

Ostgaard Honored as Hereford Woman of the Year

A respectful silence followed by a deserving applause swept through the crowd as the Hereford Woman of the Year was announced at the National Hereford Women (NHW) annual meeting Oct. 25 in Kansas City, Mo. This year's recipient of the annual award went to the late Sandra "Sandy" Ostgaard, Dayton, Ohio, who passed away unexpectedly June 9, 2019.

Sandy had a love for the Hereford breed and, most of all, the people of the breed. Her giving nature embodied the characteristics of the Hereford Woman of the Year award, which recognizes an NHW member exhibiting outstanding leadership and who excels in promoting the Hereford breed.

Sandy grew up on a Hereford farm in Irwin, Ohio, and continued raising Hereford cattle with her husband, John. The couple always went to great lengths to help youth, to improve the NHW organization and to educate others about cattle, specifically Herefords. Her commitment to educating youth led her to attend the Ohio State University, where she received a bachelor's degree in education and became a member of the alumni association.

Sandy was devoted to serving and mentoring the next generation of Hereford breeders and did so by serving as president of the Ohio Hereford Women's Association. She was serving on the NHW board of directors and headed the historian committee at the time of her passing. To honor Sandy's legacy and to highlight her dedication to the breed and its breeders, the NHW presented the 2019 Poll-ette Founders Scholarship in her memory at the 2019 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo. The NHW continued to remember Sandy by placing a single turquoise vest on an empty seat at every NHW event in her absence.



The late Sandra "Sandy" Ostgaard was named the 2019 Hereford Woman of the Year at the National Hereford Women annual meeting. Pictured accepting the award on Sandy's behalf (l to r) are: Tom Ostgaard, Tucker Ostgaard, John Ostgaard, Riley Evoniuk, Kurtis Evoniuk and Erika Evoniuk.



Sandy Ostgaard

The Ohio Hereford Women believe Sandy embodied all a Hereford woman should, and she went above and beyond on every responsibility. She left a lasting impression on Hereford breeders with her welcoming smile, contagious laugh and constant words of encouragement.

"She was a wealth of knowledge and I always went to her for advice," says Trudy Nolles, former NHW board director. "She was just a loving, caring individual that enjoyed life."

The Hereford breed and the NHW certainly lost a valued team member, but Sandy's passion and legacy lives on in her children, grandchildren and countless others she mentored throughout her lifetime.

"Our mom used to brag about how our Herefords would always be put on the main aisle in the beef barn at our county fair," says Thomas Ostgaard. "She always said it was because they were so pretty and docile which easily welcomed fair spectators to reach in and stroke their beautiful white faces. She taught us that being a good Hereford breeder is more than just producing a quality herd, it also includes educating the public on the beef industry and qualities that the Hereford breed offers to the industry. She demonstrated that being a Hereford breeder is an identity that you proudly share with all those that you come in contact with." **HW**