

Hereford Hall of Fame, Merit Inductees Honored

The American Hereford Association (AHA) recognized two Hereford breeders who have committed their lives to the Hereford breed Oct. 27 at the Hereford Honoree Reception during the AHA Annual Meeting and Conference in Kansas City, Mo.

Lester Schafer, Buffalo Lake, Minn., and Byron Bayers, Twin Bridges, Mont., were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame, which recognizes breeders who have dynamically influenced the direction and advancement of the Hereford breed.

"We congratulate both of these men for the impact they have made on the Hereford breed," says Jack Ward, AHA chief executive officer. "Their dedication to the breed is inspiring and I am honored to induct them into the Hereford Hall of Fame."

Schafer was also honored with the Century Breeder award, which recognizes Hereford breeders who have stood the test of time and families who have been dedicated to raising Herefords for 100 years.

Also during the reception, Eddie Sims, Elgin, Okla., and Dwayne Dietz, Billings, Mont., were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit. These

inductees are not necessarily Hereford breeders but have, in their own ways, greatly influenced the Hereford breed and the cattle industry.

"Eddie and Dwayne are great friends of the Hereford breed, and the AHA is honored to induct them into the Hereford Hall of Merit," Ward says.



Lester Schafer

Lester Schafer was raised on the farm where he currently resides. He graduated from Buffalo Lake High School in 1944 and went on to serve in the military in 1945, where he was a member of the Army of Occupation in Germany after World War II.

He was discharged from the military in 1947 and attended the University of Minnesota-St. Paul, where he graduated with a degree in animal husbandry.

The registered Hereford herd Schafer runs was originally started by his aunt and uncle in 1917. The farm received century farm status in 2000.

Schafer purchased a scale and began collecting weaning weights

on calves in 1960. When the AHA established the Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) program a few years later, he was one of the first to sign up.

Throughout the years, he has remained active in the Minnesota Hereford Association, the Minnesota Hereford Breeders and the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association. Schafer served as the secretary for the Minnesota Hereford Association for 25 years and has been inducted into the Minnesota Hereford Breeders Hall of Fame and the Minnesota Livestock Hall of Fame.

He and his wife, Kathleen, have four children — Mary, Kala, Laurie and John. The couple have spent their entire lives farming and ranching on the same farm where Schafer grew up.

Byron Bayers

Byron Bayers has spent almost all of his 80 years involved with the Hereford breed.

Bayers Hereford Ranch was established in 1918 and is the oldest continuous running Hereford herd in the state of Montana. The original herd was primarily polled and was gradually transitioned to horned cattle until polled Hereford influence was brought back in the late 1990s.

After graduating from the University of Montana in 1952, Bayers served as an officer in the United States Air Force before returning to the ranch in 1955 after he married his wife, Pauline.

He served as president of the Montana Hereford Association in 1958, 1960 and 1970 and was elected president of the AHA in 1976. Bayers Hereford Ranch was a member of the Montana Beef Performance Association and a charter member of the AHA's Whole Herd TPR program.



Lester Schafer of Buffalo Lake, Minn., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame. Pictured (l to r) are Terri Barber, 2017 AHA president; Molly Geditz; Laurie Schroeder; Kathleen Schafer; Schafer; Carla Greenwood; Mary Chicos; and Jim Bellis, AHA board member.



Byron Bayers of Twin Bridges, Mont., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame. Pictured (l to r) are Terri Barber, 2017 AHA president; Mary Ann Bayers; Rich Bayers; Bayers; Kathy Bayers; Jill Hotchkiss; Marc Hotchkiss; and Jim Bellis, AHA board member.

In the '60s and early '70s, he judged at almost every major Hereford show in the U.S. including the National Western Stock Show, the Chicago International, Fort Worth, Houston and Phoenix.

Bayers was given the University of Montana's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1976 and was inducted into the Montana State Fair Pioneer Hall of Fame in 1981. In 2008 he received the Canadian Ambassador Award from the Canadian Hereford Association.

In 1966 he and his family established *Hereford America*. The paper is currently mailed to every state and seven countries.

in 1968 and quickly became one of the industry's leading auctioneers. Through National Cattle Services, he has sold and managed purebred cattle sales in 44 states and seven Canadian provinces. As an auctioneer and sale manager, Sims has been instrumental in influencing the value and quality of Hereford cattle for the past 50 years.

Along with his wife, Ruth, he helped to found the Junior Hereford Association of Oklahoma (JHAO). He, Ruth and their children and grandchildren are active in both the National Junior Hereford Association and the JHAO.

Sims is quick to volunteer his auctioning services to help raise money for junior activities and scholarships. His commitment to the Mile High Night Sale in Denver has benefitted the Hereford Youth Foundation of America.

position for the *Western Livestock Journal* in 1969, where he visited many ranches and traveled to many cattle sales throughout the United States.

After a five-year stint as a fieldman for the American Angus Association, Dietz became a fieldman for the AHA in 1979. His territory covered Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho and parts of Alberta, Canada.

It was during his years at the AHA that he became recognized as one of the best cattle marketers in the country. His passion and excitement for the Hereford breed was infectious. His commitment to serving those around him has influenced industry professionals across the country.

After retiring from the AHA in 1992, Dietz began promoting and selling Herefords and has been instrumental in helping several Hereford breeders begin their herds.

In 2006 he began selling commercial advertising for the *Western Ag Reporter* in Billings, Mont., where he still works today.

Dietz and his wife, Janet, have six children and eight great-grandchildren. **HW**



Eddie Sims

After graduating with a degree in animal science from Oklahoma State University, Eddie Sims started his

career in the

Hereford breed as a fieldman for the American Polled Hereford Association.

Since then, he has dedicated his life to promoting Hereford cattle. He established National Cattle Services

Dwayne Dietz

After graduating from Kansas State University, Dwayne Dietz began his career as a fieldman for *Drovers Journal*. He then transitioned to a fieldman



Eddie Sims of Elgin, Okla., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit. Pictured (l to r) are Terri Barber, 2017 AHA president, Sims; Ruth Sims; and Jim Bellis, AHA board member.



Dwayne Dietz of Billings, Mont., was inducted into the Hereford Hall of Merit. Pictured (l to r) are Terri Barber, 2017 AHA president; Dietz; Janet Dietz; and Jim Bellis, AHA board member.