

# Herdsman of the Year

Larry Green receives the Association's Herdsman of the Year Award.

Story & photo by **Mathew Elliott**

**W**hen Larry Green left Hardin, Mont., to come to Denver, Colo., for the National Western Stock Show (NWSS), it was overcast and the windchill was at  $-30^{\circ}$  F. That's what most people call really cold. Green smiles and calls it, "good hair-growing weather." It was a nice, sunny,  $60^{\circ}$  day on the Hill when Green was awarded the 2010 American Angus Association Herdsman of the Year Award.

Green was voted this year's herdsman winner by his peers, the Angus exhibitors at the NWSS. "Thank you. This really is an honor," Green says.

The award recognizes the exhibitor who has done the best job during the past year preparing and displaying their Angus cattle. A small change to the past schedule, this year the award was presented before the grand champion bull was announced to the crowd.

## Green Angus Ranch

Green Angus Ranch sits alongside the Big Horn River 40 miles southeast of Billings, Mont., and is home to Larry; his wife, Jodi; and their children, Savannah, Ryan, Rilee and Leighton. There they manage approximately

100 maternal Angus cows and irrigated farm ground to graze. Green knows that you don't get anywhere without hard work. It's through that hard work that he has turned buying a heifer and starting Green Angus Ranch into being awarded with the Herdsman Award.

Green started Green Angus Ranch in 1975 with the purchase of his first Angus female. "In the 1980s we bought some Shoshone cows," Green says. "We got a lot of good cows there. From there we AI'ed (artificially inseminated) and got 'em cranking around where we were getting the right kind of bulls and things clicked."

The herd was growing quickly. In the early 1980s, Green estimates that he was selling 150+ bulls per year.

It was also in the 1980s that Green started coming to Denver for the NWSS. He was working for Whitestone-Krebs and Ankony Angus doing custom fitting and observing at Angus shows, specifically in Denver and Reno.

"I learned a lot watching and observing how to prepare cattle for a show from Mr. [Eldon] Krebs," Green says.

## Denim & Diamonds

Green has exhibited cattle and won shows all over the U.S. and Canada, including other Angus Roll-of-Victory (ROV) super-point shows such as the American Royal and the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE), but bringing cattle to the NWSS is his main focus now.

"Denver is the closest major show for us," Green says. "It's still about a 9-hour drive, but here we have the most traffic and customers come by the stalls to look at the cattle."

Green had been bringing cattle to the NWSS for a while, but in 1998 Green told Jodi that he wanted to have a sale in Denver. So that year, they took 40 head to exhibit on the Hill and had a sale.

"The next year we took 52 head," Green says. "We ended up having four or five in each class; it got to be a little much."

The next year they decided to let others in on the sale and not have to bring as many cattle to the NWSS. The Denim and Diamonds Sale was created and is still going today. This year's sale included 40 lots of Angus cattle consigned by 25 Angus producers.

The sale helped cut down on the number of cattle the Greens brought to Denver, but it didn't cut back on the quality.

In 1999, Green Angus Ranch had the grand champion Angus female with Green's Princess 7418 at the NWSS. Four years later, her daughter Green's Princess 1012 (exhibited by Andrew Rogen) was named grand champion. The Princess line is still being prominently featured through Green's breeding program today.

The show focus has moved more toward the junior shows throughout Montana for his children. "We've gotten more involved with the junior shows and programs," Green says. "This teaches the kids how to work and work hard. You cannot get anywhere without working hard."

## Out of the showing

With all the success Green has had in the showing, it doesn't mean these cattle will not perform outside of it. The motto that hangs



► Herdsman of the Year Larry Green (left) receives the Herdsman belt buckle from Activities and Events Director Shelia Stannard (center) and Miss American Angus Sally Yon.

on the sign in the Green's stall on the Hill and other shows reads, "Meticulously Bred, Nurtured and Designed for Realistic Cattle and Particular Cattlemen."

"That sign was designed by my father-in-law," Green says. "I don't breed for the showing; I breed for eye appeal and stoutness. All my cows need to make a living. I don't even have a show barn. We have pens where the show cattle are washed and worked with. It takes a lot of management to get them where they need to be and ready for a show."

The cow herd has decreased a little in size and Green is no longer selling 150+ bulls per

year. He is now focusing on quality genetics and producing sound cattle for some of the harsh Montana winters and selling private treaty.

"I like good, sound cattle that require little feed to get them where I want them. I don't feed creep feed to any of the calves while they are still on the cow. I want to know where they will be on their own and how good that cow is."

Green sells most of his cattle private treaty, and mostly to commercial cattlemen, but is looking into Internet sales for next year. "I sell about 99% of my bulls to commercial

producers," he says. "I am very particular about what bulls I sell; they have to be quality. I know genetics and I know how my cows perform. I hope that my customers are always happy and will come back."

Upon returning home to Montana, Green will find the "hair-growing weather" is still bitter cold, and there is a lot of work to be done. Jokingly a little worried that the snow from some previous blizzards might never go away, he reflects on the week in Denver and says with a smile, "This award is quite an honor."

