

Opportunity with a Purpose

by *Lindsey Trospen*
1997 *Miss American Angus*

"You're a cow queen?!"

For several weeks at Stephens College, I was greeted with this comment by the women in my dorm. Although I was shocked at their labeling of my former role of Missouri Angus Queen, I recall answering their questions with enthusiasm and offering them detailed explanations about my farm background and my role as the Missouri queen.

Leaving my rural community of Hamilton, Mo., and my life on the farm for a stint at an urban college was quite a change. I knew my previous experiences would always be a part of me; however, I had no idea of the opportunities I would have to tell others about them and my love for the Angus breed. These explanations are an example of how the role of Angus queen actually extends beyond the common conception of "ribbon girl."

Miss American Angus is a prominent position. Not only does she present awards and assist at functions, she also represents the Association, promotes the breed, functions as a liaison between Angus enthusiasts and the general public, and serves as a role model.

The ribbon girl image that often accompanies the title of Angus Queen is an inadequate portrayal of the position. The responsibility in the show ring is a difficult and stressful job, including numerous,

varied duties. When serving as Missouri Angus Queen, many insinuated the job I had acquired was a simple hassle. I remember responding to these comments with anticipation of the day's itinerary. Many events required me to serve as a substitute ringman. While my skirt occasionally got in the way, I was often found assisting at the picture backdrop by holding a calf or moving a back leg. I learned a great deal about the behind-the-scenes efforts that go into hosting an organized, successful show, but I believe my most rewarding experience was the gift of encouragement I was able to give to that young showman who was disappointed or discouraged. The encouraging smile or comment I was able to give provided me with a sense of purpose.

Those were not the only times that provided me with a sense of purpose. The explanation of my duties as Missouri Angus Queen to the various women in my Stephens College dorm also granted me the chance to tell of my involvement in the Angus business and the many associations it involves. Miss American Angus has an even greater opportunity to serve as an educator by providing the general public with information about the American Angus Auxiliary, the American Angus Association, the Angus breed and the Angus breeders who find purpose and enjoyment in their involvement with the Angus business. By conducting interviews and answering questions, the American Angus Queen can explain the various functions these organizations serve, and she can promote the quality product all Angus breeders diligently work to produce — Angus beef!

She can explain the commitment breeders make to produce a delectable, quality, healthy product; she can reveal the ways in which integrating the Angus breed into herds of other breeds will garner such benefits as calving ease and high carcass quality.

Miss American Angus can also illustrate the commitment to the land possessed by Angus breeders and describe the recognition we give these "Stewards of the Land."



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1997 *Miss American Angus*
Hamilton, Mo.

Through these activities, the role of Miss American Angus is transformed from a ribbon girl into a public relations liaison between the Angus business and the general public. An illustration of this is my recent trip to a shoe store that provided me with a selling opportunity of my family's processed beef. While explaining the technicalities of properly breaking in a pair of boots, the shoe salesman commented that they fit like a pair of Western boots. I quickly responded that I knew a great deal about wearing that type of boot. The conversation led to my description of the family Angus business. The salesman automatically stated his love for Angus beef. I was able to expand on his interest and explain the Certified Angus Beef Program and its increasing international success. My random encounter proved that the word is spreading.

Aside from chance encounters such as I had at the shoe store, Miss American Angus should jump at the opportunity to address the public through such forums as

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES FOR NJAA MEMBERS IN 1997

radio and television interviews, livestock functions, or farm show and exposition displays. As a candidate for Miss American Angus, I believe it's critical to spread the word of our industry by targeting the general public. This goal demands closer work with the American Angus Association, located not far from my hometown.

The expanded role of Miss American Angus could also extend into a closer relationship with state queens so that they too can exceed the ribbon girl image. I believe beneficial workshops on such topics as interview techniques, breed knowledge and personal appearance could make the queens more visible in the public spectrum. Assisting in their development as state queens will encourage them to be advocates for the Angus industry.

Therefore, the role of Angus queen extends to another dimension, that of role model. It's important to remember that the public is inescapable and taking advantage of this fact is vital. Miss American Angus has the opportunity to exert a positive influence on the junior members she contacts. The admiration that young Angus breeders have for Miss American Angus is obvious by the awe they express when they are with her. She is a role model for them and projecting an image they can admire is a necessity.

The role of Miss American Angus takes many avenues. After hearing about my farm background and my involvement in the Angus business, the women in my dormitory no longer laugh and refer to me as the "cow queen." Instead they are amazed at the opportunities I have been granted due to my association with the Angus industry.

Whether the education I provide is for my fellow students or the shoe salesman, the opportunity to promote the Angus breed and educate the public has been presented to me, just as it will be presented to Miss American Angus. The role of ribbon girl is no longer applicable.

February 15	Ownership deadline for the Western Regional Junior Angus Show
March 1	Entry deadline for the Western Regional Junior Angus Show
March 1	Summer Job Program applications due
March 14-18	NJAA Board Meetings, St. Joseph, M O.
April 15	Ownership and entry deadline for the Atlantic National Regional Preview
April 25-29	Western Regional, Reno, Nev.
May 1	Deadline for Honorary Angus Foundation and Advisor of the Year nominations
May 1	Ownership deadline for the Eastern Regional and Northwest, Southwest, and North Central Regional Preview Shows
May 15	CAB/NJAA Scholarship applications due
May 15	Ownership deadline for the National Junior Angus Show
May 15	Entry deadline for the Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show
May 15	Entry deadline for the Northwest Regional Preview
May 22-25	Atlantic National Regional Preview Junior Angus Show, Timonium, Md.
June 1	Entry deadline for the National Junior Angus Show
June 11-14	Northwest Regional Preview Junior Angus Show, Filer, Idaho
June 15	Deadline for submitting names of state candidates and delegates for NJAA elections
June 15	LEAD Conference registrations due
June 13-15	Southwest Regional Preview Junior Angus Show, Sulphur Springs, Texas
June 28-28	North Central Regional Preview Junior Angus Show, Lincoln, Neb.
June 27-29	Eastern Regional, Harrisonburg, Va.
July 15-19	National Junior Angus Show, Perry, Ga.
July 31- August 3	LEAD Conference, East Lansing, Mich.
August 1	Ownership deadline for NAILE Junior Show and American Royal Junior Show
September 25	Entry deadline for American Royal Junior Heifer Show
October 1	Ownership deadline for the National Western Stock Show Junior Angus Show
October 1	Entry deadline for the NAILE Junior Heifer Show
October 1	Ownership deadline for National Western Stock Show Junior Show
November 9	American Royal Junior Heifer Show, Kansas City, M o.
November 16	NAILE Junior Heifer Show, Louisville, Ky.

NOTE All deadlines are POSTMARK DATE

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April 24-25	Western Regional, Reno, Nev.
June	Eastern Regional, Harrisburg, Pa.
July	National Junior Angus Show, Indianapolis

