



"The old black cow and the old black bull did wonders for me—they made me money, they made my life enjoyable . . ." says Myron Woolever, immediate past president of the American Angus Assn. November 16 marked the end of his term and he sums up his year as a great experience.

A path through the Angus world led him to the presidency of an association made up of 36,000 breeders. However, it is probably Myron Woolever's obvious concern for others that best characterizes his involvement and influence in Angus circles.

His community activities are extensive and now his "Angus community" has expanded across the U.S.—the American Angus Assn. found in him a president capable of guiding and enjoying people.

He has generations of farming behind him—he has seen many changes in Angus cattle and in the association. He was a member of the crowd on hand to see the opening of the St. Joseph office and this year he participated in the 25th anniversary of that event. He attended the Centennial celebration in 1973, and also the 1981 Fourth World Forum. He has seen interest and use of AHIR programs bloom, he has watched junior activities grow as well.

Woolever has always been an Angus breeder and enthusiast—currently he has a full-time job as hospital administrator, but he finds time for much more . . . most importantly he finds time for people.

Roots in Missouri Hills

Woolever's roots in farming go back generations—and his family has been making a living from the hills of northern Missouri since the late 1800s. His father, R.L. Woolever, raised Angus feeder calves when he first moved to the "home place" near Unionville and established Greencrest Farms.

Early in the 1930s the elder Woolever purchased his first purebreds, but the cattle that really put Greencrest in the Angus business came a few years later from the Strathmore herd in Webster City, Iowa. Foundation female lines stemmed from international champion Revolution 100, and although the herd was built mainly from replacement heifers, the Woolevers always had their eyes open for good females of popular families. One of their most profitable purchases was made in Mercer County, Ill., when father and son selected the Miss Quickly cow. Her daughters established a reliable reputation as the Miss Quickly Queen Mothers. Other renowned female lines added to the Green-

crest herd were Blackcap Empress, Juana Erica and Witch of Endor.

Much of the sire strength also came from the Strathmore herd or purchases in Mercer County. Early history of bulls at Greencrest includes such names as Eric Revolution, Homeplace Eileenmere 4, Homeplace Eileenmere 50 and Greencrest Elgon.

Greencrest Farms Expand

Woolever grew up active in the Angus business, assisting his father with Greencrest until 1942 when he entered the Air Force. After serving four years—he briefly considered pursuing law, but farming was in his blood—Woolever returned to Putnam County, purchased 245 acres that bordered the original Greencrest land and married Marjorie Bledsoe.

The elder Woolevers moved into town, so Myron and Marjorie combined the two farms and raised their family at the home place. They have one son, Warren, who is personnel director for an accounting firm in St. Louis where he lives with his wife Marjorie and son Alan.

Eventually Woolever was able to buy surrounding land and "block off" the 900 acres, thereby increasing efficiency and convenience at Greencrest. Similarly, he expanded the Angus herd from 30 head to 260 brood-cows.

Woolever has been an active and successful breeder—topping many local shows and sales, co-hosting production sales and always promoting black cattle. He served as

In the late 1950s though, Woolever decided to change his approach in raising purebred cattle—he wanted to take a more practical course and let nature work for him. He had no desire to continuously fill his barn with calving cows, and he was convinced that fattening bulls, (burning them out, in effect) only to have commercial cattlemen turn them out on range, was not economical.

Management was altered at Greencrest to more closely parallel the surrounding commercial operations. Woolever quit pampering his Angus and kept his investments low. He grew out 60-65 of the best bull calves and sold them young—after they reached the yearling mark, Greencrest considered them a liability rather than an asset.

Selling was no problem, regardless of pedigree, because Woolever catered to his market. Bull sales centered around commercial breeders and his best advertising was by word of mouth. Putnam County feeder calf sales were once the world's largest and 80% of the calves going through that ring wore black hides. Woolever made it a point to recognize top breeders and feeders, making sure they got good bulls from Greencrest. When sale time rolled around and cattle sired by Greencrest bulls were consistently in the top pens, they did the promoting for Woolever's program.

Although Greencrest consigned many cattle to nearby sales and held production sales, Woolever sold the majority of his bulls right

by Nancy Ann Sayre

A smile crosses Myron Woolever's face as he reflects on his past year—he recently completed his term as president of the American Angus Assn. and sums it up as a great experience.

"I never realized an old Missouri muleskinner could meet so many fine people and have everyone be so nice to him. I am really elated about that."

Myron found time to travel many miles representing the association—at field days, shows, sales and more. Those miles gave him a chance to meet many Angus breeders—"some of the kindest people in the world."

A highlight in Woolever's busy year was his March trip to the Fourth World Angus Forum. Touring Australia and New Zealand was fascinating, the Forum was both interesting and thought-provoking . . . but he enjoyed the people most of all. An opportunity to travel for several weeks with breeders from across the country brought him much closer to each of them—resulting friendships and mutual respect are the wealth of his term.

