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Honoring Hereford Imminence

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Billy Ashe, Selmer, Tenn.; Warren and Isabel Brown, Hartland, Wis.; and John and Ginger Dudley, Comanche, Texas, were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame at the American Hereford Association’s (AHA) Annual Membership Meeting and Conference, Oct. 24, in Kansas City, Mo. Burke Healey, Davis, Okla., was posthumously inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit.

The Hall of Fame and Merit awards are presented annually to those who have influenced the advancement of the Hereford breed and the beef industry. The Hall of Merit award recognizes those who have played a vital role in shaping both the Hereford breed and the beef industry.

“Inductees into the Hereford Hall of Fame and Merit set the bar high when it comes to the advancement and promotion of the breed,” says Jack Ward, AHA executive vice president. “We are proud to honor these esteemed breeders for their great contributions to improving Hereford genetics and the nation’s beef herd.”

2020 Hall of Fame Inductees

Billy Ashe Ashewood Farm, Selmer, Tennessee

In the spring of 1956, a first-year student at the University of Tennessee with an FFA state farmer degree hitched a ride to Stillwater, Oklahoma. After leaving Selmer, Tennessee, at 9 p.m., Billy Ashe arrived at Oklahoma State University at 10 the next morning and was enrolled in fall classes and back on the road to Tennessee by 3 that afternoon. Bound and determined to be a cattleman, Billy spent his youth learning the ins and outs of the beef industry by working for many established ranches and competing on OSU’s livestock judging team coached by Dr. Robert Totusek. Billy’s love of learning has never faltered, and his wisdom extends to those young and

old and coast to coast.

This lifetime resident of Selmer started his registered Hereford herd from scratch in 1963 after earning a degree in animal science and serving two years in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He quickly became a key influencer in the commercial adoption of Hereford genetics in the Southeast and was a driving force in establishing the Tennessee Hereford Marketing Program feeder calf sale, which set the standard for similar sales marketing Hereford genetics. He helped merge the horned and polled Tennessee state associations, and under his presidency the membership of the Tennessee Hereford Association doubled. Jeremiah Malone, president of the Tennessee Hereford Association, describes Billy as a “great champion of the breed” and a man who “gives 110% to anyone who will reach out.”

Billy is eager to credit Joyce, his wife of 44 years; son, Wesley; and daughter, Patti; and their families for their endless support of his achievements and for carrying on the Ashewood Farm legacy. His other role models include his father, William C., as well as Neil Trask, Earl Purdy and the Circle M Polled Hereford Ranch operation.

A firm believer in education, Billy is dedicated to tracking statistics and was an early adopter of performance testing and artificial insemination. He works tirelessly to help others in their quest for education and has established the W.C. and Addillia Ashe Agriculture Education Memorial Scholarship to support emerging agriculturalists.

Fellow Hereford breeders Fred McMurry, Eric Walker and Marty Lueck commend Billy as an innovative, astute cattleman who is an ambassador and lifelong learner of the breed, and Tim Dennis of Glade Haven Herefords in New York has dubbed Billy a “bubbling fountain of Hereford knowledge.”

Mark Cooper of Cooper Hereford Ranch in Montana says, “Billy truly exemplifies everything that is positive and good about the Hereford breed. His work ethic, integrity and commitment to his family’s operation serves as an example to all those wishing to make their mark in an industry full of great cattlemen and cattlegirls.”

Warren and Isabel Brown Warren Brown Family, Hartland, Wisconsin

The late Warren Brown and his wife, Isabel, 98, of Hartland, Wisconsin, are widely respected for their mentorship and leadership within the Hereford breed. The couple married in 1941, bringing together two established families from southeastern Wisconsin. Soon after their union, Warren

served in WWII aboard a destroyer escort, and upon homecoming he and Isabel purchased a nursery farm in Waukesha County where they established a herd of polled Hereford cattle.

Warren and Isabel each bought a polled heifer at the 1953 Illinois State Sale and began showing cattle under the herd letters W-I-B, a prefix now found throughout the U.S. and even Costa Rica. Their three children became active in showing Herefords, and the couple naturally became leaders in Hereford youth programs. They were integral in establishing the Wisconsin Junior Hereford Association and have counseled countless youth in and out of the show ring.

