

Supporter

Bob Call invests in the future of the Hereford breed by placing faith in youth programs.

by **Cassie Bacon**



As a young boy, Bob Call recalls driving oxen with his granddad in rural Oklahoma, using the words “gee” and “ha” to steer the working animals. Little did he know this early experience would spark an interest in Hereford cattle and become the focal point of his retirement years.

Breeder for 33 years

Bob and his wife, Dolores, operate CBY Polled Herefords in Cushing,

Okla. What started as a three-man partnership – Bob Call, Robert Bland and Ken York – in the mid-’70s is now solely operated by Bob and Dolores.

“I started raising polled Hereford cattle only by chance in 1975,” says 80-year-old Bob, with a smile. “When the partnership decided to break up, Dolores and I took 10 heifers to build on what we now have today.”

John Loewen, an Oklahoma Hereford breeder, says Bob started in the Hereford business merely as

a hobby and now he and Dolores do all of the labor themselves.

“Dolores gets credit for always opening the gates,” John says with a laugh. “She is always the gate keeper when visitors come out to the farm. I don’t know how Bob trained her so well.”

Bob says he is proud of his wife’s willingness to help. He explains not only does she always open the gate for the truck but also gets out and shuts it when they go back through.

Bob and Dolores began dating in high school. The couple married three years later after Bob sold his horse to buy an engagement ring for Dolores.

Opening gates is not the only way Dolores helps her husband. The couple continue to cut their own cedar trees, carry feed sacks around the farm and maintain other daily chores. Hereford cattle have been their means of staying active and healthy, John says.

“Let me demonstrate how we feed hay,” Bob says with a chuckle. “She drives the pickup while I stand in the back and throw the alfalfa off to the cows.”

Bob’s grandfather was a member of the Bartlesville, Okla., Roundup Club, and Bob drove his grandfather’s oxen in several parades throughout the state. Bob demonstrates in 1945 with his grandfather’s oxen and his own horse, which he later sold to purchase an engagement ring for Dolores.



While Dolores readily jumps at the chance to get gates for her husband, she asks that they be easy to open. Bob and Dolores feed and check cows together every morning.

While Bob says their “place isn’t fancy,” the couple maintains a herd with rich Hereford pedigrees and annually sells bulls to commercial cattlemen and show heifers to youth within the region.

Dolores maintains all the herd records. She insists “the bull,” referring to her husband, makes all the breeding decisions.

“Bob is management,” Dolores says. “When things don’t go good, management didn’t do very good.”

Strong financial background

Bob’s life has not always been surrounded with Hereford cattle. In the Air Force for four years, Bob was stationed in Colorado and Texas. Dolores worked in the banking industry during his military years and continued her career afterward. After the Air Force, Bob earned accounting degrees from both Coffeyville Community College and the University of Kansas.

“When Bob went to college, me and the government put him through school,” Dolores says.

In 1962 Bob and Dolores moved to Cushing and started a certified public accountant business. Bob was a managing partner of CBEW Professional Group LLP, a certified public accounting firm, until retirement 18 years ago. The firm still operates today in four Oklahoma towns — Stillwater, Drumright, Pawnee and Cushing — managing returns for cities, hospitals, and of course, the Calls.

Service to the Association

Many Hereford members remember the landmark 2000 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Tulsa, Okla. Elected as the chairman, Bob made the first merged junior national a huge

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success, setting a high bar for today’s standards.

“When Wisconsin hosted the Expo, I spent many hours on the phone with Bob,” says Steve Folkman, owner of C&L Hereford Ranch, Ixonia, Wis. “He coached me through many of the steps and challenges with hosting an event of this magnitude.”

Although he had been a leader all his life through his own CPA firm and membership in the Lions Club, serving as JNHE chairman helped Bob get “on the radar screen” as a leader for the American Hereford Association (AHA), according to John. In the fall of 2000, Bob was elected to the AHA Board, serving as chairman of the finance committee for almost four years.

John had known of Bob for years, but their relationship was not developed until they served on the AHA Board together. Today, they remain close friends, and John often calls on Bob as an advisor.

“I wouldn’t have been as successful if it wasn’t for Bob; Bob’s a driver,” John says. “My first year on the Board, I was lucky enough Bob was already on there, so I could hit the ground running because of his mentorship. It was unique being from the same state because we were able to travel to meetings together.”

