

SPARKS RUST, JR.

Sparks Rust, Jr. was a cowboy, and he and his family have been raising Quarter Horses since AQHA began.

Rust roped, rode bulls and bucking horses, and occasionally bulldogged while growing up on the 23,000-acre family ranch in Del Rio, Texas. His father, Sparks Rust, Sr., registered the family's first Quarter Horse, Rusty R by Red Bug, in 1941, right after the Association formed. After he was registered, Sparks Rust, Sr. had all the ranch's mares registered.

Rust Jr. went through 4-H and he trained most of his own horses on the family ranch. He continued to support youth programs throughout his life. He first became a 4-H horse club leader in 1959, and was the local junior-rodeo chairman for a number of years.

When he was 17, Rust joined the Rodeo Cowboys Association, the forerunner of today's PRCA. Later, he was appointed by the governor of Texas to serve five years on the Texas Animal Health Commission. He also served as director of the Independent Cattlemen's Association. In 1981, he judged the AJQHA World Championship Show, and four years later he judged the AQHA World Championship Show. He also served as ring steward for years at the World Show, in addition to judging Quarter Horses in Central and South America, Europe, New Zealand and Australia, and was an AQHA ambassador who helped establish several international affiliates. He served as the chairman of the AQHA International Committee, and served on the judges and finances committees.

Rust was elected to the AQHA Executive Committee in 1986. He became president in 1990, the year of AQHA's 50th anniversary. During his presidency, he focused on memberships, and adding the AQHA Riding Program and team penning to the Association's list of events.

Rust died in 2001, the year he was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame.



INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

2001