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DAKOTA TERRITORY

BUFFALO ASSOCIATION

February, 1999



From the President Volunteer To Be A Success

It was fantastic to see such an energetic crowd at the Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show and Sale held at the end of January. At the same time, the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association also our annual Winter Conference. The quality of the buffalo at the sale and the quality of the people in our association speaks volumes about the industry itself. Our meetings were

very productive and I felt the sale was a tremendous success.

We elected three new directors at the business meeting: Annette Smith, Newcastle, WY; Chad Kremer, Vivian, SD; and Chad Heim, Rockham, SD. I would like to welcome them aboard. It is gratifying to see people make the commitment to work for their industry. I think we all realize the need to do our share to make this business a success.

As a board, we appreciated the direction our membership provided by the strategic planning sessions. A big thank you to Judy Wood for coordinating those efforts. We will address these issues with specific emphasis on the number one priority, educating the public. Along those lines, committees have been formed and chairpersons named.

Education: Co-Chairs, Chad Kremer, 605-683-6339
Dixie Byrd, 605-895-2119.

Marketing: Roy Liedtke, 307-682-6599.

Financial Relations: Annette Smith, 307-663-7645.

Animal Regulations: Chad Heim, 605-472-1000.

BHBC Sale: Steve Sutton, 605-258-2863.

BHBC Show: Jason Sparling, 605-380-0800.

If any of you are interested in serving on these committees, please contact the chairperson. We need your involvement. By working together, we can build on the foundation for this dynamic and growing industry. Looking forward to green grass, baby calves and spring rains.

Greg Smeenk, President
Dakota Territory Buffalo Association

Free time is hard to come by for just about anyone these days. For the membership of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association, the days are full and the list of chores seems to get longer and longer. That just makes your spare time all the more valuable to you and your fellow members.

Currently there are over 200 members in the DTBA and the list seems to be growing each and every day. There are six elected board members who are giving of their time and talents to help make this association successful. That still leaves a lot of people power out in the ranks.

If every member would give a little of their time, the association would be the real winner. Take the time to attend a board meeting. They are open to the public. Maybe your ideas and input will make the difference on an issue. Participate in the shows and sales hosted by your association and other regional membership organizations. If no one chose to show and sell their animals, there would be no success in the buffalo industry.

Something as little as giving up one or two days at a big show, such as the Black Hills Buffalo Classic, to help feed and water all the consigned buffalo. Maybe you could help man the DTBA booth during a show or at a local event. Even something as simple as taking your camera out to the pasture and clicking off a few good shots of your animals and then sending them in for the association to use on their display board is a good use of your time to benefit your association.

If you know of any friends or acquaintances who might be interested in the buffalo industry, bring them along to a sale or better yet, to one of the association's New Producer Seminars. Just taking time to tell about the industry to newcomers is a valuable use of your time. What better way to get people involved with this great animal than to be involved yourself. Donating items for the fun auctions is a good way to help fund the DTBA. Maybe you have thought of a new way to promote buffalo or their by products. If so, share those thoughts with a board member or another member. We are all in this industry to help each other out.

Instead of making the burden of running the DTBA fall on the six sets of shoulders of the Board of Directors, let's join together and distribute that weight a little more evenly. Get involved and help to lay the framework for a successful industry.

You Asked For It And Here It Is...The DTBA Newsletter!

Hi and welcome to the first edition of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association newsletter! The membership has been asking for a newsletter for quite some time and I am pleased to be able to present one to you. The DTBA Board of Directors decided at their meeting in January to allow me the opportunity to provide this service to you, the members, and I am truly excited about doing so.

In each edition, I will try and cover stories, sales results, current association information, meeting notices and just about anything else we can fill the pages with. When the time rolls around for summer and winter conference information and registration...you'll find the information inside these pages. The board decided to do these newsletters on an as needed basis, so you might not find one in your mailbox each and every month, but don't think we forgot you. We're just waiting to make sure each newsletter is informative and full of timely information that you can use.

Since I will be handling most of the newsletter duties, you can direct any comments, questions, mailing concerns or address changes to my attention. I will be happy to deal with them for you. If anyone has any story ideas, news tips or information they would like to see in the newsletter, you are welcome to bring

those things to me as well. You don't need to do any writing or calling, just leave those details to me. All I need is the basic information and I can take it from there. Below, you will find my address if you care to send things in the mail, or you can call or fax me at the phone number provided and for those of you who like to e-mail, that address is there, too.

