

Opportunity

As I write this column, we have just wrapped up the 2008 American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Meeting weekend in Kansas City. It was a stimulating weekend that included an excellent marketing forum on Saturday, followed by a needed and successful open forum, during which members had a chance to ask Board members questions about AHA programs. As I reflect on the weekend, the word that sticks in my mind is "opportunity."

We all realize fiscal year 2008 was not a year of growth and prosperity, but I would challenge anyone who would disagree that it was a year that we positioned ourselves as an organization to be ready to grow and prosper. I believe we are in a position that will allow us to capitalize on the opportunity to increase our market share in the commercial cow-calf industry, in the grocery store and in foodservice.



Angie Stump Denton



Longtime Hereford employee Bud Snidow was recognized during the Livestock Publication (LPC) Gala, Oct. 31 as the 2008 LPC Headliner Award winner. Bud's plaque will hang in the Wall of Honor at the American Royal Complex in Kansas City, Mo. Pictured following the presentation (l to r) are: Craig Huffhines, AHA executive vice president; Angie Stump Denton, *Hereford World* editor; Snidow; and Amy Cowan, AHA marketing and shows coordinator.

I hope as you listened to the committee reports during the Annual Meeting or reviewed the *2008 Annual Report* you got excited about the opportunities we are going to have as a breed the next 12 months and beyond. You have to be excited about how, with the help of your \$100 member service fee, we are documenting the value of Herefords in the commercial industry. During fiscal year 2009, we will be able to share data from several research projects including Harris Ranch, Circle A and Amana that prove the Hereford advantage.

We do have a lot to celebrate as Hereford breeders; we continue to see increased demand in the market place for not only seedstock but also commercial Hereford replacement females and Hereford-influenced feeder cattle.

Let's take Tom Field's message from the breeders' forum to heart. Let's strive to produce problem-free cattle that make life easy for the commercial cattleman. "The opportunity is there; the choice is ours."

Highlights of the 2008 Annual Meeting start on Page 18. A copy of the *2008 Annual Report* was in the November *Hereford World* or you can find a copy online at Hereford.org under the "Annual Report" tab.

Good luck Chris

Just prior to the Annual Meeting, I heard the news that Chris Stephens, AHA youth activities director, has accepted a new career opportunity.

Chris not only did an amazing job leading and

organizing the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) but also served as the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) director. Through the years Chris has spent countless hours giving to our youth and our breed.

I've been lucky to know Chris since I was a member of the National Junior Polled Hereford Council (NJPHC). I watched Chris grow as a junior member and then devote his time on the NJPHC. He served as NJPHC chairman during a time when we had two junior organizations and the process of merging was being discussed. It wasn't an easy time to be on the NJPHC, and he did an amazing job leading the group and setting a future direction for the organization.

In December 2002 I was so excited to hear that Chris would be joining the AHA staff and leading the youth activities department. There was no doubt in my mind he could lead the Hereford youth program to a whole new level, and, in my opinion, he has done just that. Under his leadership, the Junior National Hereford Expo has developed into a premier event that is so much more than a cattle show, and the HYFA was able to distribute more than \$60,000 in scholarships in 2008.

Thanks, Chris, for your passion, dedication and hard work. The NJHA is a better organization because of you. Best wishes as you begin your career at Kansas State University (K-State) as a K-State Foundation development officer. I look forward to seeing you in K-State purple. **HW**