

## Cindy Coleman



You could say Cindy Coleman, Raytown, Mo., has “been there and done that” at the American Hereford Association (AHA). Cindy joined the American Polled Hereford Association (APHA) staff in 1973, working for four years in the accounting department before accepting a job offer for a higher paying position at a local printer. After only eight months, Cindy returned to the APHA to operate the keypunch machine, which she ran for four years.

For the next 25 years, Cindy pursued positions in the education and research department, the mailroom, the reception desk and the customer service department before settling into her niche as records supervisor in 2000. She says her experience from the various areas within the Association qualified her for the position, although everyone in the office is cross trained.

As supervisor, Cindy is responsible for training other employees on the AHA system and ensuring they know how to efficiently handle calls with breeders.

“I make sure the records department and customer service department work well for our breeders,” Cindy says.

She did bookkeeping at a life insurance company before joining the APHA staff and admits she has learned a lot through handling data at the Association. She says change has been swift and tremendous during her 33-year tenure.

“Technology has streamlined everything we do,” she says. “Almost all the changes we have experienced are a result of technology. The number of employees (at the Association) has decreased because of technology and because of retirement.”

Cindy says working with people, both AHA employees and customers, is the best part of her job. Though some calls can be challenging, it is well worth the extra effort to satisfy customers, she explains.

“They (producers) are all interesting and all have a different story to tell,” Cindy adds. “You may get an occasional grump, but they need at least one person to be kind to them and give them good qualified answers. You never know what kind of day or week someone has had when they call you.”

She says she remembers one man who harshly criticized her because of an error on a certificate. But, after solving the problem for him, he would only talk to her when he needed help. Often he would call just to say hello and visit with Cindy.

Cindy enjoys the family-like atmosphere of the AHA office and the ability of the group to put aside differences to support each other.

“It’s where you meet all your best friends; it’s more of a family here than anything,” she says. “It’s nice to work in a place where everyone cares.”

When she’s not at the office, Cindy enjoys taking motorcycle trips with her husband, David. In the spring and summer, if the weather cooperates, Cindy and David hit the road almost every weekend for daytrips with friends. For weeklong trips, they trailer their bikes to other states. During the past five years, she and David have ridden in South Dakota, Colorado, Kentucky, North Carolina, Arkansas and Missouri. **HW**

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## Mary Ellen Hummel



“Behind every successful man, there is a great woman.” Mary Ellen Hummel proves that proverb true by serving as executive assistant to Craig Huffhines, American Hereford Association (AHA) executive vice president.

Mary Ellen plans meetings, helps with the process of electing new board members, records show points and helps Craig with numerous projects.

“As Craig’s job changes, so does mine,” says Mary Ellen. “Organizational skills are very important to my job.” She explains that teaching for more than 13 years provided a lot of experience in maintaining a structured and organized schedule on a daily basis.

Originally from Denver, Colo., Mary Ellen has taught preschool and kindergarten in Littleton, Colo., and Kansas City, Mo. She and her husband, Ken, lived in Littleton for 12 years before moving to Murfreesboro, Tenn., for 18 months. In 1985 they moved to Kansas City after Ken accepted a job offer.

Mary Ellen began working in the AHA accounting department in 1988. Since then, she has “done a little bit of everything” at the Association, including duties in the records department and subscriptions department, says Mary Ellen. Hop

Dickenson, the previous executive vice president, recruited Mary Ellen after his former secretary retired. Mary Ellen says Craig “acquired” her when he took the executive vice president position in 1997.

During her 17-year tenure, Mary Ellen has observed many changes within the Association.

“The number of personnel has decreased over the years and the use of technology has increased both in the office and on the ranch as well. More performance records are kept and evaluated,” she says.

AHA members and personnel are Mary Ellen’s favorite part of her experience with the Association.

“The friends I’ve made and the supportiveness of the staff toward fellow staff members whether bad times or exciting times has been really neat to see,” she says. “I do miss talking to the members, because I don’t get to do that as often anymore.”

When Mary Ellen isn’t keeping Craig on track, she enjoys singing in her church’s choir and spending time with her three children and six grandchildren. Their families live in Broomfield, Colo., Overland Park, Kan., and Solon, Iowa. **HW**

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