Woolever's concern for people and interest in breeders has carried into the more serious side of his role as well. The year has been one of many decisions and changes for the association, particularly regarding staff and personnel.

"I'm really proud of the changes made and I feel the association is in excellent hands. I think an awful lot of Dick Spader and we certainly have the staff to make things run the best. I'm also pleased, very pleased with the JOURNAL, I think we've made great strides with it in the last year."

There is no doubt that Woolever's experience as hospital administrator and community leader has helped him analyze strengths and weaknesses within the association. He appreciated the JOURNAL's tremendous need for a general manager and feels the board's perseverance in finding a qualified man for the job is now paying off. With changes in leadership for both the association and JOURNAL, efforts have been made to more effectively combine the two. The potential for improvement in communication within the Angus industry and more efficient use of staff is great.

Satisfying those who spend money, says Woolever, is a primary rule of good business and his energy while serving as president has therefore been centered around meeting the needs of breeders and advertisers.

Rising costs and means of financing the association's many services have of course been great concerns in 1981. Woolever is discouraged that the association has been forced to increase registration fees and certificate costs; he hated to see a charge placed on AHIR at a time when that program was very exciting in its expansion. However, he feels strongly that the association must take a conservative approach to assure sufficient income—he views discontinuance of any services as much worse for breeders than increase in costs.

"In summary though," he says, "the outlook is encouraging and it's been a rewarding year—the general feeling of breeders is as good as I've ever seen."

Woolever leaves, he feels, on a positive note and it makes him proud to have been president. " . . . it's been a real honor . . . "

Myron Woolever

A Lifelong Interest in Angus Breeders

president of the Northeast Missouri and Chariton Valley Angus Assns. as well as the Missouri Angus Assn. In 1975 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the American Angus Assn. and since then has served on several committees, as chairman of the Angus Productions, Inc. board, and finally as president.

Back to Basics

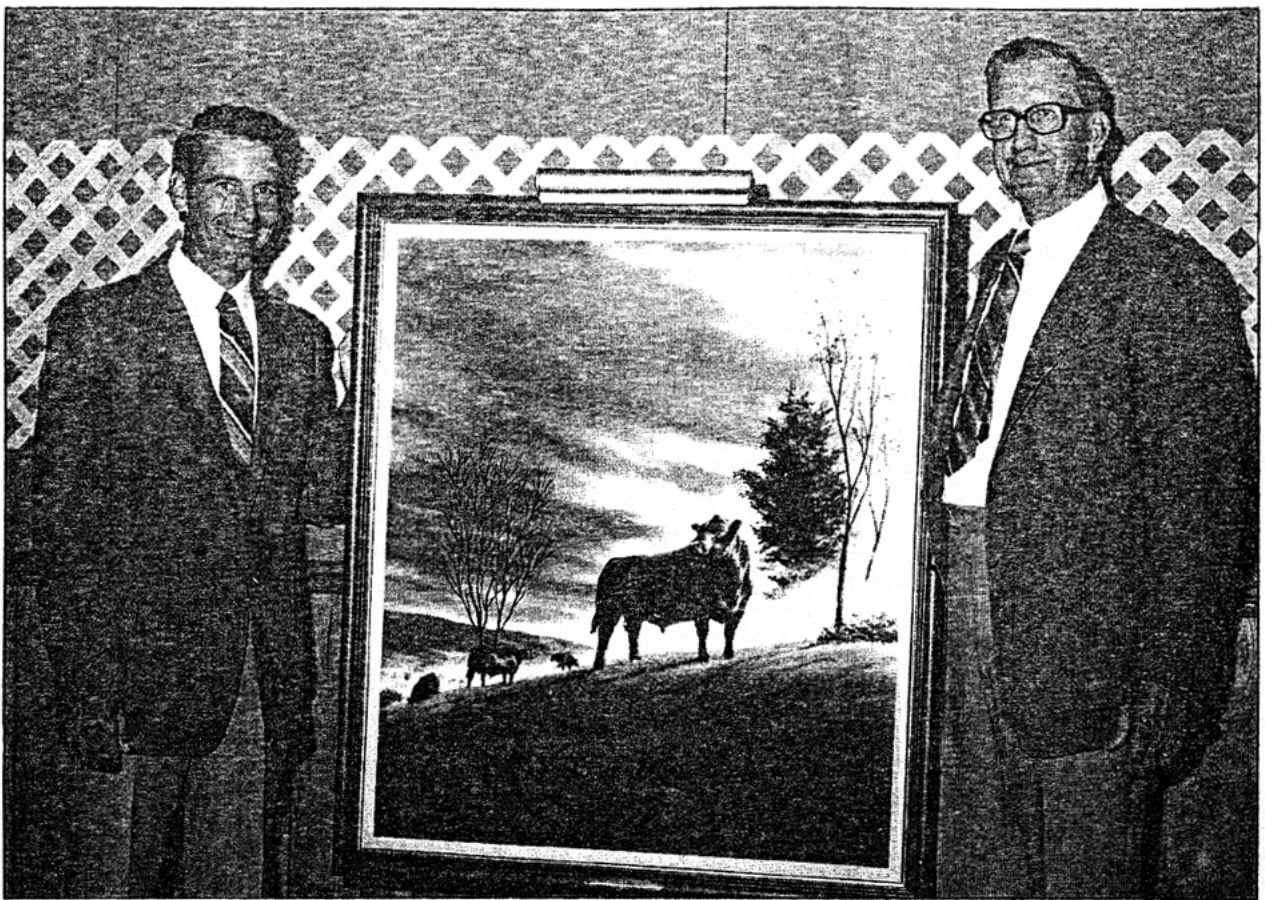
Woolever's father had set a solid foundation in the Angus business for Greencrest Farms, and from there Myron continued to compete and sell cattle successfully in an era when family lines and popular pedigrees were of utmost importance.

