



# Newsmakers

► Items of interest **about** and **for** members of our Angus family. *Compiled by Linda Robbins.*

## IN THE NEWS

**Diablo Valley Angus**, Byron, Calif., has been recognized by the American Angus Association as a Historic Angus Herd.

George and Florence Heiser purchased the first cattle in their commercial herd June 5, 1889. More than 123 years later, Diablo Angus remains in the family. Grandson Dennis Lopez is the current owner and manager, and says that he keeps a simple philosophy of buying Angus cattle to stay in business rather than buying cattle to make them work.

When he was 15 years old, Lopez purchased his first Angus bull at the Q Bar Sale in Sacramento, Calif. He went on to buy more heifers to build his Angus herd.

"Since that purchase, we have focused on improving our female base, and over the last 10 years, we have increased the weaning weights 90 pounds and the yearling weights 144 pounds," Lopez says. "Cattle producers aren't in the business to just make a dollar; instead we strive to produce a high-quality product people want to consume."

Today, with his children, Libby and Adam, he manages 140 head of cattle.

"I am very fortunate to be in the Angus business and have met some of the greatest people in the world," Lopez says.

Historic Angus Herd honors are presented to Angus breeders or immediate families who have been in continuous production of registered Angus cattle for 50 years or more.

**Kessler Angus**, Milton-Freewater, Ore., has been honored by the American Angus Association as a Historic Angus Herd.

Owner Randy Kessler began the herd in

1962, when his parents bought him his first registered-Angus heifer for a 4-H project. The foundation female was purchased from Triple T Angus, also of Milton-Freewater. Even though he was only 9 years old, Kessler knew he wanted to be part of the Angus breed.

"I always wanted a black one from the get-go," Kessler says.

By the time he graduated from high school, he owned 50 Angus cattle, with the help of loans co-signed by his parents. In 1964, Kessler received his first payment for a bred-and-owned sire, Eileenmere Playboy. From then, the herd was promoted through fairs, and Kessler accelerated his sales to 70 bulls a year through private treaty.

They began supplementing their private-treaty sales in 1991 with top consignments in regional Angus sales. That same year, they sold Kessler's Rainman 002 for \$20,000 in the Inland Empire Angus Association Sale in Hermiston, Ore. Another consignment highlight was in 2006, when they sold an interest in Kessler's Frontman R001, a son of Connealy Front Page 0228, for \$21,000 at the Cowman's Classic All-Breed Bull Sale in Spokane, Wash.

Kessler Angus has built a reputation for quality performance, growing with each additional calf crop: "You can go back in almost all of our cows five, six, seven generations before you find something that isn't Kessler Angus," Kessler says.

It was Kessler's late wife, Dawn, who persuaded him to convert to the first Kessler Angus production sale in 2007. Today, the farm sells 120 head annually, and Kessler personally delivers each one. He dedicates the

development of the herd, and his family, to Dawn.

"We made a great team," Kessler says. "She could recall everyone's name, and she made more than half of our sales calls; she could sell an Eskimo snow."

Today, the Kessler family continues their Angus legacy by managing the 300-head herd. Children Cody, 13; Cheyenne, 17; and Tierra, 20; help with day-to-day operations on the ranch.

**Lefevre Angus Farm**, Butler, Mo., has been recognized by the Association as a Historic Angus Herd.

Like many others in agriculture, Sam Lefevre's interest in Angus cattle started with a 4-H project. He purchased his first Angus show heifer from Cloverleaf Stock Farm in Adrian, Mo. Nine years later, he began his own herd using females from Hilltop Angus. The first Lefevre Angus cow was Hilltop Myamy, out of Esquire of Many Trees 26.

Several generations were born from that foundation female. Lefevre kept back many heifers through the years and some of the bulls used in the program include Prompter, New Design, and Frontier 095. Lefevre Angus was home to about 150 cows up until recent years. Today, Sam Lefevre and his wife, Doris, continue the herd with 18 cows.

**Debbie Lyons-Blythe**, White City, Kan., America's Farmers Mom of the Year, will join other national agriculture experts at the American AgriWomen (AAW) annual midyear meeting April 4-6 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Louisville, Ky.

Lyons-Blythe says she is proud to accept

## Texas Jr. Angus Ass'n Annual Banquet, Fort Worth, Jan. 26

► **Don and Wendy Denny**, Lubbock, were honored with the Heyser Award for outstanding service to the Texas Junior Angus Ass'n. Pictured are (from left) Tom and Merridee Wells and Alford Echols III, presenting; Wendy and Don Denny, recipients; Ty and Nikolyn Williams and Scott Pohlman, presenting.



PHOTO'S COURTESY OF AMERICAN ANGUS ASS'N



► **Kyle and Ann Williams**, Idalou, outgoing advisors, were honored for their service to Texas juniors.



