

Atkins Elected AHA President



Pete Atkins

Pete Atkins, Tea, S.D., was announced as the new president of the American Hereford Association (AHA) during the Annual Meeting and Conference Oct. 27 in Kansas City, Mo.

“The Hereford breed is made up of great cattle and great people. We have tremendous momentum in the breed right now, and I look forward to working together with the staff and Board to continue the momentum and expand Hereford influence across the beef industry,” Pete says. “I am truly humbled and honored to have the opportunity to serve this great breed and look forward to the coming year.”

Pete and his wife, Laura, and three sons, Scott, Craig and Paul, own and operate Atkins Herefords. The family’s goal for the operation is to produce high-performing cattle with moderate birth weights that have eye appeal and will work for the commercial cattleman. Emphasis is placed on raising sound, trouble-free cattle, and udder quality in the cow herd is stressed heavily. When selecting breeding stock, the Atkins use a balance of all tools available.

Pete was raised on a diversified cattle, hog and crop farming operation in southeastern South Dakota, where he and his family live today. The family began collecting and reporting performance data in 1975 and have used artificial insemination (AI) since the late 1970s and embryo transfer (ET) for the past 10 years.

Today, Atkins Herefords consists of a base herd of 25 registered cows, and it produces an additional 20-50 ET calves each year. Together with their good friends and partners, the Jerry Delaney family, the Atkins market bulls through an annual bull sale, and host an online female sale each fall. Atkins Herefords consigns bulls

and females to the Mile High Night Sale and exhibits carloads of bulls and pens of heifers with the Delaneys each year in Denver.

Birdwell selected vice president

Joel Birdwell was selected to serve as the 2019 AHA vice president. He and his wife, Bridget, and three sons, Jarret, Judson and Jhett, reside in Kingfisher, Okla., on the ranch his family homesteaded 115 years ago.

Joel raised and showed Hereford cattle in his youth and was involved in state and national junior Hereford programs. He attended Oklahoma State University (OSU) and was a member of the 1995 livestock judging team.

Upon graduation, Joel was hired by OSU to manage its purebred beef cattle herd, which consisted of 500 purebred cows and five breeds. He was responsible for managing the AI and ET programs, the student workforce and the annual production sale.



Joel Birdwell



Pictured is the **2019 American Hereford Association (AHA) Board of Directors**. Seated (l to r) are: **Pete Atkins**, president, Tea, S.D.; **Joel Birdwell**, vice president, Kingfisher, Okla.; **Bruce Thomas**, Goldcreek, Mont.; and **Jack Ward**, AHA executive vice president. Directors standing (l to r) are: **Mark St. Pierre**, El Nido, Calif.; **Bruce Everhart**, Waldron, Ind.; **Andrew Matheny**, Mays Lick, Ky.; **Tommy Mead**, Midville, Ga.; **Craig Beran**, Claflin, Kan.; **Nate Frederickson**, Spearfish, S.D.; and **Kyle Pérez**, Nara Visa, N.M. Not pictured is **Joe Waggoner**, Carthage, Miss.

In 2002, Joel and Bridget moved to Kingfisher to help expand Bridget's family's farming and cattle operation. The Birdwells focus on raising bulls and females that excel in economically important traits — calving ease, marbling, fertility, fleshing ability and rapid growth to a moderate mature size. They run approximately 2,000 head of stocker cattle annually. They also have more than 400 commercial cows and utilize a three-breed crossbreeding rotation of Hereford, Angus and Charolais genetics. Cattle are marketed through video and private treaty sales.

Joel partners with his father on 300 registered Hereford and Angus cows, which are on the family ranch in Fletcher, Okla. They utilize AI and calve both in the spring and the fall. Approximately 100 head of bulls and females are marketed through their production sale hosted in February as well as through private treaty. He has also followed in his father's footsteps and has been growing his purebred auction business for the past 10 years.

Directors elected

Delegates elected three new directors during the membership meeting. Craig Beran, Claflin, Kan.; Bruce Everhart, Waldron, Ind.; and Andrew Matheny, Mays Lick, Ky., will each serve four-year terms on the 12-member Board.

Completing their terms on the AHA Board were outgoing president Kevin Schultz, Haviland, Kan.; Jim Mickelson, Santa Rosa, Calif.; and Bob Thompson, Rolla, Mo.

Craig Beran

Along with his three brothers, Craig owns and operates B&D Herefords and Angus, which consists of 800 cows. B&D Herefords and Angus has been raising registered Hereford cattle for 50 years and holds two annual sales. The Season Opener sale in March is in its 32nd year, and the Fall Classic Sale began in 2018. Between the two sales, B&D Herefords and Angus markets approximately 200 bulls with a focus



Craig Beran

on performance and a highly efficient cow herd.

