

# Kansas Century Breeder Starts Junior Hereford Movement

*President of first Hereford youth organization shares histories of group, family ranch.*

by *Teresa Oe*



The AHA recognized M Bar Ranch, Winfield, Kan., as a Century Hereford Breeder ranch during the AHA Annual Membership Meeting Oct. 22, 2007. Pictured (l to r) are: Jack Ward, AHA chief operating officer and director of breed improvement; Theresa and Dwaine Waite, M Bar Ranch; and Craig Huffhines, AHA executive vice president.

**D**waine and Theresa Waite of M Bar Ranch, Winfield, Kan., have not only carried the Waite family's registered Hereford herd to and beyond 100 years but also greatly influenced junior programs throughout the country.

It was Dwaine's idea to establish the Kansas Junior Hereford Association (KJHA), the country's first formal Hereford youth organization.

Lois Schlickau, wife of the late George Schlickau, says her husband was president of the Kansas Hereford Association (KHA) when Dwaine in his youth asked "if they couldn't get something going for the juniors."

"Mr. Schlickau called a meeting in the fall of 1957, and a group of young people met with the Kansas Hereford Association officers," Dwaine says. "Also

present was Andy Duffle, director of junior activities for the American Hereford Association (AHA).

This was the beginning of the Kansas Junior Hereford Association."

SR Mark L1 K553, purchased from the former Stone Hereford Ranch, Hermiston, Ore., was a major herd sire for the Waites in the 1970s. This is one of his twin sons raised on the Waite ranch.



This is a top Waite calf from the family's 102nd year of production.



Kansas Hereford Tour participants stopped at M Bar Ranch last summer to view the cattle herd, as well as the metal corral system that includes more than 700 feet of fence and 13 gates.

An article in the December 1957 issue of *The American Hereford Journal* says Dwaine was elected president at a Nov. 10 meeting in Hutchinson, Kan. Other officers were Dorothy Johnson, Zenith, secretary-treasurer; John Condell, El Dorado, vice president; Stanley Stout, Cottonwood Falls, reporter; and Ross Deewall, Coldwater, sentinel. Directors included Ann Hoy, El Dorado; Bill Reed, Benton; Clint Birkenbaugh, Cleveland; and Colleen Ungeheuer, Centerville.

The article also stated, "A person wishing to be a charter member of the organization must have his dues of \$2.50 paid before the Kansas Livestock Convention next March." Theresa was one of 35 charter members.

In the years to follow, Dwaine says state Hereford youth organizations began to pop

up all over the country, following Kansas' example. In response, Duffle organized the American Junior Hereford Association (AJHA, now the National Junior Hereford Association) in October 1965

as the young cattlemen arm of the AHA. Dwaine was asked to address the delegation at the first junior national convention.

The KJHA became known outside the U.S., too. "England, Canada and Australia junior associations asked to copy our bylaws," Dwaine says.

As the KJHA and other junior Hereford associations were developing, so was a relationship between Dwaine and Theresa. Their families lived only four miles from each other, and Theresa's father and uncles purchased bulls from the Waites.

"We went to the same country grade school for two years, belonged to the same 4-H club, and competed in county fairs and numerous judging contests together," Theresa says. "We never dated until my last year in high school and when I was in college.

As they say, 'the rest is history.'"

A large part of this history has been continued KJHA involvement, as the couple, now in their 60s and 70s, served many years as advisors to the group. Dwaine is especially proud that the organization has produced several national officers.

"One of my happiest moments was when one of our juniors, Glenn Oleen, became the national junior president," Dwaine says.

Oleen, too, can well remember the election of 1968 and the role that Dwaine played in his accomplishment. "If he wouldn't have encouraged me, I probably wouldn't have been on the national board," Oleen says. "The junior program has always been a highlight of his life, and he continues to be very supportive."

Dwaine and Theresa have also been active in the KHA and Kansas Hereford Women organizations. They've attended national Hereford shows and events, served in leadership roles, and hosted state field days, tour stops and judging contests.

