

2019 ApHC Hall of Fame

Dave & Kim Utke

Consistency in excellence for decades is perhaps what best defines Dave and Kim Utke and their Sheldak Appaloosa ranch. What began in the 1960s as a two-person dream to make a living breeding horses on about 1,000 acres in Sheldon, North Dakota, is today a two-person powerhouse breeding operation respected throughout the United States and twelve countries around the world.

The first Appaloosa Dave and Kim met was a gentle, stocky, red leopard named Rebel Red Hawk that boarded overnight on their place. They bought him and began their program. The first Utke-bred foal to achieve national acclaim was the red leopard colt Prince Shannon, who was Junior Reserve National Champion at the 28th National in 1975. He also won the Junior Championship at the Grand National Cow Palace and went on to become a leading sire of both halter and performance horses and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1996. Utke success continued with great stallions including Prince David, Mighty Tim, Awestruck, Imagine, and the championships, high points, and accolades won by Sheldak progeny numbers well into the thousands and includes the 2017 Hall of Fame induction of String Of Storms.

The Utke mission has always been to produce horses that can win at halter and go on to work on a ranch or compete in anything. They achieve this with their quality band of broodmares, they don't stand their stallions to the public, and they don't use AI. They value the one-on-one nature of selling 25-35 weanlings each year to fellow horse lovers, have many repeat customers, and despite their many successes relish the sheer enjoyment their horses bring to families.

Dave and Kim joined the ApHC in 1963 and have supported the breed in every way as true ambassadors, including giving back



to the community and representing Appaloosas to new audiences. They've always supported multiple regional clubs, and 4-H, rodeo, and saddle clubs in their area. They were awarded 2016 Red River Horse Breeders Association Horseman and Horsewoman of the Year, were recognized with a North Dakota Soil Conservation Award, and have been featured in many national and international publications over the years including *Western Horseman*, *Today's Horse*, and *Appaloosa News/Journal*.

When they were starting out they went to the best breeders of the time like Lane Hudson and Carl Miles for advice about how to get it right. Never veering from their business plan, they have become known for gorgeous, versatile Appaloosas of sound mind and body that excel in any discipline. Today when people look to the best breeders of the time, Sheldak is on the short list by any metric. Please join us in congratulating Dave and Kim Utke for their elevation into the Appaloosa Horse Club Hall of Fame.