Craig has been an active member of the AHA for more than 30 years and has served as a delegate for Kansas for the past 20 years. He has also served on the nominating committee for the AHA Board. Within the Kansas Hereford Association, he has served as president and as a board member. In support of Hereford youth, Craig and B&D Herefords and Angus have been a sponsor for the Kansas Junior Hereford Show and the JNHE. As a representative of Kansas and American agriculture, Craig traveled with the Kansas Department of Agriculture on a beef genetics trade mission to Uruguay and Argentina to visit Hereford and Angus ranches.

On a local level, Craig has served on the Barton County Farm Bureau board, the Barton County Farm Service Agency board, the Beaver Grain Corporation board and the finance board for Holy Family Parish. He is also a founding member of the Claflin Recreation Commission.

Craig is married to Michelle Beran, and they have two children — John, who is pursuing a graduate degree in archeology at Eastern New Mexico University, and Bridget, who works as an agriculture journalist and was an active member of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA). Michelle has served on the National Hereford Women board of directors and was secretary for most of her tenure in addition to serving as parliamentarian and chairman of the queen committee.

Bruce Everhart

Everhart Herefords is a 50-year purebred operation consisting of 25 head. The operation sells bulls, steers and heifers to commercial and junior members in the Midwest and utilizes grass and wood pastures not suitable for corn and soybean production. Its herd was built on junior heifers purchased annually from Wiese and Sons over a 15-year period. Breeding some of the best females from this iconic herd



Bruce Everhart

to some of the most elite bulls of the breed has produced champions at state and national shows. The highlights of the program are raising the reserve supreme heifer at the Indiana State Fair and the reserve national champion female at the JNHE.

Bruce recently retired after a 40-year career in ag banking. He managed an ag banking team in the Midwest with Wells Fargo Bank. Bruce is also a board member and past president of the Indiana Hereford Association. He has served leadership roles in hosting three extremely successful JNHEs in Indiana. He is currently the vice chairman and finance chair of the Hereford Youth Foundation of America and a board member of the Hereford Legacy Fund LLC.

Bruce also serves on the Rush Shelby Energy cooperative board and is a member of the Indiana State Fair Commission. He and his wife of 38 years, Shoshanna, have two children — son, Blake, and his wife, Ashley, and daughter, Jordan, and her husband, Brian — and six grandchildren.

Andrew Matheny

Matheny Herefords is a 150-head operation that began in 1990. The goal at Matheny Herefords is to produce Hereford cattle that fit the demand of its customers to perform well in both purebred and commercial operations. He is a past member of the Kentucky Hereford Association board of directors as well as a past member of the American Junior Hereford Association (AJHA) board of directors from 1985-87.

In 1982 Andrew purchased a Hereford cow as an FFA project, marking the beginning of his involvement in the Hereford breed. He then became involved in the AJHA, where he met his wife, Suzanne. In 1990 they began Matheny Herefords and have grown it to a 150-head operation. Their spring calving program is a diverse system, which allows them to utilize AI and ET technologies. Each year their Hereford



Andrew Matheny

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calves are split between natural mating and ET calves, totaling 50 head. The remainder of their cow herd is used as recipients to raise ET calves for other purebred breeders.

The set-up of the Matheny Herefords program also allows the family to sell genetics from their herd twice each year. Females are marketed through an annual production sale, The Breeder's Cup, held each fall. Bulls are sold in conjunction with Boyd Beef Cattle and Meyers Angus in an annual spring bull sale. The family also sells cattle via private treaty to purebred breeders each year. A large majority of their calves are contract ET calves, but the remaining commercial calves are sold in the Kentucky Hereford-Influenced Feeder Calf sales.

The goal at Matheny Herefords is to produce Hereford cattle that fit the demand of its customers to perform well in both purebred and commercial operations. Focusing on phenotype as well as genomic predictors has allowed the Mathenys to produce cattle that have adapted to the needs of their customers. Each year they strive to breed cattle that will have a positive impact on the industry and will be profitable for their customers.

Andrew is a member of the AHA and the Kentucky Hereford Association. He has been a Kentucky voting delegate at the Annual Meeting since 2014, has served on the Kentucky State Show planning committee since 2015 and has been a Kentucky Junior Hereford Association advisor

since 2017. Andrew also served on the executive planning committee for the JNHEs in 2006 and 2017. He is a past member of the Kentucky Hereford Association board of directors as well as a past member of the AJHA board of directors from 1985-87.

Andrew is a member of the Mason County Cattleman's Association, the Kentucky Cattleman's Association and the Mason County Livestock Improvement Association. He is also a member and deacon at Highland Christian Church.

Andrew and Suzanne have two children, Austin and Taylor Belle, who both serve on the NJHA board of directors **HW**