The Browns helped establish the formerly named Wisconsin Polled Hereford Association and were known as the face of the association for many years. Each served as president and Isabel led the organization as the executive secretary. She was also the first president of the Wisconsin Poll-ettes.

They also worked tirelessly in their community. Among the many organizations and boards they served, the pair were dedicated to the Waukesha County Fair and its livestock show. Isabel was an active 4-H leader and organized the county's first livestock auction to fundraise for a county beef barn and was named Honorary Fair Marshall of the Waukesha County Fair.

Jerry Huth of Huth Polled Herefords in Oakfield, Wisconsin, says, "There are few people who can match the passion of Warren and Isabel Brown for the promotion and advancement of the beef business and the Hereford breed. Warren and Isabel are a model of the people that have made this breed great — untiring and continuous support of the beef industry, promotion of national and state Hereford organizations, and their love and support of the Hereford breed and the people who call themselves Hereford breeders."

Jim Birdwell of Fletcher, Oklahoma, who auctioneered the Browns' production sales for several years, adds, "They were truly icons in their own way and the Hereford breed is stronger today and in the future because of their contributions given unselfishly to a breed of cattle they truly believed in."

In celebration of their successes, the pair has been awarded Livestock Producer of the Year by the Wisconsin Livestock Breeders Association as well as Cattle Producer of the Year by the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association. In 1995, Warren and Isabel were inducted to the Wisconsin Hereford Association Hall of Fame for their efforts as "breeders who have given unselfishly to the benefit of the Hereford breed." It is our pleasure to honor them on a national level for their commitment to keeping the Hereford breed at the forefront of the industry.

John and Ginger Dudley
Dudley Bros., Comanche, Texas

Distinguished leaders John and Ginger Dudley have left their mark on the Hereford breed in the state of Texas and across the country. In partnership with multiple family members, the pair operates Dudley Bros. in Comanche, Texas, and carries on a legacy of producing commercially focused registered Herefords.

Dudley Bros. began as a three-way partnership in 1927 between John's father and two uncles. The registered herd was added in 1938 and the operation's first of now 59 annual production sales was hosted in 1962. John, who was born and raised on the ranch, met Ginger at Trinity University in San Antonio. He later attended Thunderbird School in Arizona and then served in the U.S. Navy for four years. Two years later, John and Ginger married and settled down in Comanche. John and Ginger enjoy spending time with their son, Gardner, and his wife, Elizabeth, along with their three grandsons Will, Thomas and Hudson.

Today, Dudley Bros. operates as a family-owned limited partnership with a limited liability company serving as the managing general partner. Currently, 14 family members are shareholders — John and Ginger Dudley, Jim and Margaret Dudley, T. J. and Kerry Dudley, Tom and Melissa Dudley, Ray and Monica Dudley, Harry and Rhonda Dudley and Julia Dudley Allison. John is the president of the Dudley Bros. LLC.

Phillip Burns of Burns Farms Herefords in Tennessee praises John and Ginger for their outstanding teamwork. He says, "John and Ginger have been the glue that has helped make the family partnership work, and the vision and strategic direction of the successful business has largely derived from their effort. Their mutual support and affection for each other is contagious."

John and Ginger have devoted countless hours serving organizations within the Hereford breed and the cattle industry. John is a past president of the Texas Hereford Association and Ginger is a past president of the Texas Hereford Women. While on the American Hereford Association Board, John was part of the merger committee, and he considers making that initiative a reality the most significant activity he was involved with as a director. His extensive leadership positions outside of the breed include serving as president of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. John previously held a seat on the executive committee for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and was chairman of the advertising committee. He was also a chairman of the Texas Beef Council.

Arthur Uhl of Powell Herefords in San Angelo, Texas, recognizes John and Ginger as "tireless advocates of not only the Hereford breed, but agriculture, conservation, culture and community as well." The couple established the Jackson Albert Dudley Scholarship fund and

were leaders in forming Friends of Historic Comanche Inc. John was also appointed to the board of regents of the Texas State University System and was an outspoken advocate for agriculture programs in the system's seven universities. Additionally, he served as director for the Texas Agricultural Land Trust.

Longtime friend and peer Jack Chastain, executive secretary for the Texas Hereford Association (THA), says John serves with purpose and sincerity in every role he holds. "John's passion for the ranch and for the Hereford breed has contributed not only to his personal ranching success but to the success of our Texas Hereford Association," Chastain says. "His business and political science degrees were most helpful in shaping programs and policies of THA."

