

from the office

LEAD IN

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This is my last "Lead In" and I have some mixed emotions while writing it. By now, most of you know I have resigned as executive vice president of the American Angus Assn. effective May 1, 1981. I have had tremendous cooperation from breeders of Angus cattle, the staff and the Board of Directors. Together we have accomplished more in the last three years than I would have dared think possible when I started.

We have had some failures, but I think they were insignificant compared to our successes. We built on what had been accomplished in previous administrations, which included efficient processing of daily work, outstanding field service and continually improving activities.

As I reflect over accomplishments of the last three years, I have no idea what ultimately will be deemed the most significant. I think one of the most important facts is that many of our accomplishments were long-range in nature and will offer the breed the opportunity for continued improvement in the years ahead.

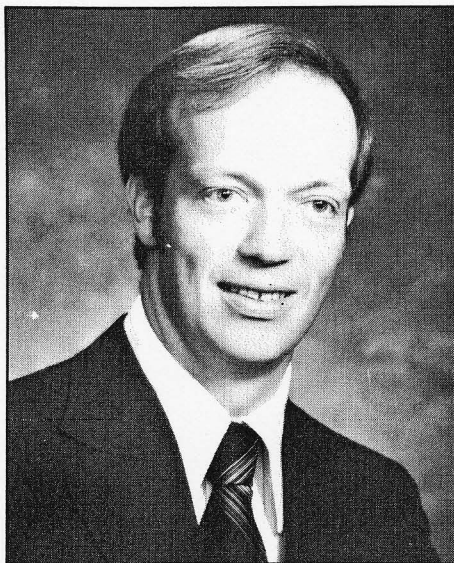
Team Effort

None of our accomplishments can be attributed to any one person but were the results of team effort by what I think Angus history will record as one of the most competent and most highly motivated staffs to ever serve the Angus breed. Our administration tried to recognize that all people have their strengths and weaknesses and that progress can be made by maximizing a person's strengths and minimizing his weaknesses. Further, I tried to motivate the staff to a higher level of achievement by providing an atmosphere where accomplishment, performance and hard work were recognized and rewarded.

Suggestions and comments from breeders always were passed to the appropriate committee of the board for action, but the majority of the ideas came from the regional managers, the staff or were brought up during board discussions. I also spent considerable time evaluating the activities of other associations, both in and out of agriculture, for new approaches and successful ideas. All activities and actions were ultimately discussed, modified and acted on by the board.

Accomplishments

Our accomplishments included an improvement in staff organization as we developed job descriptions for everyone and goals for each individual, department



and the association as a whole. Our communications efforts were greatly expanded through surveys, requests for breeder opinions and through open committee meetings. We purchased the ANGUS JOURNAL and circulated it to all our members, which gave the ANGUS JOURNAL twice the circulation of the next largest beef breed association magazine but, more important, it provided each and every member monthly communication with the association and with each other.

The purchase and improvement of the ANGUS JOURNAL were the most visible changes and they created controversy—a lot of it at times. And even though ANGUS JOURNAL still has room for improvement, I would have to call it an unqualified success. A success in content, a success in image and quality, and a success in terms of profit. This is only its second complete year of operation, and after four months, it is \$55,000 ahead of budget, \$71,000 above last year at this time; and if it keeps up the same pace, it should clear more than \$100,000 this year.

Stiffest Tests

Shortly after I was employed, we had some of our stiffest tests, as we implemented the non-traditional blood typing rule, dealt with potential lawsuits and established successful procedures for dealing with misrepresentation and genetic defects.

We dramatically expanded Angus advertising for two years before reducing it this year for budget reasons, improved the radio

advertising program, developed several cassette slide shows (one of which helped breeders improve their own advertising) and created a cooperative advertising program that put monthly Angus advertising, paid for by members, in publications in 39 states.

Involvement of youth in the American Angus Assn. was greatly expanded, and this should provide great dividends for the Angus breed, the beef industry and, ultimately, the country. Junior activities included junior leadership conferences and a junior Angus recognition program designed to motivate and recognize outstanding juniors. Establishment of the National Junior Angus Assn. and an Angus Foundation were two very important accomplishments that should reap benefits for years.

Breed Improvement

There were several important and dramatic improvements in breed improvement. Participation in the Angus Herd Improvement Records program was significantly increased from a 5% annual growth rate to more than 35% growth in 1980 alone. Forms have been simplified, and it will be much easier to process registrations and weights at the same time. Circulation of the National Sire Evaluation and Pathfinder Reports were expanded from approximately 3,000 to more than 35,000. The first national Angus A.I. sire listing was printed, the minimum number of calves measured for growth traits in sire evaluation was doubled from 10 to 20 and the first sire evaluation report from field data for an established breed was distributed. A new computer has been installed and the programming is nearing completion to offer a new performance registration certificate and greater breeder service.

The Certified Angus Beef program, which was the first attempt by a beef breed organization to carry the identity of its product all the way to the consumer, was implemented as a pilot project and established as feasible in spite of the fact that the Food Safety and Quality Division of USDA stopped the program after its initiation. We won that contest with Carol Foreman's department of USDA, but it was only after long hours, intensive efforts, much education and help from numerous people.

Industry Oriented

The association became more industry oriented during the last three years. We

Continued on Page 42

Continued from Page 17

tried to provide the membership with more economic information and projections and wrote many letters to bureaucrats, congressmen and even to the President to express views for Angus cattlemen. We encouraged membership in NCA and state cattlemen's associations and strongly supported the defeated Beeferendum. In addition, ANGUS JOURNAL provided our membership with more information about the industry, NCA and the National Live Stock and Meat Board.

A new membership class was installed to provide a more current membership list in the future, and new fee schedules were introduced to stimulate business and provide adequate income to support association programs. A new export program was introduced this year and promises to be self-supporting or even profitable in its first year.

In spite of our tremendous increase in activities, extremely high rates of inflation and uncertainty in the beef industry, the association has been in the black at the end of each fiscal year and had income that was \$27,000 ahead of expenses when I resigned.

Reservations

After three years of total commitment, I have reservations about watching from the sidelines. However, the Board of Directors and I disagreed about an organizational matter that I thought was fundamental to effective management. I'm sure the Board of Directors were voting their convictions, and I don't think you can ask any more from a board than to have them vote openly and objectively for what they think is best for the breed.

Many things remain to be done as programs are refined, and new and more difficult challenges lie ahead. I am strongly encouraged by the selection of Dick Spader as my successor, because he has been a vital member of an outstanding staff. He not only is diligent, talented and competent but also well versed in the Angus breed and an outstanding leader.

During the past three years, I have had the opportunity to meet many people, to see many Angus herds and learn extensively about the Angus breed. My experience in association management and contacts with professionals in association management, government, industry and universities has broadened my outlook and has been very educational. I certainly have enjoyed and benefited immensely from this experience and look forward to future contacts with Angus breeders.

On the other hand, I am very enthusiastic about spending more time with my family and evaluating new challenges and new opportunities. 