

Bud & Julia Westlake & Family

Bud Westlake has devoted his whole adult life to the breeding, managing, and promoting of purebred Suffolk, Hampshire, and Shropshire Sheep and the entire sheep industry. During this period, he has developed his Suffolk flock to National prominence at shows and sales throughout the nation. He has also coordinated export of United States sheep into foreign countries, such as Canada and South America. Throughout this time he has always approached the sheep industry with integrity required of a purebred livestock producer.

Bud Westlake was born in Union County, Ohio, on December 20, 1930, to Sam and Mary Westlake. The family farm consisted of grain and livestock. Bud and his father, Sam showed registered Shropshire and Suffolk Sheep at various county fairs and the Ohio State Fair. Bud graduated from Broadway High School in 1948 and joined the United State Air Force to serve in the Korean Conflict. He later met Julia Cone and she became his bride in August of 1952. Together they built a bond of being in the Suffolk Sheep business. Besides farming 700 acres of soybeans, corn, oats, and hay, Bud showed and judged across the nation. Julia kept the home fires burning, raising three children, Karen, Steve, and Danny. Bud and his family have been an integral part of the Ohio State Fair Sheep Barn. In addition to exhibiting many champions in both breeding and market divisions during his 58 years, he has also been selected by his peers to judge many breeds of sheep at the Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, New York, Michigan, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Iowa, and California State Fairs. He has also judged the Chicago International Livestock Show, North American International Livestock Exposition, Eastern States Exposition (Springfield, MASS), Nugget All American Suffolk Show in Reno Nevada, Keystone International Livestock Exposition, Cow Palace (San Francisco CA), Los Angeles County Fair, Midwest Stud Ram Show, Saskatoon Saskatchewan Fair, Canadian Royal in Toronto, and Expotiba Internacional in Curitiba, in the state of Parana, Brazil.

Over the course of their lifetime, Bud and his family have received a lot of recognition for their work pioneering the Suffolk breed in the Midwest, including the 1988 Ohio Master Shepherd Award in honor of Charles B. Boyles – Ohio's highest sheep honor, recognized by the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association. Bud was on the board of the National Suffolk Sheep Association for two terms and received their Distinguished Service Award in 1991, in Kansas City, MO. He was inducted into the Ohio State Fair Hall of Fame by then-governor George Voinovich in 1994 for his 40 years of exhibition and judging in Ohio. He has also been involved as President and Director of the Ohio Suffolk Sheep Association, Vice President and Director of the National Suffolk Sheep Association, and Ohio Lamb and Wool Committee Member.

Today, Bud has retired as of November 1993 (if you believe that – I have some swamp land in Florida to sell you with sheep on it!). He still has 140 breeding ewes, Julia, the three kids, 6 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. He and Julia grin when they proudly talk about grandchildren, Emily, Derek, Leigh Ann, Jarret, Josh, Jake, Evan, Karrigan, and Karis.