John says Bob rehearsed Board ideas with him during their rides to Board meetings and other Hereford functions. He credits Bob



Bob received a painting in recognition of the endless amount of time he dedicated to the success of the 2000 JNHE.

for AHA’s first financial officer hire and says Bob is recognized by many past Board members for reorganizing finances when financial stability was not the Association’s strong point. With his financial ideas in place, leaders of the organization can now reflect on how they are doing and provide visibility to all members.

“Bob has been an awfully instrumental person to this

continued on page 68...



Now retired for 18 years, Bob was a managing partner of CBEW Professional Group, LLP, a certified public accounting firm. Bob still visits the firm often.

Bob’s claim to fame

Claim to fame: Bob served as a math tutor for the legendary basketball player Wilt Chamberlain at Kansas University.

A fisherman at heart: With a strong love for fishing, Bob can often be found in his straw hat throwing hula poppers during summer days of bass fishing.

Certificate of membership: Orville Sweet signed a certificate of membership from the American Polled Hereford Association for CBY Polled Herefords on Dec. 17, 1975.

A friendly goodbye: While goodbyes can sometimes be sad, Bob can be expected to smile positively and say “toodaloo.” HW



Bob presented the Bob and Dolores Call Scholarship to Nicole Starr at the 2007 HYFA "Harvest Gala."

Association," Steve says. "During our service on the Board together, I recognized and realized how behind the scenes Bob really was. He was a consensus builder among the group, creatively and constructively getting things done."

John says Bob is so famous on the Board that people still quote him today during meetings.

"He has a way of working with people, and they don't even realize that," Steve says. "He's able to pull that together in such a wonderful way. And I've never seen Bob with a personal agenda. It's always for someone else."

With his strong background in accounting and business, many say Bob has bettered everyone in the breed. He is always looking out for today's youth.

In 2002 Bob was appointed to the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) board. He continues in this role today and has served two terms as president.



Bob and Dolores Call enjoy time with their Herefords.

"HYFA has struggled for many years," John says. "Bob came in as chairman and reorganized the board. He almost single handedly brought the almost non-existent board of \$200,000 to more than \$1 million within the first year."

Before Bob's appointment, HYFA consisted of the American Hereford Women, National Organization of Poll-ettes and the AHA boards. During his first year on the board, he was the mastermind in reorganizing the HYFA board with resignation of all current members and a new slate of carefully selected individuals.

With the new selection process, board members could be targeted for their premier ability to market the program to reach their \$5 million endowment goal most efficiently.

"Donating to HYFA is worth it because most of the money gets used for the purpose it is put in there for."

"The current structure of the youth foundation can be accredited to Bob Call," says Chris Stephens, past HYFA staff director.

At the first Gala event Bob initiated, he says they just wanted to make people aware of the foundation. He says it also was the first time to have the horned and polled segments together, creating unity within the breed and association.

"Youth is how the breed will stay in business," says Bob. "Our youth make up our future and will have to continue on. John Wayne is not going to come riding over the hill to save our breed."

Recently, Bob and Dolores donated \$100,000 to HYFA.

"She wrote the check," says Bob. "I just made the decision. I did that to help other board members step up."

For youth like Nicole Starr, the Calls' selfless donation to Hereford youth will provide a way for her to attend college. Starr received a \$2,500 Bob and Dolores Call Scholarship at last year's HYFA events in Kansas City.

"It is nice to have the finances available to me," says Starr. "But more importantly, it's an honor to be recognized as a junior and have the support of breeders to ensure my education. Longtime breeders like Bob have contributed to the history of the breed and lay the groundwork for our Association. With my experience on the junior board, I have witnessed the support of HYFA through leadership events such as PRIDE to help our juniors be successful in the beef industry."

Bob always responds to comments of his service and generosity with humbleness.

"It seemed like a good idea to give to HYFA," Bob says. "We don't have any kids, and it helps somebody go to college. Donating to HYFA is worth it because most of the

money gets used for the purpose it is put in there for, as the board covers their own expenses and there are no administration costs."

With a heart of passion coupled with a strong feeling for the cause, Bob and Dolores will continue to be advocates for the Hereford breed and especially the youth. His generosity of time and financial support are appreciated by all.

"Bob has a heart bigger than his body when it comes to juniors," Steve says. "Bob's strong contributions and infectious personality set the bar high for other Hereford breeders." **HW**