

Two Giant Bovines Have Gentle Personalities

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

Stories about two big bovines recently crossed our desk.

In October, Blossom, a 13-year-old Holstein cow, received papers certifying that she is "officially amazing" by London representatives of the Guinness Book of World Records. At 6-ft, 4-in., Blossom will be featured as the world's tallest cow in the 2016 Guinness book.

Her owner, Patty Hanson, of Orangeville, Ill., says she's been caught off guard with all the media attention. But Blossom has always been special, she says, and is her farm's "official greeter".

Her late father raised heifers for area dairies. When Blossom could not be bred successfully, she would normally have been sent to slaughter except for the fact that Hanson's daughters considered Blossom a beloved pet. Blossom had personality and loved being around people. So despite being a nonproductive animal, Hanson's father agreed to keep her.

"My only regret is that he isn't here," Hanson says, noting her father always said Blossom might turn out to be a record-setting cow.

Hanson notes that Blossom never received any special feed, and the vet surmises that because she never calved or produced milk all her energy went to growth.

The Holstein is well-known in the area and to the ladies who come from miles around to quilt or scrapbook at Hanson's on-farm business, Memory Lane Crafting Retreat. Attendees love the peace of the country, Hanson says, where she grows and harvests beans, corn and hay with small farm equipment, including her dad's old Oliver tractors. The women also love taking photos with Blossom.

"What makes her different from most cows, in addition to her size, is her friendliness. She just makes people happy," Hanson says. "Now the whole world is looking at Blossom."

Across the country in Kooskia, Idaho, Babe, a 14-year-old Holstein steer has developed his own following. Although he does not hold the world record for a steer, he measures an impressive 6 ft., 2 in. tall and is about 13 ft. long.

Babe was given to Ruebush after the calf was abandoned at birth because he had developed pneumonia. Ruebush took the opportunity to teach his daughters about using natural remedies, such as hydrotherapy, to heal livestock and, in the process, gained a lifelong pet that has traveled to four states with the family.

After just one rough ride Babe was saddle broken and he's been giving rides ever since as part of a unique ministry.

"Girls especially seem to get the most out of riding him," Ruebush says, noting that teachers and ministers report teens have improved social skills and self-confidence after working with Babe at conferences and events where the giant steer makes guest appearances.

Ruebush has never pursued setting any records with Babe, but notes he is a very gentle animal with a great personality that makes a difference in people's lives.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Patty



At 6 ft., 4 in., Blossom will be featured as the tallest cow in the 2016 Guinness World Records. Her owner, Patty Hanson, says Blossom is her farm's "official greeter."



Photo courtesy The Clearwater Progress

Babe, a 14-year-old Holstein steer, is 6 ft. 2 in. tall and about 13 ft. long, says his owner, Dale Ruebush. Babe is saddle broke, and likes to give rides.

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Loader-Mounted Mower Makes Roadside Trimming Easy

Mowing steep roadsides is not a problem for James Rohr, Navarre, Ohio, who made a side-mount mower hitch that carries a 22-in. wide push mower about 10 ft. out to the side of the bucket on his loader tractor.

"It's simple to use and results in a nice, even cut," he says. "I use it to mow the steep banks along a road next to my property. Using the loader I can see what I'm doing without having to turn around. I can raise or lower the loader and also tilt it up or down to adjust the position of the mower."

He left the handle on the mower and attached metal plates to the front and back of the deck. Chains run from the plates up to a short crossbar on the end of the telescoping pipe. The base of the pipe fits over one of the bale spears on the loader and it rests on top of another one. The chains attached to the mower deck allow it to roll easily over uneven ground.

"I've been using this method to mow roadsides for more than 13 years and I can't think of any way to improve it," says Rohr. "I can set it up for use in only about 7 min."

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Side-mount hitch carries a 22-in. wide push mower about 10 ft. beyond the bucket on James Rohr's loader tractor. Chains attached to mower deck allow it to roll easily over uneven ground.