



## 2010 BIF Commercial Producer of the Year

# Downey Ranch

by *Katie Maupin*

**T**he Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) named Downey Ranch Inc. (DRI) of Wamego, Kan., its 2010 Commercial Producer of the Year. Located just southeast of Manhattan and nestled in the Flint Hills, DRI has ensured the proper handling of its cattle since its formation in 1986 by Joe Downey.

Joe Carpenter and Barb Downey, DRI managers, accepted the award from Burt Rutherford, *BEEF* magazine senior editor, during the 42nd BIF Research Symposium and Annual Meeting, June 28-July 1, in Columbia, Mo. The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), located in Topeka, nominated the ranch.

“The Downeys make a great commercial producer nominee because they work hard every day to make sure that a good quality product makes it to the consumer’s plate,” said Scarlett Hagins, communications program manager for the KLA. That has been their focus since Day 1, she added.

Presently, the Downey Ranch encompasses more than 6,300 acres occupied by 550 cows. Along with its 140 registered Angus cows, DRI manages commercial Angus, F<sub>1</sub> baldies and Red Angus and Angus-cross cows, 425 that calve in the spring and 125 that calve in the fall.

Downey Ranch’s low-stress handling techniques ensure that no animal “ever has a bad day.” Integrated disease management, fenceline weaning, early weaning, research- and feedback-based management and individual end-point management are also utilized by the DRI team to efficiently produce high-quality beef.

Most DRI calves are marketed through U.S. Premium Beef (USPB) on an age- and source-verified grid, while commercial bred females and registered bulls are sold at an annual production sale. Downey Ranch assists its customers in optimizing returns on their calves by using the tools that are proven successful.

Downey Ranch is now focused on financial analyses and has added a family member to the team to assist with the process. With its superior production techniques and financial planning, DRI hopes that its well-run business will support family and employees well into the future.

For more information about Downey



PHOTO BY ANDY ATZENWEILER, COURTESY OF BIF

► From left, Joe Carpenter and Barb Downey receive the 2010 BIF Commercial Producer of the Year Award from Burt Rutherford, *BEEF* magazine.

Ranch visit [www.downeyranch.com](http://www.downeyranch.com).

Downey Ranch was one of six nominees for the honor. Others recognized at the meeting included the following:

### **Stan & Lisa Buzzard**

*Owners: Stan & Lisa Buzzard, Beecher City, Ill.*

In 1996, Stan and Lisa Buzzard of Beecher City, Ill., purchased 27 bred heifers from the Elite Heifer Program at Paris, Ky., which was the start of their commercial cow-calf business. The Buzzards now manage an 800-acre grain and commercial beef cattle operation consisting of 120 cow-calf pairs and 45 replacement heifers. The smoky-colored brood cows are an Angus × Charolais cross and are bred to high-performance, superior-carcass Angus bulls to produce approximately 25% smoky calves and 75% black calves.

In the spring the cow-calf pairs are divided into groups and are placed into multiple pastures. They calve February through April. The herd has a tight calving period, with 85% of their calves born within the first 30 days of calving.

With multiple pastures, the Buzzards are

able to analyze the performance of each individual sire. They maintain a 96% weaned calf crop weaning in August at 165 days of age. Weaning weights average 526 pounds (lb.). The steers are finished in the feedlot, and the heifers are enrolled in the Illinois Heifer Development Program. The Buzzards have consigned heifers in the spring-calving sale since 2003, receiving premium prices with repeat buyers.

Stan began farming in 1973, while also working and co-owning a concrete construction company. In 2000, he sold his shares of the company to devote his time to the farm.

Stan and Lisa Buzzard were nominated by the University of Illinois Extension and the Illinois Beef Association.

### **G.W. Jones & Sons Farms**

*Owners: Raymond B. Jones, Elizabeth Jones Lowe, and Carolyn Jones Blue, Huntsville, Ala.*

In 1804, the Jones family’s ancestors moved to Madison County, Ala., from Lincoln County, Tenn., to farm. For the last

CONTINUED ON PAGE 210



## Downey Ranch CONTINUED FROM PAGE 209

205 years, the family has continued to farm in Madison County, currently operating 2,000 acres for the cattle operation, which began in 1939. It has now been surrounded by the city of Huntsville.

The farming enterprises have also expanded through the years and include farming operations in Jackson, Marshall and Limestone counties.

From the 1940s through most of the 1980s, Horned Hereford cattle primarily comprised the cow herd. Today, half Red Angus, half red Gelbvieh, or Balancer, herd sires produce a calf crop consisting of approximately half Red Angus, half red Gelbvieh.

