

There are many ways to begin a story.

You can start out with hope that beats terrible despair;

truth that defies powerful lies;

love that conquers horrible odds,

but tonight we are here to tell a story about two people who have committed their lives to helping people and helping them succeed. Their story is about completely selfless acts without looking for anything in return. Perhaps Spencer Kimball said it best, "Humility is: Greatness in plain clothes."

On the outside we see mild humble people in their 'plain clothes', on the inside they are powerful influences on the environment around them. Little did they know at the time how much they would influence people's lives. Their influences on the IBHA Organization as a whole has also been profound. This influence has reinforced the foundation of our structure and added more value and opportunity for our organization to grow and keep up with the horse show industry. They have been dedicated committee members, charter club members, charter club officers, show managers, executive committee members, cheer leaders, parents, grandparents, exhibitors and most of all selfless teachers.

As we weave our way through life, our paths are influenced by choices. While navigating these paths, we stumble across obstacle and we make choices on how to proceed, no matter how seemingly insignificant these obstacles appear, they can dramatically affect your life at that time or sometime in the future. And all our lives were dramatically changed when Dauane and Renee' Elkins' path first brought them to an IBHA show as exhibitors.

Renee's father had an interest in the western lifestyle, so Renee' grew up knowing horses and loving horses. Her first horse, Mr. Breeze, was a gentle teacher, the kind every kid should start on. Renee' and her sister Heather went on to compete in 4H, local horse shows and high school rodeo. Her entire family was involved in competing. She was born in TX, but has lived the majority of her life in CO and calls CO home.

Dauane was born and raised near Denver, Co. As he grew up his family was not involved with horses, so he grew up an athlete. Football was his favorite sport, but he also found time for baseball too. Duane was born to be a leader, he served in our armed forces, first in the Marines and finished up his career with the Army and retired as a Master Sargent.

Dauane - thank you for your service.

The year was 1972 when a good friend talked Renee into going to a work Christmas party, little did she know what that night held for her. It was there she was introduced to Dauane and this is where the true story begins. The next day she told her co-workers that she had just met the man she was going to marry! Dauane had not been around horses growing up, but it did not take long for him to figure out which end you fed and which end you cleaned up after! Nor did it take him long to learn just how far away one had to be from the back of the horse and not lose any teeth. One evening Dauane was moving around his stallion and was kicked in the mouth losing 3 teeth. Renee' was able to get him in the car covered in blood and took him to the hospital.

Shortly after they were married, they purchased a horse by the name of Vandy Hills. Some friends were involved with IBHA and convinced Renee' and Dauane to give it a try. They attended the Dun A Ramma around 75 or 76 and thus triggered the first of many memorable moments together when they earned a Reserve Champion award in English Pleasure. Little did they know they were hooked on IBHA. Not because of showing their horse, it was the people and their family warmth that appealed to them since they have strong commitment to family.

Through the years they have enjoyed owning around 25 to 30 horses. A couple of those memorable horses were Flashy Again and Maid N Impression. Maid N Impression was a supreme champion halter mare and later raised some great foals. But with all the horse accomplishments, they still insist that the people are their fondest memories.

Renee' and Dauane were drawn to IBHA for its family friendly atmosphere. Renee's sister, Heather, and their son, Jason, came along and they all showed together. They say that, "the horses bring us together, but it is the people that make it great!" They fell in love with IBHA and made it part of their family as well. And what does a family do? They take care of each other! They began to get involved to help support their new 'family'. Mr. Lonnie Allen was a huge motivator and encouraged them to move forward and continue to get involved with IBHA. Dauane and Renee' started to lead IBHA towards the future. Their servant leadership style was so magnetic, it was not long before IBHA started to transform. They had experience with other horse show organizations like Quarter Horse and Palomino. They brought new ideas up to IBHA and kept us in line with a forever changing industry.

Their accomplishments are many and here is a list of a few:

Membership starting in 1975, life members 1994, executive committee member, Vice president, president, modified rule book, charter delegates, helped charter clubs standardize horse show management, scholarship committee, show managers, self-published author, but most revered 'job' of them all was and still is: Helping people. It is their life's intention to help young people succeed and put a positive spin on their life's direction. They are instrumental in working with Colorado State University in offering young people a way to get involved with event management.

Today they run a successful show management company, Excel Associates an Equine Event Management Company. Their company is responsible for running 85 shows a year. Amazingly they find time to spoil their grandchildren. If there is time left over, you will find Renee' in a good book and Dauane in the vegetable garden, but when there is a well-deserved vacation, you will find them with their toes in the sand at Anini Beach on the island of Kauai.

They mentioned that in about 10 years they may look towards retirement. Even though they may retire from their business, I guarantee that they will never retire from helping people.

I had the opportunity to speak with several other people about Dauane and Renee', the first words I heard were: selfless, kind, dedicated and how deserving they are of being inducted into IBHA's prestigious Hall of Fame.

There was the story that Dauane and Renee' could make any horse show fun no matter what! During shows in Estes Colorado it would rain and hail during the night. Exhibitors would awake to find ankle deep mud for a show arena, but everyone had a good time and enjoyed being there. They just knew how to make the best out of what they had and kept everyone together. It was a family first, then a horse show.

Another person commented that it was not just a weekend where you came to show your horse, just as much emphasis was put into the social atmosphere. Through their guidance, people created bonded friendships and the IBHA Club in Colorado was more than an extension of IBHA, it was a family. It was a hard working family – as Renee' would say, "I am a work horse, not a show horse."

One more testimonial – comes from someone very close to all of us Michele Manseau: They are responsible for some of my greatest memories.

Thankful to Renee for seeing the potential in me to do a good job representing MHBHA as the delegate, as she recommended me to "fill her shoes", allowing me to meet all the wonderful people of IBHA around the country.

Gave me the opportunity to help earn some extra money for horse showing by working assembling ribbons for their business. Even spent the night at their house to save travel time so i could get more hours worked in.(Midnight Ribbon Elf ???)

Fond memories of every convention of going out in search of the best Bananas Foster or the Riverboat adventures

They spent many years continuing to hold IBHA shows ,with very little profit, because they knew we all loved competing & visiting with our fellow Buckskin enthusiasts

I was so excited to show case Dauane and Renee's lead by example style and their hard working lifestyle and how it has influenced many lives and helped bring IBHA to the innovative organization it is today. If you would indulge me in one more quote by Fr James Keller, I think he sums it up the best, "A candle losses nothing of its light by lighting another candle."

With that, please join me in welcoming our latest inductee's to the 2014 IBHA Hall of Fame –

Dauane and Renee Elkins!