

Welcome Home

My family and I just returned from a trip to Walt Disney World (WDW). What an experience! For those of you who have been there you know what I'm talking about. It's an amazing place.

Customer service is something the WDW characters, or staff members, do exceptionally well. From the minute we walked off the bus, we were welcomed by helpful, cheerful individuals. "Welcome home" was a phrase we heard numerous times each day during our stay. The WDW characters work tirelessly to make sure guests feel like they are "at home" while visiting the resort.

WDW is not a typical theme park. In addition to the four main theme parks, the resort contains two water parks; six golf courses; a sports complex; an auto race track; 20 resort hotels; and numerous shopping, dining and entertainment offerings. It even has its own fire department. The 20,000-plus-acre property is the largest theme park resort in the world.



Angie Stump Denton

So intrigued by the resort, I did some research after returning home. What I found is that today WDW employs more than 58,000 people, spending more than \$1.1 billion on payroll and \$478 million on benefits each year. The resort is the largest single-site employer in the U.S.

Walt Disney's vision of the Florida resort came about after realizing there was no room to grow Disneyland in California. He searched the U.S. for the perfect place for his vision. In 1964 Walt Disney Productions began quietly purchasing land in central Florida, southwest of Orlando, in a large swampland. Disney did so under the mask of many fake companies, in order to keep the price of land as low as he could.

The company acquired more than 27,000 acres of land and arranged favorable state legislation that provided unprecedented quasi-governmental control over the area to be developed. In 1966 Disney and his brother, Roy, announced plans for what they called "Disney World."

Unfortunately Disney died before his dream became a reality. Construction began in 1967, less than a year after his death, and Magic Kingdom opened to the public Oct. 1, 1971.

As I've thought about the 58,000 WDW employees and their sincere friendliness I've summarized it's because of the kids — ages 1 to 99. The smiles on the faces of WDW visitors must rub off on the WDW characters. I know Wesley, my son, and Nathaniel, my nephew, were smiles from the moment they opened their eyes till they closed them again each day of our stay. And honestly,

this 30-some-year-old mom enjoyed every minute too.

More smiles

Growing up our family vacations weren't to places like WDW or Disneyland, but our yearly trek to the Junior National Polled Hereford Show brought smiles to me and my sisters' faces. Similar to WDW the junior national is a place that feels like home as you spend the week with your Hereford family. Whether it was making the top-cut in our class or just playing cards with our friends on the showbox, we cherished every moment at the junior national.

Now as a Hereford employee, I see those same smiles and excitement continue during the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE). I still look forward to the event each summer even though I'm too old to walk in the showring with a heifer. Now you can find me in the ring behind the camera trying to capture those precious smiles of our junior members.

In this issue we highlight the upcoming JNHE that will be in Denver July 7-14. The eight-page section that starts on Page 37 includes a schedule, hotel information, contest options and a listing of JNHE judges. The section also includes a list of all summer junior shows. Turn to Page 34 for information about other family-friendly activities available in the Denver area.

I look forward to seeing you in Denver; it will be a "Hereford Celebration" full of smiles and excitement.

Best wishes

This month we say goodbye to Teresa Oe, American Hereford Association (AHA) communication coordinator and *Hereford World* assistant editor. Teresa will be moving back home to her family's ranch this summer. I will miss her talent as a writer, editor and communicator, as well as her vision, creativity and friendship.

Teresa has done an amazing job spreading the Hereford message in other publications. As Hereford breeders we should be proud and excited about the media impressions we've had in the last 12 months, which are all thanks to Teresa's skill and dedication.

We've made great strides in reaching commercial bull buyers and giving them reasons to buy Herefords. As a communication team, we're committed to seeing those efforts continue and will strive to keep Herefords in the news.

Best of luck, Teresa; we'll miss you. Thanks for sharing your talents with the Hereford breed. **HW**