

United Suffolk Sheep Association

Call of Fame



2017 Inductees

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Hall of Fame

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Johnson Club Lambs, Weldon & Brian Johnson
Alan & Mary Kjedaard
Ansel Luxford
Buckeye Acres, Ron & Carla Young

The 2017 USSA Hall of Fame inductees were honored on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky during the USSA Annual Meeting and Dinner.

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Year	Inductee
2017	Johnson Club Lambs, Weldon & Brian Johnson
2017	Alan & Mary Kjedaard
2017	Ansel Luxford
2017	Buckeye Acres, Ron & Carla Young
2016	Clyde & Justina George & George Brothers
2016	Millers Livestock, Brentford & Brenda Miller
2016	Chuck Ream, Windswept Ranch
2016	Duane & Marcia Sickels
2016	John & Pam Sponaugle
2016	Dwight Stone, Stonemark Suffolks
2015	B.B. Burroughs
2015	Bob & Mark Chapman
2015	John Eagle
2015	Dr. Ben Huff
2015	George Hunter
2015	Sherwood Jackson
2015	Donna Mays
2015	Pearce McKinney
2014	Andrus Suffolks, Ken & Jim Andrus
2014	Andy Asberry
2014	Tom Burke
2014	Jim & Jacky Caras
2014	Hawkins Farm Suffolks, Glen "Sadie" Hawkins & Joy Hawkins
2014	Marvin & Sandy Heupel
2014	Joe Holbrook
2014	Bob Kimm
2014	Norman Olsen Family
2014	Tom Slack, Slack Club Lambs
2013	Wes Azeltine
2013	Betty Biellier & Family
2013	George and Fred Buckham
2013	Fred A. & Marian Coble
2013	Robert Hall
2013	Heggemeier Sheep Farms, Bill & Alice Heggemeier & James & Jody Heggemeier
2013	Dr. Harold A. Henneman
2013	Bill & Helen Hurst

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2013 Jarvis Sheep Co.
2013 Allan & VeNeal Jenkins & Annette Benson
2013 Warren Kuhl
2013 Jack Larsen
2013 Pearson Linn
2013 Larry Mead
2013 Roger Nichols
2013 Olsen Brothers, Alden & Snell
2013 Bob & Margie Paasch & Family, Donner Trail Ranch
2013 Richard Roe
2013 Roland (Rollie) & Ruth Rosenboom
2013 Wayne & Mary Skartvedt
2013 DuWayne Swenson
2013 Craig Van Arkel, Van Arkel Suffolks
2013 Harlan & Edwina Wagner
2013 Farrell Wankier
2013 Roy & Joe Warrick
2013 Bud & Julia Westlake & Family

Johnson Club Lambs *Weldon & Brian Johnson*

Weldon Johnson, Gotebo, Oklahoma, raised sheep all his life. As a young boy he started his show career which he continued as a young adult. He then passed this grand journey on to his son, Bradley and daughter, Karen.

In 1964 Weldon purchased his first Suffolk ewes. Weldon said, "The first thing we knew we had 30 to 40 ewes, and the next thing we knew we had to buy a farm to have a place to keep them. It went from a hobby to a job." He purchased Stonemark ewes from Dwight Stone for a ewe base and added a ram from Stan Heitz. Weldon helped bring the Suffolk Club Lamb Industry to prominence in Oklahoma.

Gradually Suffolks grew more popular and in 1969 Karen won Grand Champion at the Oklahoma State Fair, the first Suffolk to win Grand at a major show in Oklahoma. Weldon said, "We got our foot in the door and we were on our way". Johnson Club Lambs were Grand Champion at all major shows in Oklahoma and many across the nation.

Karen reigned as the International Suffolk Queen in 1970. It was a proud moment and year for our family to be representing a breed of sheep that we loved.

Weldon retired from sheep in 1988 and started carving as a hobby. Karen and her husband, Jim Mason took 100 ewes and Bradley and Brian took the rest of Weldon's flock to continue Johnson Club Lambs.

Weldon continued being the mastermind for Mason Suffolks and helped them evolve into a fully registered herd which proved to be predominately NN/RR. Attending the Midwest Sale and Top of the Rockies were always a highlight of the year and felt like family reunions.

Bradley and Brian have been leaders in the Club Lamb Industry for many years and have continued the winning tradition that Weldon started years ago.

Weldon's philosophy was always stay in the middle of the road. Weldon still loves talking sheep and even at the age of 92 can still judge a great one!

Alan & Mary Kjeldgaard

Alan started the Suffolk business the summer of 1963 with the purchase of the only 2 yearling ewes at the Nebraska State Sale. One of these ewes proved to be a program builder. The following year he bought 6 yearling ewes from Boys Town, their shepherd was also the herdsman for their dairy. He gave some advice to Alan that he never forgot; he said if you make your Suffolk ewes look like a Holstein cow you will always have production. He never forgot that and that created a vision in his mind of what he wanted them to look like.