I hope you enjoy this first newsletter. It was fun to put together and there was a lot of ground to cover, with the DTBA Winter Conference and the Black Hills Buffalo Classic. I look forward to visiting with many of you at upcoming shows and sales. Feel free to stop me and visit. I always have time to talk with good friends.

Karen Conley, DTBA Newsletter Editor

send tips, suggestions, comments or news items to:
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Box Elder, SD 57719
phone/fax: 605-923-7755 • e-mail: tgkc@gwtc.net

Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Winter Conference

Planning for the future was a highlight of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association's Winter Conference this year. Producers and interested parties from around the region were in Rapid City, SD for the annual meeting. States represented at the meeting included North and South Dakota, Montana, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and even Canada. This wide geographic representation enforces the growing popularity of the buffalo industry.

With DTBA President, Sandy Limpert beginning the meeting, participants were asked to stand up, introduce themselves and answer the question posed at the start of the meeting, to name one problem you see in the buffalo industry today.

One of the most reoccurring answers to that question was that of marketing. How to go about marketing the meat, the most salable by product of the buffalo is the big question in front of the whole industry right now. Tying right in with how to market the meat is education. Many people in the room pointed out that without educating the public, there was no need to market. The public needs to be informed about buffalo meat, its benefits, where to find it and how to prepare it properly.

Other topics that people brought up included information for new producers, more research on disease and nutrition, education of bankers to make obtaining loans easier, feeding practices, becoming more selective in breeding practices and quality control throughout all phases of the industry, from pasture to plate. Interference from outside sources, such as animals rights activists and other organizations with harmful agendas was also discussed and many agree that the threat from these sources is very real and needs to be taken seriously.

Another issue that was touched upon was one that has potential to make or break the industry. With the buffalo industry still in its infancy stage, crucial elements are necessary to make it successful. So far, the demand for breeding stock has kept the industry going. However, as producers are becoming established, the market for breeding stock animals has become more stable and the industry focus has begun to turn to marketing the meat. That is where this new situation has begun to spring up.

While many producers that sell animals for meat finish the animals on grain, there are other producers that believe in keeping the animal all natural, feeding them only on grass. What is happening is that the division between these groups is opening up a small rift that could quickly become a large tear. A small band of people within these groups have decided to bicker between each other about whose animals are best and so on. This kind of internal conflict is one of the greatest dangers facing the industry right now. Many of the people at the DTBA meeting expressed their concerns about this situation and time was spent discussing ideas that might address this issue.

After spending time voicing their concerns, conference attendees were updated on health issues in the industry by South Dakota State Veterinarian, Dr. Sam Holland. Holland has been very pro-active and supportive of the buffalo industry and his frequent updates on health concerns are always appreciated. Dr. Holland noted that the producers need to concern themselves not only with marketing, but also the labeling and packaging of their products. There is room for everyone in this industry," he noted. "What you need to look very strongly at as a whole is the food safety issue. That is what is killing the beef industry right now. Don't fool yourself into thinking that the buffalo industry is immune to pathogens that can affect food safety."

Holland also noted that from the consumer's point of view, confidence in the product is more important than the price. "If someone thinks a product is unhealthy, they won't buy it no matter how inexpensive it is. The same is true that if a product is

safe, consumers are willing to pay more for that assurance of quality."

The Brucellosis issue was also touched upon and the one infected herd in South Dakota, according to Holland, has set a target date of May 1 of this year to have no positive reactors on the ranch. Holland hopes that if everything falls into place, South Dakota could possibly see a change in status by this fall.

Another presenter, Dennis Sexhus of New Rockford, ND, updated the membership on the North American Bison Coop. Sexhus is the CEO of the company, a producer-owned coop.

The rest of the day was spent breaking up into groups to do some strategic planning. The groups each took an idea from the morning's comments and ran with it. They discussed how to deal with the issues and also ranked them in what they felt was the order of importance of items that needed to be dealt with. These strategic planning sessions were new for this organization, but the good comments and productive outcome of the sessions proved that it was a good idea.

