

# United Suffolk Sheep Association

2020 DIRECTOR ELECTION - DISTRICT 2



## Jeff Baumann, Savannah, Missouri

I have been involved with sheep production since my grandfather bought me a bottle lamb when I was a very young boy. Turns out, I am a 5<sup>th</sup> generation family sheep producer. I could blame my work ethic on the fact I grew up on a farm. I grew up raising and showing Suffolk sheep at State Fairs, Louisville and at the National Junior Suffolk show just to name a few. My family continues to show currently and I take great joy in seeing my nieces and nephews pursuing that wonderful activity.

My family's Suffolk flock isn't solely centered around the show ring. We raise purebred breeding stock, range rams for commercial flocks and butcher lambs for customers that demand a high quality carcass. The flock consists of 100 blackface ewes, 50 of which are Registered Suffolks. I plan on our flock growing in all areas in the future as they can simultaneously bring productivity and profitability to our family. The Suffolk breed allows our farm to reach several different markets and this is one attribute our association needs to focus on. I truly understand how the Suffolk breed influences all areas and we as a United Suffolk Association need to continue to flex our muscle, as a director I could help our association do this.

I am a high school agriculture teacher with 12 years of experience. The skills I use in the classroom and lab can prove very useful if selected as a board member.

- My experience with education and technology would prove beneficial when introducing new ideas and programs.
- Promotion and marketing of curriculum is important when educating our youth and is key to the success of our breed.
- My experience and interaction with youth gives me a clear understanding of what our future needs and how to better serve our younger members.

Suffolk producers are intelligent and resourceful and with help from a strong association presence can continue to thrive. I am very passionate about my sheep and want to share that passion with my association and its members.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey W. Baumann



## Tom Burke, Smithville, Missouri

I would like to introduce myself; my name is Tom Burke; as a Candidate for reelection to the Board of Directors of the United Suffolk Sheep Association. It has been my privilege and pleasure to have been a Suffolk breeder for the past 40 years.

One of the highlights of my life was being inducted into the United Suffolk Sheep Association "Hall of Fame" at the 2014, 41<sup>st</sup> Annual North American International Livestock Show on November 17, 2014.

In 1988 I was elected to the National Board of the National Suffolk Association and reelected in 1990 and 1993. I had the privilege and pleasure of serving as President of the National Suffolk Association from 1994 through 1996. From 1994 through 1996 I served as Vice President of the Missouri Suffolk Breeder's Association and from 2003 to 2007 served as the Secretary/Treasure.

In 2002 I was selected to judge the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual North American International Suffolk Show in Louisville, Kentucky. In 2005 I was elected to the Board of Directors of the United Suffolk Sheep Association and served as President of the United Suffolk Sheep Association in 2009. For 30 years I have served as an announcer for the National Junior Suffolk Show. For the past 35 years I have exhibited Suffolk's at many shows.

I have exhibited numerous Louisville champions and first prize winners and have been the premiere exhibitor at the North American International Livestock Show in Louisville at the National Suffolk Show for 4 consecutive years. In 2019 I exhibited Suffolk at the Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas State Fairs. My registered Suffolk flock continues to grow and prosper.

In 2017 I was inducted into the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery in Louisville, Kentucky, becoming the first Suffolk breeder since the exception of the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery in 1903 to receive that honor.

As a member of the Board of Directors of the United Suffolk Sheep Association I have worked for all members to continue building a fair and strong organization. I currently serve as the Treasurer for the United Suffolk Sheep Association and I sincerely ASK for your vote and support in my candidacy as a Director for the United Suffolk Sheep Association. As a Director of the United Sheep Suffolk Association, if you are in need of help or have a problem, you won't have to find me, I will find you.—THANKS!

***---Please see other side to view an additional candidate for District 2---***

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## W.E. (Bill) Gergen, Geneva, Nebraska

Hey! It is me, the "Disruptive Force" as I have been labeled by some! My name is W.E. Gergen (WEG) and I am declaring my candidacy to run for Director from District II for the United Suffolk Sheep Association Board of Directors.

I am beginning my 58<sup>th</sup> year of breeding and raising Suffolks. I cover all the bases: breeding stock, range rams, commercial rams, and club lambs.

The biggest issues I have today with the USSA Board is "common sense" when it comes to unnecessary spending. The other problem I see is "discrimination". Most of the time the Board does this without thinking things completely through.

