

**137<sup>TH</sup>** ANNUAL  
MEETING

# ANGUS

THE BUSINESS BREED

## TRADITION OF PROGRESS, EMBRACING CHANGE

*American Angus Association members met in Kansas City, Mo., and virtually, for the 137th Angus Annual Meeting.*

*by Julie Mais, editor*

The American Angus Association hosted the 137th Angus Annual Meeting for both in-person and virtual attendees Nov. 7-9, in Kansas City, Mo. Education, networking and Angus business were still the focus of the 2020 event, though mask-wearing and social distancing were thrown in the mix to safely host the meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Continued on page 102*

- 106** KEEP MOVING FORWARD
- 110** DECISIONS THAT DRIVE DESTINY
- 112** NEW OFFICERS, BOARD LEADERSHIP ELECTED
- 116** ANGUS HERITAGE FOUNDATION INDUCTS FOUR NEW MEMBERS
- 120** A CENTURY OF TRADITION
- 122** DATA DRIVING LONGEVITY
- 126** TALK OF THE TOWN
- 130** CHANGING THE GAME
- 134** ANGUS FOUNDATION RAISES \$20,050
- 138** ROV SHOW WINNERS
- 142** GRAND PRIZE GIVEAWAYS



During the opening session on Sunday, Nov. 8, Association CEO Mark McCully highlighted the ability of Angus breeders to manage through tough times.

“2020 has been a year, hasn’t it?” McCully said. “We know we also have members that have suffered hardships and suffered loss ... [In addition to the global pandemic] we’ve had the storms to deal with through Iowa, we’ve had fires throughout the West and hurricanes. It’s been a tough year. Like any other tough year, 2020 has taught us a lot of lessons, though, as we’ve gone along. As farmers and ranchers and our agricultural community, we’re pretty used to overcoming adversity, aren’t we? That’s one of the reasons

I’m just always so proud to be a part of the ag community, be a part of the Angus family, maybe this year more than any other.”

Reflecting on advice from 2019 Angus Convention keynote speaker and former Travelocity CEO Terry Jones, McCully said being prepared for disruptors in the beef industry will position the Angus breed as a continued leader.

“There’s a lot of things that could potentially be, I would suggest will be, very disruptive to how we’re doing our business five and 10 years down the road,” he said. “The reality is how we embrace that change as a breed, as breeders, as an association. How we embrace those disruptors ultimately is going to dictate our

future. It’s going to ultimately dictate our relevance. But I’m encouraged, because our history is about embracing change. We’re about allowing for innovation, we’re about allowing for creativity, allowing for independence. That’s one of the beauties of the Association. We have a tradition of progress.”

## Education

Producer education remained a main focus of this year’s event. Following McCully’s address, attendees heard Association updates. Kent Weigel, professor and chair of the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences at the University of Wisconsin–Madison; Tom Lawlor, executive director of research and development at the Holstein Association, USA; and Kelli Retallick, director of genetic and genomic programs for Angus Genetics, Inc. (AGI), discussed the importance of improving reproductive function for the Angus breed and the cattle industry, and the role that haplotypes play in bovine fertility.

Jerry Cassidy, Association director of member services, and Chris Stallo, Association chief operating officer, presented the Focusing on Longevity panel. They discussed how commercial cattlemen are turning to seedstock producers for maternal traits that have been difficult to characterize. Cassidy and Stallo said with the implementation of an inventory reporting option through the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) program, the Angus breed not only will collect more data but also collect more useful data to serve all sectors of the industry.

The four leaders of the American



Angus Association entities sat down with McCully to discuss how each entity handled challenges of the past year. John Stika, Certified Angus Beef LLC president; Joel Cowley, AGI president; Brett Spader, Angus Media president; and Thomas Marten, Angus Foundation executive director; also shared strategic priorities and how each entity plans to tackle the year ahead.

Keynote speakers inspired thought and action. Super Bowl Champion Jordy Nelson, in a presentation sponsored by Neogen, said his upbringing on his family's farm and Angus operation helped prepare him to be successful on the field. Kevin Ochsner, owner of Agcellerate Consulting Company and host of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association television program, *Cattlemen to Cattlemen*, assured members that there is power behind the decisions that drive our future. His presentation was made possible by Zoetis.

Learning lounge sessions were pre-recorded and are available online for members to learn about management, nutrition and genetics all from the comfort of their home.

## Giveaways

Association members and Angus enthusiasts who registered to attend the 137th Angus Annual Meeting in Kansas City or online were entered to win a Priefert and Tru-Test by Datamars complete cattle handling system and a John Deere XUV835M Gator™ Crossover Utility Vehicle.

Kelly Johnstone, Albion, Neb., took home the complete Priefert Rodeo and Ranch Equipment and Tru-Test by Datamars cattle handling system

valued at \$7,247. Bill Rishel of North Platte, Neb., was the lucky winner of the XUV835M Gator™ Crossover Utility Vehicle. Donated by John Deere, the versatile utility vehicle has a retail value of more than \$16,569.

## Recognition

The Awards Dinner, sponsored by Neogen, on Sunday, Nov. 8, highlighted some of the Association's best and brightest.

The American Angus Auxiliary recognized retiring president Gina Hope, Berryville, Va., and announced Pam Velisek, Fairplay, Md., will lead the organization in 2021.

Roll of Victory (ROV) show winners were recognized. ROV Show Heifer of the Year was Seldom Rest Bardot 8021, owned by Sara Sullivan of Dunlap, Iowa. Winning ROV Show Bull of the Year was HAG McK Model 1748, owned by Dameron Angus Farm of Lexington, Ill.; Sexing Technologies of Navasota, Texas; and the Haggards of Modoc, Ind. Express Ranches, Yukon, Okla., won ROV Breeder of the Year.

The work of Angus breeders is more than a business — it's a way of life. The Association celebrated a family who has been in continuous production of registered Angus cattle for at least 100 years. Century Award recipients for 2020 were Arlen (posthumously) and Becky Sawyer of A&B Cattle of Bassett, Neb.

Each year the Association recognizes innovators and visionaries who possess drive and wise decision-making skills to better the breed and the industry by selecting individuals for induction into the Angus Heritage Foundation. The 2020 inductees are Bill Powell,

Thurmont, Md.; Brian McCulloh, Viroqua, Wis.; Steve Olson, Hereford, Texas, and Aloysius "Al" DeClerk, Pocahontas Ark.


Angus youth were also in the spotlight as Ellie Kidwell, Walhonding, Ohio, was selected to serve as the 53rd Miss American Angus.

## Leadership elected

The 137th Annual Convention of Delegates convened Nov. 9, where 298 delegates elected two new officers and five directors. The new treasurer was also announced.

Elected to serve as officers of the American Angus Association Board of Directors were David Dal Porto, Oakley, Calif., president and chairman of the Board; and Jerry Connealy, Whitman, Neb., vice president and vice chairman of the Board. Chuck Grove, Forest, Va., was announced as treasurer.

Directors elected to their first terms are Mark Ahearn, Wills Point, Texas; Smitty Lamb, Tifton, Ga.; Charles Mogck, Olivet, S.D.; Darrell Stevenson, Hobson, Mont.; and Jerry Theis, Leavenworth, Kan.

The 2021 Angus Convention will be Nov. 6-8, in Fort Worth, Texas. Registration and lodging reservations open July 1, 2021. 

*Editor's note: The Angus Journal will print coverage of the 2020 Angus Annual Meeting in this and upcoming issues. See online coverage of the convention at [www.angus.org/Media/News](http://www.angus.org/Media/News).*