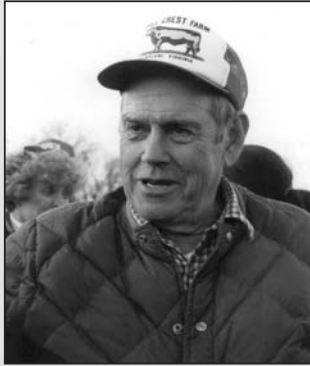


Virginia's 'Hill Crest Farm' ‘

The land that is known as Hill Crest Farm first came into the Rucker family on December 27, 1842, when William Ambrose Rucker and his wife Annie Chappelle purchased 388 acres from her father, in Delaplane, Virginia. Then, on January 1, 1869, they purchased another 317 acres from him. Their son, B.A. Rucker, Sr., started the cattle business officially at Hill Crest in 1924 and it has been in continuous operation since. The next generation on the farm was B.A.'s son John. Mr. John Rucker was born at Hill Crest, in the farmhouse, in 1921. Mr. Rucker grew up on the farm, attended local schools, and received a degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1943. The whole family has been involved in agricultural activities for many years. Mrs. Rucker was the office manager at the Fauquier Livestock Exchange for over 20 years.



John Rucker

Their three daughters showed cattle, and participated in 4-H. Penny and Sue each represented Virginia at the National Junior Showmanship Contest that was held in conjunction with the All-American Angus Breeder's Futurity in Lexington, KY. Penny went in 1967 and 1968, and finished in the top 14. Sue showed in 1971 and finished 3rd in the contest. Sue's heart was always with the cattle and the farm. When she graduated from high school, she enrolled in an interior design school in Washington, D.C. At the same time, she was on the state judging team that had to practice for Chicago, and she had cattle to show in West Virginia, Richmond, and Timonium. The priorities were clear. John and Sue loved their cattle and worked hard to improve the Hill Crest herd. They focused on high maternal traits. The cow families that consistently produced some of the best calves from year to year included: Edith Erica, Rachel, Queen L and Blackbird.

Mr. John Rucker was into the activity of the farm every day, until the day before his death in 2007. Sue was her father's constant advisor and helper until her untimely death in an automobile accident in 2006. Since that time, Hill Crest has been under the day-to-day management of Jerry Hall, Connie's husband. Jerry grew up in New Jersey where his family had

a dairy of 100 plus top quality Holsteins. In addition, Jerry has managed several other dairy farms of that size. When he came to Virginia he managed Foxlease in Upperville.

Hill Crest hosted "Homecoming"

sales for several years. These sales included cattle from friends and neighbors in Virginia and Maryland. Buyers came from North Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. John and Sue also sold bulls privately to commercial and registered breeders. Sue also bred Border Collies. There were times that you couldn't walk through a barn at a show without seeing one of Sue's dogs.



Through the years, the land of Hill Crest Farm has been used for more than cattle, but also Orchard grass seed, which was Mr. B.A. Rucker Sr.'s crop. Caring for the land to the best of their ability, the Rucker family has the farmland in conservation easement. In 2002, Hill Crest received the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District Award, for their continuing interest in applying soil and water conservation practices.

This year, in honor of the Rucker family's stewardship and their continued involvement in pursuing Angus cattle production, Dwight and Carolyn Houff of Holly Hill Farm, Mount Sidney, Va., have created the John Rucker Family Angus Scholarship Endowment Fund with a \$10,500 gift to the Angus Foundation. Developed to provide educational scholarships to deserving youth of the Virginia Junior Angus Association, this fund will pay tribute to the work that the late John, Marjorie and Sue Rucker did for Angus youth.



Rucker Endowment

Over the last four years, since Sue's death, Hill Crest has recaptured some of the quality genetics that John and Sue advanced. Most of these cattle have come through Don Benner, of Benfield Farm, Deerfield, VA. Don bought 4-H heifers from Hill Crest and many of his cows go back to the Hill Crest cow families mentioned earlier. In addition, new genetics are being introduced. Last year, four full sisters out of a Pathfinder dam were added to the herd. There is also a Bushwacker daughter that shows great promise.

Hill Crest also has a loyal employee Thomas Hamm, who has been part of the farm operation for almost 50 years. He helps with many aspects of the daily farm work—moving and feeding cattle, making hay, and general farm chores. The farm now includes 250 acres of owned land and 500 acres leased, including all of the hay and corn that they grow, and the herd consists of over 150 cows. No general sales are planned at this



John and Sue

time, but there are cattle for sale by private treaty.

The "2010 Virginia Beef Cattlemen's Field Day" is planned at Hill Crest on August 28. All cattlemen are invited to visit the farm and enjoy the events of the day, which include equipment displays, cattle displays, lunch, and industry speakers.

By Mike Shanahan



Profitability In 2010 and Beyond...

2010 Virginia Beef Cattlemen's Field Day

Saturday, August 28, 2010
Delaplane, VA



Sponsored by:

*Virginia Angus Association &
Virginia Cattlemen's Association*

and generously hosted by:

**HILL CREST FARM
AND
POOR HOUSE ANGUS**
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE
NORTHERN VIRGINIA ANGUS ASSOCIATION



Planned Events will include:

- *Panel discussion featuring industry professionals*
- *Keynote Speaker*
- *Equipment Displays*
- *Cattle Displays*
- *Free Lunch...*

...and a golf tournament to be held on August 27!

Featured Speakers Include:

- *Chuck Conner, President and CEO, National Council of Farm Cooperatives*
- *Tom Field, Executive Director, of Producer Education for NCBA*
- *Paul Bennett, Knoll Crest Farm*
- *Tim Sutphin, Hillwinds Farm*
- *Don Schiefelbein, Schiefelbein Farms*

Hotel Information: Holiday Inn and Suites
located on the golf course in Front Royal
540-631-3050
Super 8 Motel in Front Royal
540-636-4888

*Watch for more details on the website
at www.vaangus.org, or call 540-
337-3001.*