►The North Carolina Angus Ass'n officers and directors are (seated, from left) **Catherine Harward**, Richfield, North Carolina Jr. Angus Ass'n president; **James Scarlett**, Snow Camp, past president; **Suzanne Brewer**, Lexington, executive secretary; **Roy Swisher**, Statesville, president; **John Smith Jr.**, Pink Hill, vice president; **Maggie Tennant**, Greensboro, North Carolina Angus Auxiliary president; **Jo Linville**, Yadkinville; (standing, from left) **Henry Vines**, Snow Camp; **Eugene Shuffler**, Union Grove; **Tripp Smith**, Graham; **Randall Smith**, Snow Camp; **Steve Gordon**, Kings Mountain; **Randy Jones**, Kinston; **William Leatherman**, Lexington; **Stephen Watson**, Lenoir; **Stan Tennant**, Greensboro; **Jeffrey Wood**, Willow Spring; **Bill Teague**, Waynesville; and **Chris Gragg**, Boone.



► **Bobby Aldridge** (right), Yanceyville, receives North Carolina Angus Ass'n Hall of Fame honors from **Bill Ebert**, chairperson of the Hall of Fame Committee.

the award in recognition of farm moms everywhere who work long hours for little recognition.

"I'm humbled to be singled out, because there are so many farm moms who work each day to build a legacy for their children," she says. "I am thankful for everyone who supports farm wives and moms in general."

Lyons-Blythe authors an online blog, *Life on a Kansas Cattle Ranch*, with which she strives to give consumers a glimpse of life on a family farm. America's Farmers Mom of the Year is an element of Monsanto's America's Farmers program, an advocacy effort promoting, recognizing and supporting U.S. farmers through communications, awards and special programs that highlight the importance of agriculture.

This year, AAW, a national coalition of more than 50,000 farm, ranch and agribusiness women, will address such issues as consumer education, agriculture advocacy efforts, and mining and fracking.

Lyons-Blythe has been a life member of the American Angus Association since 1980.

**Flinton McCabe**, Elk City, Kan., was among the 20 young livestock producers from across Kansas who met in Topeka Feb. 18-19 for the first installment of the 2013 Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) Young Stockmen's Academy (YSA). Merck Animal Health is again partnering with the association to host the members for an in-depth look into KLA and the beef industry. A series of four seminars will take place throughout the year in various locations in Kansas.

During the two-day session in February, attendees were exposed to advocacy training, the legislative process and services provided by KLA and the National Cattlemen's Beef

Association (NCBA). As part of an interactive training session led by KLA staff, White City rancher and beef advocate Debbie Lyons-Blythe and WIBW-Topeka farm broadcasters Kelly Lenz and Greg Akagi gave the group an overview of the various media outlets available to help tell the beef-production story.

Lyons-Blythe shared how she has implemented advocacy into her daily routine through the use of her blog, *Life on a Kansas Cattle Ranch*, Facebook and Twitter.

YSA members attended a Senate Agriculture Committee meeting at the Capitol and participated in a financial planning seminar conducted by Kennedy and Coe LLC that focused on debt management and planning for the future of the family business. Attendees also took part in KLA's legislative meeting, where they and other members determined positions on individual bills under consideration by the Kansas Legislature.

The second installment of the YSA class will be in May. McCabe is a former National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member and has been a regular member of the American Angus Association since 2007.

#### ANGUS ARRIVALS

**Kyle and Angela Hotz**, Hotz Farms, Lone Tree, Iowa, announce the birth of their daughter, **Abigail Rose**, born Feb. 17. Abigail weighed 7½ lb., and was 20½ in. long.



► **Abigail Rose Hotz**, born Feb. 17 in Lone Tree, Iowa, received an Angus membership ID before she received a Social Security number.

Grandparents are Keith and Kathy Hotz, Lone Tree, and Frank and Mary Kaehler, Saint Charles, Minn.

Angela was a member of the NJAA and the Minnesota Junior Angus Association.

#### IN PASSING

**Merrill Anderson**, 73, of Newman, Ill., and Weslaco, Texas, died Feb. 2 at the Aurora House Hospice after a lengthy battle with cancer.

Merrill was born in Broadlands, Ill., May 21, 1939, to Harold and Margaret (Gore) Anderson. He graduated from ABL High School in 1957 and attended the University of

Kentucky on a basketball scholarship. He was a member of Troop B, 1st Recon Squadron, 106th Artillery. He married Lyn Cooley in 1962.

Merrill was a farmer in the Broadlands area and raised Simmental cattle and Standardbred horses. He acquired his auctioneer's license in 1962 in Decatur, Ill., and has been an auctioneer selling purebred hogs, cattle and Standardbred and Arabian horses since then.

