

# 2010 President & Director Candidates

## Mike Moyers - Presidential Candidate

**M**ike Moyers and his wife Debbie live in Bridgeport, Texas, and run Sandy Creek Farm. They have



four children, Maclain, Amber, Brandon and Jarred. The farm was originally only peanuts and cotton until in 1958 Mike's father began milking. By 1974,

Mike's brother and father were milking 200 head of cattle in a double 6 parlor. His father sold the dairy to his brother and built a smaller double 4 to milk, what he called, the better kind. In 1975, Mike and his father traveled to Ohio to attend the L-J Dispersal to buy their first registered cow. L-J Model Jeaverissa became the foundation of the family that still gives them a lot of pride today.

Mike bought the farm in 1984. His father passed away in 1988 and Mike credits his dad for anything valuable that has come his way. They have milked as many as 175 head, always with a mixed herd of Brown Swiss and Holstein. The cattle have always been pasture fed, with excellent winter pasture, 80lb averages weren't uncommon through the winter. In May of 2006, they had the Sandy Creek Milking Cow Dispersal and sold all of the cows and bred heifers. Mike is proud of how the cows sold, going to virtually every part of the country. He personally delivered cattle to New York and Oregon. He is proud that the cattle have done well for other people.

Pot Luck SB Butterfly was purchased by Elite Dairy and was Grand at Harrisburg and Reserve Grand at Madison and also All-American Aged Cow. SCF Victor Maggie was 1st 3-Year-Old at Madison and All-American in 2008. SCF James Vix purchased by Nate Goldenburg was 1st 5-Year-Old and Reserve Grand at the Wisconsin State Show and Grand at the Southwestern National and Nominated All-American. There have also been numerous State Fair and National Show winners that came out of the dispersal..

Mike has maintained an interest in several cows including SCF Ensign Victoria, SCF James Trinket and SCF James Butterfly. Their son Brandon is working at home with Mike and they have added several special heifers to their group. They are now milking a small group of all Brown Swiss. Milk sales are made direct on the farm, the balance is sold to a cheese maker and the cheese is offered at the farm.

The fact that Sandy Creek bred cattle have been grand or reserve at the South-

western National since 2000 and that they have received Premier Breeder the last four years makes Mike proud. He's also proud of the opportunity to judge in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Mexico; helping grow the Southwestern National into one of the larger and popular shows and the five successful years at the Heart-of-America Sale.

Outside of the farm Mike is a partner in an oilfield service business which developed a method of extending the life of drill pipe.

## Allen Bassler - District III Candidate

**A**llen Bassler is from Old Mill Farm in Upperville, Virginia. He and his wife Tammy have three children, Amanda, Lorraine and Allen Jr.

Allen was raised on a 200 head Brown Swiss farm named Sand Rock Farm in Rocky Ridge, Maryland. He currently works at Oak Spring Farm as a dairy manager as well as managing and breeding show cattle at Old Mill Farm.

Old Mill Farm has won Grand Champion at the World Dairy Expo six times, has a total of nine grand champions, fifteen All-Americans, two Reserve All-Americans and a total of twenty-nine nominations for All-American.

Allen has been Chairman of the National Show Committee for Brown Swiss as well as being on the Research Foundation Board of Directors and Research Foundation Committee. When he's not working on the farm Allen enjoys attending church and teaches a Wednesday night boy's class of 1st and 2nd graders about God and life. He also enjoys NASCAR racing.



## Michael Overstreet - District VIII Candidate

**M**ichael Overstreet, from Chillicothe, Texas, runs Overstreet Dairy with his mother Glenda, wife Christine and their three kids Mikayla, Brianna and Garrett. Their first Brown Swiss heifers were purchased in 1978 as 4-H projects; from there they have bred and bought to get to where they are today.

Overstreet Dairy is home to 1,100 milking cows, 267 are Brown Swiss. They also raise all their replacement heifers-1,030 head of which 227 are Brown Swiss. Their current RHA at 3x is 19,000M on 267 Brown Swiss cows. The dairy consists of 700 acres of owned land and 250 acres of rented land. Milk cows are fed TMR made of sorghum, wheat and corn silages. Alfalfa hay is purchased and mixed in TMR also.

Heifers are grazed on summer grasses, hay grazer and wheat. Some heifers are fed



TMR in the feed lot.

Michael has served as Director for District 8 for the past three years and is currently serving as President of the Texas Brown Swiss Association.

He has served as a dairy judging coach for 4-H and has also been on the show committee for county livestock shows. In 1999 and 2000, he served as a Director of the Texas Farm Bureau on the county level. Both he and his wife have participated in young cooperative programs through DFA, attending meetings and conventions in Tennessee and Louisiana. Michael has also been a member and Director on the Chillicothe Rodeo and Riding Club for the past eight years.

