

Hall of Famers

Livestock marketeers honor Cotton, Lefty and Spader.

The names of three livestock professionals — Terry Cotton of Saint Joseph, Mo.; William “Bill” Lefty of Lincoln, Calif.; and Richard “Dick” Spader, now deceased, formerly of Rosendale, Mo. — were added to the Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame wall at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) Club Jan. 15.

The Livestock Marketeers — an informal fraternity of livestock fieldmen, auctioneers, sale managers and related livestock business leaders — met for their 46th Annual Banquet in conjunction with the NWSS in Denver, Colo. The event was hosted by American Live Stock; awards were sponsored by DVAuction Inc. and The Stock Exchange.

Master of Ceremonies Neil Orth, executive vice president of the American-International Charolais Association (AICA) and a 1984 Hall of Fame inductee, introduced Cotton and Lefty during the festivities at the NWSS. Spader was added to the special posthumous plaque provided by Crow Publications.

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 encourage younger members of the industry to succeed in their chosen profession.

More than 80 marketeers were in attendance for 2011.

Terry Cotton

Terry Cotton, president and general manager of Angus Productions Inc. (API), has been with the wholly-owned subsidiary of the American Angus Association for more than 30 years.

Cotton attended Kansas State University and earned a degree in animal science. Before joining the Angus staff, he worked for Glenkirk Farms, Maysville, Mo., in its bull and heifer development program.

He started his career at the Association in 1979 as an *Angus Journal* representative in the western United States and Canada. He then moved to the Dakotas, Minnesota and Nebraska, serving as a regional manager and *Angus Journal* representative.

Cotton assumed the role of general manager in September 1986. Since that time, API has become one of the largest publishers

in U.S. agriculture. In addition to growing the *Journal* substantially, API has expanded the reach and role of the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, a 70,000-circulation publication targeted to



Terry Cotton

commercial cattlemen. Cotton launched the Special Services Department, which produces nearly 400 sale books per year, as well as the Web Services Department and Creative Media.

“As the growth and acceptance of the Angus breed has increased, so have the information needs of our readership,” Cotton says. “We’ve worked hard at meeting those needs and staying on the cutting edge of advertising, marketing and editorial.”

Cotton was introduced at the Livestock Marketeers banquet by auctioneer Steve Dorran, who noted Terry’s “rules of the road.”

“He’s passionate about everything he does,” said longtime friend Jim Bessler. “In the past 25 years, API has become one of the greatest in the livestock business.”

Terry expressed his appreciation for mentor Dale Runnion, former general manager of API, and other industry leaders.

“We are a family,” he told the marketeers. “We tend to spend a lot more time with each other than we spend at home, and the people we stand beside at the ring are important. It’s fun to do this. These unlimited miles up and down the road, the mountains of paper, the gallons of ink.”

“The one thing that has endured is the auction,” he emphasized. “The auction system has endured, and continues to flourish into the future.”

Terry lives in Saint Joseph with his wife, Sarah. They have two sons, Drew and Adam.



►The Livestock Marketeers inducted three members of their fraternity — Terry Cotton, Bill Lefty and Dick Spader (posthumously) — into the Hall of Fame during the 2011 NWSS. Pictured with the friends who “roasted” them are (from left) Jim Bessler, Sycamore, Ill.; Steve Dorran, Timnath, Colo.; Terry Cotton, Saint Joseph, Mo.; Bill Lefty, Lincoln, Calif.; Brett Spader, Carbondale, Kan.; Skinner Hardy, Glendale, Ore.; Jerry York, Nampa, Idaho; and Neil Orth, Kansas City, Mo.

Richard “Dick” Spader

Dick Spader, former American Angus Association executive vice president, led the Association in his 32-year career to be the largest and most influential breed registry in the world.

“He was a man’s man and a cowboy’s cowboy,” said regional manager Chuck Grove, who introduced Spader’s



Richard Spader

posthumous induction into the Livestock Marketeers Hall of Fame.

Dick graduated from South Dakota State University (SDSU) in 1969 with a degree in agricultural journalism and a

minor in animal science, after having completed service in Vietnam with the U.S. Marine Corps from 1962-1965. He was also a bull rider and member of the SDSU rodeo team.

He began his career at the American Angus Association in 1969 as assistant director of public relations. He became director of the Performance Programs Department in 1976. Under his direction, the Association issued its first *Field Data Sire Evaluation Report* and its first *Pathfinder Report*.

In 1981, Dick was named the Association’s executive vice president. He served in that capacity until his death in October 2001. Several programs were established during his tenure, including the Commercial Relations Department and the Angus Information Management Software (AIMS) program. From 1986 to 2001, Angus cattle registrations increased from 133,000 to more than 271,000, and the performance records database increased from 179,000 to 693,000 weights processed annually.

“As good as Dick was with his family, he was equally good with his extended family in the livestock industry,” recalled Scott Johnson, director of AIMS.