Merrill was inducted into the Marketeers Hall of Fame at the National Western Stock Show Jan. 19, 2013.

He is survived by son James; granddaughter Margaret; and special friend Nancy Brady.

**Danny Ross "D.R." Ingram**, 70, Water Valley, Miss., died Feb. 16 at the Mississippi State Veterans Home in Oxford, Miss.

D.R. was born in Oxford to Albert and

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Birdie (Smith) Ingram. He served as a 1st Lieutenant MP in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky. He graduated from Mississippi State University, where he was a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity.

D.R. was a cattleman and farmer, a director emeritus of Mechanics Bank and past director of the Tallahatchie Valley Electric Association. He served as chairman of the board and president of the American Polled Hereford Association and was a director of the Mississippi Angus Association from 2002-2006. He had been a member of the American Angus Association since 1986.

D.R. was Mississippi Cattleman's Association president in 1987, serving five years on the Steering Committee. He was Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association president more than once. His most recent service to the state was a more than 10-year stint as president of the Mississippi Livestock Council, which gave him a seat on the State Fair Commission. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Water Valley.

D.R. is survived by daughter Julie; son John; and six grandchildren.

**Willard Ericson**, 90, Prairie Village, Kan., formerly of Marquette, Kan., died Feb. 21.

Willard was born Oct. 29, 1922, to Willie and Amy (Hopp) Ericson in Marquette. He was united in marriage to Grace Ferguson April 5, 1946, in Marquette.

He was a farmer and rancher, serving as

president of the Kansas Angus Association (KAA) and inducted into the Kansas Angus Hall of Fame. He was named an honorary member of the KAA in 2008. He had been a life member of the American Angus Association since 1945.

Willard was active in the community as a school-board member and a community leader for 4-H. As a lifelong member of Elim Lutheran Church, he served on the church board and sang in the choir.

Willard is survived by daughter Jill; son Shannon; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**James "Jim" Turner**, 82, Hobson, Mont., died Feb. 25 at Valle Vista Manor.

Jim was born on the family homestead in the Salt Creek area Sept. 14, 1928, to William and Harriet (Williams) Turner. He was one of five children.

The family moved to the Gumbo Flats, south of Hobson, in 1936, later moving into Hobson in 1939. Jim graduated from Hobson High School. After graduation, he moved to a ranch above Utica, where he was the first to bring Angus cattle into the Pig Eye Basin. Uncle Sam called him into the Army in 1951, where he served as an MP until 1953.

Upon his return home, he met Joyce Nelson of Moore. They were married Sept. 1, 1953, and lived at the Utica ranch until moving into Hobson in 1956. Jim worked with his dad in the registered-Angus business. In September of 1958 the move was made to the current ranch just outside of Hobson.

Jim, his dad and fellow Angus breeders Howard Baird and Jamie Stevenson Sr. were instrumental in establishing one of the

first production sales in the Central Montana area. Known as the Cream of the Judith Basin Sale, the breeders offered their cattle for public sale in November 1962. This sale continued for several years until each breeder began having his or her own sale.

The first Green Valley Angus production sale was hosted in 1965. The first sales, hosted each fall, took place at what is now the Thomas Ranch just outside of Hobson until the sale barn was built at the main ranch. Eventually, a transition to a spring sale was made, and bulls and heifers were sold annually each spring until the late 1990s. Mature cow sales were hosted in 1985 and 1993, with the registered cows dispersed privately. There are still cattle on the ranch.

Jim really enjoyed the bull sales and the people he met. His friends within the Angus industry stretch far and near. The Green Valley program was known across the United States. Jim is well-known for being one of the first to bring Wye breeding to the state of Montana with his purchase of Bonanza of Wye. The sons and daughters of Ankonian Cornhusker were also well-known and sought after during their time.

Hunting was one of his hobbies, including big-game hunting trips to South Africa. There were many trips to Canada and Alaska to go fishing.

Jim had been a life member of the American Angus Association since 1957. He was a life member of the American Legion and the Eagles Lodge. He was involved in many organizations, and, if there was something to be done, he could always be counted on to help out. He served on the

**Ohio Angus Ass'n Annual Meeting & Banquet, Feb. 2, Plain City**



►The Ohio Angus Ass'n officers and directors are (seated, from left) **Kelvin Egner**, Shelby, president; **Tim Harsh**, Radnor, vice president; **Allen Gahler**, Graytown, treasurer; **Daniel Wells**, Chillicothe, secretary/fieldman; **Sandra Wallace**, Kansas; **James Rentz**, Coldwater; (standing, from left) **Frederick Penick**, Hebron; **Herman Howell**, Hammondsville; **Jay Clutter**, Wapakoneta; **Kent Bauman**, Otway; **Henry Bergfeld**, Summitville; **Joe Sanders**, Harrod; **James Winter**, Ashville; **Brent English**, Elida; **John Grimes**, Hillsboro; **Derek Bankey**, Custar; **Chip Enos**, Cambridge; **Todd Raines**, Seaman; **John King**, Tippin; and **Paul Hill**, Bidwell.



