

Ted Ressler

Ted Ressler was born on November 17, 1929, on a farm southwest of Mandan. He served on the first North Dakota Quarter Horse Association Board of Directors and was the first American Quarter Horse Association National Director solely for North Dakota. It has been said that Ted is the man most responsible for the North Dakota Quarter Horse Association becoming a reality in 1960.

On the farm Ted learned to handle horses at an early age. When he was eighteen years old, he went to work for legendary rodeo contractor Leo Cremer of Big Timber, Montana. After leaving Cremer's employ, Ted worked for Jerry Boren, a cutting horse enthusiast from Mandan. However, Ted was drafted into the service in 1951 when the Korean War broke out, and he served until 1953.

Then, in the late 1950s, Harold Schafer of Bismarck decided to get into the Quarter Horse business but quickly realized he was going to need some help, so he turned to Ted Ressler, one of the best-known horsemen in the state. At that time Blackburn was the leading maternal grandsire of AQHA Champions and one of the over-all top broodmare sires. It is for this reason that Harold and Ted decided to build their breeding operation upon the blood of the renowned stallion, and to name it after him as well. Beginning in 1958, Ted went about quietly buying all the Blackburn mares he could locate. He managed to buy forty-nine mares, and in 1961, Harold and Ted bought the legendary stallion, Pretty Buck. He was installed as the ranch's senior sire and would prove to be a magic cross on the Blackburn mares. As a result, the single most impressive set of horses to ever be brought into the state of North Dakota, up to that time, came about. The effects of the operation are still being felt today, as descendants of the program can be found throughout the Northern Plains. And, although Harold was definitely the money behind the operation, Ted was the master planner.

Ted managed Blackburn Ranch for approximately ten years. After 1969 Ted and his family moved to their ranch in Mandan and kept some mares and their stud, Poco Eagle, and raised a few colts every year. Ted worked for ten years as a sales representative for the Ralston-Purina and Peavey Companies. In 1979 he developed serious health issues, and because of that, as well as imminent city zoning changes, they sold their horse pasture to developers.

Ted still lives in Mandan with his wife Carolyn. They have three children, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.