The cow herd consists of approximately 450 cows with a fall calving season of 63 days beginning Oct. 1. All performance data is collected, maintained and evaluated using the Red Wing Cow-Calf software. Calves are marketed at the end of May or June. The steers are sold at an average of 650 lb. in truckload lots directly to a feedlot. A select group of heifers are retained as replacements, with the balance being sold to local cattlemen.

G.W. Jones & Sons Farm has received favorable feedback from their customers on the feedlot and carcass performance of their calves. Their reputation of performance has resulted in repeat customers for the past several years. Future plans are to continue to improve using all the tools available to 21st-century cattlemen. Available tools to improve genetics, expected progeny differences (EPDs), recordkeeping and forage production will be utilized as the family continues their farming legacy.

The Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) nominated G.W. Jones & Sons Farms.

## M&B Limousin

*Owners: Mike & Betsy Cravens, Lee's Summit, Mo.*

The Cravens have been in business for more than 20 years. Their operation is comprised of 1,050 acres. They maintain both spring and fall calving seasons on their 280-head operation.

M&B Limousin started as a small commercial herd with rented Limousin bulls. Impressed with the calving ease, performance and sturdiness of the breed, they have expanded their herd of crossbred cows and maintain 110 head of registered Limousin cows.

The Cravens believe in sound science and readily use EPDs and genomics data in

selection and breeding decisions. They have developed strong relationships with Strauss Free Raised® veal and Laura's Lean Beef, two branded programs through which the Cravens market a large percentage of calves. They also appreciate the economic advantages of age and source verification and keeping calves natural.

The Cravens have operated single-handedly, with both working full-time jobs. Retirement has allowed full operational focus, improving their cow herd and maintaining industry ties. True stewards of the land, the Cravens are continually working on pasture improvement and preservation of the land. As well, they have continued to upgrade facilities and working equipment in an effort to improve operational efficiency. Mike and Betsy are always looking for ways to increase reproductive efficiency and performance of their cattle. They have fine-tuned their nutrition program and honed their selection criteria.

Mike attributes much success to a formal background in animal science, judging livestock at the University of Missouri, and 40-year ownership of "The Old Mill, Grain and Seed."

M&B Limousin was nominated by the North American Limousin Foundation.

## Duane Martin Livestock

*Owners: Duane Martin Family, Ione, Calif.*

Duane Martin Livestock is a diversified ranching operation covering seven states, including California, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. Duane has been in the ranching business for 46 years. He started out driving a ready-mix cement truck. He earned enough to buy his first cows at age 24. Ever since then, every dollar he's made has been related to the cattle industry. He is involved in order buying, cattle feeding, and grazing stockers and cow-calf pairs.

The calving season is both spring and fall, which is determined by the climate and location of the ranches. The cow-calf operation includes more than 8,000 mother cows. Duane Martin Livestock owns Magnum Feedyards of Wiggins, Colo., and feeds many of his cattle there as well as in other feedlots in the heartland.

Duane continues the philosophies passed on by his father, Frank Martin: "Never sell a thin animal," and "water (availability on a ranch) is half the feed." This commitment to animal welfare reaches further, with continual

improvement of facilities, professional development for staff, and the ranch policy to not sell sick or injured animals, but rather to heal them or euthanize.

The links between cow-calf, stocker and feedlot provide much of the advantages of vertical integration, without being rigid, since the strength of the business has been to take advantage of marketing opportunities and knowing when to buy or sell cattle into the various markets.

Everything is centered around cattle, not with money from other businesses. There has been no outside inheritance or capital. The Martins believe that theirs is an example of what beef production should be — a business that can profitably stand alone, and that is their goal. They say there is never enough time in the day to do it as wonderfully as they want.

Duane Martin Livestock was nominated by the California BCIA.

## Optimal Beef LLC

*Owner: Alan Graybeal, Blacksburg, Va.*

Optimal Beef is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of southwest Virginia. The cattle operation has been in existence since 1950, when Alan's father purchased land and began his beef cattle production system. Alan joined the cattle enterprise full-time in 1993, at which point they purchased additional land and significantly expanded their cow herd.

Currently they maintain a herd of 400 Angus-Simmental crossbred cows. Cows are calved in February-March and in September-October. Generally all cows are bred by artificial insemination (AI), and then herd bulls are introduced for 64 days.

All calves are weaned and backgrounded at the farm. Replacement heifers are selected from their calf crop and developed to enter the cow herd. All remaining calves are fed for retained ownership through Circle Five Feedyard in Henderson, Neb., and enter an age- and source-verified program.

Their cow herd is maintained on 800 acres of owned land. Pasture and hay management are critical to the success of their operation. Rotational grazing is used on all their land, and they strive to maintain a mixture of grasses and legumes in their pastures. Some paddocks are also used for haying, and in late summer some are stockpiled for winter grazing. Their goal is to feed hay for only 75 days during the winter months.

Optimal Beef was proudly nominated by the Virginia BCIA.





## BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year

# Sandhill Farms

by *Katie Maupin*

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) named Sandhill Farms, Haviland, Kan., its 2010 Seedstock Producer of the Year. Originally homesteaded in 1869, Sandhill Farms has been the home to six generations of the Schultz family, who still use the resources of Edwards County for the farming and ranching operation.

Farm owners Kevin and Vera Schultz accepted the award from Burt Rutherford, *BEEF* magazine senior editor, during the 42nd BIF Research Symposium and Annual Meeting, June 28-July 1, in Columbia, Mo. The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) nominated the ranch.

"The Sandhill team uses the fruits of BIF every day by utilizing technology to ensure both commercial and seedstock customers' success in the future," said Scarlett Hagins, communications program manager for the KLA. "They work hard to utilize really sound genetics and solid management practices to grow their business."

Roy Schultz purchased the first registered Polled Hereford bull to use on the commercial cow herd in the 1940s. Around three decades later, his grandson, Kevin, started the registered Hereford herd as part of

his 4-H project. Presently, 300 brood cows reside on Sandhill Farms, two-thirds of which are registered and the rest purebred commercial.

The spring breeding program utilizes artificial insemination (AI), embryo transfer (ET) and highly proven cleanup sires to ensure genetic improvement. Sandhill Farms tested more bulls in the American Hereford Association sire test than any other breeder in the last decade. The top end of the tested and proven bulls is used in the farm's breeding program along with highly accurate and proven outside bulls. For the past 17 years, Sandhill Farms has used ultrasound to identify outliers that could improve its cattle's carcass merit. Today the bulls that are marketed through the farm's sale rank in the top 1% for two of the breed's four selection indexes and the top 10% in the remaining indexes.

Along with using performance data, Sandhill Farms' management ensures a quick generation turnover. Next to selling bulls, culling the cow herd is the favorite thing to do. The Sandhill team believes that seedstock customers buy the benefits and discipline of its culling program.

For more information about Sandhill Farms, visit [www.sandhillfarms.com](http://www.sandhillfarms.com).

Eight ranches were recognized as regional seedstock producer honorees. They follow.

### Circle Ranch

Owners: *Tim and Jill Curran and Family, Ione, Calif.*

Circle Ranch is owned and operated by Tim and Jill Curran and family and is located in Jackson Valley near Ione, Calif. The Currans are a fifth-generation Amador County ranching family that dates back to 1856.

Circle Ranch has been in the commercial cattle business since 1975, but in 1992 purchased a group of Simmental heifers from Nichols Farms in Iowa to produce bulls for their commercial cow herd. At the time, Circle Ranch was in a partnership with Jim and Rebecca Kirk of Monterey County, Calif. The partnership had a set of Angus-based commercial cows they felt needed some Continental influence.

They liked what the Simmental breed had to offer, but, like many breeds at the time, it tended to be larger-framed. The Nichols heifers they selected accomplished what they were looking for to produce bulls for their commercial Angus-based cow herd. They retained the moderate frame, reaped the benefits of hybrid vigor, increased red meat yield, and ended up with a set of half-blood females perfect for their environment.

Within a few years they were producing more bulls than they could use and started to sell a few. They felt the ideal beef cow was a blend of 25%-50% Simmental and the balance Angus. It soon became obvious that to help their customers maintain females of this percentage, the logical solution was to produce composite bulls. Today Circle Ranch markets 90 bulls annually, with the majority of those a SimAngus composite of 50% Simmental and 50% Angus.

Today, Circle Ranch maintains a cow herd containing 350 mother cows of which 275 are registered SimAngus or Angus. The cow herd is nearly all fall calvers, with the heifers calving in mid-July and the cows starting Aug. 1. The cows are summered on irrigated pasture on both owned and leased land in Jackson Valley and near Sloughhouse. The cows are wintered in the foothills also near Ione and Sloughhouse.

In 2007, Circle Ranch partnered with Bruin Ranch (Auburn, Calif.) to create the Beef Solutions Bull Sale. In 2009, Beef Solutions marketed 144 bulls, including 70 bulls from Circle Ranch.



PHOTO BY ANDY ATZENWEILER COURTESY OF BIF

► From left, Burt Rutherford of *BEEF* magazine presents Vera and Kevin Schultz of Sandhill Farms the 2010 BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year Award.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 212



## Sandhills Farm CONTINUED FROM PAGE 211

The California Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) nominated Circle Ranch.

### Edgewood Angus

*Owners: Pete, Connie and Peter Henderson, West Point, Va.*

Edgewood Angus consists of a 200-cow registered Angus herd, which has been developed since the early 1980s from a commercial herd. Pete and his wife, Connie, along with their son, Peter, and in conjunction with their daughters and Peter's wife, have managed to make Edgewood a family affair. In 2000, the operation expanded from 75 acres to roughly 450 acres and moved the primary operation from Williamsburg to King William, Va. Since that time, they have all worked very hard on improving pastures, fencing and cattle management infrastructure.