►**James Rentz** (left), Coldwater, receives the Distinguished Service Award from Kelvin Egner.



►The Ohio Angus Ladies Auxiliary officers are (from left) **Lynn Hill**, Bidwell, secretary-treasurer; **Jackie Egner**, Shelby, president; and **Cheri Miller**, Lindsey, vice president.

## NEWSMAKERS

Judith Basin County Fair Board from 1962 until 1998.

In addition to his wife, Jim is survived by sons Bruce and Randell; daughter Pamela; John and Becky Christensen; brother Kenneth; and sisters Lois and Nancy.

**Lynda (Lawrenz) Russell**, Greeley, Colo., died Feb. 27 in Greeley.

She was born Nov. 7, 1937, to Herbert and Dorothy Lawrenz in Wyoming, Ill., the oldest of four sisters. She married Keith Russell April 6, 1957. She followed Keith from ranch to ranch with two little boys, Randal and Rodney, until they settled in Colorado in 1964. She worked at First National Bank in Johnstown, Colo., from 1964 to 1969, when their daughter was born.

Lynda worked at Fort Saint Vrain Power Plant in Platteville, Colo., from 1975 to 1993, then retired to the bank from 1994 to 2004, when she had to retire due to health problems.

Lynda enjoyed being active and attending church. She enjoyed the outdoors and gardening. She was an avid sewer and quilter, but she most enjoyed and loved her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, Lynda is survived by son Randal; daughter Kelley; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## INDUSTRY EXTRAS

**Cristián Vergara** has joined ABS Global Inc. as a technical services consultant for the North American business. In this role, Vergara will plan and execute the technical services strategy in key regions of the country, interacting closely with the technical services team and key account managers to develop new ways to deliver reproductive value to customers.

**Richard Gebhart**, Claremore, Okla., was elected chair of the Federation of State Beef Councils at the 2013 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show in Tampa, Fla. **Cevin Jones**, Eden, Idaho, was elected vice chair. **Tod Fleming**, Wisconsin, Region III and **Steve Hanson**, Nebraska, Region VII, were elected as new regional vice presidents to the NCBA Executive Committee.

Gebhart and Jones will serve as representatives to the Beef Promotion Operating Committee (BPOC), along with 2013 Federation members **Dawn Caldwell**, Nebraska; **Terri Carstensen**, Iowa; **Jennifer Houston**, Tennessee; **Jerry Effertz**, North Dakota; **Dick Sherron**, Texas; **Steve Hanson**, Nebraska; **Irv Petsch**, Wyoming; and **Becky Walth**, South Dakota.

**Debbie Wilson** has been named associate director and team leader of the operations, management and accounting team of the Farm Credit Administration's Office of Regulatory Policy. She will lead the team in developing policy guidance on accounting, disclosure, governance and related issues, including interpretation of accounting standards and helping to establish reporting standards for compliance by Farm Credit System institutions.

**Kevin Hughes**, Boise, Idaho, was elected president of CattleFax at the organization's business meeting in Tampa, Fla., Feb. 7. **Jerry Kuening**, Imperial, Neb., was elected vice president; **Jamie Willrett**, Malta, Ill., was elected Midwest Director; and **Don Quincey**, Chiefland, Fla., was elected Southwest Director.

**Al Gustin**, farm broadcaster, journalist and farmer in North Dakota was honored with the Milton D. Hakel Award for Excellence in Agricultural Communications during the National Farmers Union annual convention March 4. He retired from farm broadcasting Nov. 30, 2012, after 45 years in the industry.

**Roger Paulsen** has been named deputy director of the Office of Examination at the

Farm Credit Administration (FCA). As deputy director, he will support the Office of Examination in examining and overseeing the Farm Credit System to ensure its safety and soundness. He will continue to direct the development and execution of FCA's enforcement and special supervision activities, and will provide key input in planning and directing other programs. He succeeds Don Clark, who retired earlier in the year.

**Bill Needham**, Owego, N.Y., has been named territory manager in the northeast U.S. by Lallemand Animal Nutrition. The company also hired **Kerry Barling**, Iola, Texas, in technical services-beef; **Ernest Keith**, Springfield, Mo., as monogastric product manager; and **Lindsay Reyes**, Canyon, Texas, as territory manager in the southwest United States.

**Lydia Cox** has joined Nichino America as director of regulatory affairs.



**Editor's Note:** This column is compiled by Assistant Editor Linda Robbins. To submit your newsmaker, email [lrobbins@angusjournal.com](mailto:lrobbins@angusjournal.com) or call 816-383-5245.