

# Looking Ahead



Jack Ward

As you study this issue of the *Hereford World*, you will see that the American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Meeting was a great success. I would like to congratulate Jack Turner and Jimmy Powell for their induction into the Hereford Hall of Fame and Art Handel Jr. for being inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit. It was great to hear the stories they told and to share in their history and their contribution to the Hereford breed during the Hereford Honoree Reception.

The Hereford Youth Foundation of American awarded 23 deserving National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members with more than \$140,000 in scholarships, including 10 recipients of the Vanier Family scholarships at \$10,000 each. It was exciting to hear the juniors express their appreciation as they accepted their scholarships.

Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) recognized their partners in the packing, food service and retail segments who have shown growth and commitment to the CHB brand over the past year.

To start Friday evening's reception, the AHA recognized the Shaw family for its leadership. As Sam retired on Saturday morning, he represented the third generation of the Shaw family to serve as AHA president. The Shaw family's commitment to the breed and the seedstock industry is unprecedented, and I

would personally like to congratulate the entire family.

A big change with this year's Annual Meeting was the addition of a trade show and the expansion of the educational forum on Friday afternoon. The breakout sessions during the forum were intended to give members an opportunity to interact with staff and industry leaders. The AHA will continue to build on these for the 2017 Annual Meeting, and I ask that you take part in the survey that has been sent out so we can identify additional topics you would like covered.

To close out the weekend, the AHA had six great candidates to fill the three open Board positions, and I would like to congratulate them all. It is exciting to see the passion that members have for the position and the commitment that all of the candidates have for the breed.

As strong as fiscal year 2016 was for the AHA, it is more exciting to look to the future. Plans are in place for the AHA to build on its young sire test program, to move toward a more robust genetic evaluation, to conduct a new strategic plan, to grow and expand CHB, to continue to build a marketing opportunity for documented Hereford and Hereford-influenced feeder cattle, redesign the AHA website, and to grow membership and demand for Hereford cattle. All of these, along with other

projects, are attainable for the next fiscal year and will continue to position Hereford cattle well within the commercial industry.

## Bridging the gap

More specifically, as the junior membership keeps growing, we need youth to understand the task and opportunity ahead of them. As the world population grows, the demand for high-quality, wholesome, efficient cattle will be needed to feed this growth.

The NJHA is filled with energetic, sound minds with the desire to continue to promote Hereford cattle and the entire beef industry. The NJHA has done a great job of providing a platform for youth to get involved with various parts of the industry, but our staff and Board would like to continue to bridge the gap and to build a program that will allow our youth to understand all parts of the industry.

In the next few weeks, the AHA will introduce a program that will allow our junior members to send cattle to a commercial feedyard to feed and harvest these cattle. This will provide them insight on how the commercial feedlot and packing industry work.

As we close out 2016, I would like to wish all of you a very blessed, merry Christmas. **HW**