

**THE BATTLE OF FLOWERS® ASSOCIATION
24th ANNUAL
TEXAS HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST**

Statement of Originality

(To be signed by the author of each winning essay at each school.)

**I hereby state that I have written this essay using my own words.
All direct quotes have been cited to identify their sources.**

My essay is between 350 and 700 words in length.

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Number of words in essay: 590

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Teachers should send winning essays and this statement to:

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By January 15, 2018

“The Goat King of the World”

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Seventh Grade

San Antonio Academy

Words: 590

“The Goat King of the World”

There are two definitions of crazy. The first definition is mentally deranged, especially as manifested in a wild or aggressive way. The second definition is extremely enthusiastic. People often called Adolph Stieler crazy in the ranching business, and I am pretty sure they meant the second definition.

Adolph Stieler was born with ranching genes surging through him. His mom's father was Caspar Real. In 1850, when Caspar came to Kerr County, he was one of the first people to introduce sheep ranching to the newly explored Texan land. Caspar's brother-in-law, Captain Charles Schreiner was also a very experienced rancher. He founded Y.O. Ranch which would eventually cover 600,000 acres of Central Texas. Hermann Stieler, Adolph's father, married the daughter of Caspar Real. Hermann lived in Germany and didn't have a lot of experience in raising cattle. But he knew how to raise sheep and goats. In the 1870s, Hermann established his dream sheep ranch in the Texas hill country. By 1917, he had grown his ranch and passed it on to Adolph, who was ready to take on the hardships of the sheep business.

In 1921, Adolph withdrew money from a life insurance policy and bought 800 Angora goats. Angora goats are smaller than regular goats. They have a thick coat of mohair which is a soft, resilient, and durable material that is made into smooth clothing, hats, and other fluffy accessories. It is different from wool because it is eight times warmer, and it is much softer. Although mohair is better than wool, everyone thought Adolph was crazy when he bought the goats. Angora hair only sold for six cents a pound, and it was not popular throughout America. Although people doubted him, his

tenacity and love for his sheep and goat ranch didn't let anyone stop him. One of the main reasons why he bought the Angora goats was that he expected a rise in the economy. He knew that clothes manufacturers were starting to make clothes out of mohair and car manufacturers were also starting to use mohair to make car upholstery.

As Adolph predicted, the American economy skyrocketed. The prices of Angora hair went up to eighty-five cents per pound. On top of that, the value of the individual goats rose to sixteen dollars apiece, and he owned over 60,000 animals.

Adolph carefully studied the grazing patterns of his goats, sheep, and cattle. He used his research to find the ways he could get the most out of his pasture without overgrazing it.

Adolph's Angora goat business boomed. Everyone started seeing him as the ranching legend that he was. To recognize Adolph, the local Republicans held a reception in Kerrville for him. George H. W. Bush made a speech about his great successes. Afterward, Adolph stood on the podium with Bush and everyone cheered. It was the legendary Goat King standing with a future U.S. president. This was the highlight of his life and a substantial achievement for a Texan rancher.

Adolph Stieler died on July 5, 1979 and was buried in the Comfort Cemetery. Even though the Stieler Ranch has been passed on to Adolph's sons, his love and dedication can still be seen throughout the 90,000 acres of land that he owned. The community will always remember Adolph Stieler as an intrepid, smart, and assiduous Texan rancher. And above everything else, he will always be known as the father of Angora goat ranching and the Goat King of the World.

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