

United Suffolk Sheep Association

Hall of Fame



2019 Inductees

Suffolk Hall of Fame

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John Ascuaga

Spelman B. Collins

Rob Frost

Ken McMillan

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Year	Inductee
2019	John Ascuaga
2019	Spelman B. Collins
2019	Rob Frost
2019	Ken McMillan
2018	Greg Deakin, The Banner Sheep Magazine
2018	Richard & Cindy Jones Family, Five Star 'J' Farms
2018	Larry & Linda Pauly, Double L Livestock
2018	Sam & Pat Wiford, Wiford Suffolks
2018	Bob & Mary Wilson
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

(Continued on next page)

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
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

John Ascuaga

John Ascuaga, son of a Basque sheepherder, grew up in Idaho along with his three siblings on a self-sustaining farm raising pigs, chickens and commercial sheep. John continues to be connected to his roots, owning Jacks Valley Ranch, just south of Reno in Carson City, Nevada. He had a commercial sheep flock, utilizing Suffolk rams until recently, dispersing due to uncontrollable coyote problems. John's children were involved with the sheep; his son, Stephen, showed sheep for many years. John and his wife, Rose, still reside on the ranch today, along with his commercial Angus and Hereford cow herd.

John's formal college education was in hotel and restaurant management. He was hired as the Nugget's General Manager in 1955 and purchased the business in 1968. He and his family owned and operated John Ascuaga's Nugget Casino until 2014 when the casino was sold to Nevada based Global Gaming & Hospitality.

The Nugget All American Suffolk Show and Sale was the brain child of Bob Paasch of Donner Trail Ranch, Edwina Wagner who served as the Secretary of the California Suffolk Breeders Association and John Ascuaga. They had seen the success of the Hereford Sale at the casino and wanted to provide the same prestigious sale and venue for Suffolk breeders in the west. The first sale was held in June of 1980 with over 450 head of Suffolks entered and over \$10,000 in premiums were offered. Many Suffolks sold through this sale would go on to become champions and top sires, impacting Suffolk flocks across the country.

The Nugget All American sale continues today and has expanded to more breed divisions. The sale continues to attract breeders and buyers from across the country, selling hundreds of breeding stock each year.

When asked what his memories were for the first sale John mentions that there was a lot of interest in the sale and knew it would be successful but it would take a lot of work and the attendees experience would make the difference. The show was held in the parking garage and sheep were sold in the Celebrity Room, and when that curtain was raised the stage of Suffolks was a sight to remember...and still is today.

John remembers all of the nice sheep people he met through the years, specifically mentioning Bob Paasch and Bill Heggemeier.

John is a self-made businessman who stayed connected to his roots and helped build one of the most successful sheep sales in the Western United States. He states that his employees are what made the Nugget casino what it is and his business specifications are what made the business/customer experience top notch...including his requirement for lamb served in the casino – must be American Lamb.

Spelman B. Collins

Spelman B. Collins was born on June 5, 1902 in Oakland, California. He graduated from University of California Davis with a degree in agriculture. He spent several years as a range sheep operator this work was done in Utah, California and Nevada, mostly around Carson City and Reno, Nevada. Also as a camp tender and later as a foreman of an extensive field fattening operation.

Next my Grandfather's life was teaching agriculture at Middletown, Calistoga and Livermore High Schools. In 1940 he joined the faculty of California Polytechnic College at San Luis Obispo where he was instrumental in building the sheep unit, stocked with purebred Suffolk sheep of course!

In 1949 Spelman was brought in as a sheep specialist on the Walt Disney movie "So Dear to My Heart" to train several lambs to knock over things, including the show judge. He also played one of the judges at the local fair and received accolades for his acting prowess. This did not get him because he went right back teaching.

In 1956 Spelman wrote a book on the business of raising sheep call Profitable Sheep, with the intention that it would be used students and as well as sheep ranchers alike. I would not be surprised if many of you have a copy, as do I. And yes, I raise sheep and use his book.

Over the years while still teaching and after retiring Spelman raised Suffolk sheep and showed them across the country. His knowledge and experience also made him in demand as a judge in both small fairs as well as some of the most prestigious shows across the country including Louisville. His time and effort was first and foremost given to his students, Future Farmers of America Chapters, 4-H groups and organizing the first Junior Wool Growers Association at Calpoly SLO added to his standing. His peers from Calpoly, the show circuit and later from the California Wool Growers honored him with the "Golden Fleece Award".

Our Grandfather died September 19, 1994 at his ranch in the Santa Ynez Valley. He had sheep up to his passing which I took care of under the teacher's watchful eyes. I am proud and humbled by him, that he would leave me the legacy of his life's work. Our family is very thankful to the United Suffolk Sheep Association for bestowing this great honor of our Grandpa Baa.

