

Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010



Blondes on pasture at Ferme Morrissey at Racine, Quebec

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To view the newsletter in full colour, check it out
on the web: www.canadianblondeassociation.ca

PLEASANT VALLEY BLONDES

Full Blood Blonde d'Aquitaine



Proud Sponsor of The Lindsay Exhibition
2009 - 2010



Congratulations
Jason Vantol
High Rock Farms
Grand Champion Female
Prize \$500



Congratulations
Don Dunham
Donaleen Blondes
Grand Champion Bull
Prize \$500

PLEASANT VALLEY BLONDES
613-483-3385
Harrowsmith ON

Sheldon Asselstine

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ah, at last the end of February. Supper's on the table and the sun is just going down. In my mind, winter is over!

For a good number of purebred breeders of all breeds across the country, the barn lights have been burning. Calving time is one of the most rewarding times of the year. This year is particularly good as the calves are very vigorous, up and looking for their first meal in record time.

Bull Tests across the country are entering into their final weeks, with bull sales getting in full swing. Time to Semen Test the old bull to determine if he is still up to the job at hand. If not, now is the time to invest.

Your board has also been busy. They are working on Herd Inventory, a new Membership Directory and a proposal to simplify our performance program.

Alberta is hosting the National in November and they are wasting no time – giving opportunities for sponsorship of the various classes in the Show. Grab your sponsorship early!

Until next time ... happy calving! ■

Myrna Flesch

*Excellence is a journey ...
not a destination!*

Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Assoc Founding Board of Directors (1973)

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Leo Fouillard (MB)
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Ken MacKenzie (AB)
Shirley Bilton (AB)
Mel Gosling (AB)
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Garth Landeryou (AB)

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The Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association is not responsible for any claims made in an advertisement appearing in this newsletter.

KAM BLONDES

Karl & Ann Musgrove

Box 106, Charlie Lake, BC V0C 1H0

Phone: 250-262-3278

"Keeping the Commercial Man in Mind"

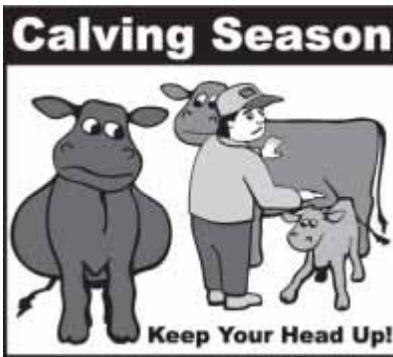
Despite the strain of checking cows and the aches and pains associated with calving time, spring calving can be a pleasant and rewarding time on any cattle operation. It is more rewarding if one remembers a couple of quick points. The first point is safety and the second is safety.

Have you ever looked into the eye of a cow to find out what is going on inside her mind?

The eyes are large, even pretty and almost provide a reflection of oneself in the moisture that covers the eye. Those bright eyes can be indicative of a bright cow, but do not underestimate what that bright-eyed cow actually is thinking.

Most cows are somewhat passive, used to a producer's presence and accepting of it. However, mood swings can be wide.

Within a cow/calf herd, two scenarios generally play out. The first would be similar to getting together with a group of friends. As cows associate with people, they



accept a certain level of coexistence and don't mind an occasional visit.

Too much coexistence can create competition that, in some cases, is no different than getting caught between two cows wanting the same bite of food. The small cows usually lose.

If you are checking the cows and are mistaken as the competition, you will be the small one and, if unprepared,

you will lose. If you have watched cows co-mingle around a water tank, you may recall two or three cows trying to get a drink of water only to step aside when the boss cows walk up.

In the world of dominance, it is better to be at the top of the pecking order. It is important for cattle to respect you and understand their place.

The most frequent challenge with over-friendly animals is that they catch you off guard, especially when they decide to move up the pecking order. The producer is part of the pecking order, so injuries can happen. The change in attitude generally happens without warning. It can happen in the middle of a normal day while checking the cows. (A side note: This is one of the reasons when one hears of bulls that challenge their owner; they simply are moving up the pecking order.)

Without re-enforcement, big wins, little loses. On the other extreme, and one that is seldom a surprise, are those cows that are not accustomed to your presence and view the producer as a predator.

Checking cows requires an awareness that cows are large, living beings that have a mind of their own.

These cows (or bulls) display defensive tactics by lifting their head and tail and giving a snort or two and a dance maneuver. These types of cows tend to put everything on the run, including real predators. Some strong arguments can be made for sending these types of cows to the sale barn.

