

A True Leader

Betsie Ebert brings out the best in others, earning her recognition in her community and the NJAA as a natural leader.

BY CHRISTY BELL



CHRISTY BELL PHOTOS

NJAA Outstanding Leadership Award winner Betsie Ebert, with her willingness to serve and to help others, has made a difference in her local, state and national Angus organizations, as well as in her community.

**Leader ...
role model ...
motivator ...
hard worker...
mentor ...
friend.**

These are just a few words that describe this year's recipient of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Outstanding Leadership Award. Betsie

Ebert, of Lexington, N.C., is a true leader.

The NJAA Outstanding Leadership Award was created in memory of Barbara Smalstig for her support of junior Angus activities. The award is intended to honor an outstanding NJAA member each year during the American Angus Association banquet held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting in Louisville, Ky. Ebert, 20, is the fifth person to receive this award.

■ Early start

Ebert became involved with showing Angus cattle

when she was 8 years old. Her parents, Bill and Jane Ebert, always had Angus cattle. Ebert thought she would give showing a try and picked a calf from her parents' herd. Little did Ebert know at her first show that 12 years later she would be a respected, prosperous young adult within NJAA.

"I fell in love with it," says Ebert of her first show experience. Since that time her cow herd has grown to more than 40 head of registered Angus.

Ebert became actively involved with the North Carolina Junior Angus Association (NCJAA) and the

NJAA when she began showing Angus cattle. She attended her first National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in 1990 in Omaha, Neb., and has missed only one since then. Through these organizations Ebert has been a true leader, a motivator, and a supporter of junior Angus members, junior Angus activities and Angus cattle.

Ebert has served as president, vice president, treasurer, queen and princess of the NCJAA. Within her state association, she has encouraged membership, helped conduct events, served on committees,

conducted workshops and assisted with the start-up of the NCJAA "Booster's Club" to raise money for the junior organization.

■ A good example

William and Lucille Leatherman are Ebert's NCJAA junior advisors, good friends and neighbors. The juniors in the state look up to Ebert as a leader and a guide, says William. "Betsie is a mentor for a lot of the kids. She has the skills to help lead the organization and has laid the groundwork for the association and for so many juniors following in her footsteps."

David Gazda, American Angus Association regional manager, has had the pleasure of working with Ebert for several years. He says, "It is through her involvement and capable leadership that this junior program (NCJAA) has grown and developed into what I consider is one of the strongest and most respected groups in the country."

Ebert says, "It is important for me to be a good leader so I can set examples for others. I learned early in my leadership skill development that one cannot accomplish goals alone. It takes teamwork. It takes being unselfish. And most of all, it means taking people where they are and moving them to greater achievements."

Ebert also has been involved with her state's cattlemen's and cattlemen's associations. She was elected as the first North Carolina Beef Ambassador in 1996-97. In that position Ebert promoted beef and the beef industry by making television and radio spots and by talking to cattle producers in her state. She also participated in the National



Betsie Ebert says watching her parents, Bill and Jane Ebert, work hard for their goals has set a good example for how she wants to live.

Beef Ambassadors Contest.

To help increase her knowledge of the livestock industry, Ebert participated in the North Carolina Myth Finder Speakers Bureau. This program teaches people about the livestock industry to clear up misconceptions. Using her leadership skills, she spoke to her community, local cattle organizations and civic groups.

Another experience through her state included a tour through Scotland with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. She assisted in the planning of the tour to make it most beneficial for everyone by helping select farms and important places to visit that would give participants a greater knowledge of Scotland's agricultural industry. One stop included a visit to the world's oldest Aberdeen Angus herd.

■ Biggest leadership role

Ebert feels her biggest

leadership position so far has been her two-year term as chairman of the Atlantic National Junior Council. The council works with adults responsible for the Atlantic National Roll of Victory (ROV) Show in Timonium, Md., to produce a first-rate junior show in conjunction with the event. It is up to the council to pick judges, set rules and guidelines, raise money for expenses, and plan the activities. Ebert truly has enjoyed her role because of the end result — a great show with active junior participation.

"We worked as a team," says Ebert, speaking of her council members. "There is no 'I' in 'team.' It takes someone to coordinate and get everything together, but it takes a team to get it done."

Because of her hard work and dedication to the Atlantic National, Ebert was awarded the 1998 Calderazzo Award for her outstanding volunteer

service to the show. This award is given to juniors or adults who have been instrumental to the success of the show.

Ebert's other activities in the NJAA include participating in the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference, the *Certified Angus Beef*™ Cook-Off contest sponsored by the American Angus Auxiliary, the extemporaneous speaking contest, team sales, poster contests, and representing her state as a national voting delegate.

■ Rewarding experience

Ebert's Angus activities have helped her win many Angus awards, including the first High Field Angus/Boomer Esiason Foundation Scholarship given to Angus youth for contributions to the Angus breed, the 1997 and 1998 Atlantic National Merit awards, second-place American Angus Auxiliary Scholarship and the honor to

compete for Miss American Angus, NJAA Bronze and Silver awards, and an Angus Foundation scholarship.

"Being involved with the National Junior Angus Association has been a family activity," says Ebert. "It has given me lots of leadership opportunities and has made me visible, when otherwise I may not have received these opportunities through anything else."

"See strengths in others and encourage them to explore their talents. Share the dream and involve others."

— Betsie Ebert

■ Community leader

Well-respected in her community, Ebert's leadership role there is just as strong as within the Angus breed. While in high school, Ebert directed and participated in a Learning Disabilities Speakers Bureau. She conducted forums for parents, teachers, educators and students on dealing with children with learning disabilities. She motivated disabled teens to be active

despite their disabilities. She also was responsible for getting her high school involved with the North Carolina Special Olympics.

Ebert is an active member of Friedberg Moravian Church. She plays an active role in youth fellowship and works with the young people in her community. She has worked with such programs as Habitat for Humanity, Medical Ministries and Community Awareness.

Currently, Ebert is a Student Government Association representative for her college and a college mentor for incoming freshmen.

She is a junior at Barton College, Wilson, N.C., majoring in biology, and she plans to earn her master's degree in microbiology. She wants to pursue a career in the research field.

"I want both children and adults to say that I am a role model," says Ebert. "I want people to know that I am the type of person who stands by my word."

Joel Harris, president of the North Carolina Angus Association, talks of Ebert with the greatest respect: "Betsie's strengths are her outgoing personality, warmth and friendliness, and her dependability. She is able to express her informed opinions tactfully and with conviction. She is a positive influence on others, both juniors and adults."

When working with people, Ebert believes in the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!* "See strengths in others and encourage them to explore their talents. Share the dream and involve others. Through leadership, I have sought to encourage the willing," says Ebert.



Betsie Ebert wants to continue to be involved with Angus activities throughout the years to come.

■ Giving credit

It's obvious Ebert is a true leader and a hard worker. She gives credit to her parents for being the person she is today, for they are her role models.

"Mom and Dad set goals for themselves and achieve those goals by working hard. Nothing stops them," she says. "They set a good example for what I want to live for."

She adds, "My beginnings started at the grassroots level with someone believing in me. It is these people who have

given me the opportunity to grow from within and beyond."

Those who know Ebert know her for her charming smile, fun sense of humor and sincere personality. Through the leadership she has provided and examples she has set, many people, young and old, have gained from her actions. Her dedication to the Angus breed, Angus activities and Angus people have not gone unnoticed.