off the farm. He found a simple, direct approach to be most effective.

Some of the first ear tags made were used in this herd—Woolever compiled an annual list of tag numbers and pedigrees, set prices on each animal offered for sale and then let interested breeders analyze the cattle and information for themselves. Buyers felt they were treated fairly and must have been pleased for the list of repeats is long.

Concern About the Blacks

Woolever has deep-rooted respect for Angus cattle—they have been his life. He is sincerely concerned now that the fundamental qualities of the breed are being sacrificed, mainly in the race for size.



This Angus painting will find an honored place in the home of Myron Woolever (right), serving as a reminder of his enjoyable years with the Angus breed. Charles Cannon, newly-elected president of the American Angus Assn., made the presentation in October on behalf of the board of directors.

"The old black cow and the old black bull did wonders for me," he says, "They made my life enjoyable, they made me money."

In watching recent trends, Woolever feels some concern about the selection pressure on size and growth without regard to fertility traits.

Greencrest Farms based their cattle operation on the Angus female—on her known fertility and mothering ability. Woolever's calving season was limited to 40 days and grouping those calves closely was of primary importance. Selection pressure on production was strong and fertility was stressed. In fact, Woolever ran two consecutive breeding seasons of 20 days each—his reasoning behind the "fresh bull" for the second three weeks was to make sure any female that came up open had no excuse.

Lowering of the beef grades also concerns Woolever. In his mind this is a serious error and he feels the long-term effects will hurt Angus producers.

While he firmly believes we have the best product on the meat market and that people will continue to demand Angus beef (even more if the grading system were eliminated), Woolever realizes that the public must be educated. People must see some facts to support the concepts that a cow can wean a calf on range and roughage, and that beef cattle producers can raise a high quality product that competes for very little grain.

Woolever contends that some fat is necessary to keep the marbling in quality beef and

feels strongly that we need to keep that quality if we plan to compete with pork and poultry. He sees the future of the CAB program holding much potential and would like to see carcass contests return to share a little of the limelight.

Community Leader

Woolever was raised on the land and has made Angus cattle his livelihood, but it has not been his only venture. At this point Woolever is still an Angus breeder—he leases out some 160 head—but his main enterprise for the last two years has been administration at the Putnam County Memorial Hospital.

Woolever played a key role in development of the hospital, served on its board of directors since it was founded in 1963 and has been administrator since 1979. Unionville also needed a nursing home and Woolever organized the interested public of Putnam County to make a reality of that plan as well.

His concern with public affairs and "political dabblings" also have led him to the presidency of the North Central Missouri Rural Electric Cooperative, a position as secretary of Northwestern Electric Power (Cameron, Mo.) and a place on the State Board of Education (1974-1975). Putnam County Chamber of Commerce recently named this community leader "Citizen of the Month."

Woolever never has hesitated to try his hand in a new business—for 17 years he operated the Unionville theater in partnership

with his only sister, Meta Cassady, to whom he is extremely close.

In 1977, Missouri Mining Company recruited Woolever as public relations director. He served in that capacity for a year and a half, selling his farm to the company in 1978. His interest in Angus continued though and that same year he successfully ran for a second term as director for the American Angus Assn.

Although his ties to the home place and farm house were strong; (he wishes now that he could have saved a few more heirlooms and also more records and ANGUS JOURNALS which his father had accumulated), Woolever has no regrets about moving and gearing himself in new directions. His wife, Marjorie, suffers from Parkinson's disease and is confined to the nursing home, so he is glad to be living in town.

It Has Been an Honor

Woolever handed over the gavel last Nov. 16 when he completed a year as president and six years on the Board of Directors. The association has benefited from his interest in and enjoyment of people; in turn he has appreciated the opportunity to meet and work with many breeders.

To serve as president of the American Angus Assn. is truly an honor, but it is also a position that demands long hours and many miles. Required then is a devotion to the black breed and a great respect for Angus breeders. Myron Woolever certainly has both. A