

# Cherished Memories

Banners and ribbons, trophies and bronzes, pristine white and a beautiful crown — all directly associated with the role of National Hereford Queen. But that role also carries many more challenges and responsibilities. From the travel and interaction with other Hereford enthusiasts to the smiles on young exhibitors' faces — all responsibilities and opportunities synonymous with the role of National Hereford Queen have resulted in memories I will cherish forever.

Excited and overwhelmed are understatement to how I felt this time last year. To receive the honor to represent the breed that helped make me who I am today is something that I will always hold very dear and true to my heart. Many said the year would be gone before I knew it; little did I know it was gone in a blink of an eye. Sharing the excitement of the winners, becoming a role model for young ladies and witnessing the pride on parents' faces were all priceless moments that surpassed all my expectations.

My reign as queen allowed me to travel more than 20,000 miles last year. I was honored to have presided over all six major Hereford shows — Louisville, Reno, Denver, Fort Worth, Harrisburg and Kansas City — as well as the Junior National Hereford Expo in Kansas City this past summer. I witnessed, firsthand, record-setting events as well as record-selling animals in our beloved breed.

Attending the shows was an incredible experience, but even more enjoyable was attending individual breeders' production sales. I was truly honored to be invited to attend sales across the U.S. I have done countless interviews, have visited with hundreds of people and cherish every minute I had in the pristine white and crown.

I learned how much "behind the scenes" work goes into producing these incredible events. The American Hereford Association (AHA) has a staff that is second to none, fun to work with and always willing to lend a helping hand.

Members of the National Hereford Women, the sponsor for the National

Hereford Queen, were always willing to help out in any way they could. The directors who make up the National Junior Hereford Association board were absolutely awesome to work with — always there, always willing to assist and very supportive. It is an honor as well as a very humbling experience to be surrounded by so many who believe so strongly in our breed at every membership level.

The number of individuals and breeders who helped me, both in and out of the arena, is too long to even try to list — "it took a village." But I send out a huge, heartfelt "thank you" to each and every one of you. Every Hereford activity I attended was an amazing experience. I especially want to thank the Oklahoma Hereford breeders for choosing me as their Oklahoma Hereford Queen and for their continued support as the National Hereford Queen.

The role of National Hereford Queen is more than handing out awards and standing at the backdrop with the winners. It's a privilege and an honor to promote our breed and our industry. The Hereford breed carries strong traditions and is backed by many multi-generation families, including my own.

I was excited to crown the new 2013-14 National Hereford Queen in Kansas City this past month. I know the crown and title are in very capable hands with Brooke Jensen, Courtland, Kan., now representing our breed. Hereford blood also has run deep in her veins for three generations — dating back to Kinnaber Cattle Co. in Canada. I wish her the very best and hope she enjoys the incredible experience as much as I.

To share a quote — "Where there is no struggle, there is no strength, and nothing in this world, worth having, comes easy." Spending the year as the ambassador of the breed I love was not without its challenges, but it's even



more challenging to say farewell to an honor I proudly held. My future will always include involvement with the Hereford breed. The AHA is a wonderful organization, featuring wonderful people that I am proud to call my Hereford family.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

*Whitney Andras*

2012-13 National Hereford Queen