Checking cows requires an awareness that cows are large, living beings that have a mind of their own. While most cows are predictable, the most important point to remember is what is predictable is that cows can be unpredictable.

Your Blonde Semen Source



"Blackwater Ainsley" New genetics from England.

We also have an extensive selection of semen and embryos from the 70's, 80's & 90's for sale.

Please contact us for more info, or download the colour catalogue available on our website.

Willow Springs Stock Farm

Reed & Michelle Rigney & Family
Westlock, Alberta
Ph: (780) 348-5308
Cell: (780) 307-2702
Email: rigney@clearwave.ca
Web: www.wsscattle.ca

The unpredictability is intensified by throwing a pinch of hormones into the cycle. Two cases where unpredictability can increase are during calving and breeding. Breeding season is not upon most of us yet, so let's pass on the bull for now, but calving is under way. Any cow has one priority and that is to nurture and care for the baby to which she just gave birth.

These are not only learned processes, but also the result of physiological changes that occur through pregnancy, calving and post-calving. Cows with newborn calves are unpredictable.

A sudden bellow, a certain smell, the wrong look and the cow has one thing in mind, which is eliminating the problem, but it is not the calf. So heads up in the calving pen and stay safe. ■

*By Kris Ringwall, Beef Specialist
North Dakota State University Extension Service*

TATTOO LETTER FOR 2010 IS "X"

***An uphappy customer talks to 20 people,
while a happy customer talks to 5!***



**Breed to improve. Raise to enjoy.
Bred females for sale year round.
Performance tested!**

Paul, Mary Ellen, Samantha & Phillip Ferguson
R.R. 3, 21 Crystal Rd., Jasper, Ontario K0G
1G0
Phone: 613-275-2422

HELP US ... HELP YOU

Marcel Lachance

The revenues generated by membership fees is the most important source of income your Association has to promote, advertize and conduct all activities you would expect from your association.

Although all members receive a renewal notice in late October, many members delay in paying this fee till much later in the year. This is very unfortunate as it creates enormous difficulties for your Board. It is very difficult to plan any activity without knowing when and if you will have the funds to execute them.

We will be issuing a new Membership Directory in the near future and if your name is not listed, it is probably because your membership fees have not been paid for this year. This would be unfortunate as these directories are handed out at all fairs across the country and used by potential buyers to contact Blonde breeders in their region.

This is your Association, this is your breed, and this is part of your marketing plan so please **HELP US HELP YOU** by paying your membership fees on time. LIKE NOW. ■

ONTARIO BULL TESTING

Paul Ferguson

With breeding season coming upon us, Blonde breeders need to make important decisions on our breeding program: whether to go with polled, horned, performance or style, calving ease or milk. These decisions will make a big impact on the future of your herd. In Ontario, we are lucky enough to have Bull Evaluation Centres across the province. The more bulls we can evaluate, the better the breed will become. There are 13 Blonde bulls presently on test in Ontario. Some of these bulls are from first-time consignors. I would like to congratulate them for this.

The breeders that put their bulls on test are: Steven Acres with 6 bulls; Carmen Morris with 2 bulls; Crystal Farms, 2 bulls; Lavelaine Farms, 1 bull; Donaleen Blondes, 1 bull; and North Shore Farm with 1 bull. Contact these breeders for up-to-date performance or to BIO at www.biobeef.com. Evaluate your newborn calves before you castrate. You could have the top bull in the breed and you don't know it unless you test him. Lets see if we can increase the number of bulls being tested for 2010. ■

Outdoor Farm Show Goes Blonde

Submitted by Ian Kruis

This past September, Beavermeadow Blonde breeders, Bruce, Cathy, and Dan Langstaff of Tupperville, Ontario entered a purebred Blonde steer in the Carcass Competition at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock, Ontario. The competition rates 20 heifers and steers, which are on display for the entire three-day event. Following the competition the carcasses are graded and purchased by Norwich Packers.



Cathy was pleased to see the Blonde breed highlighted at the awards ceremony, as one of the butchers in attendance said: "This is the carcass that I would take home and feed my family," pointing to his choice carcass belonging to Beavermeadow Blondes. Yes, the trademark "leanness of the Blondes" is observed once again.

The Beavermeadow steer weighed in at a lean 1,390 lbs and dressed at 898 lbs. He

received the highest marks for yield in the competition at 62%. He also had a REA score of 82. Bruce and Cathy were pleased with their overall ranking in this year's event and are striving to improve that ranking to be in the medal standings at the 2010 competition.



The Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association congratulates Bruce, Cathy, and Dan for entering the competition and ensuring that Blondes retain their visibility and profile within the beef industry. We encourage breeders to seek out and take part in similar competitions throughout Canada, allowing producers to observe for themselves the tremendous quality and yield found in the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed. For more information about Canada's Outdoor Farm Show - 2010 Carcass Competition visit www.outdoorfarmshow.com. ■



News from Ontario

Submitted by Ilse Vink

The OBdAA had a busy year in 2009. A 'Spring Select Sale' was planned and held in the end of May, after most of the calving season finished for many members, but before the Show Season got into its busy schedule. The Sale had something for everyone, bulls for the upcoming breeding season, cows with calves for those wanting to expand their herd, and young heifers for 4-H and show prospects.



The Show season got its public start at Campbellford Fair, with the first 'points show' held there in August. It was a busy show season, with some new show people

joining the more seasoned veterans. It made for a competitive but fun season, with the highlight of the season being the Lindsay Central Exhibition, which included some new prizes for some categories.

The show season wrapped up the same weekend the 9th Annual 'Cream of the Crop Sale' was held in October. This was just in time for quite a few members to head off to Victoriaville, Quebec, for the CBdAA AGM on Thanksgiving weekend, which also included a Show and a Sale.

The year ended with more Performance testing for many of us, and with a new calving season waiting around the corner in 2010. ■

News from Man/Sask

Submitted by Dave Chevalier

The Man/Sask Association's Board of Directors had a teleconference meeting on January 24th at 8:00 pm. Discussions took place about our website, co-operative ads, our participation in Holland, Manitoba Beef Day and Redvers, Saskatchewan Bull Congress, Bull Test awards and date for our AGM.



Our website is currently getting a facelift with combined efforts of Dave Gerega and staff of Blue Diamond Blondes. Reed Rigney (Pres. of the Alberta Association) offered information and help in this matter. We are very appreciative. Thanks go out to them.

Marcel Dufault of Bellevue Blondes attended Holland Beef Day. Pat Filz of Forty Acres Blondes attended Redvers Bull Congress. Thanks go out to these Board members for bringing our display and promoting our breed.

Our Man/Sask sponsored Bull Test is ongoing with test weights available on their website: www.manitobabulltest.com.

There will be an open house March 13, 2010. Sale day is April 3, 2010 at the station. Awards will be handed out at this time for top-gaining and all-around best bull.

I was able to visit the test station on Feb 18 and did a tour of the bull and heifer pens, of which we have six bulls and three heifers being evaluated. The station manager commented that all these animals were high quality and a good representation of the breed. All animals that pass the evaluation will be for sale by auction on the mentioned sale day. I'm hoping to go back with

camera in hand. If anyone would like pictures, I could email some out.

Our AGM will take place Friday, April 2, 2010 from 6:00 – 10:00 pm at the Lakeview Inns & Suites, Brandon, MB. Hope to see as many breeders there as possible.

This is my first newsletter as President of the Man/Sask Board. At this time I'd like to thank the Man/Sask Board for being accessible and easy to work with.

Hope your calving goes well this season and bull sales are brisk. ■

BLONDE SHOW ENTHUSIASTS TAKE NOTE HERE!

Plan now to have your Blonde animals at the
2010 Lindsay Central Exhibition, September 26th.

\$8,500 Blonde Prize Money up for Grabs!

Based on regular 2009 Lindsay Central Exhibition payouts to 7th place (\$50).

ONTARIO BLONDE d'AQUITAINE ASSOCIATION Darren Vink Memorial

Top-up of \$200 for first place in all 9 individual classes!

PLEASANT VALLEY BLONDES

Sheldon Asselstine, Harrowsmith

\$500 for Grand Champion Blonde d'Aquitaine Female

\$500 for Grand Champion Blonde d'Aquitaine Bull

LES STONE MEMORIAL

Open Beef Junior Showmanship

*PRIZE MONEY: \$800 to be divided equally among
all the participants in class 3801 & 3802.*

1st place to receive an award and an additional \$10.

2nd place to receive an additional \$10.

The Ontario Blonde Association Board has decided that the Lindsay Central Exhibition will be the 'Blonde Royal'. In doing so, the Board has topped up the regular classes and prize money to the sum of \$200 first place per regular individual classes.

Group classes will carry regular exhibition prize payouts, ie: Breeder's Herd, Get of Sire, Progeny of Dam.

*ALL animals MUST be legibly tattooed and have a
Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Assn. registration paper to qualify.*

Open to ALL fullblood or purebred Blonde cattle in Canada.

**Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association
2010 National Meeting, Show & Sale
November 19 - 21, 2010
Olds Agricultural Society Fairgrounds - Olds, Alberta**

Schedule of Events

Friday, November 19

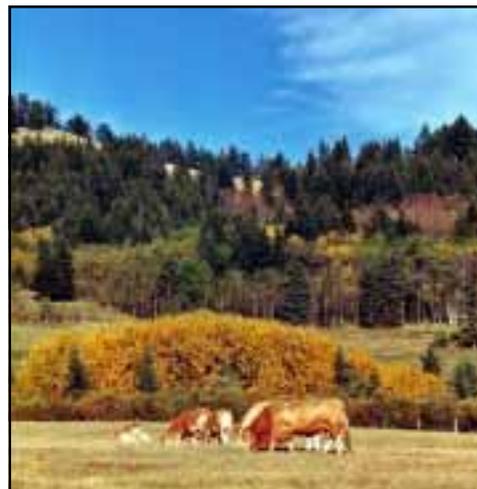
8 a.m. – Noon Arrival & Stalling of cattle.
Cattle may begin arriving
Thursday afternoon.
7 p.m. – 10 p.m. Hospitality Suite at Olds Best Western

Saturday, November 20

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. National Blonde d'Aquitaine Show
2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Pre-Sale Hospitality
4 p.m. – 6 p.m. National Blonde d'Aquitaine Sale
7 p.m. - Midnight Banquet

Sunday, November 21

10 a.m. – 3 p.m. National Blonde d'Aquitaine
Annual General Meeting
4 p.m. Release of cattle; stalls must stay
intact until this time. Cattle may
stay until 9 am Monday morning.



Now taking Sponsorship Bookings!

\$500

Friday Night Hospitality

\$250

Grand Champion Female
Res. Grand Champion Female
Grand Champion Male
Res. Grand Champion Male

\$200

Premier Breeder
Premier Exhibitor

\$100

Calf Champion Female
Reserve Calf Champion Female
Junior Champion Female
Res. Junior Champion Female
Senior Champion Female
Res. Senior Champion Female
Calf Champion Male
Res. Calf Champion Male
Junior Champion Male
Res. Junior Champion Male
Senior Champion Male
Res. Senior Champion Male
Breeders Herd
Get of Sire

**Sponsorships will
be filled on a first
come first serve
basis, so book your
sponsorship today!**

**Watch upcoming newsletters, the Alberta Blonde website,
or contact us directly for more information.**

Alberta Blonde d'Aquitaine Association

Contact Reed Rigney, Westlock, AB
Phone: 780-348-5308 ... E-Mail: aba@clearwave.ca
Website: www.albertablondcattle.com

News from Alberta

Submitted by Reed Rigney

I recently had an opportunity to tour the 27 bulls in the Alberta Blonde bull test at Strathmore, and was pleased with the group. There is a wide age range in the bulls, with most of the bulls still under one year of age, however they are developing well. There is a bull for everyone; polled fullbloods and purebreds, horned bulls, lighter birth weight heifer bulls and heavy muscled performance bulls.



Results as of February 11th (55 days on test) had a polled purebred Chevlard Trombone son consigned by Shambani Blondes leading the test with a double polled fullblood bull sired by RHEO Lancaster and consigned by Arsha Blondes second for gain. Bulls from Shambani Blondes and Willow Springs Stock Farm lead in the weight per day of age category. By the time this publication reaches you, the bulls will have been weighed and indexed again, so check our website for up-to-date results and pictures of the bulls. The bulls will also be scanned via ultrasound for carcass traits before the test is completed on April 9th. If you don't have computer access we can mail results directly to you. There isn't an official sale for the test, so please contact the individual consignors if you are interested in purchasing one of the bulls.

Plans for the 2010 National in Olds, Alberta continue. The dates are planned and facilities are booked. Now we are in the planning process of the event itself, however we require some sponsorships to be filled in order to do that. There is a list of sponsorships available in our advertisement elsewhere in this publication, so please take the time to read it.

We will be mailing out the full Show & Sale package in the next Canadian Blonde newsletter, so watch for that as well. It will have everything you need; rules for the show and sale, dates, hotels, entry forms, etc. We will also make it available for download on the Canadian and Alberta websites as soon as it is ready.

