



Geoff is a second generation Herdsman of the Year, following in the footsteps of his father, J.C., who won in 1981.

# More Than a Career

*Geoff Andras, Okmulgee, Okla., was honored as Hereford Herdsman of the Year.*

by *Julie White*

Finding his passion at a young age and pursuing it with intense dedication, hard work and enthusiasm is what led Geoff Andras, Okmulgee, Okla., to be recognized by his fellow Hereford breeders as the 2016 Herdsman of the Year at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver.

“Being named herdsman of the year was a total shock and completely unexpected,” Andras says. “There are some guys that haven’t been honored with this award that I really respect. It was a humbling experience.”

Andras was selected for the award by his peers — other Hereford herdsman and breeders — and was honored

prior to the selection of the supreme champion Hereford on Jan. 16.

## Hereford heritage

As a sixth-generation Hereford breeder, Geoff soon realized raising and showing cattle is how he wants to spend his days.

“My family has been in the Hereford business for more than 100 years,” Andras says. “On the Andras side, my great grandfather had Herefords in Illinois. JC Andras & Sons showed and won all the major box car days in the early 1900s through the 60s. On my mother’s side is the legendary Beartooth Ranch — so I guess you could say it’s a family tradition.”

Andras started out showing Herefords at a young age in Montana with his parents J.C. and Deb Andras, now of Checotah, Okla.; brother, John; and sister, Whitney.

“I started out at the local level in Montana through 4-H and FFA and the junior Hereford associations, and was lucky enough to help some people at national shows,” Andras says.

“Growing up in Montana, I was lucky enough to run around with Russell and Stacy Dietz, Billings, Mont., Bodie Winters and Brian Barragree, Columbus, Mont. Tom and Cindy Weimer, Susanville, Calif. also took me under their wings. They all encouraged my passion for showing as far as wanting to go and be involved and try my hardest at what I’m doing.”

Between his junior and senior years of high school, Geoff worked at Langford Herefords in Okmulgee. “I started helping in the show barn and then came back after I graduated and took a year off of school,” he says. “I attended Connors State College in Warner, Okla., and after I was done there I decided show cattle and working with cattle was my passion.”

From that time, Geoff grew into his current role as herdsman. “I’ve been fortunate enough to be herdsman at Langford’s,” he says. “I do everything from calving cows to the preparation of sale and show cattle; I just kind of touch every aspect of the operation.”

Langford Herefords is a seedstock operation. “Our main business is selling range bulls to the commercial sector,” Andras says. “We have two production sales a year. There’s lots of really good



Pictured at the 2016 National Western Stock Show (l to r) are: Curtis Curry, American Hereford Association (AHA) Director; Geoff Andras, 2016 Herdsman of the Year; and Sam Shaw, AHA president.

## Andras recognized by industry

Geoff Andras, the 2016 Hereford Herdsman of the Year, has been recognized on numerous occasions for excelling in the industry. He was named reserve senior showman at the 2011 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) and was a top 10 showman three times in the senior division. In 2009 he was honored with the Wesley Rakestraw Hereford Enthusiast Award, and in 2011 he was selected as a Herdsman of the Year finalist at the JNHE. In 2006 Geoff was a Northern International Livestock Exposition Heifer of Merit Champion recipient. **HW**



Geoff was surrounded by family and friends after receiving the 2016 Hereford Herdsman of the Year award. Pictured (l to r) are Cole Lemmons, Cole Atkinson, and Bill Leib of the Langford crew; J.C. Andras, Whitney Andras, Geoff, Deb Andras and John Andras; and Joanie Kramer and Watson and Cash Langford.

cattle that can compete both in the showing and in the real world. That's what I like about Langford's cattle."

### Love of the industry

Andras says he enjoys all aspects of being in the cattle industry, but he especially appreciates seeing hard work result in a successful run. "My favorite part is taking one from start to finish," he says. "Seeing where you start with one and knowing with hard work what they will be at the finish line is what I love."

He adds that it all starts with selection in the pasture. "It begins with finding a heifer or bull calf you think has a lot of potential — from its breeding to its phenotype. Taking them into the barn, working hair, feeding and spending the time it takes — it's just exciting to watch the progression."

Andras says each day what he does, and what other cattlemen do, is to give back to agriculture. "The show cattle industry is just a small portion of the cattle industry, but it's a way to market programs and it's a way to advertise cattle to the commercial man and that's what it's all about."

### Learning from the best

Andras credits numerous people who have helped him become the herdsman he is today. "I've been fortunate enough to have a lot of good people throughout the years lend advice and a helping hand," he says.

"Two of my greatest idols are my dad, J.C. (1981 Herdsman of the Year), and

my grandpa, George Ellis of Beartooth Ranch in Columbus, Mont. I look up to them more than anybody. Those two were very influential in my life. Though I never got to spend a lot of time with my grandpa, he was always in my mind pushing me. He was an idol not only to me but to a lot of people in the beef industry and cattle business. And I was fortunate enough to be named after him. He was one of the greatest of his time and still highly respected."

Andras says he has been fortunate enough to work side by side with folks like Matt Copeland, Nara Visa, N.M.; Chad Breeding, Miami, Texas; Mark Kelley, Ennis, Texas; Wes Horn, Stillwater, Okla., and many others.

"Of course I really appreciate Leon, Suzy and Watson Langford for believing in me to get the job done right," Andras says. "And my brother has pushed me to succeed. John has always been there for me with that tough love and his pushing has made me better."

Andras plans to continue in the industry. "Showing cattle is a passion of mine," he says. "It's what I love and enjoy doing. It's not just about the banners, it's about taking your program to the next level and advertising it to the commercial man who can improve their programs and increase profits. That's what it's all about." **HW**



## Tips from the Hereford Herdsman of the Year

Geoff Andras, Okmulgee, Okla., was recently named the 2016 Herdsman of the Year at the National Western Stock Show. He shares these tips with youth for success in the industry.

"It's all about hard work and preparation. Every bit of getting show cattle ready is done at home. From the feeding to hair work to practicing showing — it's all done at home.

"Never give up with what you want to do. There's always going to be hard days and things that might want to set you back a little bit, but stay true to what you believe in and how you want to do it and it will always carry you on." **HW**