What came out of the strategic planning was a list of 10 items that the membership is sending to the board of directors. They are listed from most important to least and these are the items that the people who make up the organization feel need attention. The number one items was educating the public, then keeping control of the industry from top to bottom, maintaining quality control of meat but maintain cohesiveness within the different groups, marketing the end products, marketing, research on disease and nutrition, educating the financial community, generating and increasing volunteers within the organization, and crisis management were how the subjects were grouped.

Although some of the lines between the items are blurred, many cross over and encompass other areas. Somewhat similar to a vote, this is the voice of the industry speaking to those that have the power to make the changes or to put the wheels of change in motion. It was an interesting experience to see the evolution of the morning comments as they turned into meaningful criteria for the board to address.

With so much at stake right now, the industry must work through the growing pains and learn to act together to achieve a common goal of selling buffalo meat, no matter if it's grass or grain that gets you there. One of the most important things to come out of the DTBA winter conference was to hear and respond to the voices of the people who matter. For an organization to be open to ideas and suggestions from the general population is certainly a step in the right direction toward a successful industry.

DTBA April Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association will be held on Thursday, April 8, 1998. The meeting will be held in Executive Room I at the Seven Seas Motel in Mandan, ND, beginning at 7 p.m. The Board Meetings are open to the public and any interested members are invited to attend.

Topics of discussion will include a report on the upcoming summer conference, committee reports, producer forum locations and dates, a wrap up of the winter conference, newsletter reactions and any new issues that need to be addressed.

The Board of Directors of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association include: President, Greg Smeenk, Newell, SD; Vice-President, Chad Heim, Rockham, SD; Secretary/Treasurer, Jud Seaman, Rapid City, SD; and directors Dixie Byrd, Presho, SD; Chad Kremer, Vivian, SD and Annette Smith, Newcastle, WY.



1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale Results

The 1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show and Sale more than lived up to the expectations of those involved in hosting the event. The BHBC is the showcase for the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association and is held in Rapid City each year in conjunction with the Black Hills Stock Show. This year's event was the largest yet, with 204 animals from 56 consignors being judged for the show and then sold at auction.

Producers from around the region bring in quality animals for the Black Hills Buffalo Classic and this year's show judges, Lorne Miller from Binscarth, Manitoba, Canada and Ken Childs from Ramona, CA, had their work cut out for them selecting the award winners in each class. A new class this year, a pen of two yearling heifers, rounded out a nice offering of animals, including heifer calves, pen of three heifer calves, yearling heifers, two year old bred heifers, bull calves, yearling bulls and two year old bulls

Show winners from the 1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic are as follows:

Pen of Three Heifer Calves

Honorable Mention: 777 Ranch, Rapid City; Sheyenne River Bison Ranch, Harvey, ND; Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND; Drift Prairie Bison, Lehr, ND; and Mahoney Buffalo Ranch, Fulton, SD.

Bronze Trophy: Lazy J Ranch, Dalton, NE.

Silver Trophy: Spirited Winds Tatonka Ranch, Caputa, SD.

Gold Trophy: Shady Creek Bison, Richmond, MN.

Heifer Calves

Honorable Mention: Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch, Buffalo, SD; Double Diamond Buffalo Ranch, Faulkton, SD; Heim Buffalo Ranch, Rockham, SD; Flying Circle Ranch, Lemmon, SD; and Garden River Bison, Prince Albert, Sask.

Bronze Trophy: Mahoney Buffalo Ranch, Fulton, SD.

Silver Trophy: Willow Ridge Bison Ranch, Wilkie, Sask.

Gold Trophy: Sheyenne River Bison Ranch, Harvey, ND.

Pen of Two Yearling Heifers

Honorable Mention: Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND and Tatonka Ranch, Melville, Sask.

Bronze Trophy: Trails End River Ranch, Presho, SD.

Silver Trophy: Double Diamond Buffalo Ranch, Faulkton, SD.

Gold Trophy: Nixon Creek Bison Ranch, Athol, SD.

Yearling Heifers

Honorable Mention: Double Diamond Buffalo Ranch, Faulkton, SD; Trails End River Bison, Presho, SD; Colorado Bison Ranch, Mead, CO; Jay Melius, Spearfish, SD and Scott and Susan Peterson, Belle Fourche, SD.

Bronze Trophy: Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND.

Silver Trophy: Sparling Bison Ranch, Athol, SD.

Gold Trophy: McFarland Ranch, Hettinger, ND.

Two Year Old Bred Heifers

Honorable Mention: Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND.