Just an early reminder that the deadline for Show & Sale entries will be October 8th, 2010. For those of you coming from a further distance, we would be happy to help you with the care of your animals prior to, and during the show. We will also have a clipping and grooming crew available for those who are not comfortable doing that work yourselves. It's going to be a great event, and I hope to see many of you there. ■

Reed Rigney
Box 5959, Westlock, AB T7P 2P7
home # (780) 348-5308
cell # (780) 307-2702
www.albertablondcattle.com

Nouvelles de l'Association Blonde d'Aquitaine du Québec

Submitted by Clémence Landry, présidente

L'Association provinciale du Québec a tenu son assemblée annuelle des membres le 27 février 2010.

Le nouveau conseil d'administration qui vous représentera pour l'année 2010 est : Clémence Landry, présidente ** Jean-Pierre Lavoie, vice-président ** et les directeurs/directrice sont Linda Cyr, Gilbert Gauthier, David Ladouceur, L. Pierre Léger et Alain Normandin, Maureen Landry continuera à assumer le secrétariat.

Le 11 février 1984 à Longueuil a eu lieu la première rencontre de huit éleveurs de Blonde d'Aquitaine qui désiraient qu'une association soit formée au Québec, Monsieur Laurent Desrosiers était présent.

Monsieur Laurent Desrosiers a tiré sa révérence le 27 février 2010, 26 ans plus tard.



Le Conseil d'administration désire remercier Monsieur Desrosiers pour toutes ces années de service à la race et aux membres de l'Association en tant que membre fondateur. ■

To read minutes of meetings, you must have access to the Members Only section on the website. Contact a Board member for the password.

Canadian Blonde Board Working Towards Simplified Performance Program

The Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Board feels that as a performance oriented, terminal sire breed, it is extremely important to comparatively measure our growth, carcass and other traits. We are currently in discussion with Beef Improvement Opportunities (BIO), who calculates our EPD's, and Canadian Livestock Records (CLRC), who do our registrations, to make submission of performance information simpler. We are working towards having all the information gathered together on one application. If all goes according to plan, you would apply for registration, send in the performance information and all payments to CLRC who would then forward the relevant information to BIO. One set of paperwork for everything.

The purpose of this article is to assess how many members would be willing to participate in the performance program under this simplified system. Here are the basics of what you would be required to do:

1. Pay approximately \$200/year/farm** to be part of the performance program which will give you EPD's for all your cows, calves and sires used as well as calculate Adjusted weaning weights, yearling weights, performance indexes and cow & sire performance summaries.

** Please note that CBDA membership and registrations are not covered in this fee; this only pays for the performance program.

2. Submit ALL of your calf birth information to the program including birth weights, calving ease and information from dead calves (if possible). Eyeballed weights are not acceptable.
3. If possible also send in weaning and yearling weights of all calves kept to the relevant age. However if you don't have access to a large animal scale at this time, the birth weight and calving ease information would be enough to participate.

The more information you send in, the more relevant the EPDs and other information you get back will be.

The Blonde performance program currently provides EPD's for birth weight, calving ease, maternal calving ease, weaning weight, yearling weight, milk, scrotal circumference, hip height, rib eye area, marbling and back fat. The more information that you send in, and the more breeders that participate, the more relevant the EPD's and other information you get back will be.

I would appreciate a response from everyone who reads this article. Even if you can't, or won't participate, those answers will help us to address your issues. Please email or call me with your response or questions.

Reed Rigney, Performance Committee Chairperson
Westlock, AB
(780) 348-5308
rigney@clearwave.ca

Polled and Horned Fullbloods & Purebreds

Blonde Lady Farm

Blonde d'Aquitaine Cattle
Ron MacArthur & Family

735 Salisbury Rd
Moncton, NB E1E 1C4
Ph: 506-382-6630

Offspring from the Breeds' Top AI Sires

HELP US "BE GREEN"!

If you have e-mail but are still receiving your newsletter by Canada Post, please send the CLRC your e-mail address. This will save us postage, envelopes, printing, and labour costs. More importantly, it will help us "BE GREEN". Every little bit helps!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

April 2, 2010	Man/Sask AGM, 6 - 10 pm	Lakeview Inn & Suites Brandon, Manitoba
April 3, 2010	Man/Sask Sale	Douglas Bull Test Station Carberry, Manitoba
April 10	Canadian Livestock Records Corp AGM	Ottawa, Ontario
May 15	Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Assoc AGM	Location TBA
June 1	Summer newsletter deadline	
June 10 - 13	Millbrook Fair	Millbrook, Ontario
July 9 - 18	Calgary Exhibition & Stampede	Calgary, Alberta
July 23 - 25	Lakefield Fair	Lakefield, Ontario
October 8	National Show & Sale entry deadline	
October 16	10th annual Cream of the Crop Sale	Hoards Station, Ontario
November 19 - 21	National Meeting, Show & Sale	Olds, Alberta

Blonde d'Aquitaine Herd Inventory

Marcel Lachance

Your Canadian Board has been asked several times in the past for the number of Blonde-producing cows we have in the Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine herdbook.

