

MOTHERS

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reading this on Saturday morning, at first in a sweat because Mother's Day has arrived without your notice but now hopeful I will explain your way out of getting your mother something nice, you are wrong. Do not blame me if you greet your mother tomorrow empty-handed.

But as you pick out the wholly inadequate gift, the token, the card with the mass-produced poetry or the bouquet you know your mom likes because you've bought it for her the last ten years, think back to those first Mother's Days. Think construction paper, markers, scissors and glue and the effort you put in to making a card that was the most elaborate you had ever conceived. Think of your desire to spend time with your mom, to show off for her, to have her attention and give her yours.

When you bring a gift to her this weekend as you celebrate Mother's Day, remember it is made infinitely better with an accompanying gesture. A pair of mugs that come with an hour-long conversation over coffee. A potted flower with a helping hand in the garden to plant it (and maybe even pulling a few stray weeds while you're there.) A movie she would like with the time to watch it with her.

Those gifts, as meager as they may be compared to what your mother is due, will become symbols in her life of her child's appreciation.

There is no relationship quite like the one between a mother and child. Not only does she have all the dirt on you, she spent many good years getting the dirt off of you. You may be able to fool others, but not her. And yet when she looks at you, she will always see the best in you.

Do not take Mother's Day as a challenge to pay down the debt you owe your mom. You will never get there. Use it as an opportunity to build up that relationship she treasures so dearly and create a moment she will carry with her.

Daniel Wattenburger is the managing editor of the East Oregonian and the son of Barb Wattenburger, the best mother a boy could have.

CATTLE: Terry's father started the ranch in the 1940s

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The award aside, though, to fully understand the Anderson's joie de vivre, one must climb aboard an off-road vehicle and roam the ranch with them and experience an exuberance akin to a child exploring a wonder-filled frog pond.

On Tuesday, Terry climbed into one ATV and Debby slid behind the wheel of another. Terry led, following a trail barely visible on the rolling grassy hills, but firmly etched into his brain. The ATV tires rolled over rocks as the vehicles roared past gnarled sumac trees, yarrow and lupine and splashed through tiny creeks. They came upon eight or nine cows munching grass in a meadow and Debby greeted some of them as she would a friend or maybe a family dog.

"Hey, Lulu," she called to a black cow with a topknot. Most don't have actual names, just numbers, but Terry and Debby know most of them, plus their mannerisms and markings. Debby pointed to number 5515, which had a large, white, whale-shaped smudge on its forehead. The cow, unalarmed by human presence, chewed on.

The ATVs came to a stop at the top of the world — at least the Anderson's world. Looking out over velvety green canyons and valleys that encompass the Anderson's 16,000 acres (3,400 deeded and the rest leased from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America and private owners), one could see black dots scattered across the landscape for miles as cattle grazed near and far.

"The prettiest view you'll ever see," Terry said.

The panoramic overview prompted memories of Terry's father, Marvin "Red" Anderson, who started the ranch in the 1940s. Red, who grew up poor in the St. Helens area, quit school in the eighth grade to go to work. He washed cars for a car dealership and sometimes he and his brother would travel by train to Detroit to drive vehicles back from the production plant to the dealership. One day, he stopped the car on Cabbage Hill, just outside Pendleton, and told his brother, "This would be the perfect place to start a ranch."

The words would be prophetic. On the walls of the office inside the Andersons' home is a framed



Cows and their calves graze in a draw Tuesday on the Anderson's ranch southeast of Pendleton. The Andersons run more than 500 cow pairs — cows with calves — on their 16,000 acre ranch in the Blue Mountains.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



Terry Anderson drives past some cattle on his ranch Tuesday southeast of Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

\$4,000 check written in 1944 by Red with "McKay Creek Ranch" in the memo line.

Red started his ranch life as a horse trader. He, his brother, Bun, and Numie McCain ran wild horses in the tough and rocky McKay Creek Drainage.

"You think 'The Man from Snowy River' was wild," Terry quipped. "These were the men from McKay Creek."

The men, in order to outsmart the wild horses, would take entire days studying the horses from afar before rounding them up. They would run one stud bunch (one stud and 8-12 mares) into another stud bunch, which caused them to mix and mingle.

"The studs wouldn't leave without their mares," Terry said.

The business morphed and grew along with Red's family. More land was

acquired as a wintering headquarters in the Stanfield area. The cattle business began with the purchase of one bull and 19 cows in 1944. Those initial cows grew into today's herd.

"To this date, not one other female has been brought into this program," Terry said.

After aggressive expansion, economic downturn in the '80s brought some downsizing and sale of farmlands. Terry's brother,

Rod Anderson, who had run the farming operations, started Rod Anderson Construction. Half-brother Casey Anderson started a career in ranch management. Terry and Red focused on breeding bulls. In 1989, they sold 22 bulls. Currently, they market around 200 bulls per year and maintain more than 500 mother cows. Anderson bulls are bred to thrive in rough environments.

Daughter Shana Bailey and son-in-law Justin Bailey

and their children, Easton and Ali, help with the ranch and a subsidiary horse operation. Since peddling his first bull in 1989, Terry has sold more than 5,000 of the animals. He's learned that knowledge is power in the competitive bull breeding business. He pores over data about sires and paid to do genetic testing on 575 cows and almost 400 calves this year. DNA tests are expensive at \$40 a pop, but the information they provide is invaluable and can move the industry forward, he said.

Debby focuses on whatever she can do to assist. She helps move cattle to different pastures. She feeds calves (usually twins who don't receive enough milk from mom) with half-gallon bottles full of milk replacer. She helps with calving. "I'm his sidekick," she said.

"We're basically together every single minute," Terry said. "We're a team. She's equally as passionate about the cattle and the land."

They married in 1995. Eventually, she sold her salon in order to concentrate on their cows and horses.

Their recent honor, the Legacy Award, brought them back to the past.

"We decided we would accept this award in honor of my dad," Terry said. "He's the guy who had the vision."

"Terry Anderson is very passionate about being a progressive cattle producer," said Andy Vanderplaat. "We are proud to recognize Terry and his family for the commitment it takes to maintain a ranching heritage."

The accolade, though thrilling for the Andersons, is just gravy. They find plenty of joy amid their gorgeous rolling hills and the cattle that roam them.

Said Terry, "We are absolutely, totally blessed to make a living in God's country and taking care of God's critters."

Contact Kathy Aney at kane@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810.

Little Darlings!

This special section will be filled with photos of and messages for adorable little darlings from Umatilla County. Families will want to keep this special keepsake for their child and family for years to come.

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DEADLINES:
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