Hall of Merit

Burke Healey Southern Cross Ranch, Davis, Oklahoma

The late Burke Healey, or "Mr. Hereford" as he is fondly remembered, is recognized as a visionary of the Hereford breed and the beef industry at large.

Burke's journey in the Hereford breed began in 1950 at the age of 18 when he and his younger brother Skip purchased the Flying L Ranch located in Davis, Okla. The partnership continued through 1988 at which time they decided to bring their children into the operations. It was then Burke renamed his portion to the Southern Cross Ranch. Burke's children continue the operation today.

A respected cattleman, Burke was ahead of his time in recording quantitative measurements and using cutting-edge data to evaluate and to improve his herd's genetics. One of his most notable achievements is developing the frame score chart, a tool widely adopted by the beef industry.

This past president of the American Hereford Association led the way in forming the Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) program during his tenure on the Board. Peers and fellow directors Guy Colyer, Jack Holden, Vern Rausch and Dale Venhuizen credit Burke as a pioneer in performance testing and as an instrumental leader in the merger of the national horned and polled associations. Burke's other influential ideas included performance pedigrees and making data available online.

As an industry leader, Burke was very active in the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) and was one of the 15 people who wrote the

original Long Range Plan for the beef industry. His efforts earned him numerous awards, including the BIF Continuing Service and Pioneer awards, *BEEF Magazine's* Trailblazer of the Year and recognition in Bob deBaca's book *Courageous Cattlemen*, which described the key influencers of the U.S. beef performance movement. Burton Eller of Virginia, a former executive vice president of the National Cattlemen's Association, says, "Burke was never afraid to stand up to advocate for a promising new idea or to defend a tried and true principle. He always had both feet planted firmly on solid ground and was a true thinker for Herefords and for the beef industry."

At home, Burke was very active in community organizations and was often the name behind an anonymous donation supporting the emerging leaders of local 4-H and FFA programs. Roger Stuber of North Dakota describes Burke as "a man who gave more than he got" who was "honest, willing, dedicated to purpose and a true Hereford leader."

Bob Drake, past president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, remembers Burke as a mentor, teacher and an individual who could relate to every part of the cattle industry. He says, "When we lost Burke Healey, we lost a giant who represented the Hereford industry, all of the cattle industry and all of agriculture."

Although Burke has been posthumously inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit, his firm belief in Hereford cattle and their contribution to the genetic pool of the nation's beef herd is a legacy that will continue to live on.

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The American Hereford Association (AHA), with headquarters in Kansas City, Mo., is one of the largest U.S. beef breed associations. The not-for-profit organization along with its subsidiaries — Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC, Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI) and the American Beef Records Association (ABRA) — provides programs and services for its members and their customers, while promoting the Hereford breed and supporting education, youth and research. For more information about the AHA, visit Hereford.org. For more Annual Membership Meeting and Conference coverage, visit Hereford.org/media.

Cutlines:

Ashe_HOF_3451: Billy Ashe, Selmer, Tenn., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame. Pictured (l to r) are: 2020 American Hereford Association (AHA) President Joel Birdwell, Will

David and Patti Coleman, Ashe Coleman, Stratton Coleman, Billy and Joyce Ashe, April and Wes Ashe and AHA Board director Bruce Everhart.

Brown_HOF_3426: Warren and Isabel Brown, Hartland, Wis., were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame. Pictured (l to r) are: 2020 American Hereford Association (AHA) President Joel Birdwell, Paul Slayton, Isabel Brown, Bette Brown Slayton, Steve Merry and AHA Board director Bruce Everhart.

Dudley_HOF_3383: John and Ginger Dudley, Comanche, Texas, were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame. Pictured (l to r) are: 2020 American Hereford Association (AHA) President Joel Birdwell, John and Ginger Dudley, Will Dudley, Elizabeth and Gardner Dudley and AHA Board director Bruce Everhart.

Healey_HOM_3357: Burke Healey, Davis, Okla., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit. Pictured (l to r) are: 2020 American Hereford Association (AHA) President Joel Birdwell, Barry and Pam Healey, Janet and Brian Healey and AHA Board director Bruce Everhart.