Edgewood Angus has been consigning bulls to BCIA test stations for more than 14 years. During that time they have developed a strong reputation for quality genetics and have had several bulls top the BCIA tests and sales. Consistent, predictable genetics has been the focus, accomplished through the use of proven sires. Customer service is a high priority for Edgewood Angus, and they work diligently to assess the needs of their commercial bull buyers to design genetics that will do the job for them.

Edgewood has been awarded the Bartenslager Award and Premier Angus Breeder Award on two occasions from the Virginia BCIA in 2007 and 2009. In December, Edgewood hosted its second annual on-farm performance-tested open-house bull sale. Select females are offered through consignment sales.

Pete is past president of the Virginia BCIA and is currently the chair of the BCIA Culpeper Test and Sale Committee. He is very active with Virginia Angus and other beef and ag entities.

The Virginia BCIA nominated Edgewood Angus.

### McBee Cattle Co.

*Owners: Ron and Teri McBee, Fayette, Mo.*

McBee Cattle Co., owned and operated by Ron and Teri McBee, has been located in north-central Missouri since 1979. The ranch presently consists of 1,650 acres of rolling fescue-based pasture in an 80-paddock intensive grazing system that is home to 250 registered Braunvieh/Angus hybrid females and 200 commercial females of mostly

Braunvieh-influenced genetics. Utilizing both spring and fall calving seasons, an extensive artificial insemination (AI) program, and several home-raised sires are used to advance both the purebred and hybrid herds.

Beginning in 1999, the best Braunvieh cows have been mated to some of the top performance Angus bulls to begin the development of their first generation F<sub>1</sub> progeny, called McBee Builder Hybrids. Mating their top F<sub>1</sub> bulls to their F<sub>1</sub> females, they are now producing second- and third-generation hybrids.

Including bulls from customers who have purchased McBee genetics in a cooperator program, 100-120 bulls are developed annually with a high-fiber, low-starch commodity ration. Performance is measured for growth and carcass traits. After a rigid culling program, only 60% are offered for breeding in an annual selection-day sale at the ranch.

Customer service has always been part of the McBee program. Since 1993, bull customers' calves have been grouped and marketed through the McBee Calf Roundups every spring and fall. Customers can see additional premiums through the McBee Gate Cut Heifer Sale and the new McBee Genetic Advantage Program.

The Braunvieh Association of America nominated McBee Cattle Co.

### Rincker Simmentals

*Owners: Curt, Pam, Cari and Brent Rincker, Shelbyville, Ill.*

Rincker Simmentals of Shelbyville, Ill., has been in the purebred beef seedstock business since 1972, when Curt began raising Simmental cattle with his father, Leland. Prior to this, the Leland Rincker family was in the Angus business. Leland was recently recognized as the 2008 Illinois Simmental Pioneer Breeder of the Year. The Rincker Simmental herd comprises 80 Simmental brood cows that produce seedstock for purebred and commercial herds. Bulls and heifers are sold through the Illinois Performance-Tested Bull Sale, Mid-American Showcase Simmental Sale, and the farm's Illini Elite Sale. Bulls are also consigned in an Eastern Missouri sale at Bowling Green. Another way to market their genetics is through the farm's website at [www.rincker.com](http://www.rincker.com).

An aggressive embryo transfer (ET) program has been used for several years to multiply the progeny of outstanding females

in the herd. This breeding program has resulted in numerous successes at the Illinois State Fair Open and Junior Shows. The herd is predominantly a winter- and spring-calving herd, although recent interest has led to limited fall calving to enhance the interest in both breeding bulls and females.

Performance testing, expected progeny differences (EPDs) and dollar value indexes (\$Values) are stressed at Rincker Simmentals, with these traits combined into a phenotypic package that possesses structural soundness, desirable conformation and balance for the beef cattle industry. Rincker Simmentals has continually consigned several of the top-indexing and selling bulls in the Illinois Performance-Tested Bull Sale.

One of the major components that has allowed the Rincker Simmental operation to succeed is its pasture and grazing program. The primarily cattle farm comprises 265 acres with 105 acres dedicated totally to grazing, 50 acres for hay production and grazing, and the remainder for cash grain production and winter grazing.

Rincker Simmentals was nominated by the University of Illinois Extension and the Illinois Beef Association.

### Schuler Red Angus

*Owners: Schuler-Olsen Ranches Inc. and the Darrell Schuler Family, Bridgeport, Neb.*

Located in the panhandle of western Nebraska, Schuler-Olsen Ranches was started by Darrell and Mary Lou Schuler in 1959 with commercial Hereford cattle. A crossbreeding program was implemented in the early 1970s, and after witnessing the benefits of heterosis and breed complementarity firsthand, a registered Red Angus herd was started in 1976 to develop seedstock for use on the ranch's commercial cattle and to sell to neighboring operations.

