

NEWSMAKERS

Compiled by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

Within this “Newsmakers” column we share important news and accomplishments of our members, including state association activities, birth and marriage announcements, and news of Angus members’ passing.

In Passing



Jay B. Penick, 73, passed away Feb. 11, 2021, at his home in Fountain Hills, Ariz.

Jay grew up on the family farm near Hebron, where he graduated from Lakewood High School, followed by graduation from The Ohio State University (OSU). While at OSU, he was a member of the livestock judging team and the Alpha Gamma Sigma ag fraternity.

Following graduation, he started his career with the American Angus Association. He completed his career as president/CEO of the Northwest Farm Credit Services in Spokane, Wash.

Simple pleasures in life brought great joy to Jay. He loved spending time and playing with his grandchildren. He always enjoyed a quiet evening with family and friends, glass of wine in hand, cooking a great steak dinner for all, and watching a good sports game — especially the Buckeyes.

He loved working with his brother, Fred, on the family farm when he could and spreading a generous heart to all when needed.

Jay is survived by his wife of 48 years, Pam; children, Michael (Stephanie), Matthew (Rebecca) and

Tami (Ralph) Wilson; sister, Diana (Tom); brothers, Ralph (Lois) and Fred (Cindy); sister-in-law, Connie (Jim); close friends Lonnie and Susie; eight grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.



Robert Lee Bruner, 80, passed away Feb. 20, 2021. Robert was born June 5, 1940.

Robert had a passion for his family, friends and the agricultural business. He spent his life’s work helping communities, farmers, ranchers and cattlemen by providing sound advice and mentorship to many. He unselfishly donated his time to many worthy causes for the benefit of countless individuals, associations and boards, because it was the right thing to do.

He served as a member of the Clientele Advisory Committee with the Center for Grazing Lands and Ranch Management, six years as an advisory director of the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) Program, and a past chairman and 15-year member of the executive committee for the Build East Texas organization. He was also a past president of the Texas Forage and Grass Council.

In addition, he served as chairman

of the Walker County Pasture and Forage Committee and hosted numerous demonstrations and field days on his ranch. He served on the Advisory Board of the Texas AgriLife Research Board at the Overton Experiment Station.

Robert also served as director of the Independent Cattlemen’s Association and member of the Natural Resources Committee of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association.

Robert was a member of the Methodist Retirement Center Board of Directors and vice chairman of the Huntsville Town Creek Retirement Center.

As a businessman, along with his ranching career, he strongly promoted increased awareness of soil fertility. He was awarded the “Excellent Producer” Award from the Texas Forage and Grassland Council in 1993. Robert was also awarded the 1995 Bill Clements Award for Outstanding Leadership in Agriculture by Build East Texas.

He was chosen as the 1998 “Man of the Year in Texas Agriculture” by the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association.

While serving as a director of the Texas Angus Association (TAA) during the late 1990s, Robert was instrumental in the formation of an All-Breed Bull Test and Sale. The test,

under the name Beef Development Research Center of Texas, was formed by the TAA and the Texas Brangus Association, with Robert serving as president. TAA benefited by more than \$100,000 from the test. Robert also served as co-chairman of the first Stars of Texas Female Sale hosted by the TAA.

An avid promoter of agricultural education, he worked closely with the Texas A&M Extension Services and with the Agriculture Department at Sam Houston State University, which awarded him the "Outstanding Agriculture Supporter" Award in 1996. He also served as the vice chairman of the Sam Houston State University Foundation.

He served as member of the initial coordinating body for Regional Group H of the Texas Water Development Board. Senate Bill 1, passed in the 75th Legislature, charges the Regional Water Planning Group with the responsibility of developing a water plan to meet the needs of the Region for the next 50 years.

Bruner served as vice chairman of the Audit Committee with the National Cattlemen's Beef Board. He was selected as winner of the 2008 Vision Award, recognizing innovation in the beef industry. The award is sponsored by MicroBeef Technologies and presented by the National Cattleman's Foundation.