Dick Spader died in 2001 after suffering a heart attack while in the pasture tending to his Angus herd. He left behind his wife, Sheri; sons Jared and Brett; and daughter Alyssa.

“It’s your family and friends that keep your memory alive. How fortunate we are to have those!” said Brett Spader. “I want to

thank everyone in this room, and those that came before.”

William “Bill” Lefty

“I am privileged to be somewhere ... in cow country, North America” is part of the opening statement on Bill Lefty’s telephone answering machine, and appropriate for his approach to the livestock marketing industry.

An independent, full-time professional auctioneer and sale manager with a career spanning almost 45 years, he has worked with hundreds of clients in 41 states, Mexico and six Canadian provinces.

Bill was an animal science major with a minor in agribusiness and a graduate of the University of Arizona and the University of California–Fresno. He was a charter member



Bill Lefty

of the Alpha Sigma Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho, president of the Block & Bridle Club and a member of FSC’s Cow Palace winning livestock judging team as well as co-high individual of carload judging at

the NWSS. His college education was preceded by active duty in the U.S. Army.

First introduced to the excitement of an auction by Col. Harry Hardy (father of Skinner Hardy), Bill got additional exposure to purebred marketing through classmate and auctioneer Phil Tews, who gave him a chance behind the microphone. While on a special project for Henry King at *Quarter Horse Journal*, he attended an Angus sale in Oakley, Kan., conducted by Hall of Famer (1980) Ray Sims. That was the turning point in his life.

A 1965 graduate of 1972 Hall of Fame honoree Walter Britten’s National Auction Institute in Bryan, Texas, Bill established a full-service sales management company. In addition to advertising, sale books and sale preparation teams, necessity forced him to purchase portable cattle handling equipment, trucks, trailers, bleachers, sound systems, computers and more to hold on-the-ranch sales. Many of these events marketed more than 500 head; a few surpassed 1,000.

He helped organize Jack Linkletter and The Howard Hughes Corporation’s

International Cattleman’s Expo Performance Bull Show & Sales of Las Vegas, Nev. Bill founded the National Reined Cow Horse Association’s 1971 Snaffle Bit Futurity Sale, the World’s Champion All-Around Stock Horse (morphed to World’s Greatest Horseman) and The Magnificent Seven, and he conducted the first central performance-tested bull sale west of Stanford, Mont. He conducted the first sales for the Western Brangus Breeders, Beefmaster Breeders, California Charolais Association, and the Northwest and California Simmental associations. In the summer, between equipment sales, ranch visits, field days and fundraisers, he sold the National Ram Sale in Salt Lake City and several junior livestock auctions.

Bill has been privileged to work with high-profile horse and cattle producers, including the King Ranch in Texas, Bar 5 Ranch in Manitoba, Haythorn Land & Cattle in Nebraska, Walt Disney, and Parker Ranch in Hawaii.

He has been invited to officiate as an auctioneer at every major livestock show in North America, including the Canadian Western Agribition, Calgary Stampede, Toronto Royal, NWSS, Cow Palace, North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) and the Houston Livestock Show. A highlight was the selling of three national breed sales in one year at Denver’s NWSS. In 2001, he conducted the highest grossing Brahman dispersion of the decade. Perhaps his highest profile sale was the stallion Nu Bar, a son of Doc Bar sold at public auction in California for \$1,100,000.

Along with his purebred sale activities, Bill was interim partner-operator of a livestock auction market, syndicate member of a high-profile Quarter Horse stallion, guiding partner in the purchase of *The Livestock Market Digest*, and in the year 2000 was an active partner in the single largest livestock acquisition in the western United States; in the fall, that herd produced the highest selling dollars per pound calves in the nation.

“Lefty is an auction junkie, and the No. 1 viewer on LiveAuction.tv and DVAuction.com,” joked fellow Hall of Famer (2002) Jerry York. “He’s a fine person and a really good man. I’m proud to be associated with you and call you my friend.”

Skinner Hardy (Hall of Fame 1991) became acquainted with Bill in 1965, and

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said they've travelled a lot of miles and worked a lot of great events.

"I couldn't have a better friend than Bill," he said. "He will get you into a lot of situations, but he will get you out of them!"

Bill credits a host of friends and family for their support, encouragement, inspiration and mentoring, as well as for providing the opportunities to gain industry knowledge and valuable marketing experience.

Bill accepted his award by recognizing the Livestock Marketeers in attendance and

asked them to remember their predecessors in the field.

"To the world's best — and those who want to be the best — auctioneers and bid spotters, a toast to you," he said. "And raise a glass to all of the empty saddles, and all of the marketeers that have gone before. Remember, if this was easy, everyone would be doing it."

Bill resides in Lincoln, Calif., and remains active in the industry. He considers his greatest achievements to be his daughter,

Bobbi Lynn, and his son, Bert, along with Bert's wife, Deirdre, and their two daughters, Della and Dotty. All are successfully immersed in an independent, diversified California farming and ranching operation.

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



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