



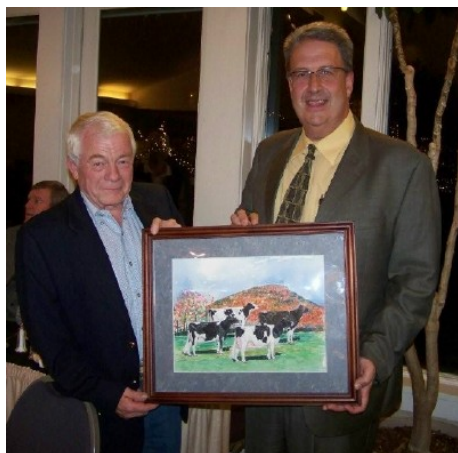
The New England Newsletter

A publication of The New England States Holstein Association, Inc.
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Fall 2011



Doug Nelson 2011 Master Breeder and Distinguished Service Award Recipient



*Water color of four of Doug's favorite cows: Lucy, Tie, Wish and Sindy
Artist: Laura Marek, CT*

Award Presentation by Tim Abbott

It is my pleasure to present these awards tonight to a person for whom I have great admiration and consider a mentor. It is very unique that both awards are given in the same year to the same person but as I read you the pedigree on this man, it will become very clear why the two go hand in hand!

His passion for breeding cattle started at a very young age. He tells stories of being just about tall enough to reach the udders of the cows he was milking when he first started out. He was raised in very humble beginnings where hard work was part of life. He remembers milking crossbred cows and dreaming some day of having a purebred Holstein cow. As a teenage, he would leave school early to go across the state to pick up fresh semen to breed his cows to in order to make better cows.

He remembers going to a sale that Dick Gould had with pure-

bred cattle when he was 12 years old and dreaming of owning cattle like the ones sold some day. Early influences in his career were Dick Gould, Dick Mallory and Bill Briggs. He learned from these people and in 1963 went out on his own with 22 head of purebred cattle. Anyone that knows him understands that risk is something he does not shy away from. In the early '60s he paid \$3,000 for a cow at a Northeast Kingdom Club sale....a lot of money at the time!

By the '80s he had built several herds of cattle and had bred some great ones. Nel Acres Johanna Senator was a huge success story. This bull that sired tall black silky daughters had 151 Ex daughters and, at one time, was the top bull in Canada.

His focus has bounced back and forth between his passion for breeding great cattle and his passion for growing commercial herds. One of my first memories of Doug was at the Lylehaven sale in 1994 when he bid up to \$90,000 on Sultry only to be outbid by the Japanese at \$92,000, showing again that he had no fear of taking risks.

One of my favorite things to do with him is to ride around his 800 acre game farm. He has bred moose, elk and deer just as passionately as he has Holsteins. He started raising elk as there was good money in velvet from their antlers, but chronic wasting disease stopped this market. Always innovative and creative, he opened a restaurant to get premium price his elk and buffalo. My favorite ride through the game farm with him was the year he had a couple moose calves in the park. We found a beautiful moose calf standing in the woods. "Come here, beautiful", he called and then turned to me and said, "Abbott, if there was an All-

American contest for moose, she would win, wouldn't she."

A favorite story from this man is associated with his most recent development of an elite herd. He tells me that his youngest son was talking about being a doctor. "I'd rather you were an undertaker than a doctor!", he told his son and urged him to get involved with cattle. From that point on, the vision of his latest adventure in the cow business started...Cowtown Holsteins. Since Cowtown began, Doug and his family have hosted many sales that have brought thousands of dollars to New England Holstein breeders. He has also been the host for one of the most successful events to hit the Holstein business in the recent decade - the North East Show Calf Summit. Doug and his family have hosted hundreds of youth at their operation and opened the doors of his great facility to the young people in New England to help fuel their passion for the business. Doug has given generously to this event and should be proud of his role in its success. The most powerful thing Doug has ever said to me is that *Vermont's greatest export product may be its youth*. Maybe that is right about our business and maybe the Summit will spark a youngster to be the next Doug Nelson and our Holstein Youth need not be "exported".

Today Doug's operations include over 2500 head of milk cows, over 5000 head total in 5 different locations, some 8000 acres, a game farm, a successful restaurant and an Elite herd that boasts many regional show winners and a Grand Champion at WDE. This herd has had 7 Ex-95 cows and a BAA of over 114.

Yet with all of these achievements his crowning glory is his family. If you think he is proud

of his cows or farms just ask him about his kids and grandkids! It is a real pleasure to see them here tonight.

It is my honor and pleasure to present this year's Master Breeder and Distinguished Service Award to Derby Line's own **DOUG NELSON**.

Following the presentation of this award, former UVM basketball head coach **Tom Brennan** entertained members with humorous stories from his career in coaching and shared his life's lessons.

Farm Tours

Sue Brown welcomed a large crowd of adult and junior members to Lylehaven.



Richard Hall welcomed visitors to Fairmont Farm where members enjoyed a bountiful barbecue and then toured the facilities.