The seedstock herd expanded in the 1980s and was improved through AI, utilization of EPDs and a complete performance-testing program. Recognizing the need for identifiable carcass traits, in 1991 Schuler Red Angus began finishing its commercial progeny and collecting carcass data with the assistance of University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Beef Cattle Specialist Ivan Rush. This program expanded to include structured carcass testing on customer cattle sired by Schuler Red Angus bulls. Greater than 25% of the Red Angus breed's high-accuracy carcass trait sires have been proven by Schuler Red Angus. A composite cow herd was



started in 1992, including Red Angus, Hereford, Gelbvieh and Simmental genetics.

The current ranching operation encompasses 17,000 acres, including 2,000 acres of private pasture leases and 1,250 acres of irrigated farm ground. Butch and Susan Schuler and their children, Stephanie and David, manage the operation today with approximately 1,000 head of spring-calving females. The Schulers hosted their 28th production sale this spring, selling 150 Red Angus and Red Angus composite bulls and 40 head of registered Red Angus heifers.

Schuler Red Angus was nominated by the Nebraska Cattlemen.

## Spring Creeks Cattle Co.

*Owners: Bob and Rhonda Mitchell and sons Matt, Bart and Scott, Wauzeka, Wis.*

Near the Wisconsin River in southwestern Wisconsin, Spring Creeks Cattle Co. manages more than 600 registered Limousin, Lim-Flex® and Angus breeding stock. Over the course of 35 years, the enterprise has grown to include 3,000 acres of owned and leased pasture and cropland. While farming is the norm around them, the Mitchells take a ranching approach to their operation and farm to support the cattle, allowing them to optimize their natural resources responsibly.

They focus on producing sound, practical cattle that can be productive in any environment. They have built their cow herd with proven herd bulls and elite AI sires. Their breeding program centers around

“breedin’ the feedin’ kind” and producing seedstock that have a positive effect in today’s beef industry. They sell bulls, mature cows, bred females and open heifers off the farm.

The Mitchells raise calves without antibiotics or added hormones and promote their naturally lean, meaty carcasses. A portion of their calf crop goes to Laura’s Lean Beef and Strauss Free Raised® veal each year. They were happy to help introduce Strauss Brands to the Limousin breed and forge its sourcing agreement with the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF), providing a new marketing opportunity to all Limousin-influenced calves.

The Spring Creeks Cattle Co. crew are proud spokespeople for the industry, including Bart and Amy’s appearance on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” in 2008 to explain how they raise and manage free-raised veal calves. Their family is involved in a variety of industry organizations, including Bob’s recent service on the NALF Board of Directors and his terms as its vice president and treasurer.

The NALF nominated Spring Creeks Cattle Co.

## Windy Hill Angus Farm

*Owner: Jack Tate, Boaz, Ala.*

Windy Hill Angus Farm has been raising registered Angus cattle for 32 years in Boaz near Sardis City, Ala. The cow herd has ranged from 30 to 90 cows, and at present consists of 65 cows and 10 open heifers. The breeding herd consists of primarily a fall

calving season from September to January to capitalize on bull evaluations and production sale marketing with a small spring herd calving in March, as well. All breeding females are bred using estrous synchronization and AI with a cleanup bull for a 75%-90% AI-sired calf crop with 10% of the calf crop produced from the ET program.

All production weights, carcass ultrasound, and average daily gains from an on-farm 84-day test are collected. All performance information has been maintained by utilizing Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) for the past 30 years. For years, bull calves and their bloodlines were evaluated by participating in the Alabama BCIA North Alabama Bull Evaluation and more recently in the University of Florida Bull Test. Bulls are also marketed by private treaty, in the Northeast Alabama Performance Breeders Bull Sale, and in Alabama BCIA-sponsored sales. In 2009, Windy Hill Angus conducted its first production sale with guest consignors on the first Saturday in May and conducted its second sale May 1, 2010.

Jack Tate is an active leader in his state and national breed associations. He is a past president and director of the Alabama Angus Association and has served as a delegate to the American Angus Association national meeting in Louisville, Ky., for the past 20 years.

Windy Hill Angus Farm was nominated by the Alabama BCIA.



## Lifetime achievement recognized

A bright mind and researcher in the genetic improvement of beef cattle was honored by former students, beef industry leaders and colleagues at the 42nd Annual Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Research Symposium and Meeting June 28. The opening ceremony for the conference was a perfect opportunity to honor Richard “Dick” Quaas of Cornell University with a special Lifetime Achievement Award.