Bronze Trophy: Double Diamond Buffalo Ranch, Faulkton, SD.

Silver Trophy: Heim Buffalo Ranch, Rockham, SD.

Gold Trophy: Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch, Buffalo, SD.

Bull Calves

Honorable Mention: Willow Ridge Bison Ranch, Wilkie, Sask.;

Rock Creek Ranch, Bonners Ferry, Idaho and Tatonka Hills, Lake Norden, SD.

Bronze Trophy: Joe R. Sander, Wilkie, Sask.

Silver Trophy: Keewatin Bison Ranch, Foxford, Sask.

Gold Trophy: Sheyenne River Bison Ranch, Harvey, ND.

Yearling Bulls

Honorable Mention: Trails End River Bison, Presho, SD; Buffalo Dance Bison, Presho, SD; Sparling Bison Ranch, Athol, SD; Heim Buffalo Farm, Iroquois, SD; Colorado Bison Company, Mead, CO; Flying Circle Ranch, Lemmon, SD; Grandview Bison, Bushnell, NE; Tatonka Ranch, Melville, Sask.; Checota Bison, Melville, Sask.; Rock Creek Ranch, Bonners Ferry, ID; Bar X Ranch LLC, Powell, WY; Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND and Red Canyon Ranch, Thermopolis, WY.

Bronze Trophy: Flying H Buffalo, Raleigh, ND.

Silver Trophy: Rossow Buffalo Ranch, Flasher, ND.

Gold Trophy: Tatonka Hills, Lake Norden, SD.

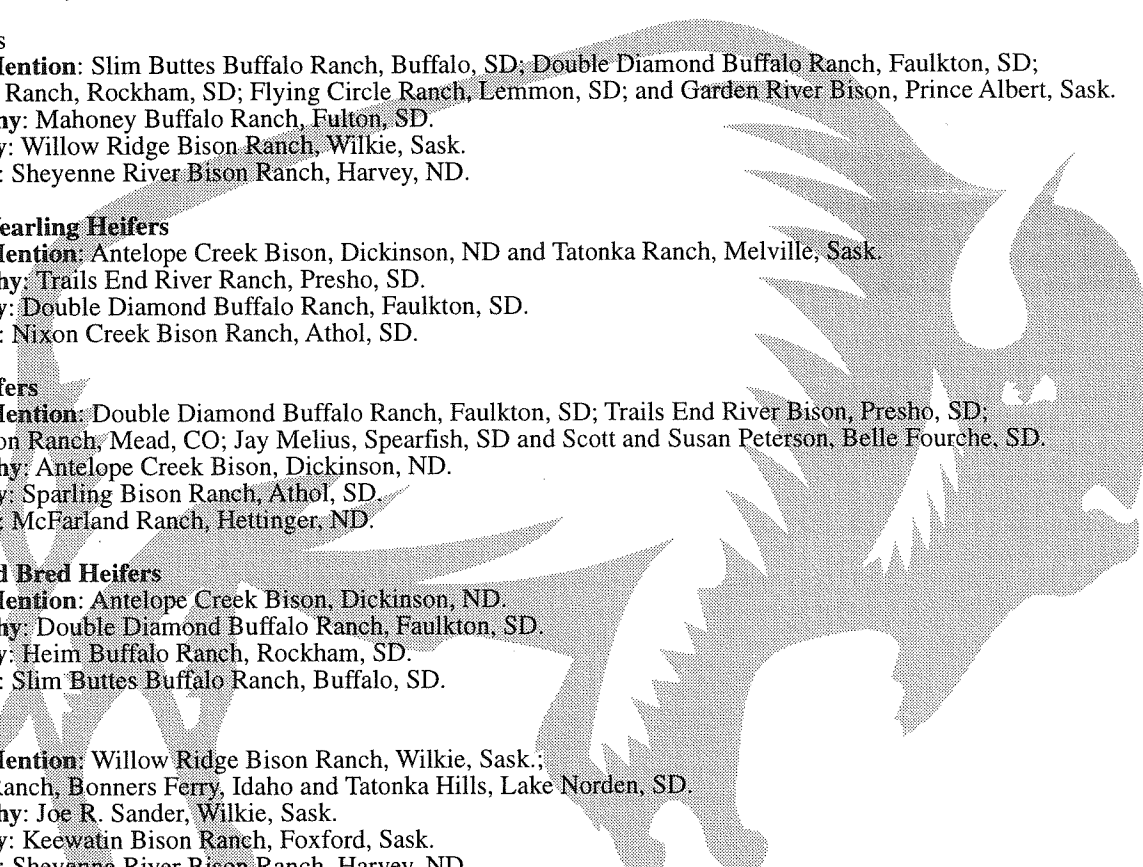
Two Year Old Bulls

Honorable Mention: Blue Mountain Bison, Lyons, CO; Colorado Bison Company, Mead, CO and Trails End River Bison, Presho, SD.