This information is essential when applying for funds under various programs sponsored by producer groups within the industry, i.e. CBBC.

In order to achieve this, each member must update his/her herd inventory with CLRC.

To simplify this process, the Canadian Board will be sending you the inventory of your herd as presently listed with CLRC.

All you have to do is cross off those animals that you no longer have in your herd and return the inventory listing to CLRC in the POSTAGE PAID, SELF-ADDRESSED envelope that is provided for that purpose.

We expect that all members should be receiving their individual herd listing by March 31st and the Board thanks you in advance for your help. ■

The Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association Bylaws and Code of Ethics are posted on the website.
www.canadianblondeassociation.ca



Bull Tests are complete

Bull Tests are now complete or nearly completed. Bulls were tested at Douglas Station in Ontario, Douglas Station in Manitoba, at Cattleland Feedyards, and at West Wind Blondes in Alberta.

**Want to see results from
this year's Bull Tests?**

**Visit the Canadian Blondes website at
www.canadianblondeassociation.ca**

MARKET YOUR SEEDSTOCK ONLINE

Why not advertise your bulls, cows, heifers, semen or embryos where the world can see what you have available! Text only ads on the Marketplace page are just \$5! Ads with pictures are charged \$10 per picture.

**FAX OR E-MAIL YOUR INFO TO THE OFFICE:
FAX 613-731-0704
E-MAIL cbda@clrc.ca**

BREEDER PROFILE

WEST WIND BLONDES

Giving back to the breed

Submitted by Ian Kruis, with assistance from better half, Jenny Knox

Over the past few years Myrna Flesch has spent countless hours writing newsletters, updating the Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine website, as well as interviewing and writing Breeder Profiles on our members. This time we decided that she should have a break from her volunteering and so I took the opportunity to interview both Shirley Bilton and Myrna Flesch a few weeks ago. Fortunately I have had the opportunity to visit West Wind Blondes, so I can write this profile from first-hand experience.

If you find yourself in Stavely, Alberta this spring, you won't have to look far to find a happy man. Despite the long hours and a heavy workload, it's calving season that Blonde d'Aquitaine breeder Shirley Bilton loves most. The loving dedication he showers on the farm's youngest animals is the same loving dedication he has shown to the Blonde breed over the years, as he and Myrna Flesch continue giving back to the breed that has given them so much.

History

Going back a century ago, in 1890, William Shirley Bilton was a sheriff in Westport, Ontario when he decided to move his family, belongings and livestock west in hopes of a better life. Bilton couldn't have known that his decision to move to cattle country would lead to his grandson becoming the first cattleman in North America to purchase a Blonde d'Aquitaine half-blood heifer at auction.

Shirley and Myrna

Born in 1922, Shirley Maxwell took over the farm at the young age of 15, when his father lost his eyesight. A quintessential cattleman, under former farm name 'Bilton's Farm', Shirley transitioned through the years breeding dual-purpose Shorthorns, Black Angus, Angus-Charolais mix, and then Charolais. In 1973, Bilton calved his first Blonde/Charolais cross, using a fullblood French Blonde bull and a purebred Charolais cow. At the time, Shirley saw moving to Blondes as an obvious choice because of their good weight gain and easy calving.

In 1992, Shirley moved to Stavely, Alberta where he joined forces with Myrna Flesch and formed West

Wind Blondes. They chose this name because you can often feel the west winds coming from over the magnificent Rockies. With two quarter sections of land, there is room for their herd of 70 cows (downsized in recent years from over 100), grazing land as well as hay production – unless it is a considerably dry year, then they are forced to rent pasture and buy hay. Down on the farm, Myrna is responsible for West Wind Blonde's record keeping, marketing and the website, while at 87 years of age, Shirley still does the "hard work."

Breeding

In 1996, West Wind Blondes began the transition to becoming completely fullblood. Purchasing a fullblood bred heifer, Van Alta 32C, and breeding her back artificially to Marmacs Cagney led to West Winds Herdsman 32H and the advancement of the herd, adding fullblood heifers from Brydown, Green Meadows, Hanover, Harcon, Lavelaine, Donaleen,



Shirley, bedding a calf shed, March 2010.

