

BEEF COUNCIL bullhorn

BEEF



NMBC Presence Enlivens 2010 Joint Stockman Convention

Good spirits pervaded the 2010 Joint Stockman Convention in Albuquerque at the Marriott Pyramid North. Here are a few snapshots of the event, featuring the NMBC-sponsored opening reception, the NMBC meeting, NCBA featured speaker brought in by the NMBC, and Beef Backer Award made this year to industry pioneer and Buena Vista rancher Felicia Thal.



A. Retiring NM Department of Agriculture Secretary Miley Gonzales and NMBC Chairman Cliff Copeland at NMBC meeting. B. NMBC Director Bernarr Treat and Yetta and Phil Bidegain enjoy a good laugh together. C. Former NMBC Chair, now NCBA Beef Board representative Tammy Ogilvie and NMBC Director Jim Bob Burnett on the serving line. D. Rick Richards, NMSU Extension Specialist, explains his role as go-to person for Kids, Kows 'n More. E. Emma Frost, daughter of N.M. Dept. of Agriculture marketing specialist Felicia Frost. F. NMBC Director Andres Aragon and Marriott carving chef serve up the roast beef. G. Jerry Mangham of Sysco food distributors explains the new Heritage Ranch sourced-beef program. H. Contractor Patty Waid reports on the State Fair Beef Booth to NMBC directors. I. NMBC-sponsored speaker John Lundeen, executive director, market research, NCBA, addressed consumer trends, emphasizing the importance of the Millennial generation's impact. J. NMBC directors discuss industry issues. K. NMBC directors. L. NMBC Director Darrel Brown and Mindy and David McCumber enjoy the NMBC-sponsored opening reception.



NMBC Chairman Cliff Copeland, Beef Backer Award winner Felicia Thal, and NMBC Executive Director Dina Chacon-Reitzel.

Felicia Thal Receives 2010 Beef Backer Award

The Beef Backer Award is presented annually by the New Mexico Beef Council for outstanding efforts to help advance the New Mexico beef industry through education, promotion and research. This year's award went to Felicia Thal.

When Felicia and her husband, Alan, left their home in South Africa in December, 1949, the day after they were married, she had not an inkling destiny would lead her to become a pioneer in the New Mexico beef industry. Felicia and Alan first met as children; they reconnected as students at University of Cape Town. It was Alan's internship at Cornell School of Medicine that brought them to the U.S. As the family crossed the country following the path that led Alan to become a distinguished surgeon and a pioneer in open heart surgery, Felicia continued her studies in intellectual history at Johns Hopkins, Columbia, University of Minnesota, and Wayne State University, where Alan served as chairman of surgery, while along the way teaching, raising three children, and fulfilling the many demands of her job as the wife of a nationally-

known and highly-respected physician. While living on a small farm in Kansas, in 1966 the Thals started their herd of registered Herefords. In 1973, they moved to the Thal Ranch in Buena Vista, in the heart of Mora County. By 1978, Felicia was actively involved with the team of pioneers, including Jody Clavell, Bill MacIlhenney, Loren Nunn, and Will Orndorff, whose efforts resulted in the establishment of the New Mexico Beef Council and the Checkoff. Before that, however, in 1974, Felicia attended a meeting at Philmont where she volunteered to organize membership for New Mexico Cattlegrowers in Mora and San Miguel counties.

"I would go to the auction barn," she recalls, "And I enlisted many local ranchers." Her first endeavor paid off with so many new members and she won the membership prize for recruitment.

Her success led her to travel New Mexico on behalf of the fledgling organization that became the NMBC, speaking to groups everywhere, and to carry the idea to Gov. Bruce King and the legislature. "I strongly felt the need for promotion, education and research," she says. "Jody Clavel was chairman, and I was secretary-treasurer, which was a misnomer, because there was no money, it was all absolutely voluntary back then." She served as an NMBC director from 1978-81.

Felicia went on to become chair of Research and Improvement for Cattlegrowers, bringing in speakers and organizing seminars, serving in

that capacity for eight years. In 1972, Felicia was named Cattleman of the Year; and in 1984 she received the Outstanding Leadership Award from New Mexico State University.

She then became part of the original committee that brought the idea of the Farm and Ranch Museum into reality, serving as that organization's first chairman of the board.

In addition, Felicia served for almost a decade with the State Land Office on the state board of the Soil and Water Conservation Board, representing Mora and Wagon Mound. She has also been active in the state Hereford Association, becoming its secretary-treasurer and pioneering the idea of an annual Hereford bull sale in Roswell.

"I'm glad I did it all," she says. "I worked with good people, with good colleagues. This work is only possible through cooperation."



Felicia Thal and her family celebrate her 2010 Beef Backer Award.



2010-2011 DIRECTORS — CHAIRMAN, Cliff Copeland, Purebred Producer.

VICE-CHAIRMAN, Joe Clavel, Cow-Calf Producer; **SECRETARY**, Jim Bob Burnett, Cow-Calf Producer.

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