

Kick Your Feet Up

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Libby Williams



Larry Bellamy

This is part of a series featuring past employees of the breed associations that now comprise the NSR. Email comments to seedstockedge@nationalswine.com.

HOMETOWN: Fort Cobb, Okla.

EDUCATION: Bachelor of science in animal science and agricultural education from Oklahoma State University

POSITION WITH THE NSR: Southwest Duroc fieldman from 1989-1998

CAREER TODAY: Running the Circle of Gold pig sale in El Reno, Okla., and raising five kids

BEST THING THE NSR BRINGS TO THE INDUSTRY: Organization within and among the different breeds

It doesn't matter if it's in the show ring or on the baseball field, competition is what drives former Southwest Duroc fieldman, Larry Bellamy. That competitive nature is a family matter, a trait Bellamy has passed on to his children and grandchildren alike.

Bellamy's competitive spirit came at a young age. As a child, he grew up showing cattle and playing baseball and basketball. Because of his excitement in the show ring, Bellamy attended Oklahoma State University to study ag education and animal science.

His love for the livestock industry was satisfied with his choice of majors, but his passion for athletics was missing until he decided to walk onto OSU's baseball team. As a freshman, Bellamy was cut from the collegiate roster, but he found another outlet for his athletic ability: a sandlot league.

"I led the (sandlot) league in hitting, so they asked me to come out (for the team)," Bellamy says.

Unfortunately, the year Bellamy was invited back to join the OSU squad, he was scheduled to graduate at mid-term, so he turned the offer down.

Not being able to play collegiately didn't affect his love for sports, though. In fact, it would always be a hobby for Bellamy. He continued to coach boys'

baseball and basketball while pursuing his professional interest as an ag teacher. Bellamy even played slow pitch softball until he was 50 years old.

Even though sports were the hobby that drove him, agriculture was the career path he was passionate about.

"When I got out of college, I wanted to raise purebred livestock," Bellamy says. "I couldn't afford to raise cattle so I got into the hog business, and I just had a fondness for the industry, you might say."

Bellamy raised hogs, traveled the Southwest region and California for the UDSR for 13 years, taught agriculture and is credited with running the Circle of Gold pig sale every fall in El Reno, Okla., since 1979. That's where his family comes in.

"If you are talking about a family affair, that's the Circle of Gold pig sale," Bellamy says.

Bellamy's entire family helps put on the sale – from his wife working the office, to his daughter putting together the sale list and his brother taking entries. Not to mention, his sons help put on the event and his son- and daughters-in-law and grandchildren fill in wherever necessary.

To Bellamy, family is the grounding factor he truly identifies with. Sure, he loves competing and he loves purebred livestock, but family is first. Luckily, his family has inherited his most dominant

traits. He boasts about marrying, "one of the best basketball players that has ever played at Fort Cobb." That's his wife, Sandy.

"She was a good athlete," Bellamy says.

All three of his kids, Mickey (Toad), Jesse and Judy played competitive high school sports and all grew up showing pigs. It's the same story for his grandchildren. Four of his five grandchildren were members of Oklahoma State champion athletic teams, and Bellamy is proud to say he's watched his grandchildren play in 55 state tournament games.

It's no different in the show ring. His family is competitive there, too.

"My oldest granddaughter even had the grand barrow at Tulsa one fall," Bellamy says.

Today, Bellamy is still putting on the Circle of Gold sale the last Sunday in October. He and Toad run a registered Duroc and showpig operation out of Fort Cobb, Okla., called Toad'L Genetics. Bellamy is still raising kids as well. He and his wife are taking care of a brother's five grandchildren; maybe they'll inherit that competitive drive too.

After all, Bellamy stands strong behind his principles.

"If you can't show it, throw it, kick it or bat it, well I don't have much time for it."