

Facing Challenges: One Day at a Time



Angie Stump Denton

I love my job.

There's no doubt about it: I love writing about Herefords and promoting our breed, and I especially enjoy getting to know our members and sharing their stories, ideas and tips with others.

It's hard to believe this is my tenth Hereford herd book as editor. Each year my team and I attempted to come up with a different theme. Honestly, last year's "service" theme was one I didn't know how to follow, and then there was Atlas.

What a devastating blizzard. My heart ached for those Hereford breeders affected by the storm along with the other farmers and ranchers in its path.

While I was thinking about those producers affected by the blizzard, it struck me how Mother Nature has also wreaked havoc on so many other parts of the country. From droughts to floods to tornadoes to wildfires, she has recently challenged Hereford breeders and other agriculturalists. And, thus, the theme of "Mother Nature's Challenges" was born.

Farmers and ranchers will always be at the mercy of Mother Nature. They may not always like the challenges she throws, but they adapt and keep on doing what they do best — producing the food, fuel and fiber important to our country's economy.

In this issue we share stories of how Hereford breeders and other cattle producers have survived "Mother Nature's Challenges." Hereford breeders and Hereford cattle are hardy, and when working together, our members can face any challenge and thrive.

Dedicated to Seth

Today is Father's Day. Yes, the magazine is to be to the printer tomorrow, and I'm just now writing my column. The good news is I'm taking after the two amazing editors who have been my mentors — their columns were always the last to go to the printer, as well.

I am so lucky to have an amazing man in my life whom I call "Dad." With three daughters, he has not had it easy, and now with three sons-in-law, four grandsons and three granddaughters, he definitely has his hands full. We are so lucky to have him as a role model.

I'd also be amiss not to mention the other "dad" in my life, my husband, John. He too is such an amazing dad. Because of him I'm able to travel across the country and to do what I love — working for the American Hereford Association — while he keeps things on track at home with our two boys. He's such a rock in my life, and I can't thank him enough.

But, today, I'm thinking about those who have lost their dads this year and, even more so, those dads who have lost their sons.

On March 30 our Hereford family lost one of our own way too soon. Seth McKay tragically died in a one-car accident. He was on his way to church and then was planning to wash and clip his Hereford heifers with his sister, Bailey, and parents, Grant and Linda, getting ready for the first show of the season the following weekend.

Seth touched so many lives in his short 17 years. Just like those whom we feature in this issue that have been affected by Mother Nature, my heart aches for the McKay and Crays families as they face life's challenges without Seth.

Seth, thanks for making such a difference in all of our lives. Your legacy lives on in all those whom you touched.

It's amazing how fast a person's perspective can change. I hope reading this issue encourages you to count your blessings and to hug those around you a little tighter because no one knows when life will change.