

My Worthwhile Journey



Since becoming involved in the Angus business, Cara Ann Pascalar has changed from a city girl with little knowledge of livestock or sense of responsibility into a dedicated young cattlegirl who will serve our industry well as 1991 Miss American Angus.

The following is Cara's story on how she made this journey. It was the basis of her speech during the Miss American Angus contest in Louisville, Ky.

The selection of Miss American Angus is based on academic achievement, leadership ability, and school, community and Angus activities. Cara earlier won first place in the American Angus Auxiliary Scholarship Contest. She also serves as Western States Angus Queen and Oregon 4-H Beef Ambassador.

She is the daughter of Robert and Erma Pascalar of Sweet Home, Ore. and is a freshman at Oregon State University.

by Cara Pascalar

Please, if you will, imagine a little girl's life in the city; a little girl with no focus, no responsibilities, no inspiration.

Only when you can truly picture this little girl can you start to conceive how the Angus business has affected me as a person.

I was that little girl, until my family decided that we were in need of a change. A change to the good life.

Now, she awakens with a start. No sound breaks the silence of her darkened room. It's sometime after midnight, an inner alarm moves her limbs heavy with slumber out from her bed and down the stairs of the old farmhouse. Not remembering how she donned her coat and boots, she floats out into the chilled and starry night.

A flick of a switch bathes the distant barn in a halo of light. A short walk and she slides the gate latch, the ice coating on the frosted metal is reluctant to release the skin of her hand. "Got to check the barn," she thinks, "have to make sure she's okay."

A hefty push slides open the large wooden door. She takes in the sweet smell of hay and fresh straw. Another click and the stall is aglow.

I've lived out this small drama numerous times since 1981 when my family moved from the suburbs of New York City to Sweet Home, Ore.

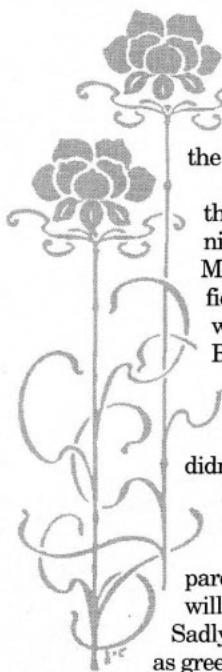
A few months after we moved I purchased my first heifer. She was a registered Angus. I truly believe with great conviction that this was the turning point in my life. This was when I began my journey through the Angus business.

Learning how to care for and manage that first Angus heifer was my first lesson with self-discipline. I soon learned that the cattle needed to be fed certain times of the day, everyday. I learned that they needed vaccinations to insure the herd's health.

There can be setbacks in a journey through the Angus business, however, as with any business. In 1986 I learned that vaccinations aren't 100 percent insurance. My Pacific International bred-and-owned champion female died of innerotoxemia at 11 months old.

Needless to say, I've never regained that title at the PI Show, but every year I am striving for it. Along with teaching me to cope with physical responsibilities, being involved with the Angus business has also taught me how to be responsible with my money.

I feel very fortunate to have had my cattle working well for me over the past nine years and I am very proud to say that I have purchased a vehicle. With help from scholarship money, I will be able to pay for my first four years of college. I realize many young adults my age won't have the



opportunity to pursue higher education and I am very grateful to the Angus industry.

It's hard to believe this all started only nine short years ago. My first junior Angus field day in Oregon was very uplifting. Being a small child I had many fears. I didn't know anyone there and I really didn't have any idea of how to properly fit my heifer.

Of course, my parents were always willing to lend a hand. Sadly enough, they were as green as I was. I will

always remember how the older members of the Oregon Junior Angus Association seemed to come out of the woodwork to help me prepare for my first show.

The Oregon Junior Angus queen, Lisa Coleman, particularly, took me under her wing. You can't image the impact a friendly word and a helping hand has on a nine-year-old child. I was so inspired by all the members' enthusiasm that I knew this association was for me and that I belonged here and was wanted. It's a feeling that I had never experienced before.

After the field day, I decided to join a local 4-H club with my older brother, Bobby. Although I was the youngest member of the C-ville Sirloins, this didn't stop my 4-H leader, Agnes Marble, from telling the group that I would be in charge of the fitting and showing clinics. Her reasoning was that I was the only member who showed outside of 4-H. This was because I was the only member, aside from my brother, who raised Angus cattle. The other less fortunate members had Charolais, Red Angus and Simmental.

These young people didn't know about state field days and functions because their junior associations were weak and without direction. This new responsibility that Agnes gave me put me directly into a leadership role. Even though I was uncomfortable at first with my new undertaking, I soon found that the other 4-H members readily accepted me and wanted to learn from me. This acceptance gave me a new feeling of confidence that I had never found in myself before. This new-born confidence blazed a path which has touched many aspects of my life.

I've been an officer in the Oregon Junior Angus Association since 1983 and

an officer in the Northwest Junior Angus Association since 1985. The leadership roles I've seen through in 4-H will take me to Chicago to attend National 4-H Congress as Oregon's Beef Ambassador.

In school, I was student body second vice president. I learned early on that people are respected by their peers if they are individual thinkers and not crowd followers. I believe that I succeeded in my leadership positions because of the opportunities I was afforded by the junior Angus associations.

I have been involved with merchandising, promotion and public speaking through functions such as semen sales, member drives and the National Beef Cook-Off.

We've all had our personal disappointments in the Angus business. However, I've learned that disappointments should never allow you to deviate from your goals. Being around Angus people means being around optimistic, supportive people. Their optimism has definitely rubbed off on me. I am always looking forward to next show season, next calving season and next breeding season.

The Angus business has been such a great focus of my energy. Angus have been the spice of my life and the dear friends I've made along the way will always be remembered and cherished.

As I look ahead, I can easily see how the Angus business has affected my choices for the future. At this point in my life my long-term goal is to become an obstetrician who runs a small herd of Angus cattle.

Why an obstetrician you might ask? Well, I have never witnessed a more beautiful sight than a mother cow giving birth to a healthy baby calf. The thought of helping a human being through the delivery process is thrilling.

The most important lesson I've learned from being in the Angus industry is that self-fulfillment comes from being of service to others. Whether it be helping a beginner at a show, or a heifer during calving. Yes, helping is the key word.

Earlier, I spoke about my trip to the barn in the middle of the night. That journey to the barn in the dark of the night is symbolic of my journey through the Angus business. In that drama I described leaving a darkened child's room and traveling to the light and warmth of a barn stall.

That light represents self-realization. I feel that nothing is helping me to realize my full potential more than my continued journey through the Angus business.

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