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On October 18th, the Greenville Municipal Auditorium hosted the premiere of *We're Here*, a powerful documentary that sheds light on the devastating wild. res that swept across the Texas Panhandle in early 2024. The event began with Chuck Smith, General Manager of a local feed company, introducing the film's creator, Lee Wells. Smith, who played a pivotal role in the recovery efforts, expressed gratitude for being part of the project, describing Wells' dedication as both inspiring and deeply moving.

"After you watch this tonight, I hope that you're as moved as I am," Smith noted, emphasizing the documentary's core theme: Texans helping Texans during one of the state's most challenging natural disasters. Smith shared how his partnership with Wells began spontaneously as the fires were still raging. "I got a call in my office," Smith recalled, "and he asked, 'Chuck, this is Lee. I want to do something for these guys out there, but I've been told no everywhere I've asked. Can you help me?'" Despite the urgency, Smith and his team rose to the challenge, leading to a strong collaboration that

fueled relief efforts. “He was very good at calling and saying, ‘I’m on my way up, Channel 8 news is coming with us,’ or ‘I’ve got a film crew and cameras to set up,'” Smith added. He then introduced Wells as a tireless advocate for farmers and ranchers affected by the disaster.

Taking the stage, Wells expressed heartfelt gratitude for the overwhelming support of friends, neighbors, and the community. He underscored the increasing challenges faced by farmers due to rising regulations and stressed the necessity of unity to sustain both the state’s food supply and a way of life. Wells called for ongoing support, reminding the audience that recovery would take years, not months. “These folks still need our prayers,” he said, urging attendees to spread awareness and offer continued financial and emotional assistance.

Wells also introduced Eddie Peña, a participant in *Ultimate Cowboy Showdown*, who traveled a long distance to attend the screening. Peña’s presence symbolized the unwavering spirit of ranchers committed to beef production and preserving the ranching lifestyle. Kevin Busher was another key figure recognized for his swift response during the fires, organizing hay and feed deliveries. His actions sparked a broader community response, leading to thousands of volunteer hours and demonstrating the power of individual action in times of crisis.

State Representative Jill Dutton, a dedicated advocate for agriculture, also addressed the audience. “The Texas agriculture spirit is alive and well right here in East Texas,” she declared, praising Wells’

“relentless generosity.” Dutton presented a resolution honoring Wells’ contributions, along with a ag own over the state capital. The resolution highlighted Wells’ coordination of relief efforts, which raised over $130,000, delivered more than 200 tons of grain and 1,000 bales of hay, and included collaboration with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Wells also partnered with a mill to produce an all-purpose livestock feed and helped repair miles of damaged fencing.

As the lm concluded, the audience rose to their feet in a standing ovation, a testament to the lm’s emotional impact and the community’s deep connection to the story.

Phillip Hat eld, one of the attendees, said, “Yes, one person can make a HUGE difference! Lee Wells mobilized North Texas communities to help Texas Panhandle farmers and ranchers—not just by sending 18-wheeler truckloads, but also pickup trucks and trailers making multiple trips to deliver free supplies. He shared not only resources, but also hope and encouragement, inspiring fellow ranchers to rebuild their lives, homes, and start living again. Thank you, Lee Wells, for your heart and taking MASSIVE action.”

Another audience member, Revi Menasche, added, “What a great and very emotional lm. I didn’t know what to expect, but it was heartwarming. I felt so many emotions—sadness, anger, and hope for humanity. Thank you, Lee, for taking us on this ride of emotion and giving us an understanding of rancher life that most of us take for granted. Well done, sir.”

Alicia Vega also shared her impressions of the film: “The film was amazing—high-quality and engaging. It kept the audience hooked as the emotional moments were real and raw. They did a phenomenal job, and I can’t wait for it to reach a broader audience.”

In a follow-up interview with *The Rockwall Times*, Wells described the screening as an “exhausting but rewarding night.” He discussed his plans to explore various distribution channels to broaden the film’s reach, inviting suggestions for increasing awareness.

As the event drew to a close, Wells reflected on the personal toll of the wildfires and the challenges faced by those affected. While the documentary captured much of the tragedy, Wells admitted that some stories remained untold. “What you will see is bad, but it was even worse,” he said. He hopes that *We’re Here* inspires viewers to act when opportunities arise to help others in need.

We’re Here stands as a testament to the resilience, strength, and unity of Texas’ agricultural community. Wells concluded by urging viewers to not only watch the film but to appreciate its message of hope, action, and perseverance.

To learn more about the documentary and its journey, visit www.werehere.com.