

by *Diane Meyer*

Another 'New Beginning' Cliché

In the spirit of spring, appreciate the opportunities a fresh start can bring.



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Standing in the rubble of my childhood home last September, I half-jokingly pointed out I wouldn't have to clean out the house when Dad died. His home had burned down in the Napa Valley wildfires two days earlier. Three stories worth of debris lay collapsed in our basement, but everyone was okay. We had everything and nothing all at once.

A few months later, I occasionally think about my high school yearbooks or FFA jacket tucked away in the closet. I imagine playing the upright baby grand piano in the living room with my first deer head looking down from the wall. But, something I realize when I think about all that "stuff" laying in a pile of rubble — I don't actually miss it. I miss the snapshot of time each item symbolizes.

I'm thankful for a sound mind that hasn't robbed me of memories. Those are more valuable than any object. With memories, you still have everything you think is gone.

Something else I realize when I think about all that stuff laying in a pile of rubble — this is a fresh start. In the spirit of spring, let's be thankful for new beginnings. Sometimes, we need a clean slate. You never know what opportunities can arise from desolation.

In this issue

As we "focus on females" in this month's *Hereford World*, we begin by honoring one of our own. Celebrate Christy Benigno on Page 30 as we wish her a fulfilling retirement after 15 years of exceptional editorial design for the Association.

In this issue, we feature the 2020 Dams of Distinction (DOD). Turn to Page 36 for the report and then flip to Page 56 to learn about what it takes for a cow to be a DOD. The Hereford bulls recognized in 2020 for siring efficient, fertile and productive females are listed on Page 68.

As a writer, there are stories you are proud to share and stories you feel honored to share. I am honored to share the story of Martha Dixon of River Circle Farm, Hartsville, Tenn., on Page 44. When American Hereford Association Field Representative Tommy Coley told me about this idea, I was excited to highlight a strong cattlemaster for this issue. Little did I know the extent of Martha's influence on the Hereford breed. Needless to say, I will never forget the time I shared some iced beverages with Martha, Julie Chapin and Tommy and Kim Coley in the "Heart of Tennessee." Cheers to these lifelong friends who are inspired by good and inspire good in others.

Cheers to new beginnings, whether they rise from ashes or bloom after storms. Cheers to a fresh start. May your spring be bright and your smile brighter. **HW**



My dad, Bud, and his dog, Lou, survey the serene scene of their home in St. Helena, Calif., after it burned down in the Glass Fire, Sept. 28, 2020.