

Next Generation

POSTCARD FROM AN NJAA DIRECTOR

The past is important for the future

While the title of our monthly column is "Next Generation," this month I've decided to write about past generations. We all know them as our grandparents and parents. They are the people who know and appreciate all



Tom Patterson

too well the sacrifices and daily toil that occur on America's farms and ranches.

As many of you know, my family history is important to me. This history gives me a landmark

upon which to look back if I feel lost or confused.

My grandpa, Tom Patterson Jr., died a year ago last April. It was only after he was gone that I truly understood the sacrifices he

had made for me and the incredible accomplishments he had achieved due to backbreaking work, determination and faith.

I knew him as a man of strong character, integrity and American pride. His father, Tom Patterson Sr., was born "at the Rocky Mountains" in Montana territory in the late 1800s. He instilled a work ethic and patriotism into my grandfather that has been handed down throughout the generations of our family.

During my grandpa's childhood, he endured blinding March blizzards, summers of droughts and the Great Depression. His family raised cattle and crops and managed to scrape a hard-earned living from the hills of south-central Montana. At the age of 8, Grandpa Tom was sent to the fields to turn over the heavy clay soil of Shane Ridge with a surefooted, sturdy team of horses.

Years later, when a world war threatened

the American way of life, my grandpa bought his father a brand new John Deere B and grain seeder, and he joined the Air Force where he was a mechanic on the bombers that protected the free world. Upon his return from service, he married my grandmother and purchased the home ranch from his parents.

Over the next 30 years, my grandpa expanded the size of our operation and raised two sons. He instilled in them the same strong beliefs in hard work, goal setting and self-reliance.

His goal was to some day hand over a strong ranch that could support the next generation. Today I am living proof of his dedication. I am the third Tom Patterson to walk the fields and pastures of our ranch, and every time I do, I see ghosts.

I see the generations before me who spent their lives working in these very spots so I may have a chance to do the same someday, and I am eternally grateful.

I am a firm believer that the next generation of agriculture is in good hands due in great part to the examples and traditions that have been established by our ancestors. By following their strong examples, we may ensure the progression of our special way of life.

— **Tom Patterson, Columbus, Mont.**

Sitz Angus donates pick of heifer crop

Sitz Angus, Dillon, Mont., has donated the pick of their 2000 heifer calf crop to highlight the 2001 Angus Foundation Heifer Package. The sale of the package will kick off the 2001 National Western Angus Bull Sale Thursday, Jan. 11, at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo. Proceeds from the sale of the package go directly to the Angus Foundation, which supports youth, education and research.

"We are very excited to offer bidders the opportunity to pick a heifer from the Sitz herd," says James Fisher, director of junior activities for the American Angus Association. "The generosity of the Sitz family along with the breeders who pull together to make this sale a success

is greatly appreciated and allows for a substantial contribution to the Angus Foundation each year."

In addition to the heifer, the buyer will receive 30 days of insurance on the heifer from American Live Stock Insurance Co., Geneva, Ill.; transportation to the buyer's farm or ranch, provided by Lathrop Livestock Transportation, Dundee, Ill.; a flush and three embryo implantations into the buyer's recipients from Trans Ova Genetics, Sioux Center, Iowa; and Ivomec®, provided by Merial.

For more information on the Angus Foundation Heifer Package, contact the Junior Activities Department at (816) 383-5100 or any regional manager, or visit the Association's Web site at www.angus.org.



National FFA proficiency award winners



The National FFA Organization selected NJAA member **Ryan Sweeney**, Mason, Mich., as the 2000 proficiency award winner in agricultural sales or service entrepreneurship or placement. Pictured with Sweeney is (left) Jennifer Niemann, National FFA Foundation regional director.



Cody Quam (right), Lodi, Wis., was awarded the national FFA beef production entrepreneurship award at the 73rd national convention in Louisville, Ky. Pictured with Quam is Phil Niemeyer, executive vice president and chief operations officer, Nasco Division/Nasco International Inc.

Mid-Texas Angus Association awards scholarships



The Mid-Texas Angus Association recently awarded four scholarships of \$1,200 each to Angus juniors. Pictured (from left) are Randy Roden, Grandview, Mid-Texas Angus Association director; **Tiffany Richter**, Waco; **Creighton Jaster**, Snook; **Jessica Maxwell**, Ponder; and Jim Hallman, Cleburne, Mid-Texas Angus Association director. Not pictured is **Sy Olson**, Hereford.

Poland Angus Ranch Judging Contest in Isabel, Kan.

Approximately 180 FFA and 4-H members participated in the eighth annual Poland Angus Ranch beef judging contest. Contestants placed four classes of Angus females and four classes of Angus bulls. National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member **Justin Ray**, Buhler, Kan., placed fifth individually in the FFA "A team" division.

Scholarship opportunity

Accelerated Genetics will award four \$500 scholarships to high-school seniors planning to major in agriculture at a short course, vocational-technical college or four-year university.

Any senior who has participated in high-school agricultural education, 4-H or an agricultural organization is eligible to apply. Applicants or their parents must be currently purchasing semen products from

an authorized Accelerated Genetics representative.

An application can be downloaded from the Accelerated Genetics Web site at www.accelgen.com or by contacting Kari Stanek at 1-800-451-9275. Applications must be postmarked by Feb. 15.

Montana juniors elect leaders

Leading the Montana Junior Angus Association (MJAA) are **Joe Cook**, Billings, president; **Russell Mosher**, Shepherd, vice president; **Abbey Ahlgren**, Grass Range, secretary; and **Ray Ramberg**, Chinook, reporter. MJAA advisors are **John** and **Pam Patterson**.

Thomas Angus Ranch

Thomas Angus Ranch, Baker City, Ore., has donated a "Pick of the Herd Flush" with proceeds to benefit the 2001 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) scheduled for July 2001

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in Denver, Colo. The flush is being donated in memory of Gloria Thomas, who passed away in 1999.

The flush will be auctioned at 3 p.m. on Jan. 12, 2001, during the Angus Foundation Female Sale in Denver.



Pictured (from left) are **Bob Thomas**, **Lori Thomas**, Western States Angus Auxiliary President **Carla Malson** and **Rob Thomas**.

