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Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

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Hereford Crossroads #6 celebrates Northwest Nebraska's Heritage



LINDA TEAHON

Pictured above is the Sandhills Heritage Museum in Dunning and the Hereford display inside the museum.

KERRI REMPP,
DISCOVER NORTHWEST
NEBRASKA DIRECTOR

Nebraska is cattle country, and one piece of that heritage will be honored this fall in Northwest Nebraska, when Hereford Crossroads #6 makes its way to Crawford in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Crawford Hereford Breeders Association.

The Hereford Crossroads reunion will take place October 10 at the Crawford Community Building, the sixth such event organized by Nebraskans for Hereford Heritage since the group's inception in 2015. Former Crawford Hereford Breeders members will have memorabilia on display when the doors open for the 5 p.m. social hour. Other events that night include a meal at 6 p.m. and the annual Hereford Hall of Fame induction and special entertainment at 7 p.m. Typically, two Nebraska Hereford breeders and one Hereford bull are inducted into the Hall of Fame each year.

The Crawford Hereford Breeders Association was formed in 1920, with Clyde Buffington and Sam Swinbank leading the effort, said member and former sale manager Tom Lemmon. Both men were holding private bull sales, but were interested in forming a regional association that could draw additional consigners.

Eleven breeders were involved with the organization when the first sale was held in March 1920, though not all of them consigned bulls that inaugural year. Without a sale barn, the association held its initial sale at the Crawford City Park, and early sales often took place in livery stables, according to a 1970 story in Nebraska Cattleman.

"They used hay bales for seats. It was a little bit western. They had some good saddlehorses to lead the bulls in and out," Lemmon said.

The first decade of sales saw an average that never went above \$200, with the lowest at \$99 in 1925. By 1927, the association had 94 head consigned, and topped that at 95 in 1929. A year later, the average price was \$102, but founding member Clyde Buffington had the top-selling bull at \$250.

As membership grew, the association built a barn in 1941 and added a sale pavilion in 1945,

Lemmon said. The association held an organizational meeting in December or January to consign bulls, and had its annual meeting prior to its sale in March. By 1945, the association was also hosting Hereford shows.

The final show and sale for the Crawford Hereford Breeders Association took place in 1995, but the group boasted 150 members in those 75 years. Membership drew heavily from the Northwest Nebraska region, but also from breeders as far away as Mullen, Lewellen, Bridgeport, Morrill and Henry, as well as Edgemont, Hot Springs and Oelrichs, S.D.

From its earliest days, the association also supported local youth, starting a 4-H Calf Club in 1921, allowing youngsters to choose calves from the members; herds and sell them in the association sale. Lemmon's father, Cal, was one of the boys who drew lots for calves in 1921. He and fellow club members Beth Riggs, Gilbert Swinbank, Jim Buffington and Lawrence Tollman staged an all-Hereford show for President Calvin Coolidge during his 1927 visit to Ardmore, S.D., with the assistance of the association, according to a Sept. 4, 1947 issue of The Panhandle Digest.

"I still like the Hereford cattle," Lemmon said. "In talking to descendants of members, they still have fond memories of the Hereford cattle and the association. They might run Angus, but that part hasn't gone away."

Hereford cattle were introduced to the U.S. by Kentucky statesman Henry Clay in 1817, though he crossed his with shorthorn cattle to avoid inbreeding, according to the Texas State Historical Association. The first breeding herd was introduced in New York by William Sotham. The American Hereford Cattle Breeders Association (later known as the American Hereford Association, was organized in 1881 and established its permanent headquarters in Missouri in 1920.

The Nebraskans for Hereford Heritage want to continue the tradition of preserving information about the Nebraska Hereford industry. The brainchild of Richard Brown of Lincoln, it was organized in 2015 with the goal of creating a Hereford museum.

"It is our long-term goal to have our own museum somewhere in the Sandhills, ideally in central Nebraska," said Linda Teahon, one of the founding board members. At the end of the first meeting, the breeders at the meeting each contributed \$100 toward the effort and began working on fundraising ideas. Hereford Crossroads, an annual reunion of Hereford breeders, was the result. The reunions take place each October, at various locations around the state. All former members of the Crawford Hereford Breeders Association, Nebraskans for Hereford Heritage members, 4-H and FFA members and other interested parties are invited to the Hereford Crossroads #6 next month.

While they work toward their goal of establishing a Hereford museum, Nebraskans for Hereford Heritage has curated an extensive collection of paintings, sculptures, bull sale catalogs and American Herd Bull editions dating back to 1926. A rotating exhibit culled from that collection is on display at the Sandhills Heritage Museum in Dunning, which opened in 2017.

"Our collection of information is very valuable to the Hereford industry," Teahon said. "We change (the exhibit) out regularly with artwork. We have to continue to promote our Nebraska beef, and that's one thing we're trying to do."

Artist Brandon Bailey's "Under the Shade Tree" is one of the premier pieces in the collection and has become the official "flag" of the Hereford Crossroads events. It is displayed at each reunion and on special occasions at the museum in Dunning. Teahon's photo of the bulls along Goose Creek on the Benj Fink ranch near Elsmere inspired Bailey's oil painting, which was auctioned off at the Old West Trail Rodeo fundraiser several years ago. Teahon won the bidding that night and has loaned the painting to the collection.

