

Ladies at the Royal

by **Marlena Ballinger**

The National Hereford Women (NHW) met for its Annual Meeting on Saturday, Oct. 21, at the Downtown Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Kansas City, Mo. The meeting included keynote speaker Jeff Ditzenberger, the presentation of Hereford Woman of the Year, the nomination of three new board members and farewell to three retiring board members.

Jeff is the founder of TUGS: Talking, Understanding, Growing, Supporting, a nonprofit organization that brings awareness to mental health, especially among members of the agricultural industry. The 2023 National Hereford Queen, Madison Katzenberger, raised money through her queen service project for this organization.

Woman of the Year

Gwen Oleen from Kansas was awarded this year's Hereford Woman of the Year. Gwen is a long-time member of the Kansas Hereford



OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President: Sally Wingler, *Christiana, Tenn.*

Vice president: Abbygail Pitstick, *South Solon, Ohio*

President-elect: Beth Mansfield, *Liberty, Tenn.*

Secretary: Marlena Ballinger, *Bluffton, Ohio*

Treasurer: Melinda Watson, *Flemingsburg, Ky.*
6196 Mt. Sterling Rd., Flemingsburg, KY 41041

Ex Officio: Briley Miller, *Newcastle, Wyo.*

DIRECTORS

Nikki Crumm, *Anadarko, Okla.*

Melanie Fishel, *Barnardville, N.C.*

Cameron Kolinski, *Patrick Springs, Va.*

Stephanie Murnin, *Musselshell, Mont.*

Brandi Murphree, *Hamilton, Texas*

Bellana Putz, *Otley, Iowa*

Linda Sikes, *Vernon, Texas*

HerefordWomen.com



Retiring NHW board members received bronze statues for their service. Pictured (l to r) are: Bridget Beran, Briley Miller and Kathy Bryan.

Women (KHW) and continues to be actively involved. She has served many roles in her 40 plus years in the organization, including director, secretary, historian and volunteer. KHW president, Paula Acheson says, "The past couple of years, [Gwen] has been my go-to friend as I became the KHW president and has been another one of my blessings that I met through the Hereford family. She is a true role model for NHW Woman of the Year."

Meet the board

NHW welcomed three new board members: Nikki Crum, Linda Sikes and Melanie Fishel.

Along with her husband, Tray, and daughter, Nikki is part owner of Sugar Creek Cattle & Hay Company and Diamond E Hereford Affiliate in Anadarko, Okla. Her entire family is actively involved in the Hereford industry.

Linda and her husband own and operate C & L Lazy S Ranch in Vernon, Texas. The ranch consists of a small Hereford herd, hay and wheat crops.

Melanie is a past National Hereford Queen and specializes in photography, videography and graphic design. Melanie resides in Barnardville, N.C.

Retiring board members included: Briley Miller from Wyoming; Bridget

Beran from Kansas; and Kathy Bryan from Texas. NHW thanked the women for their dedication and expressed gratitude for their passion and dedication to the Hereford breed.

Weekend festivities

On Saturday, the NHW board arrived at the American Royal Center for the annual Ladies of the Royal Sale. NHW

presented its Lot 2 in the sale, which was a pick of either a refurbished king-sized headboard or a vintage chest; both items were adorned with Hereford hides. Grass Pond Farm, Greendell, N.J., first selected the headboard for \$5,500, and B&D Herefords, Claflin, Kan., bought the vintage chest for \$1,500. A huge thank you goes out to Kay Knight designs for designing an exquisite diamond Hereford pendant that was raffled off by NHW. Ryan McGuffee of Mississippi won the necklace.

On Sunday, the coronation of the National Hereford Queen was held. This year's crown went to Marie Prodell from Algoma, Wis. Marie will represent the Hereford breed around the country. Along with her tiara, she won a \$10,000 NHW Scholarship. First runner-up was Abby Johnson from Virginia; second runner-up was Jalyn Davis from Kansas; third runner-up was Elaina Walsh from Illinois; and Miss Congeniality went to Madison Maupin from Tennessee. Congratulations, ladies, and thank you for your continued support of the breed and organization.

The NHW board is excited about the upcoming year. **HW**

To join and to learn more about the NHW, visit HerefordWomen.com or email nationalherefordwomen@gmail.com.