

Live Oak Legend Award recipient focuses on breeding functional, hard-working Beefmasters.



by Chel Terrell

Ranching in Live Oak County, Texas, and the surrounding area, with its rolling terrain of grasses, prickly pear, mesquite, mixed brush and live oaks, has been a passion for H.T. “Tim” Chapman, Rockport, Texas. Drive through the pasture with him on the ranch near Whitsett and you can feel the pride he has for his operation and the dedication to raising Beefmaster cattle that are functional and perform for cattlemen in the brush country of South Texas.

Hard work, drive and commitment are words friends use to describe Chapman and his efforts over the last 20-plus years to breed and raise quality cattle and help other cattlemen develop successful programs using Beefmasters. In recognition of his contributions to breed and the Live Oak Beefmaster Breeders Association satellite, Chapman will receive the 2017 Live Oak Legend Award during this year’s bull sale in Three Rivers.

“Tim is one of the hardest working, most successful self-made men that you could ever meet,” said long-time friend and Beefmaster auctioneer Anthony Mihalski, San Antonio, Texas. “He started with little to nothing and he’s very successful because of his hard work and commitment to living life at its fullest. If you know him, he never stops. He’s constantly going and constantly working.”

“Ranching is not a hobby to him, he runs a very big operation. To be in the purebred business, Tim has to raise cattle that are functional and perform and he does a good job of it. He loves Beefmaster cattle.”

Ranching roots run deep for Chapman – his brand dates back to the 1880s to his great-grandfather. He started in the commercial cattle business after graduating college,

before purchasing his first Beefmaster bull to run with his commercial cows. Instead of pursuing a full-fledged F1 enterprise, Chapman focused his energies on the Beefmaster breed. He started out buying seven Beefmaster lots at a dispersal sale in Waco and grew his herd from there, attending his first Live Oak BBA sale in the fall of 1996.

“Beefmasters are just good, easy messing cattle,” he said. “Before the 2005 drought, I probably had 110 Brangus cows and was running them with Beefmaster bulls. They produced awfully good calves.” But the drought hit Chapman like it did other cattlemen at the time and forced him to reduce his herd size. He dispersed his Brangus cows and several Beefmasters and went totally to registered stock.

Chapman and his wife Debbie currently run 250 to 275 momma cows, all registered females on several different properties spanning 11,000-plus acres in Live Oak, Bee, Karnes and Atascosa counties. He participates in the Beefmaster Breeders United (BBU) Weights and Measures program, collecting weaning weights on calves and also weaning and yearling weights on all heifers and calves that will remain in the herd. He retains the majority of heifers raised in his program, but is always seeking ways to improve quality by adding outside genetics with bull purchases from other breeders such as Collier Farms in Brenham, Texas, and at the Live Oak BBA Bull Sale.

“I’m too competitive and like to keep improving my herd. Collecting weights and measures and buying better bulls helps us make those improvements,” he said. “The number one thing to me is having a cow that calves every year and that has a good udder.”



A young calf on the ranch near Whitsett.

A FORCE BEHIND THE SCENES

Over the years, Chapman has been active at the national level, serving on multiple BBU committees and helping establish the commercial E6 sale while also participating as an energetic member of both the Live Oak and South Texas satellites. He served as president of South Texas BBA for a number of years and has been involved in many facets of service to Live Oak BBA since joining that satellite.

“Live Oak has always been special to me because I ranch in Live Oak County and in this area,” he said. “To me, it’s a ‘cowman’s’ organization and geared to smaller ranchers and their operations. Those cattlemen are running cattle because they have pasture and they have grass. They like Beefmaster and good functional cattle.”

Chapman has served on the Live Oak Board for almost 20 years and will soon begin a second term as vice president. Not one to seek the limelight, he’d rather devote his efforts to behind the scenes work.

“I do a lot of the behind the scenes work for Live Oak and I prefer that. Don’t give me a mic!” he said. “I help with maintenance of the sale barn and other things like that. My hands probably spend 40 to 50 hours a year up there working on things. The sale barn isn’t fancy, but it’s made for cowmen and serves them well.”

Chapman consigns cattle to all Live Oak sales throughout the year, and his breeding program has been recognized with many top honors including high grading lots and numerous futurity awards. He has received the Live Oak BBA Breeder of the Year award in 2015 as well as BBU Member of the Year in 2006 and the BBU Environmental Award in 2002.

“Although Tim is probably more well known for his service to the breed through his involvement in satellite Boards and BBU committees, his cattle and ranching operation are also very impressive in terms of both size

and quality,” said Trey Scherer. “He and Debbie have gone out of their way over the years to host BBU events, sponsor fundraisers, entertain BBU guests, and dedicate countless hours toward the advancement of BBU satellites and the Beefmaster breed.”

The Chapmans are also avid and long-time supporters of the South Texas Children’s Home. A special part of the Live Oak sale is the auctioning of artwork, with the proceeds benefiting the Home, a place dear to the Chapmans.

“Tim and Debbie are very generous supporters of the South Texas Children’s Home and have probably bought more artwork than anyone has,” Mihalski said. “They have a whole collection of those pictures.”

“The South Texas Children’s Home is a special place,” Chapman said. “We support one of the cottages and have donated a bird hunting trip to the sale as well as buying the artwork.”

The Beefmaster breed will continue to be special to Chapman as he looks forward to helping fellow cattlemen improve their herds with quality genetics and efficient cattle that prove their merit.

“I’m just trying to get our cattle out to cowmen, ones that really need



Debbie and Tim Chapman several years ago with a favorite Beefmaster, Annabelle.

cattle that are functional,” Chapman said. “That’s also a good way to get others started with Beefmasters and maybe they’ll continue to buy more. I love Beefmasters and I love doing this.”

“Chapman displays the kind of dedication which any breed association would be more than fortunate to have,” Scherer said. “The time, effort and resources which Tim has provided to the Live Oak BBA and BBU have been extremely valuable and has made him a true legend of the breed.” ★



Tim Chapman and his constant companion, Rita, ready to drive through the pastures checking cattle and observing the abundant wildlife on the ranch.