Their farm has enjoyed success in the show ring and on the farm through the years. Some of the most recent awards were the Division 3 Progressive Genetic Herd Award in 2006, and in 2010 they received Premier Breeder and Exhibitor at the Texas State Show. Their Brown Swiss herd has received numerous DHIA production awards. They have also enjoyed working with many people and making new friends through cattle and embryo sales to Mexico, South America and the United States.

The Overstreets enjoy spending time as a family, cooking out, camping and visiting. The kids enjoy helping around the dairy, showing cattle, 4-H and sports. They are members of the First United Methodist Church of Chillicothe. Michael enjoys spending time with his wife and kids, riding horses and working with his cows.

## Dan Baginski - Director IX Candidate

**D**an Baginski and his wife Maureen run Dan Maur Farm in Othello, Washington. They have five children: Liz (married to Joe Holtcamp, son Josh), Jennifer, Dan, Chris and Megan (married to Brian Christiansen, son Scott and daughter, Anneka).

Dan has a degree in dairy husbandry from California State Polytechnic University. They have been dairying for 40 years and have been at their current location for 30 years. They milk 200 head of Brown Swiss, Jerseys and Holsteins. They have exhibited their cattle in Washington, Oregon, California, Utah, British Columbia, Kentucky and Wisconsin. Dan has had the honor of judging Brown Swiss in Mexico, Brazil and the Dominican Republic as well as judging in Washington, Oregon and Cal-



ifornia.

They bred the Junior Champion at World Dairy Expo in 2009, Dan Maur Logic Shilo, a Spring Yearling. She went on to be All-American and was also

Junior Champion at the Royal Winter Fair. They have also twice won the Joe Eves Award.

The whole family is involved in the farm and helps at the Western Regional Brown Swiss show at the Western Washington Fair. Their daughter Liz has Brown Swiss at her home, as does their son Chris, who is at home on the dairy when he is not traveling around the U.S. and Canada fitting cattle. Their daughter Megan and her husband Brian have recently purchased their own Brown Swiss that are housed at their family dairy in Oregon. Their son Dan and daughter Jennifer also have animals at home.

#### Marc Wailes - District IX Candidate

**M**arc Wailes, his wife Janel and their four sons live in Eastern Colorado outside of Holyoke. They run Double W Farm along with Marc's brother Gregg and their brother-in-law Glenn Huwa. Marc's grandfather started milking grade Brown Swiss in 1936 and Marc's father introduced Registered Brown Swiss into the herd in the 1960's.

Marc grew up in Johnstown, Colorado, and later moved to Kersey, Colorado, where he graduated from high school. He was part of the 4-H Judging Team and while attending Colorado State University he was a member of the Dairy Judging Team and was employed at the CSU Dairy. With the desire to expand their herd they moved to



Holyoke, Colorado, where they still are today. The family currently attends the First United Methodist Church of Holyoke.

For 15 years they have been combining herd operations and building a dairy which milks 1,000 head with 340 of the herd being registered Brown Swiss and an equal amount of the total herd being young stock. They are currently in the Brown Swiss Advantage program. During the past six years they have made some choice purchases for their herd from quality breeders across the country but are now growing their Brown Swiss herd from within, registering over 100 head per year. Their Brown Swiss RHA is 23,138M, 870F and 743P. They strongly believe the Brown

Swiss cow has a bright future.

Through the years their Brown Swiss have been shown at county and state fairs and currently they are sponsors and exhibitors at the Southwestern National which is their closest national show. They have always worked with local youth in 4-H and FFA to make project calves available. They also host youth and college judging teams throughout the year and work on the committee which puts on the Rocky Mountain Brown Swiss State Show each year.

They were honored with the Genetic Herd Award at the 2009 National Brown Swiss Convention.

#### *What are your ideas to encourage commercial dairymen to purchase registered Brown Swiss?*

**Moyers:** We as an association need to put together new promotional material to promote our breed. Starting with our greatest strength and working down – protein, solids, cheese yield, quality and quantity of milk, longevity, temperament, health and cross breeding. The bottom line is long term profitability. We deliver this material to the dairymen by whatever means possible. I think the internet is the most obvious, then by publications, trade shows and on farm visits. We have seen results made by other breeds. We need to remember it took breeders support to make it work.

**Bassler:** Encouraging commercial dairymen to use registered Brown Swiss because the benefits are lower SCC, a cow that has better feet and legs, higher fat and protein which will have a higher cheese yield. Brown Swiss cows will give just about as much milk a day compared to Holsteins. Brown Swiss can take the heat a little better. For the commercial dairyman that like to cross breed they will work the best compared to other breeds. Their feet, legs and udder will be improved the fastest and they will gain components by cross breeding.