To finish, I have a story told to me many times about his early days with the sheep. After one of his turns at herding a bandy of ewes in the valleys and mountains of central California he returned the band to their owner who stated "Spelman you will never ever make a sheepman". We are so very glad he didn't take that comment to hear.

Submitted by Christopher M. Castagna, Spelman's Oldest Grandson.

Rob Frost

Rob Frost of Bloomingburg, Ohio has been registering Suffolks since 1966 when his father encouraged him to purchase the E.R. Cowman flock from Greenfield, Ohio.

Rob mentions that the most influential sheep people in his life include Larry Mead, Bill Heggemeier and Roger Nichols. The most impactful sire to his flock is RDN Paramount.

Through the years Rob has exhibited numerous Champions including 1973 Ch. Ram Ohio State Fair, 1975 Res. Champ Ewe Ohio State Fair, 1979 Res. Champ Ewe Louisville, 1980 Res. Champ Ram Midwest Sale, 1981 Res. Champ Ram Midwest Sale, 1982 Ch. Ram Ohio State Fair, 1985 Ch. Ram Ohio State Fair, 1986 Ch. Ram top of Rockies Sale, 1988 Ch. Ram Top of Rockies Sale, 1989 Ch Ram Reno Sale, 2013 Supreme Ch. Ram Ohio State Fair junior Show and 2014 Ch. Ram Ohio State Fair Junior Show.

His flock today currently consists of 40 registered Suffolk ewes. He strives to raise productive sheep that achieve success commercially as well as the show ring. His markets include the commercial sheep producer, market lambs and purebred breeding stock.

Rob has promoted his Suffolks through show ring and sale success, the Sheep Breeder Magazine and The Banner Sheep Magazine.

Rob met his wife, Lisa, when her father hired him to judge their county fair. Rob and wife Lisa have three daughters, who have all shown Suffolks His favorite memory was seeing daughter, Jennifer, win Supreme Champion Ram at the Junior Show at the Ohio State Fair.

Ken McMillan

I grew up raising sheep. My Dad raised Shropshires, Hampshires, and Suffolks, later judged widely, and was Superintendent at the International Livestock Show in Chicago. My first sheep was a Hampshire—before Dad established the Suffolk flock with one ram and three ewes from Phil Rock in Alberta, Canada, arranged by Roy Warrick. My younger brother, Ed, was first to show Suffolks.

We had great success with the Suffolk Flock—showing at the Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Ohio, and Indiana State Fairs. When Dad got a chance to move us to a great farm in 1962, we dispersed the flock.

I could only stay away from Suffolks so long. About 1970 I bought a lamb from Duane Sickels—and began a Suffolk flock that came to a halt in December 2014 when I sold my flock (and my small farmstead) to Travis Snyder—who was my neighbor, and regular helper, in Monmouth, Illinois. There were nearly 50 Purebred Suffolks in the flock when I sold.

After several efforts to establish a flock—with help from Bud Westlake, Steve George, Rollie Rosenboom and others—I focused on Ansel Luxford breeding. I followed it closely, studied the sheep and the pedigrees, and set out to have a flock with as close to pure Luxford breeding as I could—and I succeeded.

My greatest claim to fame as a breeder was to know Ansel's flock and pedigrees better than anyone OFF his ranch—and I enjoyed sharing that knowledge. I never showed and rarely put sheep in sales in recent years. Yet, one of my proudest moments was breeding "Preacher Man" which Cindy Jones and 5 Star purchased and a ram named "Blizzard" which a Colorado family purchased and succeeded with.

My interest in the Suffolk breed included a lot of things. As a junior in high school, I was a finalist in the Illinois FFA Public Speaking Contest—with a speech entitled "The Mystery of Scrapie"—a long time ago. Many years later, I testified before a US House of Representatives Agriculture Committee on some of the problems, needs, and impact of the APHIS Scrapie Program.

I was proud to be elected to serve on the National Suffolk Sheep Association Board of Directors and to be Vice President. I encouraged and in some cases facilitated the merger between the associations to form USSA. I have played a role in several National Junior Shows, support the Illinois Junior Suffolk Show, and with my family have annually presented a plaque at the Illinois State Fair for the Champion Suffolk Ram. I have judged a large number of country fair and 4-H and FFA sheep shows. I have been on the Board of the Illinois FFA Foundation. As a past National FFA President, I strongly pushed for the National FFA Foundation Award for Sheep Production.

I am honored to have been nominated and selected for USSA Recognition. I have known Suffolk Breeders, and families, all over the country for 65+ years. I have attended shows or visited flocks in nearly half the States--and visited flocks in the UK and Australia. I am very proud of the Suffolk Breed.

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