During the ceremony, many people who knew Quaas shared stories of their experiences with him, which included everything from his love for corn cob pipes, the New York Yankees and ice cream to his scientific contributions to animal science, mixed model methods and the “tough love” he showed to his former students.

Quaas has been honored in the past for his work in research and in the beef cattle industry, including being inducted as a Golden Book member for the World Simmental Federation. Quaas said BIF has always been his favorite event and that he was honored by this award of lifetime achievement. Even in his scientific mind, he said, he knows the practicality of what he does.

“Those Xs and Ys weren’t just Xs and Ys,” Quaas said. “They were pounds of meat, yearling weights and ribeyes.”

*by Katie Allen*



► Richard “Dick” Quaas (right) receives the 2010 BIF Lifetime Achievement Award from Bob Weaver, University of Missouri.

PHOTO BY ANDY ATZENWEILER COURTESY OF BIF



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 213

# BIF Recognizes Industry Innovators

## Angus breeders among those honored as industry pioneers.

by *Katie Allen*

**F**our individuals were honored for their pioneering methods in raising beef cattle at the 2010 Annual Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Research Symposium and Meeting. The Pioneer Awards were presented at a luncheon June 30.

“When you think of a pioneer, you think about settlers moving west and overcoming obstacles,” said Ben Eggers, co-chairman of the 2010 conference themed Gateway to Profit. “In the same way, these [pioneers] have led our beef industry through difficult times.”

Honored with the BIF Pioneer Award were:

► Montrose, Mo., natives **John and Bettie Rotert** have raised cattle since 1956. What started out as one registered Angus heifer grew into a partnership with Bob Harriman and the development of Rotert/Harriman Full Service Genetic Providers. The farm currently has an Angus, Gelbvieh and Simmental crossbreeding system and sells about 300 bulls per year.

Not only have the Roterts dedicated their

lives to producing great cattle, they have also been active in the beef industry and have attended BIF meetings for more than 40 years. Blind since age 21, John has found much success and gained much admiration in the industry for his ability to know what it takes to raise cattle without the use of his sight.

“John served as an inspiration to many stockmen who are continually amazed at his ability to analyze conformation in cattle with the touch of his hands,” said Eggers, who recognized the Roterts as recipients of the Pioneer Award during the luncheon.



PHOTOS BY TROY SMITH

► From left, George Rotert and Bob Harriman accept the BIF Pioneer Award from Ben Eggers, incoming BIF president, on behalf of recipients John and Bettie Rotert, Montrose, Mo.



► Glen Klippenstein (left), Glenkirk Farms, Maysville, Mo., accepts the BIF Pioneer Award from Darla Eggers.



► Richard McClung (left), Wehrmann Angus, New Market, Va., accepts the BIF Pioneer Award from Brian House of Select Sires.



► Daryl Strohbahn (left), Iowa State University, Ames, accepts the BIF Pioneer Award from Bob Weaber, University of Missouri.



► Also honored was **Glen Klippenstein** of Glenkirk Farms in Maysville, Mo. Glenkirk Farms was a premier producer of Polled Hereford seedstock and produced many national champions and multi-trait leaders. Klippenstein not only tends to business on his farm, but he has also played instrumental roles in the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), the Cattlemen's Beef Board, American Polled Hereford Association and the American Chianina Association. Klippenstein has been involved politically, serving as a senator for the state of Missouri.

"He has traveled more, spoken more, visited more beef herds, judged more shows, motivated more youth and promoted the beef industry both domestically and globally more than anyone can imagine," said Darla Eggers, member of the BIF conference planning committee.

► **Richard McClung** has served as

managing partner at Wehrmann Angus in New Market, Va., since 1978. After completing his animal science degree at West Virginia University in 1964, McClung worked for many cattle operations with the goal to produce "complete" cattle — those with low birth weight expected progeny differences (EPDs), enough milk, adequate growth with a moderate frame size, good fleshing ability and positive carcass merit from muscle, marbling and pounds.

His dedication to Wehrmann Angus helped the operation win BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year in 1997.

"He has devoted his life's work in the pursuit for cattle that excel for traits and add profitability to the business," said BIF Director Brian House of Select Sires Inc.

► **Daryl Strohbahn**, retired beef Extension educator and researcher, has served as a state Extension beef specialist at

Iowa State University for 34 years. Known by colleagues as "Stroh," his research has spanned across many different areas, including reproduction, nutrition, genetics and production economics.

His many contributions on a national scale have included developing Beef Cow Business Records, which have become a part of the NCBA's National Standardized Performance Analysis; the Midwest Beef Cattle Handbook; and BRaNDs (Beef Ration and Nutrition Decisions Software). He has garnered respect among his peers for his research and efforts to move Extension forward.