Bronze Trophy: Buffalo Dance Bison, Presho, SD.

Silver Trophy: Tatonka Hills, Lake Norden, SD.

Gold Trophy: Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND.





1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale Results, Continued From Page 4

Overall Champions

Grand Champion Female: a yearling heifer from McFarland Ranch, Hettinger, ND.

Reserve Champion Female: a two year old bred heifer from Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch, Buffalo, SD.

Grand Champion Male: a yearling bull from Tatonka Hills, Lake Norden, SD.

Reserve Champion Male: a two year old bull from Antelope Creek Bison, Dickinson, ND.

1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Producer of the Year

Kevin and Joan Stormo, Tatonka Hills, Lake Norden, SD.

The 1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Sale was held the day following the show and a large crowd of buyers and spectators were on hand to see the animals go through the sale ring. The sale total was \$759,650 on 182 animals.

Sale averages are as follows:

Two year old bred heifers: 13 head sold, prices ranged from \$4,400 to \$11,250 with an average of \$6,338.

Yearling heifers: 28 head sold, prices ranged from \$3,600 to \$10,000, with an average of \$4,727.

Heifer calves: 84 head sold, prices ranged from \$2,350 to \$6,400 with an average of \$3,151.

Two year old bulls: 9 head sold, prices ranged from \$2,700 to \$8,000 with an average of \$5,933.

Yearling bulls: 25 head sold, prices ranged from \$1,250 to \$9,000 with an average of \$4,598.

Bull calves: 23 head sold, prices ranged from \$600 to \$5,700 with an average of \$2,076.

The high selling female was a two year old bred heifer consigned by Heim Buffalo Ranch of Rockham, SD and purchased by Blue Valley Ranch of Colorado for \$11,250.

The high selling male was a yearling bull consigned by Tatonka Hills of Lake Norden, SD and purchased by Lance Kuck of Lincoln, Neb. for \$9,000.

The high volume buyer was Antelope Creek Bison, Doug and Keith Candee of Dickinson, ND.

1999 BHBC Producer of the Year: Tatonka Hills Bison

The rolling farm ground of eastern South Dakota is home to the 1999 Black Hills Buffalo Classic Producer of the Year. At the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association awards banquet, Kevin and Joan Stormo of Lake Norden, SD were bestowed the Producer of the Year honors after their ranch, Tatonka Hills Bison, picked up a number of trophies during the course of the evening.

Animals from Tatonka Hills Bison took home a Gold trophy in the yearling bull class, the Silver trophy in the two year old bull class and the yearling bull also captured the Grand Champion Male honors at the show.

The Stormos are no strangers to the buffalo industry. They have been involved in raising buffalo for the past 11 years and both Kevin and Joan have always had an interest in the animals. "I was farm raised as a kid, but then I went on to teach school for 12 years," explains Kevin. "Then I made a decision to move back to the farm and we started raising buffalo as a hobby. Things went so well that now we raise them full time. That's our job."

Tatonka Hills Bison currently runs about 130 head of females on their operation and sons Jason, 19, Damon, 17, Ryan 16 and daughter Shannon, 14 are all an integral part of the family business. "Right now, buffalo are the most promising thing in agriculture and I'm glad we can be a part of that," explains Kevin. "It looks like some of the kids might even be interested in staying with the business as they get older. Right now, they help us out a lot and they are a big part of our success."

The Tatonka Hills herd got its start the way many other herds in our region have. The Stormos attended the infamous Custer State Park Buffalo Auction in November and their first seven animals were purchased there. With that foundation, the Stormos have built their herd into a successful venture, as evidenced by their consistent wins at shows and high selling animals at the sales.