A couple years later Alan met Wes Azeltine, he was always there to help young people in the sheep business. In 1969, Wes, his wife and Alan went to the Spanish Fork Valley and they got the pick of BYU rams as well as the top ram lamb and yearling ram from Olson Bros.. This yearling proved to be the game changer. They also picked up top yearling ewes from Jack Larson, Shepherd's, Olsen's and two other top breeders in the valley.

In the 70's thru late 80's they had a good commercial trade for their ram lambs, selling around 50 head a year. Over time they have lost all of our sheep producers in the area and have no demand for commercial rams. Since that time, Alan and Mary have stayed around 20 head of brood ewes and their focus now is to produce good quality show sheep. Alan states that his biggest reward isn't winning a show or selling one for a good price but going to the lambing barn and knowing he put the genetics together that please him. Alan and Mary now have 4 grandkids showing sheep at shows and they think that is pretty awesome.

Ansel Ruesford

At age 7 or 8 Ansel's dad, an attorney, brought home from work a day old orphan ewe lamb a client had given him. He had been given a Beagle pup for his birthday several days earlier, watching the bonding and playing of a pup and the lamb was deeply satisfying.

By the age of 12 Ansel had a flock of 30 crossbred ewes with their lambs being sold at a sale barn ½ hour from his place. The place consisted of 40 acres surrounded on 2 sides by big woods and on the other two by large cattle outfits whose headquarters were several miles away.

Because of the isolation, they had a problem with a large pack of feral dogs. The Beagle pup grew however into a great protector of the sheep. Had a well-lit, well fenced corral to enclose the ewes at night. The dog quickly learned to corral them himself at night fall. And slept adjacent to the pen every night. If dogs were attacking he raised holy hell- noise he could hear from his open bedroom window. He would charge out half dressed with a .22 semi-automatic rifle mostly wounding dogs - which would deter them from returning for 4 or 5 months.

After 4 years of no family vacations (because Ansel wouldn't leave the sheep) his mom put her foot down and rented them a cabin in the mountains of West Virginia for the Labor Day weekend. With the Beagle guarding at night and a friend agreeing to care by morning and night Ansel felt pretty comfortable leaving. Returned 3 days later to find the dog gone (later learned he had been stolen by rabbit hunters) and the friend not having shown up to check the sheep. And all 30 ewes dead.

Skipping ahead exactly 15 years Ansel is teaching at a neat college in the mountains of Virginia. However his wife, Carol is restless and Ansel am finding he doesn't care for faculty meetings among other things.

Carol had been teaching elementary school so they had enough money saved to buy an abandoned 100 acre farm in the mountains on the border between Virginia and West Virginia. Carol loved animals but her experience was confined to horses, dogs and cats. So the first thing Ansel did was to pick up 2 newborn orphan ewe lambs from a sheep farm about 20 miles from them...

P.S. Ansel will leaves you with a quote from Ivan Doig's "Dancing at the Rascal Fair" a novel about a homesteading family over 3 generations outside of the Ringling Mountain. Family ends up running over 4000 ewes. A summer Sunday morning grandad and 8 year old grandson sitting on the porch. The boy says

“grandad when I grow up I’m going to raise sheep.” The old man pauses a moment, looks at the boy and says: “Well son, if you’re looking to raise sheep, there is one thing you got to remember: You need to be thinking about them even when you’re not.”

Buckeye Acres

Ron & Carla Young

Ron's father, Gaylord Young, raised commercial Corriedale Sheep. His father was a little disappointed when he told him that Corriedales were not what he had in mind for his FFA project in 1965. Ron wanted to raise Suffolks, a newer and meatier breed. With that thought in mind, he purchased 2 ewe lambs and a yearling ewe from then President of the National Suffolk Sheep Association, Pearson L. Linn thus creating the beginning of Buckeye Acres Suffolks.

They slowly developed a competitive flock of Suffolks. A significant part of their program was due to Steve George and Mike Nelsh allowing them to breed ewes to one of their elite stud rams.

Reflecting back in time, a number of outstanding opportunities come to mind. Ron enjoyed traveling the United States, Mexico and Brazil judging Suffolks and sharing the Suffolk story. Serving on the National Suffolk and United Suffolk Association Board of Directors was both challenging and educational. While serving on the National Suffolk Association Board, he was assigned to be their representative on the National Scrapie Oversight Committee for 6 years. During that time Ron had the opportunity of traveling to meetings from Reno, Nevada to Washington, D.C. The Committee put together the Scrapie Program that exists yet today. A turning point was when they were able to "work" with other breeds, incorporating Scrapie DNA testing as a part of the program.

The multi-generational friendships developed over 4 decades in the Suffolk business have been a true asset through both life's highs and lows.

Ron and wife, Carla, along with their 4 children, Kristopher, Jennifer, Phillip and William, would like to thank the USSA for honoring their family. As you know, a program can't be successful without the work of the entire family.