"He's the guy in the group who makes the synergism happen," said Bob Weaber, co-chairman for the BIF conference.

For comprehensive coverage of the 2010 Gateway to Profit symposium, visit [www.BIFconference.com](http://www.BIFconference.com).



## BIF Honors Continuing Service

Familiar faces recognized by Beef Improvement Federation for their dedication and service to the industry.

by *Katie Allen*

**F**our individuals were honored for their contributions to leadership and research in the beef industry at the 42nd Annual Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Research Symposium and Meeting. BIF conference co-chairmen Bob Weaber, University of Missouri, and Ben Eggers, Sydenstricker Genetics, presented the Continuing Service Awards at a luncheon June 29.

Honored were:

► **Michael Tess** retired as a professor in animal genetics from Montana State University. Some of the many contributions he has made to agriculture and the beef industry include serving as chair of National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium (NBCEC) Genomic Guidelines Committee, providing consulting for both the Bair Ranch Foundation that aims to further the cause of Montana agriculture and the American Simmental Association, presenting across the country on developing infrastructure to incorporate genomic information into national cattle evaluation, and serving as the current executive director

of the Ultrasound Guidelines Council (UGC).

Weaber recognized Tess as a man with experience in many different disciplines, even outside of animal science and genetics, and he was able to bring these disciplines together in his research.

"This occurred during a time when beef producers were overwhelmed with tons of research information from various disciplines, and Mike's research was aimed at bringing it all together," Weaber said. He added that Tess has been a "great thinker in the business."

► **Bill Bowman** is COO for the American Angus Association. Bowman is a University of Missouri graduate in animal science and worked for Sydenstricker Angus and the American Angus Hall of Fame before holding many positions with the American Angus Association, including vice president of information and data programs, director of performance programs and president of Angus Genetics Inc.®

He has been an active leader in BIF

through encouraging Angus leadership and members to participate. He has himself served on BIF's board of directors, Long-Range Planning Committee and as chairman of the Emerging Technologies Committee.

Eggers said Bowman's dedication to improving the Angus breed — from establishing the Beef Record Service to incorporating DNA measures to create genomic-enhanced EPDs — makes him worthy of the Continuing Service Award.

"He has focused his efforts on increasing efficiencies within the office and providing members and their commercial customers the tools to improve profitability through Angus genetics," Eggers said.

► **Dave Patterson**, a researcher in beef reproduction at the University of Missouri, has helped improve the beef industry by researching estrus synchronization and fixed-time artificial insemination (AI). His work has had a lasting impact on beef producers across the country. Patterson has also played an integral role in developing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 216



## BIF Honors Continuing Service CONTINUED FROM PAGE 215

the very successful Missouri Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Program, the first state-wide on-farm marketing program for beef heifers in the nation. During the past 12 years, the program has enrolled more than 87,000 heifers representing nearly 700 Missouri farms.

Patterson has received many awards, including the Outstanding Service to the Missouri Beef Industry Award sponsored by the Missouri Cattlemen's Association and the 2001 Man of the Year in Missouri Agriculture Award sponsored by *Progressive Farmer*.

Weaver said Patterson is also a great educator. "Patterson is dedicated to preparing students for careers in the beef industry;"

he said. "He has served as advisor to a long list of graduate students, many of whom have continued their careers in beef cattle production."

► **Twig Marston**, who currently serves as the director of the University of Nebraska's Northeast Research and Extension Center in Norfolk. Marston has a background in beef nutrition and has also had educational and professional experiences at Oklahoma State University and Kansas State University. Marston coordinated the Kansas Bull Test activities, including all the data collection, reporting and sales management.

He has also taught various beef science

classes and assisted with many 4-H and FFA youth programs. In addition to his work and research activities, Marston also currently serves as historian for BIF.

"He has judged numerous beef cattle shows as well as presented at meetings throughout the United States," Eggers said. "Twig's outstanding support of the beef cattle industry is shown through his hard work and dedication."

For comprehensive coverage of the 2010 Gateway to Profit symposium, visit [www.BIFconference.com](http://www.BIFconference.com).



PHOTOS BY TROY SMITH

► Mike Tess (left), Montana State University, receives the BIF Continuing Service Award from Brian McCulloh, 2009-2010 BIF President.



► Bill Bowman (left), American Angus Association, receives the BIF Continuing Service Award from Brian McCulloh, Woodhill Farms, Viroqua, Wis.



► David Patterson (left), University of Missouri, accepts the BIF Continuing Service Award from McCulloh.



► Twig Marston (left), University of Nebraska and retired BIF executive secretary, accepts the BIF Continuing Service Award from McCulloh.





# Students Recognized

BIF scholarships, fellowships give students support for education, conference expenses.

by Katie Allen

**S**tudents with a passion for the beef industry were offered competitive scholarships to assist with their educational and travel expenses to attend the 42nd Annual Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Research Symposium and Meeting.