**Overstreet:** I feel that in the Brown Swiss breed we need to work to be more competitive in commercial herds, commercial dairymen need to know the benefits the Brown Swiss breed can bring to their herd. They are a profitable animal due to their hardiness, durability, production and strong feet and legs. Also, dairymen need to be aware of the quality of milk that the Brown Swiss cow produces. Another great attribute of our breed is their ability to adapt and produce in a wide variety of environments. Our breed sells itself and once dairymen try a Swiss, they usually want to buy some more.

**Baginski:** In the West there just aren't the numbers of Brown Swiss to make it possible to promote their use in commercial herds. For commercial dairymen who are looking for component pricing, I would advise them to use the Brown Swiss bulls. The biggest problem in the West is the lack of numbers of Brown Swiss and dealing with the stereotype that Brown Swiss just don't measure up

to Holsteins and Jerseys. In Washington we consign to the Springtime Youth Calf Sale for 4-H and FFA members only, and help spread the enthusiasm for Brown Swiss.

**Wailes:** Show them the money! We should show them the value that owning Brown Swiss gives their milk check. We have a cow that produces the nutrient rich milk that consumers and processors want, Swiss are similar in size to the Holstein, easier to work with, have lower somatic count and longer productive lives – all things that are important to their bottom line. Registered Swiss are in demand even in these tough economic times. Swiss also adapt to the different commercial management systems and they have no climatic or geographic barriers. With a longer lived cow you will also have a higher rate of internal growth within your herd, meaning less replacement costs. There is also the potential for effective crossbreeding. We should also mention the slaughter value when they must be sold. There is added value at every stage of life with Brown Swiss.

#### *What do you feel are your responsibilities toward public functions in your district?*

**Moyers:** I think a director or president should make as many breed functions as he possibly can. State meetings, sales or shows.

**Bassler:** I think being director is more than just going to board meetings, attending national conventions and being available for phone conferences once a month. That would be just doing the basics. I think we need to be present at state and local meetings, state shows and at least one national show for your district if possible. Not all districts are the same; some districts do cover 8 to 10 states. I think talking one on one with members will yield knowledge of what the members want out of the association.

**Overstreet:** I feel that as the director from my district, that it is my responsibility to attend as many public functions involving Brown Swiss that I can. I like being out with the Brown Swiss breeders and talking about Brown Swiss. The best way to serve the people of your district is to be out among them and know what is going on.

**Baginski:** If you mean Brown Swiss functions, our family is well represented at the Western Regional Brown Swiss Show and has been for a number of years. I was a past officer of the Pacific NW Brown Swiss Association and am currently on the board of Western Herd Sires. I was a National Brown Swiss Director for six years. When I was director previously, I made it a point to attend the Western National Brown Swiss Show in Sacramento. As far as non-Brown Swiss functions, I am a member of DHIA and Northwest Dairymen's Association Coop and attend those meetings. My responsibilities as a Director would be to attend Brown Swiss functions and keep in touch with the various state associations, keeping them informed as best I can.

**Wailes:** In reality, in our Western District, the distances make travel to all Swiss func-

tions an impossible goal. I would try to make an appearance when possible, depending more on opening a line of communication to the State Associations and breeders so that I would know what was going on and so would they. I believe a director should be the go-to person to listen to their concerns and act in their behalf. It is my observation that informed and involved breeders make active breeders. We don't just need to get new breeders each year; we need to keep the old ones. Keeping an open line of communication would yield more advantages to the breeders in our large area.

**Communication is a high priority (news releases, print media, internet, websites, Brown Swiss Bulletin articles, etc.) As a Director, what plans or ideas would you suggest to improve such communication?**

**Moyers:** I think we need to take a good look at our association's website. It needs constant updating. Maybe we should bring it totally in house and start from scratch. I think a future employee should have the skills to maintain the website. Emails can be used more as a method of communication between our breeders. Press releases should be used much more than they have in the past.

**Bassler:** As a breeder I like to know what is going on with the breed and other breeders. The Bulletin is our breed magazine. It is like a local newspaper that you have in your hand and can refer back to anytime for current information. We need to utilize all the resources of computer technology – email, facebook, twitter – that may keep information and breeders up to date with what's happening in the Brown Swiss world minute by minute if needed. Even the Brown Swiss website needs to be updated daily or weekly to keep information current. We need to make the website interesting so it will bring back the users on a daily basis.

**Overstreet:** I think we could do more breed advertising in other dairy publications like Hoard's Dairyman and Progressive Dairyman. As more and more people are communicating through email and receiving information from the internet, I think it is important that we are constantly updating and improving our web sites. Through better communication we can expand our breed and increase growth in our association.