The group also has commissioned four pieces of artwork commemorating the role of landmark bulls in Nebraska's Hereford history and also aided with the restoration and display of a metal sculpture.

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Arboretum Open House Scheduled in October

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District was awarded a 2020 Greener Towns grant from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum. The grant provides funding for efforts that improve local green infrastructure for pollinator habitat, manage stormwater, or accomplish other economic, environmental, aesthetic and social goals. The project was designed to take the barren section of ground around the Thedford Fire Hall and create an arboretum. The arboretum will provide many benefits. It will show different types of trees, shrubs and plants as well as maintenance practices like pruning, fertilizing, mulching, watering etc. and provide

a living lab for students of range, horticulture, nature, and conservation studies. It will conserve soil, water and energy, reduce runoff, aid in wind erosion and capture snow to help with water recharge. Native shrubs and plant species will be a good habitat and food source for wildlife such as pollinators, birds, insects and small mammals. This project will also assist in research to identify the species of plants that grow best in the Sandhills and will show the options that the public has for conservation vegetation in their own landscapes. Lastly, it will provide the community with an aesthetically pleasing place for people

to visit and enjoy.

A spring planting was done the first week in June and a fall planting and native grass reseeded was completed September 15th.

The progress of the project will be showcased at an open house Thursday October, 8th from 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm CT. Shane will be available to give tours and answer any questions you may have about the project. The Bessey Nursery is also donating small potted trees that will be given to anyone who wants one. As a word of warning sandburs are abundant so please wear appropriate shoes if you want to step off the path.

Two vehicle accident claims life of young Dunning rancher

Ty Milleson, 22, of Dunning was pronounced dead at the scene of a Friday night, September 18 crash in Blaine County, a Nebraska State Patrol Spokesman said.

Milleson was driving a Lincoln Town Car north on Nebraska Highway 91 near Dunning when it collided with a southbound pickup about 11:15 p.m., State Patrol investigators said. The pickup, driven by Thomas Peaster, 34, of

La Loma, New Mexico, entered the northbound lane and collided with the Town Car.

A passenger in the Town Car, Shelby Wolever Milleson, 23, of Dunning, was taken to a hospital in Kearney. Peaster suffered only minor injuries.

Services for Ty Milleson were held Sunday, September 27, at the Sandhills High School Gymnasium in Dunning. Burial was in the Purdum

Cemetery.

Milleson had moved back home to the ranch pursuing his dream of ranching and competed in rodeo. He was pursuing his auctioneering skills and was devoted to his faith in God. He and Shelby were married in August of this year.

Memorials are suggested to Sandhills Community Church or the family for a rodeo memorial.

"Brewer's Army" Repeats Freedom Ride



COURTESY PHOTO

Senator Tom Brewer with riders who joined him on the 2020 Freedom Ride as he made his way across the 43rd district to visit with constituents and listen to their concerns.

Senator Tom Brewer of the 43rd district says, "I personally do not care much for politicians who tell the people what they plan to do. To me a representative doesn't tell the people anything. The people tell the representative what to do, and my constituents aren't bashful about doing that."

Brewer did a repeat of his first campaign trek by once again organizing a "Freedom Ride" across the 43rd district and was able to visit with hundreds of constituents along the way.

Brewer and his "Brewer's Army," corps of 18 staff, friends and mostly other veterans he served with in combat, went from a kick-off "meet and greet" at the Brown County Fairgrounds in Johnstown on September 6, and concluded the over two week ride at the Thomas County Fairgrounds at Thedford.

Riding a mule, Rhino, the senator rode six to eight hours a day, and

then prepared for a meet and greet at stops.

"It was a great ride, but going from 100 degrees to 28 degrees with snow in two days was a shocker," Senator Brewer said.

The 43rd district is vast and there's plenty of area to ride 20-25 miles a day.

Senator Brewer said the town hall meeting stops allowed people to talk about their major concerns and issues including medical emergencies, but no emergency medical technicians, a lack of firefighters, the Nebraska Brand Committee, the R-line project and wind turbines that are being proposed in the Sandhills.

They also spoke a lot about property taxes, economic development and voting by mail.

Senator Brewer said the mule ride was well received in 2016 and again in 2020.

"It was enjoyable to have people come and let me know what they were thinking and we tried to hit small towns along the

way."

Freedom Ride 2020 hit the communities of Johnstown, Wood Lake, Valentine, Cody, Merriman, Gordon, Hay Springs, Chadron, Ft. Robinson State Park, Alliance, and Thedford.

"I am grateful for the direction I receive from my bosses, the people of the 43rd District, and I am honored that they have selected me to carry them out," Senator Brewer said.

He added his constituents have been able to interact with a dedicated and persistent staff he is blessed to have.

"They do the hard work of addressing the issues and helping me resolve problems for people. We don't manage to fix everything, but few in the capitol building work harder at it."

Senator Brewer will be facing Tanya Storer of Whitman, a Cherry County commissioner. In the May primary election, Brewer received 61% of the vote and Storer, 39%.