



When it comes to show cattle, more specifically Hereford cattle, the recently crowned National Hereford Queen, 18-year-old Whitney Andras, from Checotah, Okla., is no newcomer to the business. A fifth-generation Hereford breeder on the Andras side and a fourth-generation on the Ellis side, Whitney comes from a family that has been devoted to the Hereford breed for many years, making her a perfect candidate to represent the organization as its queen.

"I went to my first show when I was 10 days old," Whitney says. Since that

Hereford in Her Blood

A fifth- and fourth-generation Hereford breeder, Whitney Andras was crowned National Hereford Queen during the American Royal.

by Meg Drake

first show, she has attended numerous Hereford events and activities across the U.S. and Canada. Her deep-rooted passion and involvement stem from a long line of family members who have been active in the Hereford breed.

"My Grammy Fay Ellis was a founding member of the National Organization of Poll-ettes and the first chairman," Whitney says with pride.

Among other family involvements, she says her mother served on the Junior Polled Hereford Council and was vice president. Her brother John served on the National Junior Hereford Association board, her dad's family received the Century Hereford Breeder award at last year's Annual Meeting in Kansas City, and her mother's father, George Ellis, is a very respected name in the business.

With generations of Hereford involvement, it only seems natural for Whitney to represent the Hereford breed first as the Oklahoma Hereford Queen and now as the National Hereford Queen.

Whitney was crowned the 2012-13 National Hereford Queen prior to the

selection of the champion Hereford bull during the 2012 American Royal National Hereford Show in Kansas City on Nov. 4.

Whitney competed against three other young women from across the U.S. for the title. The National Hereford Queen program is managed by the National Hereford Women. Queen candidates are evaluated on their involvement with and knowledge of the Hereford breed, behavior, attitude, appearance and interaction with producers, as well as their résumés and interviews. Judges look for a responsible, well-rounded young lady who is willing to spend an entire year traveling all over the country to represent the Hereford breed to her best ability.

First runner-up honors went to MaKayla Rutt, Minden, Neb.; Bridget Beran, Claflin, Kan., was named second runner-up, and the Miss Congeniality award was presented to Cara Cummings, Gilmer, Texas.

Although Whitney's family boasts an impressive repertoire, she has had her own fair share of successes both in and out of the showring.

Some of her most noted achievements include winning her division at the 2008 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Kansas City, Mo., exhibiting the third overall female at the 2008 Oklahoma Youth Expo and winning showmanship four years in a row at the Oklahoma state show.

An active member of the Junior Hereford Association of Oklahoma, Whitney has served the organization as secretary, treasurer, vice president and, currently, president. She has attended nine JNHEs and two Program for Reaching Individuals Determined to Excel (PRIDE) Conventions.

Currently a freshman at Connors State College in Warner, Okla.,



Hereford royalty honored during the 2012 American Royal (l to r) are: Cara Cummings, Gilmer, Texas, Miss Congeniality; Bridget Beran, Claflin, Kan., second runner-up; MaKayla Rutt, Minden, Neb., first runner-up; Whitney Andras, Checotah, Okla., 2012-13 National Hereford Queen; and Amanda Bacon, Siloam Springs, Ark., 2011-12 National Hereford Queen.

Whitney is pursuing an associate's degree in science and serving as a member of the freshman livestock judging team.

After Connors, Whitney plans to transfer to either Texas Tech or Oklahoma State University, where she hopes to dual major in agricultural communications and agribusiness.

Although busy with college and judging, Whitney says she is extremely excited to begin her stint as the National Hereford Queen.

"I want to be able to attend as many events as I can and be there for all of the juniors and breeders whether it be cattle related or not," Whitney says. "I'm looking forward to being able to be an ambassador for the Hereford breed and travel across the country and visit all of my fellow breeders."

She also says she hopes to set an example for Hereford youth that she may cross paths with during her reign.



Herefords are a family affair for both the Andras and Ellis families. Whitney's family, who traveled to Kansas City to support her as she vied for National Hereford Queen, (pictured l to r) are: her aunt, Donna (Ellis) Todd; her father, J.C. Andras; her mother, Deb Andras; her maternal grandmother, Fay Ellis; and her brother, Geoff Andras.

"I want them to know that I'm a very down-to-earth person and that I will bend over backwards to help anyone in any possible way that I can," she adds. "Being chosen as the National Hereford Queen is such a humbling experience. I am honored to represent the Hereford breed and the great tradition this role represents."

Whitney says one of her greatest role models is her "Papa," George Ellis.

"That is the person that I look up to the most," she says. "To make such a difference in the breed and the cattle industry, plus make such a positive impact on everybody, that is something that I would like to do someday."

Although she didn't have the chance to meet her grandfather, Whitney said she knows he'd be proud of her new title as she represents the breed he loved so much. **HW**