"We go to a lot of conferences, both winter and summer and we always learn a lot and have a good time. It's just lots of fun to be in this business and the people are so wonderful," says Joan. Kevin also pipes in that they enjoy showing their animals and seeing what other people bring to the shows and sales. For this couple, the buffalo industry has offered them something they couldn't find elsewhere, a livelihood that is fun, enjoyable and one that let's them keep learning and growing.

As Producer of the Year, the Stormos were awarded a beautiful Tony Chytka bronze, sponsored by Sandy and Jacki Limpert of Slim Buttes Buffalo and they also have one years use of a Featherlite trailer, sponsored by Blake's Trailer Sales.



Congratulations!



THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS AND INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE 1999 BLACK HILLS BUFFALO CLASSIC SHOW AND SALE AND THE DAKOTA TERRITORY BUFFALO ASSOCIATION WINTER CONFERENCE:

**BLAKE'S TRAILER SALES,
RAPID CITY, SD**

One years use of a Featherlite Trailer to the Black Hills Buffalo Classic Producer of the Year.

**Cammack Ranch Supply,
Union Center, SD**

The use of the Mega Panels used along the holding pens during the show.

**Brad and Connie Beavers,
Beaver Creek Buffalo Co., Jefferson, SD**

Sponsorship of the Stockman's Club for the year 2000 Black Hills Buffalo Classic.

**Jackie Limpert, Slim Buttes Buffalo,
Buffalo, SD**

Her work in soliciting sponsors for the coffee breaks and the ice sculpture used during this year's Winter Conference.

**Keith and Judi Wood,
Astoria, SD**

Providing leadership during the membership's strategic planning sessions.

**Prairie Edge Trading
Company and Galleries,
Rapid City, SD**

The hard work in hosting the registration party. It was a wonderful idea and a big hit with everyone.

Thank You All!

Upcoming Events and Sales

Saturday, February 27, 1999:

Iowa Bison Blowout, Manchester Livestock Sales, Manchester, IA at 12 noon.

Thursday, April 8, 1999:

Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Executive Room I, Seven Seas Motel, Mandan, ND.

Friday, April 9, 1999:

North Dakota Buffalo Association Spring Consignment Sale, KIST Livestock, Mandan, ND.

Saturday, April 10:

Antelope Creek Bison Ranch Annual Spring Auction, 11 a.m. MDT, Stockman's Livestock Exchange, Dickinson, ND.

Saturday, April 24, 1999:

Iron Mountain Bison Performance Tested Bull Sale, Cheyenne, WY.

DTBA January Board Meeting

On Sunday, January 31, the Board of Directors of the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association and the North Dakota Buffalo Association held a cooperative meeting. Many issues were discussed, including the roles each association assumes in being two of the largest regional buffalo groups.

One of the issues discussed at the meeting was that of the National Bison Association asking for more support for the ranks of the regional organizations. While the DTBA and the NDBA both agree that they need to support the NBA, the question was posed that if they do, what will the NBA do for them? NDBA President, Doug Woodall, commented that he feels the NBA could help the regional organizations with issues that are beyond their means, such as legislation that could adversely affect a state or organization.

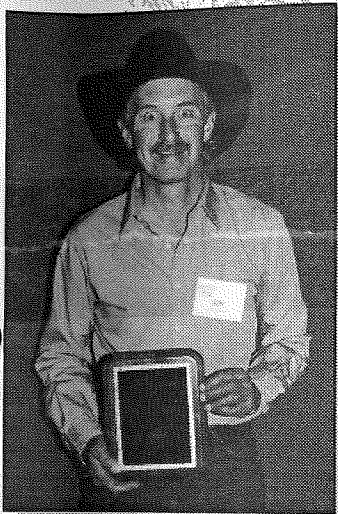
The plan for the NBA to redistrict their national organization into eight districts based on membership in the NBA was also put on the table. How will that affect the DTBA and the NDBA? While the restructuring is apparently taking place already, both parties are unsure of what steps they can take to ensure the best representation they can get through this national organization. Woodall and DTBA Secretary, Jud Seaman, both discussed ideas that ranged from including raising regional association fees to include an NBA membership to how to best show support for the NBA without raising dues.

Ideas for the Summer Conference were discussed and it was agreed that heading south to the Chadron, NE area would be a good location for this year's gathering. Plans to visit the Jim Budd and the Casey family ranches located in this area are currently being explored.