Panel Discussion *Cow Care, let's stay ahead of the times* by Peter Waterman



An interesting panel discussion, capably moderated by Martha Seifert, was held Friday afternoon at the Stoweflake Resort in Stowe, VT after two nice farm visits. There were three members on the panel. Dr. Bob Cruickshank, Woodcrest Dairy in Ogdensburg, NY is a full-time vet in addition to owning and overseeing a 6000 herd dairy milking 2700 head. I'm not sure what he does in his spare time! Paul Knox, a former New Hampshire dairyman now farming in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, milks 1150 in two locations. Betsy Flores is Director of Regulatory Affairs for National Milk Producers Federation. She has taken the lead on educating the dairy industry on the National F.A.R.M. program.

After introducing themselves, each panelist talked about the importance of cow care. Paul Knox, always introspective and sometimes a bit of a maverick, was deliberate but very interesting. He said they had their crops custom done so they could focus more on the cows. He stressed the importance of not cutting back on basic needs such as bedding and hoof trimming when money is short. He uses sand bedding in the free stalls and has a bedded pack for close-up cows. He docks tails for safety reasons, citing sand-laced tails as a hazard to his labor force which includes some Mexicans.

Dr. Bob Cruickshank delivered an interesting message in a

slow, methodical way that made listeners hang on every word due to respect for his extensive dairy background, which is very close to the cow most of the time. He said there is no one magic bullet to cow care, but rather doing all the little things right all the time. Clean and bed 3x daily, good foot care with 3x year trimming, moving cows slowly and letting them stand to drink, taking care of dry and fresh cows without crowding, paying close attention to 30-50 day fresh cows, and building a team of experts to verify you are doing a good job.

Betsy Flores said Validus was the independent verifier of the F.A.R.M. program. Over thirty co-ops are participating and 2800 farm inspections have been done to date. The idea of the program is to give the public a positive perspective on animal care and to provide farmers with supporting documentation in the event they have an issue about their caretaking abilities.

The subject of immigrant labor was raised. Dr. Bob said he used a lot of Mexicans but the government is raiding big farms and deporting illegal workers. He has started using Puerto Ricans who do not need papers to work in the U.S. Paul is satisfied with his Mexican workers and added "the locals don't want to work on farms too much". Betsy noted that there are different proposals on immigration reform in Washington, D.C. but no legislation has been passed yet. She can be reached at blfores@nmpf.org for more information.

In closing, a couple of notable points were made: Paul Knox said, "The most expensive bedding is the bedding you didn't buy because you didn't have enough money." Dr. Bob said, "Watch out for an employee you don't know too well taking a picture of a bad situation on your farm and trying to use it against you. Make sure you know your employees." Panels are always interesting and this one was very enlightening.

Breakfast Panel
**“Opportunities Beyond
the Milk Check”**
by Bob & Beth Kenneth



Value added agriculture enterprises were the topic of the morning breakfast panel at the NE Holstein convention. The panelists kept everyone riveted with their presentation on diverse business opportunities.

Each panelist had a unique addition to their dairy farm; Doug Erb, Landaff Farmstead Cheese; Rachel Brong, Wright’s Farm Market, Restaurant and Bakery; Bob Jacquier, Laurelbrook Farm compost; and Seth Leach, Woodlawn Farm genetics. A common theme among the group was the utilization of existing assets to create a diversification. It is amazing how the enterprises have evolved. The bakery started with extra cream made into cream puffs, and now employs 50 people!

All of the panelists discussed the responsibility of maintaining a superior public image, attention to detail, and dedication to the increased work load. The dairy herd continues to be the core of the overall enterprise and each panelist maintained that the cows were integral to the operation no matter how large the diversification grew.

Questions from the audience focused on family dynamics, vision for the future, and marketing issues. The commitment to Registered Holsteins is reflected in their drive for a quality enterprise beyond the milk check.

**The New England Junior
Convention Report**

**by Aryn Martin & Kirsten
Beaudry**

The Juniors had a great time at the 2011 New England Convention in Stowe, Vermont. We kicked off the weekend with tours to Lylehaven and Fairmont farms, then returned to the Stoweflake Resort for an evening of junior competitions. First, all of the participating members completed a written exam and then teams were organized for the Junior and Senior Competition. Since it’s individual scores that count to make up our New England Dairy Bowl Teams, multiple rounds were played without any clear team winner. Following the dairy bowl competition, there were two participants in the Public Speaking Contest.



New England Youth Committee Chair Andy Birch presents Maddie Beaudry with the Public Speaking Award certificate

After the conclusion of afternoon competitions, the Junior members attended their Mexican Fiesta and received their awards in conjunction with the Senior Awards Banquet. Maggie Kirby (VT) and Kirsten Beaudry (NH) achieved the top written exam scores in their respective divisions (junior and senior). Maddie Beaudry (NH) and Kirsten Beaudry (NH) had top individual dairy bowl scores, and made their respective teams.



