State Research & Extension Facebook Page. There were some glitzes as we moved to this technology. However, as different shows were going on, we had former 4-H’ers and friends from all over the United States watching. Not everyone showed up on the screen as watching, but one person that did is from Seattle, Washington. Another from Jetmore was travelling and was in Wyoming. We also had several other Ag Agents from eastern Kansas join in. That puts the pressure on. We do hope you take the opportunity to check it out.

One time the phone got so hot, it would not take a charge. At this point, I took it the 4-H Building and stuck it in the freezer for a minute. It cooled it down enough to finish the show. I realize this is probably not a recommended way to cool down the phone, but it worked. Also, I have a hand held video stabilizer called a Gimbal. When the phone was losing charge, I had to take the phone out of the Gimbal and hold it by hand. There is a definite difference in the shaking of the video.

The year of 2020 should be named the year of adaptation. We have had to make change after change to get through this fair and through our personal lives. Since we are the Hodgeman County Fair, not just the 4-H Fair, the Fair Board felt the need to provide an option for all county residents. We established a virtual entry procedure for those unable to participate physically at the fair. We had 123 entries.

The results will be sent to the paper next week. As we conclude the 2020 Fair, I again want to express my thanks to everyone that helped make this fair a success. The support has been enormous. I feel very blessed to live in Hodgeman County.