

LEAD IN

by Richard L. Spader, Executive Vice President
American Angus Association

Service with a Smile

My administrative assistant and a longtime American Angus Association employee, Anne Bindel, retired January 31. That completed a 26-year career, during which time she worked for three executive officers, Lloyd D. Miller, Dr. C. K. Allen, and for the past 13 years, me.

Anne was also secretary to some 26 boards of directors. She came to know many Association members and touched many of your lives. Earlier in the month



Anne Bindel and I take a moment to reflect on her 26-year career at her retirement party Jan. 31.

another long-time employee, Bette Baker, who worked as a clerk, retired after 24 years with the Association.

Anne and Bette in many ways are representative of numerous other employees of this organization—men and women who have devoted a better part of their working life to the American Angus Association. Their importance to the smooth operation of this business often goes unnoticed, but I consider them the heartbeat of this organization, second only to you as members.

This was brought home to me recently when I prepared a talk for a business meeting about the Association and employee management. Little did I realize until I looked into our records, that the average length of employment was 16 years. Two of these

employees—Barbara Kelly, supervisor, and Don Painter, director of member services, were here the day this office opened in St. Joseph, Mo., on June 13, 1956.

This kind of commitment works to your advantage every day as employees unceremoniously help conduct Association business—registrations, transfers, memberships, AHIR, and public relations, to mention a few. They understand their areas of responsibility and the work you do as breeders and cattle producers. Their work is second to none in the industry. They are the best team in the livestock association business.

It's not uncommon in my travels for Angus breeders to ask about certain employees who never leave the office as many of us do. Interestingly enough they've talked to these employees for years, shared their concerns, learned about their families, and developed a great relationship. They often say they plan to stop by the office sometime if they're ever near St. Joseph, just to meet someone they've talked with all these years. I, too, have had this same experience when I meet someone for the first time after dealing over the phone for years. And I can assure you that members are always welcome to tour the offices.

Many of our Angus friends had an opportunity to meet Association employees last September during the office open house and kickoff for the World Angus Forum. It was fun for us, and I believe, fun for breeders who attended that opening session.

As employees, our goal is to give you, as breeders and members, the best service in this industry. Our one-day turn around time for registrations and transfers, and three-day turn around for performance records are examples of our commitment. With our 1994 plans and the roll-out of the new Angus Herd Management software, we hope to provide new and better ways to make Association paperwork and information flow more freely.

We admit there is always room for improvement, and we welcome suggestions and new ideas, so don't hesitate to share your ideas with us. It's this kind of cooperative effort on the part of dedicated members and employees that will keep us in a leadership position in the beef cattle industry.

Richard L. Spader