

Looking to the Future

After a record-setting Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE), how can we as National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) and American Hereford Association members not think about the future of our associations and the future of the breed? If you ask me, the future is looking bright for all involved. We have a phenomenal set of junior and adult members and breeders involved right now, and there continues to be an increasing interest in the Hereford breed. We have the prime opportunity to push forward and build upon the excitement of the JNHE and to help provide a promising future for the Hereford breed.



Amanda Bacon

If you're anything like me, you feel that excitement as your heart rate picks up a bit when you're around Hereford cattle and other Hereford enthusiasts. You want to help continue making the breed stronger in the future. Then you stop, and you think, "What's my duty in all of that and what can I truly do to positively affect the future of the breed?"

You may be a junior member who is bringing one or two head of cattle to the JNHE each year, participating in one or two contests and making a couple of new friends. Or, you may be an adult member who comes to the JNHE each year solely just to watch the show. It doesn't matter what part of the nation you are coming from or how big of an operation you have back home, we each have a duty when it comes to continuing to build the breed.

I reflect on a quote by Andrew Carnegie, "Do your duty and a little more and the future will take care of itself."

Your duty as adult and junior members in an association, it is more than just doing the bare minimum and it is more than just focusing on your own operations. We all have a reason to want the Hereford breed to continue to be successful. If we each do our part to the best of our abilities, plus even a little more, we wouldn't have to speculate about the breed's future because it will take care of itself.

Reflecting on the end of my JNHE career, I've realized the importance of taking advantage of opportunities the event provides. Networking with a wider range of people than just your annual group of JNHE friends is so important. Take advantage of every opportunity there is whether it

is at the JNHE or any other time throughout the year. When you put yourself in new and different situations and provide yourself with an opportunity to grow, you will always walk away a more well-rounded person.

Getting involved is absolutely one of the best things you can do as a junior member and one of the best things you can do to help ensure that the breed continues to thrive.

We hear time and time again that the future of the breed is within the junior association. Yes, this is true; however it is also true that the future of the breed lies within the adult association as well. As members of a junior association, we need guidance and leadership from the adult association and members to ensure that as we grow, we grow in the right direction. As junior members we should take advantage of the knowledge of those around us.

If you ask me what our duty is as junior members, I would say that it is to get involved and to get as much experience as we can. Attending functions like the Faces of Leadership Conference will provide you with an immeasurable amount of knowledge and experience to help develop you as a young breeder and individual. I challenge you all to do your duty in helping the breed succeed.

I am honored to be serving as this year's NJHA chairman at a time when we have such a strong association with an incredible set of junior members. I am excited about the year ahead and all of the many great events that will come with it. My job as an NJHA board member is to serve you, so please do not hesitate to contact me if you ever need anything. With the summer coming to an end, I will be counting the days until the fall shows start. I look forward to seeing you all then! **HW**

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