



Royce Crosby

APHC Hall of Fame

Hailing from Lawton, Oklahoma, Royce Crosby became heavily involved with Appaloosas in the late 1950's and came to be recognized as a pillar of the breed.

He maintained a Medallion-winning breeding program for more than 50 years that included multiple state and regional champions, futurity winners, year-end high points, national championships and top tens. In true versatile fashion, he also bred some endurance champions and in the 1980's bred some race starters that did well on tracks in California and Oklahoma. Most notably in his horse career was one of his first Appaloosas, Miss Polka Dot. He won the 1969 National championship for pairs on her with Arlene Sims. In 1970 he won the reserve National champion jumping horse title, made the finals in a reining class, competed in stumps, stakes, English pleasure, trail, and costume classes all on Miss Polka Dot. Later, he raised several-time Oklahoma state champion stallion, Dusty Tomahawk, and in the 1990's was part owner of the beautiful blanketed dark bay stud, Zip To Three Bars.

Royce was well known for his honesty, hard work, high-quality Appaloosas, and his willingness to help others. For five decades he was an avid supporter of the AYA and regional clubs and participated consistently in Appaloosa activities. He served on the board and as vice president of the Oklahoma Appaloosa Horse Club, of which he was a member for over 40 years. When it came to the organizing and groundwork of club events and fundraisers, Royce was well known for leading by example and being among the first to "roll up his sleeves." Not only did he tirelessly show up to help and support, it is said that he did so with class at all times. Everywhere he went, not only were his horses groomed and presented impeccably, so was he.

Royce was a modest man—he worked an hourly job for an hourly wage at Flowers by Ramon in Lawton beginning in 1955, and for 23 years he taught floral design classes at Great Plains Technology Center. When not working he cared for, on average, 20 horses on the 80-acre farm leased since 1953 from the Oklahoma School Land Commission, where he grew up with his late parents, Nita and Walter, and brother Jarrell. He came from a family of horse lovers and Royce always did his own training, grooming and showing. He was passionate about Appaloosas and enjoyed the show ring, so he didn't mind budgeting and prioritizing to get there. Past APHC director Debby Letham said of him, "He's one of those quiet people who often go unnoticed and who are really the backbone of this breed."

When you speak to people in the breed who knew Royce, there are four things every one of them comment about: How gracious he was in and out of the show ring; how generous he was with his time and energy; how respected he was for his integrity; how deeply he loved the breed.

Although he had many remarkable Appaloosa accomplishments, and certainly it was his lifetime of dedication to the breed that earned him induction into the Hall of Fame—according to Royce his proudest recognition was for being identified as a good sport.