"Through our involvement, we've received training and gained responsibility," Theresa says. "The most enjoyable part has been traveling to different parts of the country, seeing other ranches and meeting people who have a common interest. Many lasting friendships have evolved from the Hereford business and activities."

One such friendship is with Rex and Vernolis Siebert, Diamond X Ranch, Marion, Kan. Recently retired, Rex says, "I sold them quite a few females and a bull or two. Now, we're just good friends. Dwaine is a true, diehard Hereford man and well-respected."

### Waite family Hereford history

The reason for this dedication to the breed, Dwaine says, is that Hereford cattle have long provided for his family. "Herefords were

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Dwaine (in the pen) "talks cattle" with attendees at a Waite sale in the 1970s.

## Timeline

- Mid-1870s** – Leon and Charity Waite began ranching and farming near Winfield, Kan., in the valley of the Walnut River.
- 1906** – Leon purchased the Waites' first registered Herefords.
- 1929** – Leon's son Boyd joined the operation.
- 1931** – Leon's son Kenneth joined the operation.
- Early 1940s** – The Waites purchased influential herd sires WHR Contender Domino 1st and WHR Worthy Domino 41st from Wyoming Hereford Ranch, Cheyenne.
- 1951** – Boyd and Kenneth bought the family ranch.
- Mid-1950s** – The Waites hosted their first production sale at the ranch.
- 1957** – The KJHA formed, and Boyd's son Dwaine was the first president at the age of 19.
- Late 1950s** – Dwaine, his brother Larry and Kenneth's son Ralph became part owners in the ranch.
- 1963** – Dwaine married Theresa Groene, and the couple moved to the ranch where Theresa grew up, just four miles from the Waite property.
- 1965** – The AHA organized the AJHA.
- Late 1960s** – Dwaine and Larry assumed full ownership of the ranch. A Waite bull won the first all-breed bull test in Fredonia, Kan.
- 1977** – The Waite cow herd peaked in size at 144 head.
- 1985** – Dwaine and Larry dispersed the herd at the last family production sale. Dwaine bought five of the top cows and one bred heifer to build his current cow herd and start M Bar Ranch.
- 2007** – The AHA recognized Dwaine and Theresa's operation, M Bar Ranch, as a Century Hereford Breeder ranch. The KJHA turned 50 years old.



good to my parents and grandparents for many years," he says. "And they've produced well for us, too."

Dwaine's grandparents, Leon and Charity Waite, settled northwest of Winfield in the valley of the Walnut River in the mid-1870s. There, they raised hogs, commercial cattle, horses, mules and chickens.

By the 1890s, Dwaine says Leon had orders for his registered Berkshire hogs from not only Kansas but also Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi and Utah.

After a state-mandated vaccination for hog cholera in 1903, the herd actually contracted the disease, and more than 300 hogs died or had to be destroyed. Soon after, Leon turned his livestock focus to Hereford cattle.

He bought the family's first registered females of Anxiety 4th bloodlines in 1906, and Robert Hazlett, Hazford Place, El Dorado, sold him his first herd bull.

The foundation of the operation was and still is functionality. "Every cow should produce a live calf and be easy to handle," Dwaine says.

In addition to Herefords, farming was an important part of the business with wheat, milo and alfalfa as main crops throughout the years.

Waite youth were successful in FFA with their cattle and crop projects. Leon's son Boyd was elected the first president of the Kansas FFA Association and the first Midwest Region vice president of the National FFA Organization. He received his State Farmer and American Farmer degrees as did his brother Kenneth, son Dwaine and two grandsons Justin and Austin.

Boyd and Kenneth joined the Waite operation following high school graduation in 1929 and 1931, respectively. Previously, it had been known as Walnut Valley Stock Farm. They changed the name to Walnut Valley Hereford Ranch and began to increase cattle numbers.

The Waites purchased sires WHR Contender Domino 1st and WHR Worthy Domino 41st from Wyoming Hereford Ranch, Cheyenne, in the early 1940s, genetics which Dwaine says contributed significantly to the operation's success. "They and their progeny complemented each other in that time period, and great improvement was achieved," he says.

