

# FREED FAMILY CREATING A LEGACY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME



Two brands, with one common goal, Double J Shorthorns and Jeepetta Cattle Company based in Alex, Oklahoma, both strive to produce exceptional show heifers that juniors can afford, and functional bulls that breeders of all disciplines can use.

Both sides of the operation have rich histories that revolve around family values and high-quality cattle. Today, the two brands work together as the Freed Family raises nationally competitive Shorthorn cattle that excel in the show ring and in the pasture and continue to get youth involved in the breed. However, cattle were not always the center point of their operation.

James was born and raised in Oklahoma City. Although he did not have any livestock, he developed a passion for the industry during the summers he spent at his grandparent's farm. Beverly, who was born in Pryor and raised in Tulsa, had a love for horses and grew up barrel racing and pole bending. The two met at Oklahoma Christian College where Beverly graduated with a degree in Elementary Education and James was working on his Doctorate of Medicine. After James completed his studies, as well as two years in the Air force, the two moved to Chickasha where he began his Pediatrics practice. Not long after they were married, the two decided to leave the in-town life behind and head to the country. In 1978 they bought the rural home where they would live for the next 40 years.

At a young age, their daughter Janet joined 4-H. She borrowed a lamb to show in ladies' lead. When she won and received a sheep halter as her prize, she convinced her parents that she needed a lamb to go with it. The family got two lambs for her to show, but due to unfortunate circumstances both sheep passed away. Janet told her dad that they needed a sturdier animal to show, and thus the cattle business began.



Janet's first steer, a Shorthorn, was selected by her Ag teacher for the docility associated with the breed. Over time the family transitioned from steers to heifers and as their son Jerry got older, he began showing cattle as well. Raising Shorthorn cattle was now a family endeavor and the name Double J Shorthorns, with a J for each of their children; Janet and Jerry, reflected that purpose.

It didn't take long for the Freed family to get involved with the Shorthorn breed on the state and national level. When the need arose for James to take on a leadership role within the breed association, he stepped up and served as the president of the Oklahoma Shorthorn Association for many years. In the early 80's, he was again asked to step up, but this time to fill a 1-year term position on the American Shorthorn Association board. He went on to serve a total of 13 years on the American Shorthorn Association board, including 4- years as ASA Vice President and a 2-year term as ASA President.

The national involvement didn't stop there. Beverly and James also served as junior advisers on the National Junior Shorthorn Association board of directors for 6 years. The couple were honored as recipients of the Junior Volunteer of the Year award for their hard work and dedication to the breed it's youth involvement.

Being geared toward youth is very important for the Freed family. Not only do they breed cattle that are gentle enough to show and cost effective enough for families to afford, but they also work to help any youth they can to get involved. Traditionally, the cattle from Double J and Jeepetta are offered through state association sales, private treaty or the Heart of the Prairie sale which they had a hand in developing. However, when one local boy came to them with a desire to show and a willingness to work, they worked out a system where he could help around the farm and could show one of their heifers in exchange. Over the years, James and Beverly have gotten many kids involved in showing the breed, including the Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture's sister.

James often says that he did not grow up around cattle and simply learned by listening to others. He and his wife now serve as the teachers to many kids who may have never been around cattle in their lives. They truly are strengthening the future of the Shorthorn industry by teaching kids today to be leaders in the breed tomorrow.

Having been married for 54 years now, James and Bev Freed have remained dedicated to the breed and to helping youth for many years after their own kids have grown. Their family has grown now as the Freed's daughter is now married with two sons of her own who are involved in the cattle business. The family now includes daughter Janet and Son in Law Jim Strate, their family Justin and Lexi Strate, with their 2



daughters, Layton and Jentry. As well as Jarred and Victoria Strate. Their son Jerry and daughter in law Carmen Freed also have two kids Vail and Vann Freed. While Jerry's kids are more active in sports, he still followed in his dad's footsteps through his career as a pediatrician. James still works as a pediatrician 3 days a week. James served as a past President and Medical Director of Southern Plains Medical Center. He applies his knowledge of how kids grow to selecting structurally correct cattle that will grow at home. After teaching for many years, Beverly transitioned to the full-time herd manger on the farm. As the nuts and bolts of the operation, she keeps records, breaks calves and hauls cattle to shows. She began her own herd, Jeepetta Cattle Company after receiving a calf for her birthday. The name Jeepetta came from the fact that she is known for driving her red Jeep, and the "etta" portion of the name signifies a lady. Bev and James work together to manage the Double J herd, while the Jeepetta side is her thriving success.



Together with Double J and Jeepetta, the herd now consist of around 35 head of cattle that carry diverse bloodlines and specially sought out genetics from across the nation. The Freed family believes in finding diamonds in the rough and developing them into something they can be proud of. Their heifers are flashy in the show ring and perform just as well in the pasture like JB Bunny's Image who was a Reserve Champion Purebred Shorthorn Heifer at

National Junior Show for the Freed's daughter Janet. As well as Ar Su Lu Jaci the National Champion Heifer at Louisville for Bev under the Jeepetta name. The bulls they raise are complete packages for both

the purebred and the commercial producer. They are also successful in the show industry including Cor Fear Factor the National Champion Bull at Louisville for Double J and JCC The Heat bringing home the title of South Central Region Show Bull of the Year for Jeepetta. The family has had many All American Heifers and Bulls, but their real pride is in raising quality cattle and in helping the future of the industry. As a family operation, they have a true passion for the Shorthorn breed and the youth who exhibit them. The Freed family has no intention of stopping anytime soon and they will keep developing cattle that breeders across the nation can proudly add to their herds and will certainly continue to foster the growth of the next generation of the industry.