Maple Valley, and Docdale. Good feet and legs remain one of their primary concerns when retaining seedstock.

A big supporter of bull testing, Shirley has totally embraced the BIO program and has run his own West Winds Bull Test (with BIO supervision) since 2004.

In 2005 West Wind developed the first homozygous polled fullblood Blonde bull in Canada – West Winds Rainier 11R. It took West Winds twelve years to go from single to double to homozygous polled.

Sales

Selling live animals from coast to coast in Canada and throughout North America, along with embryos to Sweden and semen to both North and South America and Australia, West Wind Blondes are known as breeders of reputation cattle. In 1999, West Wind shipped West Winds Hunter to China, a first for the breed in Canada. Today, 60% of West Wind Blondes' production is sold as breeding stock, with the remaining 40% being sold commercially through local auction marts.

Recognition

Judges and breeders across Canada have acknowledged the contributions West Wind Blondes has made to the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed. Accolades for West Wind Blondes over the years include bred heifer, 'Bilton's Wanda' being chosen for the National Showcase in Ottawa in the late 1980's. West Winds Lyndon was Grand Champion Bull with West Winds Minuteman winning the Junior Championship at the 2003 Calgary Stampede, the same year West Wind Blondes was awarded Premier Breeder and Premium Exhibitor.

Giving back to the breed

Both Myrna and Shirley have given back to the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed through their involvement in volunteer organizations. In 1973 the very first CBDA was formed and Shirley was one of the founding directors who went as far as signing personal guarantees to ensure the organization's success.

Later, at the request of the CBDA, Shirley was asked to gather a slate of breeders who would allow their names to stand in order to establish an Alberta Association and he did so. While he worked at setting up the Alberta Association, he did not become a member of that Board until several years later. He has worked diligently for many years to advance the breed in Canada and the US. Many years later, Shirley continues to take everything that happens with the breed to heart – he believes in it so much.

Myrna was the first female president of the CBDA (serving in 2001, 2002 and 2006-present), and credits her experience as the first female airport manager in Canada at the Lethbridge Airport as being the key to preparing for the role. Myrna also regularly attends CBBC and Genomics meetings on behalf of the CBDA.

Summary

On behalf of the Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Board of Directors and all of the members we thank you both Shirley and Myrna for your countless hours, and commitment to the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed. We wish you continued success with West Wind Blondes. For more information on West Wind Blondes go to www.telusplanet.net/public/westwind. ■

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

The quarterly newsletter features events, articles, and programs of interest to members of the Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association. The newsletter is e-mailed to all members with e-mail addresses, and posted on the Canadian website. Those without an e-mail address receive the newsletter by Canada Post.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Distribution Date</u>
Summer	June 1	June 15
Fall	September 1	September 15
Winter	December 1	December 15
Spring	March 1	March 15

Friendly reminders on ad deadlines are sent to members with e-mail addresses. If you do not have an e-mail address, mark your calendar today, and get your ad to us this coming May. You'll be glad you did!



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CALL TOLL FREE 1-877-833-7110

**Please remember to advise
the CLRC of any fax
number changes, email
address changes or
address changes.**



Harry Nauenburg, Board Member, Alberta Blonde Association

The 24th annual Canadian Bull Congress was held on January 22nd and 23rd, 2010 in Camrose, Alberta, and once again, the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed was represented. The Alberta Association reserved two stalls, one for the booth and another for a mature bull to be displayed.

The Canadian Bull Congress is the longest running and most successful in Western Canada. As a terminal sire breed, this Congress gives us a great opportunity to promote the many genetic traits that commercial cattlemen can benefit from when a blonde bull is introduced into their breeding program. We

discussed calving ease, docility, increased weaning weights, excellent feed conversion and higher dressing percentages to mention a few.

Each year we search for a good, solid bull to display at the Congress. This year we had "Arsha Polled Trigger 116T" as the bull representing the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed. Thanks goes out to Art and Sharon of Arsha Blondes for preparing and transporting "Trigger".

Over the two days of the Bull Congress, cattlemen would stop to visit and ask

questions about our breed. Information was handed out via Blonde Connection, Alberta Blonde Bullet, pamphlets and bull cards (for school children). Hopefully the directories handed out will bring a bull buyer knocking at your door. ■



Colin & Felicity Manuel

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Bulls & Heifers for Sale

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and a prosperous 2008!**

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Signs Of Impending Calving In Cows Or Heifers

As the calving season approaches, the cows will show typical signs that will indicate parturition is imminent. Changes that are gradually seen are udder development, or making bag and the relaxation and swelling of the vulva. These indicate the cow is due to calve in the near future. There is much difference between individuals in the development of these signs and certainly age is a factor. The first calf heifer, particularly in the milking breeds, develops udder for a very long time, sometimes for two or three weeks before parturition. The swelling and relaxation of the vulva can be highly variable too. Most people notice that Brahman influence cattle seem to change in this area much more than cattle from other breeds.