The Junior Dairy Bowl team competing at the 2012 National Holstein Convention is as follows: Lottie Page (NH), Maggie Kirby (VT), Maddie Beaudry (NH), and Isabel Hall (VT).



Members of the Senior Dairy Bowl Team include: Matt Fletcher (MA), Kirsten Beaudry (NH), Sarah Brochu (VT), and Heath Page (NH). Jared Birch (VT) will represent New England as the Senior Jeopardy contestant.



At the award ceremony, Kirsten Beaudry was also named the New England Distinguished Junior Member and received the John Atwood award.

The night was completed with a speech by Tom Brennan a former Basketball coach at the University of Vermont.

The Junior business meeting commenced on Saturday morning. In old business we received an overview of the 2011 Calf Summit and the 2011 National Convention in Richmond, VA. We then moved on to election of officers. The new officers are as follows: President- Aryn Martin (ME), Vice President-Kirsten Beaudry (NH), Secretary-Brittany Moon (ME), and Treasurer-Lottie Page (NH). We discussed several ideas for junior events to try to keep us all a little more involved and connected over the year including a New Hampshire Judging Tour, the Massachusetts Calf Sale, and the Calf Summit. As a final order of business, we discussed the 2012 National Holstein Convention being held in Springfield, MO. Juniors will be represented in Sr & Jr Dairy Bowl, Public Speaking, Dairy Jeopardy, the folding display contest, and the banner contest. Overall, the attending Junior members had a great time in Stowe and would like to encourage other members who missed this year's convention to stay involved. The Junior Association has a facebook group (New England Junior Holstein) where membership can be requested as well as a blog (<http://nejrhol.wordpress.com/>) that is updated on a daily basis.

Annual Business Meeting

Chris Hannan presided over the 90th annual New England meeting. Following the Treasurer's report, Finance Committee Chair Peter Waterman presented the proposed budget for discussion. Pete explained the impact on revenue of the new 10% discount program for members renewing by October 1st. He additionally noted reductions in several office expense items while maintaining strong financial support of youth programs. The association will continue its \$1,200 sponsor of the highly successful Northeast Show Calf

Summit hosted by the Vermont Holstein Association at Cowtown in Derby Line. The budget was approved at the board of director's meeting immediately following the annual meeting.

Linda Haggarty gave the membership report. While total numbers are down from last year, the distribution of membership by herd size groupings has remained fairly constant. She also noted that farms are continuing to consolidate individual memberships under a single farm name and pay for all cows registered under the same prefix.

The Breed Promotion and Show report was given by committee chair Martha Seifert. She spoke to the high quality of this year's Northeast Fall National Holstein Show at Eastern States. Over 19,000 people from 41 countries visited the World's website for live streaming of the show. Martha announced that three animals entered the ring for the Pineland Futurity. The payouts were large and included monies from the entry fees and support from Pineland Farms. In Breed Promotion, Martha announced that a single individual, Doug Nelson, received both the Master Breeder and the Distinguished Service award at the convention banquet.

Youth Committee chair Andy Birch took time from the junior meeting to update members on youth activities. He announced the new junior club officers and opened a discussion on providing more opportunities for juniors to get together throughout the year.

Region 1 National Director Peter Waterman reviewed key points from Holstein USA's national convention and matters currently under review by the board. Field Representative Bob Wilson then spoke about Holstein programs and services, noting that he continues to sign up new farms for membership.

Numerous amendments to the bylaws were approved. Most notably, the position of assistant treasurer was eliminated and the tim-

ing of the annual meeting has been changed to allow states more flexibility in hosting the New England Convention.

The slate of officers was presented and approved: Chris Hannan, President; Chris Kimball, Vice-President; Melissa Greenbacker, Secretary; and Doreen Morris, Treasurer.

Under new business, Marion Seifert expressed concern that delegates to the Holstein USA national convention are sometimes not state association members and therefore may not know the pulse of the people they are supposed to represent. She proposed the following resolution which was approved and will be sent to Holstein USA for consideration: *WHEREAS*: The people who are elected as voting delegates to Holstein USA, Inc. annual meeting are duly elected to represent the members of their state. *BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED*: that anyone elected to serve as a delegate must be a member in good standing of said state Holstein membership organization.

Betsy Bullard issued the invitation to next year's New England Convention in Maine. Preliminary plans are for a late July event with an open house and lunch at John Deere/Hammond Tractor in Fairfield, a pig roast viewing of tag sale cattle at Caverly's in Clinton, a breakfast panel and junior activities that include judging classes.

New England Committees

Finance: Chair Pete Waterman, Chris Hannan, Chris Kimball, Doreen Morris, Betsy Bullard, Lee Salonen, and Linda Haggarty

Membership: Chair Betsy Bullard, Marion Seifert, Bob Wilson

Breed Promotion & Show: Chair Martha Seifert, Bonnie Burr, Arnie Nieminen **Youth:** Chair Andy Birch, Labette Page (NH), Nicole Fletcher (MA), Leanne Moon (ME), Kirsten Kruger (CT), Lindy Birch (VT), Sylvia Panciera (RI)