

Lester Anderson

Born May 10, 1913, Lester Anderson was the first person to serve as President of the North Dakota Quarter Horse Association. He was raised on the family ranch near Leonard, North Dakota and grew up handling his dad's horses that were used for farm work and to haul grain to town or bring home supplies.

As an adult, Lester sometimes traveled to Texas in the spring to purchase horses. He'd buy a trailer and some good horses and bring them back to North Dakota. He identified "good" horses by the way they handled their heads and ears. Registration papers never meant much to him. He would say that you don't ride paper – and that some people didn't know a pedigree from a sack of flour. He used the horses himself and marketed them to others. The hardest part was fitting the horse to the person; he never wanted to put a person on the wrong horse.

A couple of his favorite mounts were Ol' Buck, a buckskin he raised that lived to 32 years old, and Gabby, a sorrel he bought in South Dakota. Gabby was beautiful and tough and still a colt when he won champion stallion at the Red River Valley Fair. According to Lester, the judge couldn't keep his eyes off him.

Lester's association involvement reached near and far. He was the North Dakota Stockmen's Association President from 1976 through 1978, and during the same time he served as a National Cattlemen's Association director. He was a charter member of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, and in 1997 he was named the Red River Horse Breeders Association Horseman of the Year. Lester is credited with spear-heading a move to reintroduce horses into the North Dakota Winter Show in Valley City in 1958. He was given a lifetime membership in the North Dakota Quarter Horse Association for his dedication and hard work as the association's first president.

Beyond his horse and cattle involvement, Lester's life revolved around his family and community. He and his wife Leila have two children, Paul and Roberta, three grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Lester died June 6, 2001.