Typically, in the immediate 2 weeks preceding calving, the udder is filling, and one of the things that might be seen is the loss of the cervical plug. This is a very thick tenacious, mucous material hanging from the vulva. It may be seen pooling behind the cow when she is lying down. Some people mistakenly think this happens immediately before calving, but in fact this can be seen weeks before parturition and therefore is only another sign that the calving season is here. The immediate signs that usually occur within 24 hours of calving would be relaxation of the pelvic ligaments and strutting of the teats. These can be fairly dependable for the owner that watches his cows several times a day during the calving season. The casual observer or even the veterinarian

who is knowledgeable of the signs but sees the herd infrequently cannot accurately predict calving time from these signs. The relaxation of the pelvic ligaments really cannot be observed in fat cows, (body condition score 7 or greater). However, relaxation of the ligaments can be seen very clearly in thin or moderate body condition cows and can be a clue of parturition within the next 12 - 24 hours.

These changes are signs the producer or herdsman can use to more closely pinpoint calving time. Strutting of the teats is not really very dependable. Some heavy milking cows will have strutting of the teats as much as two or three days before calving and on the other hand, a thin poor milking cow may calve without strutting of the teats. Another thing that might be seen in the immediate 12 hours before calving would be variable behavior such as a cow that does not come up to eat, or a cow that isolates herself into a particular corner of the pasture. However, most of them have few behavioral changes until the parturition process starts. Source: Calving Time Management of Beef Cows and Heifers, OSU Extension Circular E-1006. ■

Source: Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University Cattle Extension Specialist



PHOTO CONTEST

Do you have any great photos of your Blondes? Do you enjoy taking photos? This is your chance to grab your camera and capture that perfect pose.

The Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association is building a library of pictures that can be used on the website and in upcoming newsletters. What a great way to expose our Blonde cattle to the world!

Four times a year, one eligible winning photograph will be selected by our



webmaster, and the winner will receive a \$25.00 credit towards their next fullblood or purebred registration. Details on the website.

Remember, for a chance to win a \$25.00 registration credit and see your photo on the Blonde website, take your camera the next time you go to check on the fences!

Previous Winners:

- John & Ilse Vink, Wooler, Ontario 2X!
- Bill Van Bakel, Dublin, Ontario
- Ann Musgrove, Charlie Lake, BC
- Eric Doran, Tweed, Ontario
- Myrna Flesch, Stavely, Alberta



An older, tired-looking dog wandered into my yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home and was well taken care of.

He calmly came over to me, I gave him a few pats on his head; he then followed me into my house, slowly walked down the hall, curled up in the corner and fell asleep. An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out.

The next day he was back, greeted me in my yard, walked inside and resumed his spot in the hall and again slept for about an hour.

This continued off and on for several weeks.

Curious I pinned a note to his collar: "I would like to find out who the owner of this wonderful sweet dog is and ask if you are aware that almost every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap."



The next day he arrived for his nap, with a different note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with 6 children — 2 under the age of 3 — he's trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?" ■

Are You An Active Member?

Are you an active member
The kind that would be missed
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the crowd
Or do you stay at home
And crab both long and loud?

Do you take an active part
To help the board along?
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind to "just belong?"

Do you leave the work for just a few
And talk about the clique?

There is quite a program scheduled
That means success, if done
And it can be accomplished
With the help of everyone

So attend the meetings regularly
And help with hand and heart
Don't just be a member
But take an active part

Think this over, member
Are we right or are we wrong?
Are you an active member?
Or – do you just belong?

Author Unknown

www.canadianblondeassociation.ca

The website is a medium by which people across the world can view our breed. It is updated regularly with information concerning Board minutes, bull & heifer test data, profiles, and other information.



It also serves as an online network, providing an opportunity for you to connect with other Blonde breeders. Check it out, hundreds of people a month do!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME
2010 Memberhips are now due and have been invoiced by CLRC. Keep your Membership up-to-date, renew today.

Advertising Deadline for
the Summer 2010 newsletter is
June 1, 2010.

Get your ad material in early!

A great time to make those last-minute semen sales or promote your herd to Blonde breeders and commercial cattlemen across the country.

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