We must face reality: the glory days of the sheep business have come and gone! All the changes in agriculture today have dictated to most changes in the economy in general. Maybe the time has come "to think within the box" instead of thinking "outside the box"! Maybe it is time to try and keep the numbers of registered sheep we have and not lose anymore. When your offense is not working, your defense must step up, or you lose!

The number one issue we face is keeping the Junior members involved and enthused in the Suffolk industry. I believe the USSA has done an excellent job with this. We must keep promoting "Suffolks" and the "Juniors"; and not take our eyes off the ball or the goal!

The biggest problem I see in the sheep business today are "sales". Whether it is live sales or on-line sales we need to protect our integrity with the quality of sheep consigned. Roger Snyder asked me a question about 40 years ago, "Would you, yourself keep that ewe or breed with that ram? If not, why would you expect someone else to?" We all need to think of this when we pick out sale sheep.

The biggest challenge for the USSA and the Suffolk Breed is the direction production agriculture is taking. I wish I had a "crystal ball" and could give you all the answers but I cannot. This is also going to affect the rate of decline in numbers of Registered Suffolk sheep and members of the USSA.

Things that also must be considered:

- Age of members involved.
- Is it a hobby or a business?
- The cost of feed, facilities, equipment and labor costs.

As Directors we must work together to promote the USSA and Registered Suffolk Sheep by being able to put a positive spin on all situations and hope for the best. **DO NOT DISCRIMATE!** Use the **KISS** method in attacking all situations: **Keep It Simple Stupid!**

I believe these are the three attributes to a good Director:

- Hindsight: to see where you have come from.
- Foresight: to see where you are going.
- Insight: the common sense to do the right thing by not going too far in either direction.

I hope I have brought up some things that make you scratch your head. Please feel free to contact me at 402.540.7884 with any questions or comments.

I would appreciate your vote for Director from District II for the United Suffolk Sheep Association Board of Directors, and I apologize for not being as "entertaining" as Joe or Donald with their campaign promises.

Thank you.

W.E. Gergen (WEG/I-80), Geneva, NE



## Carol Heupel, Weldona, Colorado

My name is Carol Heupel and I have been raising Suffolk sheep for over 40 years. I started with them as my FFA project and have owned them ever since. In College I majored in Animal Science and was hired by Heupel Suffolks in Santa Maria, California to help fit show sheep. A few years later, I married Kurt and we helped out his folks until we moved to northeast Colorado to start our own farm. We brought our own small flock and grew both that and our farming. We started out with a trucking business, I taught school for a while, all while running the farm. We gradually added more farmland until we were both full time farming. Now we farm over

700 acres of both irrigated and dryland. We raise mainly alfalfa hay, corn and wheat and run 50 -60 registered ewes. Our main focus is producing range rams and go to 2-3 out of state sales, as well as selling stud animals which go all over the country.

My feelings about the Suffolk breed are many. They have been part of our life for so long, I feel very passionate about their place in the US sheep industry. Selling bucks to commercial breeders that run thousands of ewes makes us feel really connected to our American lamb product. We are trying to produce the kind of buck that works good for our customer and produces a quality end product that ends up on the consumers plate. But I still love the beauty in the Suffolk breed. None surpasses the elegance of a beautifully fitted ewe, nor the ruggedness of a big stout, big boned buck. I love watching kids show club lambs at fairs and marvel at the range sheep with speckled faces in the feedyards close to us. We as a breed are intertwined into the whole sheep industry.

So I am willing to fight for it! I was voted onto the board last November to fill a vacant position for a year. I didn't expect to enjoy working with this board so much. There are a lot of challenges for us in the Association. We are facing lowered numbers in registrations and memberships. We are looking into changing our registration platform. We are working on updating our breed standards. The committees I have been involved with are working hard to come up with solutions for these issues. Other committees have been working on by-law changes and other moves to keep us a viable organization. I would like the opportunity to continue helping to come up with solutions to help us move forward in the future. I would appreciate your vote. I have never been a quitter when faced with a problem to solve. My husband and I faced a lot of odds starting and growing a farming operation. I helped get grants and fought red tape to get a preschool program started at our school. I helped with the recovery and rebuilding of our church fellowship hall after a major flood went through our area. This is just one more thing I feel is worth the time to accomplish. I want the best for our breed and our members.

I know that we all have different operations and goals for our sheep. I hope we can be united in the cause of promoting and supporting our breed and the sheep industry. I would appreciate your opinions on how we move our Association forward and how we can give you value for your membership. Please feel free to email or call me to do so. So again, I would appreciate your support!