Kent Gray, doctoral candidate at North Carolina State University, was the winner of the 2010 Frank H. Baker Memorial Scholarship. Gray is focusing on beef cattle efficiency in his graduate research.

The Baker Scholarship Award is a \$1,000 travel scholarship given in memory of Frank H. Baker. Applicants were asked to write an essay, and all submitted essays were judged by a panel of animal science faculty.

The Roy A. Wallace Scholarship Award was given for the first time this year at the BIF conference. Winners this year included undergraduate student Sally Yon, a sophomore majoring in agricultural education and animal science at Clemson University. The graduate student award was presented to Paige Johnson Alexander, a doctoral candidate at Texas Tech University. Alexander's research is centered on animal breeding and genetics.

The Wallace Scholarship Fund was established to honor the life of Roy Wallace and his contributions to beef cattle improvement. More than 40 applicants applied for the two awards this year.

BIF conference travel fellowship recipients included Paige Johnson Alexander, Texas Tech University; Rich Chapple, University of Missouri; David Daniel Jr., Auburn University; Jared Decker, University of Missouri; Allison Echols, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Jose Alberto Barron Lopez, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Tera Loyd Black, University of Florida; Landon Marks, Mississippi State University; Allen Munger, Kansas State University; Jordan Paulsrud, Iowa State University; Megan Rolf, University of Missouri; and Tasia Taxis, University of Missouri.

The student travel fellowships were supported by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute for Food and Agriculture Animal Genome, Genetics and Breeding Program.



► Kent Gray (left), North Carolina State University, receives the Frank H. Baker Memorial Scholarship from Brian McCulloh, 2009-2010 BIF president.



► Sally Yon (center), Clemson University, receives the first-ever Roy A. Wallace Undergraduate Scholarship Award from Brian House of Select Sires Inc. and McCulloh.



► Paige Johnson Alexander (center), Texas Tech University, receives the first-ever Roy A. Wallace Graduate Scholarship Award from House and McCulloh.





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 217

## Missouri publishers receive Ambassador Award

Andy and Larry Atzenweiler of Kansas City, Mo., were named the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Ambassadors in late June. Each year, BIF recognizes an individual of the press corps who has made a major contribution to beef improvement or the BIF with its Ambassador Award.

The Atzenweilers have created a legacy in livestock publications, said BIF conference co-organizer Bob Weaber of the University of Missouri, in recognizing the father-son duo.

Atzenweiler Co. was formed in the early 1970s. The base of the business served as a publisher's representative company, selling commercial advertising for *Better Beef Business*, *Charolais Banner*, *Polled Hereford World*, *Simmental Shield* and *Canadian Charolais Banner*.

Seeing the need for a beef business publication in Missouri, they created the *Missouri Beef Cattleman*, publishing the first issue in June 1971. Shortly afterward, the publication was named the official publication of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association.

Larry's son, Andy, worked at *Missouri Beef Cattleman* following his graduation from Kansas State University in 1986. At this time, Larry went to work for the American Simmental Association to start its new publication, *The Register*.

It was this diversification of publications that motivated Larry to hire Andy and Lee McCoy to run *Missouri Beef Cattleman*. After a few years, the ASA decided to move *The Register* to Bozeman,

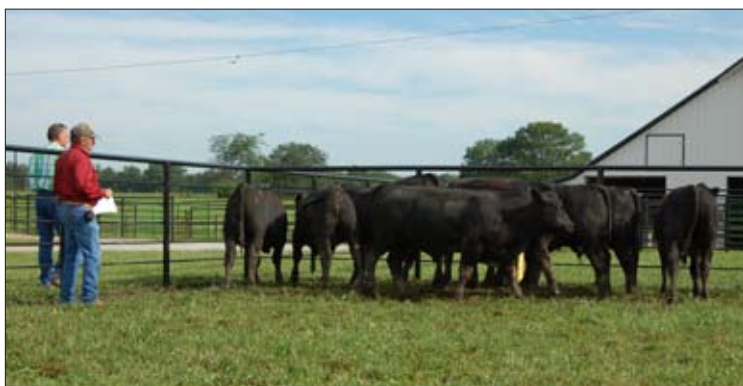
and Larry came back to work at *Missouri Beef Cattleman*.

In January 2000, Andy became the editor and publisher of the magazine, and Larry devotes most of his time to selling advertising.

*by Katie Maupin*



► Andy Atzenweiler (left) accepts the BIF Ambassador Award from Bob Weaber, event co-chairman.



► **Above & below:** Sydenstricker Genetics, Mexico, Mo., was one of the stops on the tour Monday, June 28.



► Tour participants also viewed Circle A Feeders, Iberia, Mo., which features indoor feeding.