Leon passed in 1944, followed by Charity in 1951. The boys purchased the place after Charity's death, and it became Waite Bros. at the Walnut Valley Hereford Ranch. The cattle herd consisted of 60 to 70 females.

Until the late 1940s, the Waites had sold cattle through private treaty and at the Winfield sale barn. By the end of the decade, they were selling in consignment sales across the state.

"Many times we had the highest Hereford average," Dwaine says.

The family first hosted its

own production sale at the ranch in the mid-1950s and continued to do so every year thereafter through 1985. During this period, the herd showed influence from sires Real Silver Domino 193, Colo Domino L185 and SR Mark L1 K553.

Toward the end of the 1950s, Dwaine, his brother Larry and Kenneth's son Ralph became part owners of the ranch. Ralph later left the operation, Boyd and Kenneth passed, and Dwaine and Larry remained as owners and operators until 1985.

In 1963 Dwaine married Theresa, and the couple made their home up the road a few miles on the ranch where Theresa was raised. Her family had owned commercial Herefords and baldies in earlier years, so Theresa, too, had a deep appreciation for the breed.

"I grew up knowing the importance of the breeding of the Hereford cattle

and their impact on a commercial cow herd and feedlot cattle," she says. "The Hereford performance helped my family ship fed cattle to the Kansas City Stock Yards to receive top dollar. Herefords have always been my preference."

Dwaine and Theresa, together with Larry and his wife, Karen, continued to make improvements to the Waite cattle. Three bulls raised on the ranch contended in the first all-breed bull test program at Fredonia, Kan., in the late 1960s. Dwaine notes that one of these bulls won the test and became the first officially performance-tested bull to sell in Kansas.

The cow herd peaked in size in 1977-1978 with 144 head to calve between the fall and spring. Dwaine recalls — with a laugh — the seven sets of twins born that fall.

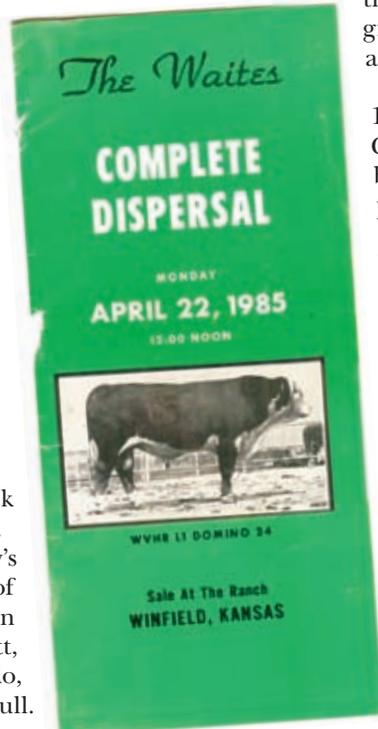
Health issues caused the brothers to disperse the herd in 1985. Dwaine, though, purchased five of the top cows and one of the bred heifers at the dispersal sale. "They were a set of young cows bred to L1 Domino 970," Dwaine says. "I added to this initial purchase to continue to build my current cow herd."

Line 1 blood is strong in the herd that now consists of about 25 head. "Although our cow herd is small, it is still very productive," Dwaine says. "As the cows aged, I added young heifers from Rex and Vernolis' herd. Their cattle were like ours in that they were dependable, calving each year and easy to handle."

The Waites' main herd sire, O L1 Domino N215, is evidence that their encouragement of young people has paid off in their own operation and in the Hereford breed. They purchased the sire from Oleen, a KJHA member they helped many years ago.

Dwaine and Theresa now raise their Herefords under the name M Bar Ranch on the property where they settled after marriage. The AHA recognized the operation as a Century Hereford Breeder ranch at last year's AHA Annual Membership Meeting.

As for the KJHA, it celebrated a golden anniversary in 2007. The Waites celebrated, too, remembering the role they had played in its development and looking forward to more years of supporting the organization and breed. **HW**



Pictured is the catalog cover from the Waites' last production sale. On the inside of many of their catalogs was the slogan, "Help Keep America Beautiful, Raise Herefords."