

Livestock Marketeers Celebrate 45 Years

The names of three livestock professionals were added to the Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame wall at the National Western Stock Show Club Jan. 16.

The Livestock Marketeers — an informal fraternity of livestock fieldmen, auctioneers, sale managers and related livestock business leaders — met for their 45th Annual Banquet in conjunction with the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo. The event is hosted by American Live Stock, Geneva, Ill.

Master of ceremonies J. Neil Orth, executive vice president of the American-International Charolais Association and a 1984 Hall of Fame inductee, introduced the 2010 honorees: Bruce Brooks of Marietta, Okla., and Gary Kendall of Potlatch, Idaho. The late A.J. Smith of Lone Wolf, Okla., was added to the special posthumous plaque provided by Crow Publications of Denver in 2009.

The Livestock Marketeers group was started in 1965 by Harry Green, Ross Miller and Claud Willett. Their purpose was to

form a fraternal organization of livestock professionals and to make annual awards in order to stimulate younger members of the industry to succeed in their chosen profession.

Nearly 100 Marketeers were in attendance for 2010, a new record for the group.

Bruce Brooks

Auctioneer Bruce Brooks was Iowa-born and raised, but headed south to attend Oklahoma State University (OSU). He was a member of the OSU livestock judging teams of 1969 and 1970, as well as Block & Bridle and the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity. C.D. “Pete” Swaffar and Ted Aegerter of the American Shorthorn Association (ASA) hired him after graduation, and Brooks traveled the southwestern states for ASA. He later worked the same territory for the *Drovers Journal* in 1972-1974, working for J.

Neil Orth. In the fall of 1974, Brooks joined Ken Holloway at American Cattle Services, specializing in purebred Limousin marketing.

In 1975, Brooks began auctioneering purebred cattle sales and has continued in that field ever since, working predominantly Limousin and Shorthorn events. In 2004, he started including real estate sales on his schedule when he joined Williams & Williams Auction Co., Tulsa, Okla.

Married to Kathy Jane O’Brien since 1977, Brooks has a son, Lance, and two daughters, Kristy and Amy. They also have four grandchildren. The family was actively involved in showing and selling steers and heifers, primarily Limousin, through the 1980s and 1990s. A Brooks family highlight includes winning Grand Champion Limousin Heifer honors twice at the NWSS junior contest — Amy in 1994 and Kristy in 1995. They currently specialize in managing a stocker-feeder operation in southern Oklahoma.

A member of the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF) and the ASA, Brooks is a past president and vice president of the Oklahoma Limousin Breeders Association (OLBA). In 1998, Bruce and Kathy received the OLBA’s Lifetime Achievement Award, primarily in recognition of their work with junior programs. He’s a member of the Saddle & Sirloin Club in Oklahoma City to help promote 4-H and FFA, and also serves on the Love County Soil Conservation board.

“I’ve always been a great believer in the auction business,” Brooks said after being roasted by Doug Paul of The Stock Exchange, Ken Holloway of American Cattle Services, and Don Cagwin of Cagwin Cattle Services. “I learned from Don and Ken to take care of business. . . I appreciate very much the opportunity to sell for these folks and being part of your team.”



►The Livestock Marketeers inducted two members of their informal fraternity — Bruce Brooks and Gary Kendall — into the Hall of Fame during the NWSS in Denver, Colo. They’re shown with the friends who “roasted” them (left to right): Willard Wolf, Valleyford, Wash.; C.D. “Butch” Booker, Colfax, Wash.; Gary Kendall, Potlatch, Idaho; Bruce Brooks, Marietta, Okla.; Don Cagwin, Virginia, Ill.; Ken Holloway, Chattanooga, Okla.; Doug Paul, Oklahoma City, Okla.; and J. Neil Orth, Kansas City, Mo.

Gary Kendall

After graduating with a degree in ag economics from the University of Idaho in 1959, Gary Kendall returned to farm in Potlatch, Idaho, and established a registered Angus herd that bred and produced the 1981 NWSS Grand Champion Female and the 1983 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) Grand Champion Female.

Kendall's marketing career may have started at home, but in 1981 he accepted the position of manager of the Spokane National Stockshow in Spokane, Wash. This developed into a sale management business when the Cowman's Classic All-Breed Bull Sale was started in 1985. He added another industry-leading event to his résumé in 1987, when he began managing the Nugget Hereford Show and Sale in Reno, Nev.

By 1991, Kendall was managing an impressive string of consignment and production sales throughout the western United States, including the Western National Angus Futurity in Reno.

The key to his success, according to C.D. "Butch" Booker, Colfax, Wash., is that "Gary has always believed in taking your best to a sale." Kendall's appreciation of quality livestock and the good people who raise them have made him a favorite in the Pacific Northwest beef industry. He was also roasted by 2007 Hall of Fame inductee Willard Wolf, Valleyford, Wash.

The *Western Livestock Reporter* — now the *Western Ag Reporter* — offered its Northwestern field representative position to Kendall in 1993, a position he held until his retirement in 2010.

"I appreciate all the people here tonight," Kendall said during the Livestock Marketeers banquet in Denver. "And all of the people who brought me here."

He and his fiancée, Linda Hartford, continue to enjoy their involvement in the seedstock industry. Gary has two sons, Rod and Dale Kendall, and a daughter, Leanne Collier, as well as seven grandchildren.

A.J. Smith

For 24 years, A.J. Smith was editor of the *Oklahoma Cowman*, official magazine of the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association (OCA). During his tenure, he developed the *Cowman* into a nationally recognized livestock publication. He wrote 294 editorials and countless feature stories, took thousands of pictures, planned numerous

ranch tours, and traveled the state providing ring service at purebred and commercial cattle sales. In addition, he trained and mentored countless livestock marketeers over the years.

Smith passed away moments after the OCA's 57th Annual Convention and Trade Show in Midwest City on July 25, 2009, serving as the face of the *Cowman* to the end. He left behind his wife of 39 years, Debra; son Aaron and daughters Christel and Jessi; and seven grandchildren.

He grew up on the family farm north of Lone Wolf, and was active in the Future Farmers of America. Smith graduated from OSU in 1963. Following his tour in the Air National Guard, he returned to the farm and was married to Debra Pollard in 1970. In partnership with his father, Alva, he managed a herd of registered Polled Hereford cows, and in 1983 he accepted the position of Harmon County 4-H agent. Over the years, he also worked for *Better Beef Business*, *Gulf Coast Cattleman*, *Weekly Livestock Reporter*, and the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service before being named editor of *Oklahoma Cowman* in 1985.

Smith was recognized with numerous honors and awards for his efforts and contributions to the nation's cattle industry, including the OSU Animal Science Recognition Award, Beefmaster Appreciation Award, OSU Animal Science Graduate of Distinction Award, Oklahoma Hereford Association Heritage Award, Oklahoma Youth Expo Show Honoree Award and Honorary Cattlewoman of the Year Award. He was also inducted into the Oklahoma Angus Hall of Fame, and served as president of the Southwest American Livestock Foundation.

"A.J. took a lot of pride in those of us he was mentoring," said Matt Sims of MCS Auction LLC, who presented the Livestock Marketeers' tribute to Smith along with his father, Smith's college roommate Eddie Sims of National Cattle Services Inc. "He was always optimistic. Bless his heart, I don't think he thought anyone would ever stop bidding!"

For more information on the Livestock Marketeers, visit www.livestockmarketeers.com.



Editor's Note: This article is adapted from a news release by the Livestock Marketeers.