

Elections:

It's not surprising this year has flown by. It's been a great year for the RWHA. It doesn't seem like our Board of Directors elections should be coming up so quickly but it's something we all should be preparing for and participate in. Any member can hold office so we urge you to consider putting your education, devotion, and time to this worthwhile cause. A general requirement is: time and a willingness to research and educate for the health, propagation, protection and betterment of the Red Wattle Hog, and the RWHA as a whole and with the ability to weigh all circumstances with an open mind rather than personal preferences or beliefs.

President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer all hold 3 years positions with terms ending in alternating years. 2 Board Members at Large hold annual positions. This year the Secretary/Treasurer position is open for election along with the 2 Board Members at Large. If you're interested in any of the positions you'll need to write about yourself telling the membership a brief history, your experience with Red Wattles, what you feel you can contribute to the breed and to the RWHA, what you see as the future of Red Wattles and the RWHA and why. You'll need send your statement either by email or snail mail to: redwattles@hotmail.com, or Kathy Bottorff, 41 Jones Rd. Horse Cave, KY. 42749. Your statement will be printed along with our other candidates and distributed to the membership for voting. All voting ballots will be mailed to The Livestock Conservancy who serves as a neutral party and will track and announce our new board members. Your statement for holding office must be received no later than September 20, 2014. Statements received after that date will not be considered.

*The Board of Directors recently approved emailing of RWHA newsletters to the members who request it rather than snail mail. If you wish your newsletters emailed you must email: redwattles@hotmail.com to let us know, otherwise you're newsletter will be snail mailed. Some people prefer snail mail and some prefer email. We will continue to do both. Email newsletters will be sent blind copied or BCC in order to protect membership privacy.

*The Board of Directors has also approved the use of DNA to register hogs over 18 months of age. DNA must prove the sire and dam and the sire and dam must be registered. Only then can the offspring can be registered even if they are over 18 months of age. UC Davis offers DNA testing and storage for a fee of \$30.00. This can be a very helpful tool to all our members in the future so please consider using it. If you need information on how to proceed please contact any board member. No hogs will be registered over 18 months of age without the DNA sire and dam connection. At this time there is no DNA for particular breeds of swine. No one knows a Red Wattle from a stockyard hog, but the DNA can show family lines.

*Please contact RWHA members in your region. They can be valuable tools to help in your success be it health or injury problems, breeding, selling stock, marketing, feed, nutrition, shelters, and anything else that it takes to keep your herd and farm healthy, happy and financially beneficial. Become a group and stay in contact. This is much more helpful than an annual meeting that most of our members are unable to attend due to distance, time and finances, and the annual meeting is limited with time as well. If you need to know your region, please contact Theresa Schieffellbein at 507-259-9383 or hindsightheritagefarm@hotmail.com and she'll be happy to locate members in your region for you. Each region is also allocated funds from the RWHA annually to purchase materials, or hold meetings, or whatever the region feels is necessary to help them all succeed.

*The first annual RWHA Scholarship winner is Donna O'Shaughnessy of South Pork Ranch. Donna will be applying her scholarship award toward her writing talents. She's written several articles and we look forward to seeing what she'll do with her experiences with Red Wattles.

*The Livestock Conservancy is working on another great project. They are currently reviewing our 2013 hog census. They're also reviewing our herd books all the way back as far as possible with our records. In doing this they will also be able to determine if there are certain bloodlines that are over or under-utilized. The RWHA works closely with The Livestock Conservancy and we're always supportive of their projects which we know will help the breed and all of us.

Why do some Red Wattles look different from others, in size, growth rates, color?

This is what makes them unique and why we all have our favorites. Longer or shorter legs, light red, dark red, long nose, shorter nose, tall and broad or shorter and broad. They will continue to evolve just like everything does. Until a few years ago there were only pockets of Red Wattles across the country. Those pockets were created by specific breeders who initially crossed them with other breeds and then bred back to Red Wattles to increase the population. In short, it was a breed-up program in the very beginning, not many years ago. Depending on what breed was crossed, and feed, pasture, weather and numerous other factors, the hogs developed and grew accordingly. In some pockets they grow slower because of weather conditions and pasture time or feed available. Because of lower population and distance, the pockets continued to be pockets so we never saw how they developed in specific regions. Now with the increasing popularity, Red Wattles are spreading across the country. Those from Iowa are showing up in Texas, from Ohio are showing up in California. This is another reason to study and know the breed standards and by knowing what you're seeing you will develop the type of herd you want and be able to cull out lesser quality for pork production. A shorter or taller hog or whatever is different may be just as great as other hogs and can mix well with your herd when genetics are combined and could bring another avenue of the standard or hardiness you may be searching for while improving your herd.

*Some people may miss the 18 month registration time frame. An easy way to solve this is to register piglets or hogs that you are watching grow and develop for breeding purposes and registration. As they grow you may decide you made the right decision. Sometimes the hog crashes and doesn't look or act like you hoped. You can remove that hog from the registered production list and it can go on to be a great pork producer, or fill your freezer. Many breeders do this and it helps to avoid missing deadlines. It also helps you develop an educated eye because you're watching those hogs more closely.

*Recently the Board of Directors held drawings for books, magazine subscriptions and jackets for our members. The winners of Dr. Sponenberg's book, "Managing Breeds for a Secure Future", are: Melissa Adams, Alanna Delagarza, Joe Fore, Stephen Johnson, and Karen Penry. An annual subscription to Acres Magazine winners are: Patric Bugni, Don Dixon, Donald Gorsage, Greg Huberty, and Brad Linneman. Winners of a jacket from Café Press are: Chris Ponce, Ron Franks, Heather Freeman, Clint Iwan, and Clyde Grover. Congratulations to all of you. All names were anonymously drawn from our membership. The Board of Directors hopes to have other drawings in the up-coming year. Good Luck! If you have any suggestions for the drawings please let us know. I had problems reaching some of our winners by phone or email. The books and magazines will be delivered by mail using the addresses we have, however we need to know jacket sizes so if you're a winner of a jacket, please contact Jenifer Kraus at jkraus@ruraltel.net or 785-628-3074 if we haven't already reached you.