In 2014 Robert and Toni were recognized for their lifelong devotion to agriculture and the beef business by induction into the Texas Angus Association Hall of Fame.

Robert is survived by his wife, Toni, of 55-plus years; daughter, Kim; son, Jim; son-in-law Robert; daughter-in-law, Maridee; and four grandchildren.

In Recognition Bobby Simpson Receives Cattleman of the Year



Bobby Simpson was awarded the 2020 Cattleman of the Year at the MCA annual convention.

The Missouri Cattlemen's Association (MCA) recognized a Salem, Mo., cattle producer as the 2020 Cattleman of the Year at its annual convention in Osage Beach, Mo., Jan. 9, 2021. Bobby Simpson was presented the award for his efforts as a second-generation MCA president and third-generation cattle rancher.

"I have had the privilege to spend the last year touring the U.S. with Bobby, and I have witnessed firsthand all of the time and dedication he puts forth as a leader of MCA," says Drew Busch, Mo. Cattlemen's Leadership College graduate. "He works diligently to make sure bylaws and policies are in line with MCA members' needs and beliefs, and he addresses concerns quickly to get answers and solutions for producers to help them move forward. Whether Bobby is at a cattle show with his grandchildren or just having lunch at a small-town cafe, he is always advocating for the MCA."

Simpson operates Simpson Farms, which was started by his grandfather in Texas before moving to New Mexico and, eventually, southwest Missouri. The farm is family-owned and operated by Simpson; his wife,

Cathy; and their son, Jarrod. His grandchildren represent the fifth generation on the farm that is home to more than 600 Angus cows.

Kleeman receives Lifetime Achievement Award



Leon Kleeman was awarded the "Pioneer Award" at the Missouri Cattle Industry Convention and Trade Show.

The MCA recognized Leon Kleeman, Miller, Mo., with its "Pioneer Award" at the 53rd Annual Missouri Cattle Industry Convention and Trade Show on Jan. 9, 2021. The award is the highest honor given by the association and is comparable to a lifetime achievement award.

Kleeman and wife, Glenda, founded Gleonda Angus Farms in Southwest Missouri after years of raising, showing and working with cattle within the Missouri cattle industry. They continue their efforts as they help raise the fourth, fifth and sixth generations on their farm.

"Leon meets every qualification for this award, as he has not only left a path for others to follow but has helped lead myself and several others down that path," says Traves Merrick, grandson and MCA Region 7 Vice President. "He has truly dedicated a lifetime to the cattle industry and now has multiple generations with the same dedication. He is a true pioneer of the Missouri beef industry."

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2021 Kansas Angus Ass'n Annual Meeting and Banquet; Jan. 30; Hutchinson



Elected to the Kansas Angus Association board of directors are front row (from left) Clint Woodrow, Emporia, president; Jeff Klausmeyer, Wellington, vice president; Anne Lampe, Scott City, secretary/manager; and John McCurry, Burrton, immediate past president. Directors pictured back row (from left) are Rick Cozzitorto, Olathe; Stephanie Dickerson, Paradise; Cash Schilling, Edson; Lynne Hinrichsen, Westmoreland; Spencer Jones, Wamego; and Elizabeth Perkins, Lorraine.



Anne Lampe, Scott City, was inducted as the 2020 Kansas Angus Ass'n Honorary Member. Pictured (from left) are honorary members Damon New and Mark Gardiner, presenting; Lampe; and John McCurry, immediate past president, presenting.



Elected to serve on the Kansas Angus Association Auxiliary (pictured from left) are Tonya Theis, Leavenworth, president; Esther McCabe, Elk City, vice president; Emily McCurry Mullen, Ulysses, secretary; Lori Fink, Randolph, treasurer; Megan Green, Leavenworth, reporter; and Wendy Flory, Baldwin City, past president/advisor.

PHOTO BY ANNE LAMPE