

50 Years, 50 Queens

“It’s not a beauty pageant, it’s a scholarship program.” This familiar line from the movie “Miss Congeniality” rings true for Miss American Angus, in more ways than one. A title cultivated from the scholarship program started by the Angus Auxiliary in 1955, Miss American Angus is a prestigious role filled with a kaleidoscope of recipients and a rich history of tradition.

by Lindsay King, assistant editor

It’s been the year of celebrations for the American Angus Association. The *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand celebrated 40 years of success in conjunction with the 35th anniversary of the All-American *Certified Angus Beef*® Cook-off at the 50th National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Miss American Angus had something to celebrate as well.

With the crowning of Madison Weaver, Ephrata, Penn., at the Angus Convention hosted in Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 3-5, 2018, the American Angus Auxiliary moved into its 51st year of Miss American Angus.

Well on its way to a century of crowns and cattle, the Miss American Angus title has evolved quickly to become a symbol for the business breed. One of pride and honor for those who bear the responsibility of the title. Although, the humble

beginnings of Miss American Angus show little resemblance to the contest today.

Yesterday

“I was a member of the Auxiliary when we were contacted to produce a national queen to represent Angus,” says Anne Patton Schubert, former Angus Auxiliary president and current member. “Our idea was to ask the first-place female scholarship winner to reign as the National Angus Queen.”

It was the quick fix the Association needed at the time in 1968. The following year was the first National Junior Angus Heifer Show, now the NJAS. Sharon Harrold first held the coveted title in 1968 through 1969, and she was the trailblazer for the 50 queens to follow in her footsteps.

In 1973, the title changed from

the National Angus Queen to Miss American Angus. Though it was still awarded to the first-place scholarship winner until 1980.

“The more we got to thinking about it, the more we realized there were probably some young ladies more interested in the job of Miss American Angus than just the first-place winner,” Schubert says. “We did not want to continue to put the responsibility of being Miss American Angus in the hands of someone if it was not her choice, it was an automatic responsibility.”

This was a good reason to make a Miss American Angus contest for the top-five scholarship winners. Though the top five are given the option to compete or not. If one chooses not to vie for the title, then the 6th place winner is asked and so forth until five contestants are found.



1968-69 Sharon Harrold



1975-76 Lynn-Hagenbuch



1986-87 Mary-Wagner



1996-97 Lindsey-Trosper

“We felt this was the best way to choose the most qualified individual to represent the Association and Auxiliary,” Schubert explains. “It was also discussed that we should open the contest up to more than just our scholarship applicants, that we would have an age range.”

They opted to keep it within the scholarship contest, around 18 and 19 years old.

“That is about the time young women are deciding if they want to stay within the cattle business,” Schubert says. “Going to college can limit their involvement with the industry, but this contest and the title are a way of getting around that.”

Today

Traditionally hosted in Louisville, Ky., during the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE), the Miss American Angus contest left the green chips in favor of the stage at the annual National Angus Convention.

“It was a big decision to move the contest to the convention,” says Whitney Troesper Renfro, former Miss American Angus and now

co-chair of the contest committee. “There was just something about crowning Miss American Angus on the green shavings. It came down to Miss American Angus being an ambassador for the Association.”



It only made sense for the contest to move to convention when all the annual meetings were doing just that. Though the newly crowned queen is required to attend NAILE — it’s tradition.

“Typically, when Miss American Angus was being crowned at NAILE, the Shorthorn show or something was going at the same time on the other side of the ring,” Renfro explains. “The stands were always full on both sides, other breeds got to hear who Miss American Angus was when she was crowned. We lost that

when it moved to convention.”

The committee makes a point of introducing Miss American Angus at each Roll of Victory (ROV) show she attends throughout her year.

“Miss American Angus is required to attend the major ROV shows, Eastern regionals and NJAS,” Renfro says. “We also encourage each queen to run with the role in whatever way she would like to use the platform.”

Renfro says the role expands with each passing year.

“Miss American Angus has evolved from someone who just passes out ribbons to serving as an advocate for the breed and the cattle industry,” Renfro says.

Constant contact with *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) allowed Renfro to hand out brand material in grocery store aisles donned in her red jacket and crown during her reign. Some have taken to the Internet to advocate for the breed while others go to elementary schools to get in front of the next generation of consumers and talk about beef.

Tomorrow

Though the role evolves, some things will never change. One of those being the red jacket.

“At one point we had a plaid outfit



1999-00 Whitney Troesper



2005-06 Mallory Troesper



2012-13 Esther McCabe



2015-16 Jera Pikin

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made for her, but we decided to go with something more basic," Schubert says. "The red jacket is absolutely beautiful. It used to be custom made for each queen by the Saddle Horse Company out of Louisville until he retired."

The tradition of Miss American Angus extends beyond the show ring and red jacket. For Renfro, and others, the crown is a sisterhood. One of both blood and adhesive.

"I remember getting the scholarship at the NJAS and having a lot of nerves leading up to the contest because my sister Lindsey was Miss American Angus three years prior," Renfro remembers. Five years later, the third Trospen girl, Mallory, would wear the crown also.

The Trospen family helped write the code of conduct still used today.



Adopted in 1990, the red jacket is the iconic symbol of Miss American Angus.

The guidelines make it easy for Miss American Angus contestants to realize the gravity of the responsibility.

"The Association pays for a portion of her travel, but she is also

required to have a chaperone at every event," Schubert says. "It is a family commitment when a young lady chooses to run for this title, not just for the contestant alone."

The committee, Association and Auxiliary do everything they can to support Miss American Angus from afar. Just a phone call away is a kind word of encouragement from a number of people. Though a familiar face is easy to spot at every event.

"It was the show ring that brought us together, but it is the people that keep us together," Renfro says. "The cattle part of things is our business, but the people and family aspect of it is what makes being Miss American Angus so special to all of us." **AJ**

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