

Vested in the Breed



The positivity and passion of the late Sandra Ostgaard, Dayton, Ohio, was felt throughout the week of the 2019 JNHE.

by *Diane Meyer*

What began as a normal Sunday soon filled with sorrow and disbelief. On June 9, 2019, the National Hereford Women (NHW) and the Hereford breed lost a dear friend, Sandra Ostgaard.

“Sandy,” as she was best known, was as passionate about the breed and its youth as it gets. With deep roots in the Hereford industry, she devoted her life to serving and mentoring its up-and-coming members.

Members of the NHW knew something special needed to be done to honor Sandy, who was serving on the NHW board of directors and headed the historian committee at the time of her passing.

“After we got the news, we started coming up with new ways to memorialize her,” says NHW President Erin Lockhart. “One of the big ways was naming the NOP [National Organization of Poll-ettes] scholarship this year in memory of her.”

At this year’s VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE), Lockhart and NHW Vice President Dana Pieper were on hand to present the 2019 Poll-ette Founders Scholarship in Sandy’s honor to this year’s recipients, Bailey Morrell and Hannah Williams. The annual scholarship recognizes juniors who have made significant contributions to the National Junior Hereford Association

as well as honors the women who laid the foundation for the National Organization of Poll-ettes, which combined with the American Hereford Women in 2009 to form the NHW — a very fitting scholarship to pay tribute to Sandra’s legacy.

One of their own

The NHW board felt a simple goodbye would not do justice to Sandy’s many years of service for the group. In

celebration of her memory, a lone, turquoise vest has been draped over an empty seat at every NHW event in her absence.

“We wanted to make sure her presence was still felt,” Lockhart says. “Though she is not with us, she was still our 12th woman on the board and she is still a part of us — she has not been replaced.”

Sandy was passionate about the National Queen program and so, in her memory, the queens and NHW members signed the back of a framed picture of “Secrets” — Sandy’s favorite painting — which the NHW presented to the Ostgaard family at the Ohio State Fair this summer.

“One of the key things we wanted to do is make sure the family knows that we felt that she’s not [forgotten],” says fellow NHW board member Shannon Worrell. “We feel it like they feel it, and we’ll feel her absence for a long time.”

Undoubtedly, the Hereford family will feel Sandy’s absence for years to come, but her kind and selfless spirit will always be remembered.

“She was a wealth of knowledge and I always went to her for advice,” says Trudy Nolles, who currently serves as committee chair for the National Hereford Queen Program. “She was just a loving, caring individual that enjoyed life.”

Although Sandy has moved on to greener pastures, she left her mark on the Hereford breed and her legacy serves as a reminder of the unison of the breed.

“The Hereford family is always outstretching,” Lockhart says. “It has no end. It helps people see that the unity the whole breed has and you come to see when one has fallen we all gather around together to remember.” **HW**