**Baginski:** Communication is very poor out West and I would try to encourage more internet information. That's a great way to keep in touch with all the breeders, especially those of us that are geographically challenged. As an example, the Jersey Association sends emails with information about activities going on and decisions made regarding their Association. Right now the only contact we as Brown Swiss breeders have with the office is through the classifiers. I would like to see email addresses in the Bulletin for office staff, including the Executive Secretary.

**Wailles:** The Brown Swiss website should be upgraded with more information and updated more often. And as with any information, it should be accurate, informative and interesting. Any articles that pertain to Brown Swiss – or state or breeder activities – would be beneficial to breeders and the association. I feel the Brown Swiss Bulletin is one of the best breed journals, but I realize that not all our smaller breeders get it. Facebook could also be used. I do not see many articles about Brown Swiss in other dairy magazines; we need to make more than just our breeders aware of our cattle and breeders. We now have the technology to be in communication with more state associations and breeders than at any other time. We need to start thinking outside the box – and then carry through.

**The use of Genomic evaluations became reality for Brown Swiss last fall. How important do you feel it is for Brown Swiss breeders to use this new tool for genetic selection at the farm level?**

**Moyers:** Genomics may be the single biggest change in agriculture since AI. The ability to test an animal shortly after birth and know the genetic impact of that animal is an incredible advantage. It is real and it is here to stay. My suggestion is use the sire summary and test your better animals. Common sense selection with good balance in type and production will remain the key to good cattle breeding.

**Bassler:** I think it is a tool that can help with selection of traits for type and production. I am not sold 100% on all of the facts about how they get the numbers they get. In time I hope the reliability will improve. A lot of money has been put into this and it could take a lot more to keep it running and up to date. I think some animals will be missed just because of their lack of high production levels even if their levels of type traits are successful. If as a breed we are striving for our cows only to excel in production and not in type traits, we may have the potential to go backwards in our breed.

**Baginski:** Genomics is a new tool to use, but it is just a tool. I think it is up to each of us to decide how important it is in our herds. I feel like I would like to find out more about it before I decide how to use it.

**Overstreet:** Genomics is another great tool in genetic advancement for all breeds. I feel that we as Brown Swiss breeders should use genomics in bull selection as a tool and not as the only means of selecting sires for our herds. I do think you will see genetics in the breed advance much more rapidly within the next few years.

**Wailles:** Big! If we can better determine an animal's genetic ability when they are a baby calf from its DNA, to get a PTA with a reliability of up to 70%, is huge. It speeds up the selection and hopefully, creates a larger genetic pool. We've seen how it has revolutionized the selection of bulls for AI

and is also will have an impact for breeders in the breeding and merchandizing of their herd's offspring. Mother Nature will give us the final results, but this technology should only help dairymen do a better job of producing milk.

**What specific performance traits should Brown Swiss as a breed concentrate their focus on during the next 10 years? (Milk, protein, type, somatic cell, calving ease, etc.)**

**Moyers:** Our #1 problem is reproduction. Real attention and weight has to be put here or we will be out of business. Swiss has finished near the bottom of the list amongst breeds for several years. By genetic selection and sound classification we can change our course. The new score card reflects the physical characteristics needed for sound breeding. Selecting sires for reproduction will be critical. Looking at our current reproduction problems many can be traced back to physical traits attributed to just a few bulls used in the past. Balance of type and production.

**Bassler:** To be competitive as a breed we do need to have production, but we can't lose our fat and protein levels. As a breed we are increasingly losing feet and leg qualities in our animals. We need to keep focusing on improving feet and legs. We are also starting to notice a high number of recessed anuses which can be linked to some of the new breeding problems of the Brown Swiss. It is important to find bulls to correct this problem.

**Overstreet:** I feel like there are three main categories that our breed needs to focus on in the next 10 years. First would be production. We need cows that can go into commercial herds and be able to produce quality milk in volumes that she is more profitable than any other breed. Second would be fertility. We have got to get our breed where they will breed back more rapidly so that this is no longer a criticism we get from producers. Third is longevity. Brown Swiss are known for longevity. Whatever road that we go down trying to improve characteristics, we must always be careful that we don't lose our longevity!

**Baginski:** Milk, protein and butterfat should be stressed and I think that is what we need to focus on – getting the word out about Brown Swiss, but it is hard to do when there are so few Brown Swiss in our area for other dairymen to see.

**Wailles:** Each breeder has to choose those traits which are most important to their herd so they can remain competitive in today's market. Ten breeders could give you ten different answers. I believe the Brown Swiss Association should strive to promote all of the above so we have a cow that works for everyone. I personally believe we need high producing cows that breed back year after year and are efficient as far as income over feed costs. For us in our operation, reproduction, a productive life and functional type, are key.