

Born in 1920 of German-Russian immigrants, John James Froelich grew up on the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota where horses were a necessity to harvest, make hay, feed cows and ride to school. He married his wife, Barbara, in 1943. Together they raised five sons and two daughters. Along with his father they continued to raise beef and dairy cattle, wheat, corn and flax on the farm located north of Selfridge.

John had a great affection for his horses but realized the draft type he was riding did not have the desired speed and versatility to his liking. His first attempt to improve this was to expose a U.S. remount stallion to his remaining draft-type mares. Soon after, he heard about a new type of horse that offered more speed and quickness, known as the Quarter Horse. So, sometime in the late 1940s he purchased the palomino stallion WR's Comanche Boy, a grandson of Old Man by Old Sorrel. Old Sorrel was the foundation sire of the King Ranch Quarter Horse breeding program and an early inductee into the AQHA Hall of Fame. He then purchased three mares, which began a breeding program that developed beyond his wildest dreams. As years passed, John purchased sons of King Trumpet x Cotton Mac's Star, Blackburn 90 and Tuffernhel, and he leased a son of Smutty Bill from Harold Schafer.

Following John's passing in 1993, his five sons, Warren, Terry, Rod, Kurt and Kelly, and their families continued the time-honored tradition of raising horses with superior conformation, gentle dispositions and world champion blood lines. The breeding program is known for its characteristic roan and grullo colors and foundation bloodlines. The Froelichs breed and market horses that display a great deal of cow sense, athleticism and confidence. Whether pulling calves to the branding iron, giving some newborns a free ride to the barn, roping across the arena, packing in the mountains, or taking an evening pleasure ride, their horses prove their versatility.

In 2011 John's sons organized a second breeding program named Froelich Legacy Quarter Horses, which continued to host annual production sales offering approximately 50 AQHA weanlings in addition to special consignments. The September 17, 2022, production sale marked the 52<sup>nd</sup> year of their annual event and represented 63 consecutive years of registering foals with AQHA. Together the two programs expose over 100 mares to multiple stallions that first must meet rigid standards of disposition, conformation, muscle and bone. They are proud to acknowledge that customers represent nearly every U.S. state, Canada, Mexico and Europe.

Each year, AQHA honors breeders who have dedicated their livelihoods to maintaining the integrity of the American Quarter Horse breed. These horsemen and their families see their biggest accomplishments and proudest moments in the horses they breed. In 2009 the Froelich program was recognized as an AQHA Legacy Breeder for registering at least one foal for 50 consecutive years, and in the fall of 2010 AQHA recognized it as the first AQHA Ranching Heritage Breeder in North Dakota. AQHA Heritage Breeders are those who breed and raise ranch-type horses, which remains at the core of AQHA and epitomizes the breed's versatility. AQHA Ranching Heritage Breeders embody the longevity, integrity and honesty of the ranching tradition.

While much credit has been given to John and his love for horses, one cannot forget the steadfast support of his wife, Barbara. She was always present to watch over their activities and give encouragement to grow the breeding programs.

A great testament to John's interest in horses can be seen in the fact that all his sons have made his dream theirs. His example of enjoying the companionship of a horse has now extended to several grandchildren and even great grandchildren. All involved have ownership in at least one mare and one riding horse. Although the color and scope of the horse herd has changed dramatically since the early years, the goal of the families remains the same as their father and grandfather - to breed horses with disposition, conformation and eye appeal. Within all the history of stallions and mares, one overall philosophy has prevailed: breed horses that the family loves to ride and feels safe doing it.

There are two dominant sayings at the Froelich homes:

"Yes, there is always fence to fix and cows to check, but we always have time to chat about our horses."

"It is a great feeling to be on the back of a horse."