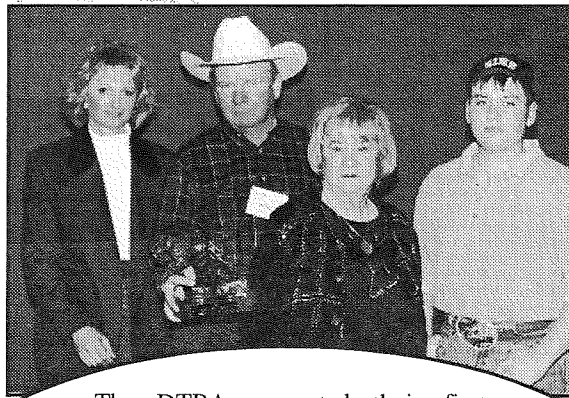
With three new board members attending their first meeting, they took time to examine the ten issues presented to them from the general membership. These ten items were what came out of the memberships strategic planning session the previous Friday. Those items were taken into consideration and used to make up the basis for the committees formed during the board meeting. The board is looking to tackle some of the top rated issues and concentrate on those, with help from the general membership.

Other items discussed during the meeting were examining the purchase and maintenance of a web page on the internet for the DTBA, the establishment of an association newsletter, participating with the Eastern Bison Assn. in defraying the costs of a restaurant promotion for bison, and further discussion about the relationship between the DTBA and the NDBA and how to best utilize the two organizations to benefit themselves and each other.

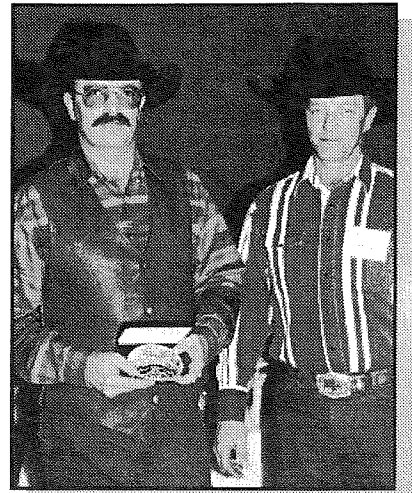
Scenes From The DTBA Awards Banquet



Roy Liedtke of Gillette, WY accepts a plaque as a retiring member of the DTBA Board of Directors.



The DTBA presented their first Pioneer Award at this year's banquet. Longtime buffalo producer, Elmer Butler, was slated to receive the award. After his unexpected passing in early December, his family accepted the award on his behalf. Marcie Hepper, Raleigh, ND, on the left, presented the award to Elmer's son, Jim, Elmer's wife, Lavonne and grandson, Frank, all of Faith, SD.



On the left, Sandy Limpert, Buffalo, SD, shows the belt buckle the DTBA gave to him as outgoing president of the association. On the right, is newly elected president Greg Smeenk of Newell, SD.

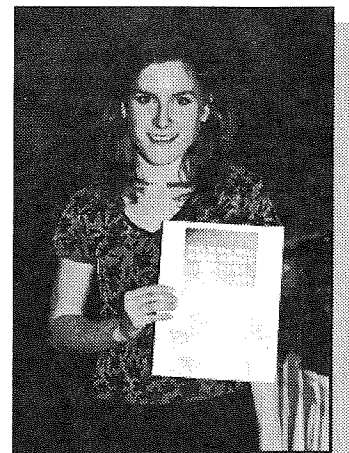


Tommi Jo Casteel of Vale, SD, the 1999 Miss Rodeo South Dakota, helped hand out awards at the DTBA banquet. In return for her help, this Tony Chytka bronze of Jerry Olson, titled "American Originals" was auctioned off with all the proceeds going to help Tommi Jo with her expenses. Rod

Sather of Mosquito Park Enterprises in Presho, SD, was the lucky bidder and took home the bronze and a thank you from Tommi Jo.



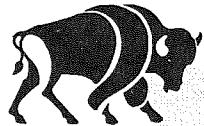
These are two of the coveted trophies awarded by the DTBA for the Black Hills Buffalo Classic show.



Alicia Keith, a senior from Basin, WY., won the DTBA art contest and her drawing was used on the cover of the 1999 DTBA show and sale catalog.

Dakota Territory Buffalo Association
P.O. Box 4104
Rapid City, SD 57709

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