

## SAVANAH ALLEN: 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE INTERMEDIATE DIV

### Continuing a Legacy

Have you ever heard the term “were you raised in a barn?” I have many times, and when I’m asked if I was raised in a barn, I usually have the answer people least expect – “Yes, in fact I was raised in a barn!” I was also raised in an industry only few understand... the Brahman industry. The story of how my family got started in the Brahman industry began when my granddad, Billy Dan Lindley, worked at the sale barn as a teenager, and fell IN LOVE with those beautiful, “crazy” Brahman cattle. He had always dreamed of starting a Brahman ranch, and in 1967 his dream came true.

My granddad and grandmother decided to buy three Brahman females from a nearby ranch, quickly became very attached, and decided to buy a Brahman bull. What they didn’t know was that those three Brahman females and one Brahman bull would be the start of their journey in the Brahman industry, which has continued almost 50 years.

Without those three Brahman females and one Brahman bull, I wouldn’t be able to say I was raised in a barn, and I wouldn’t be able to talk about my story of being raised in the Brahman industry.

My story starts with a blonde-haired, green-eyed little girl riding around with my granddad in his golfcart, strapped into a car seat, because let’s be honest... what 1-year-old wants to sit still when there are 30 long-eared Brahman baby calves surrounding her? I remember having to take a hairbrush with me to check cows because I was too little to hold a regular cattle brush. I would go with my granddad everyday so I could “check” the cows which was more like sit and brush every single baby calf that was brave enough to walk up to me. Little did we know that would be the start of my journey in the Brahman industry.

People often ask me when my first show was, or how long have I been showing Brahmans. My answer always goes back to when I was 8 weeks old and at my first show sitting on a show bull we had sent with a fitter. I fell in love with showing at only 2 years old when I walked into my very first peewee showmanship class.

When I was 4 years old I think my granddad finally got tired of hearing “Can I have her?” or “I want one!” and finally gave me my very first Brahman heifer. I named her Barbie. Who would’ve known that Barbie would be the start of my showing career and my Brahman cow herd. Too help me along, I had another very special person that always, and I mean always, went

above and beyond for me! Her name is Pat Dillard. Honestly without her I don't think I would be where I am today, inside and outside of the show barn. When I was 4 years old she helped me halter break Barbie. Somehow, Ms. Pat even taught that very stubborn 4-year-old how to show! If it hadn't had been for Barbie and Ms. Pat, I would not have wanted another heifer. I did though, and of course again, my granddad gave in and gave me my second heifer, Miley. I showed in my very first major show with Miley and I would say I did pretty well for a 6-year-old showing on those green shavings at Houston. Our debut was even captured in a promotional video developed by the American Brahman Breeders Association.

A few years had passed since that blonde-haired, green-eyed little girl fell in love with showing Brahman cattle. I was finally old enough to start showing in the junior shows! Miley and Barbie had both retired from the show ring and were put out in the pasture to build my herd. I started my junior show career with a heifer we called Sweetiepie. Our first couple of shows were the TJBA state show, and the AJBA national show. At my first TJBA and AJBA shows, I met so many lifetime friends it's not even funny! When I was 10 years old, my granddad passed away. My mom and I had no idea where to start with all the animals we were now responsible for. We didn't know if we should continue to run the ranch, scale down, or sell out. One day I saw the quote "This lifestyle isn't just about animals, it's about beliefs and values passed down through generations. Ensuring things are left better for those yet to come. It's all about Legacy." When I read that quote I knew there was no way I could throw everything I had away. I knew I wanted to continue to build the legacy my granddad had once dreamed.

If I had the choice to start over, I KNOW I would choose the life I've lived for 13 years now. Knowing how much the Brahman industry has helped me not just in my personal life, but in life skills, I wouldn't change a thing. Over the past years I've met new friends, lost old friends, I've had to make some easy decisions, and I've had to make some very hard decisions. The Brahman industry has offered me so many opportunities and has given me memories that will last a life time.

I have had experiences and opportunities most people will never know about, because I was the blonde-haired, green-eyed little girl who was not only raised in a barn, but an industry only few understand... the Brahman industry. And I would not have it any other way!