

Auxiliary Awards Scholarships for Overall Excellence

Scholarships encourage juniors to keep good records and to participate in a wide range of activities.

by *Stephanie Veldman*

In 1956, the American Angus Auxiliary awarded its first scholarship of \$300 to one girl. Forty-seven years later, the scholarship provides financial support to five girls and five boys each year.

Scholarship applicants must be graduating high school seniors who will be entering their first year of college or an accredited vocational-technical program. Five girls in the scholarship competition also earn the right to compete for the title of Miss American Angus.

The scholarship applicants must demonstrate interest in Angus projects and activities, including show records, participation in National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) activities and

conferences, scholastic achievement and awards.

"We believe that our future is based on developing leaders, and you are only as good as your people," says Nancy Jo Sullivan, American Angus Auxiliary president and scholarship chairwoman.

Sullivan says the scholarships provide incentives for members who balance their activities, including recordkeeping. "We aren't just looking for someone who shows, and we aren't looking for someone who is just scholastically talented — we are looking for a balance."

Scholarship origin

The Auxiliary first began raising money

for the scholarships through raffles and donations, says Nellie Meinders, co-chairwoman of the Advisory on Trust Committee. They also began selling a heifer at the All-American Angus Breeders' Futurity in Louisville, Ky.

"The first heifer was sold in 1958 for \$3,000 at the Futurity. P.L. Benshoof of Blairsburg, Iowa, donated the heifer," Meinders says.

The heifer sale didn't become an annual event until 1963, after which it was continued every year through 1996. "This is how it was done for a long, long time, and I think the Auxiliary thought our principal would provide enough income to fund the scholarship," explains Anne Patton Schubert, Taylorsville, Ky., on why the heifer sale was discontinued.

Sullivan says that other fund-raisers have taken the place of the Futurity heifer, including both live and silent auctions and the Frank Murphy prints that commemorate the Auxiliary's 50th anniversary. She says the Auxiliary is thinking about bringing the Futurity heifer sale back.

"There is discussion right now to maybe do something similar to it in the future, but no decisions have been made yet."

The money that is raised for the scholarships goes into a trust that was established in 1969. Only the interest earned is given for the scholarships each year.

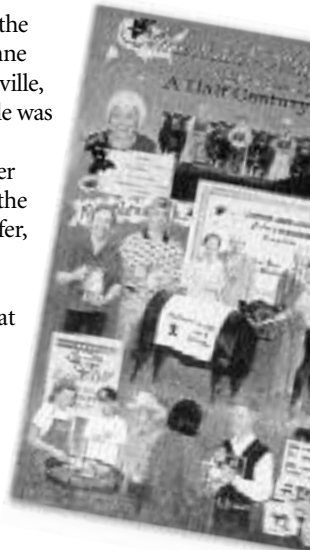
"The reason the amount given for the scholarships changes is because the amount of interest changes each year," Schubert says. "Interest amounts can range anywhere from \$7,500 to \$12,000 depending on the interest and fund-raising amounts collected."

Scholarship requirements

The scholarship application is long and requires junior applicants to draw from old records and activities they participated in. One of the goals of the application is to encourage junior members to keep good records.

"If they are really looking at the long run, at the big picture, and are really going to pursue the Angus business and are going to be successful, then learning recordkeeping is going to be very beneficial to them," Sullivan says.

"This is a good amount of money, and it



► In 1958, the first heifer that was auctioned for the Auxiliary scholarship fund was donated by P.L. Benshoof (center), Treasure Acres, Blairsburg, Iowa. She was purchased for \$3,000 by Royce Zink, Appleton City, Mo.

is rewarding for all of the years you put into showing and taking the time to do all of the activities the Auxiliary and the junior Angus associations offer,” says Jonathan Barnes, Dolphin, Va. Barnes was the 2001 first-place Auxiliary scholarship winner.

The scholarship judging is based on a point system, with 100 points as the maximum. The points are broken into three categories, including:

- ▶ 40 points for projects and activities;
- ▶ 29 points for cattle show records, showmanship, judging, Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR), and sales; and
- ▶ 31 points for stories, pictures, clippings, scholastic records and references.

Copies of the Auxiliary scholarship applications can be found through the Auxiliary link online at www.angus.org. They can also be obtained through the individual state scholarship contacts, which can also be found on the Auxiliary Web site. Each state can forward the application of one boy and one girl to the national scholarship competition.

“The application was really hard. I had to reach back and use some things that I had done in the past, but we kept really good records of the things I did,” says Cortney Hill-Dukehart, Sykesville, Md. “The 4-H record book really helped because I could go back and find things I was involved in that I wouldn’t have remembered off the top of my head. I just prepared myself that it would take a lot of time, because it was definitely a long application.”

Hill-Dukehart placed fourth in the national scholarship contest in 2001, which earned her the right to compete in the Miss American Angus competition. In November, she was crowned the 2002 Miss American Angus at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky.

Miss American Angus contest

“The job of Miss American Angus is to be a role model and to promote the Angus breed,” says Hill-Dukehart. “We are really involved in bringing attention to the Angus industry and setting a good example for the junior members.”

In 1968, the American Angus Auxiliary created the Miss American Angus program. At the time, the Auxiliary decided the easiest, most efficient way to choose the winner was to ask the first-place scholarship winner to be Miss American Angus.

The role of Miss American Angus is to serve as an ambassador for the breed and for Angus youth. She attends shows, sales and events throughout the country during her reign.

The Auxiliary decided to form a separate contest for Miss American Angus in 1980 and to invite the top five scholarship winners to compete. “There are some people who may want to be a scholarship winner and want to spend their time and effort on school things and not on the Miss American Angus program, so we changed the format and held a contest after that,” Schubert says.

The contest consists of a prepared speech, 20-minute interview, impromptu question and three-page informational test on the American Angus Association and the Angus breed.

The top five scholarship winners in the girls division are invited to compete for Miss American Angus. If one or more of the girls in the top five decides not to run, girls will be asked, in the order they scored on their scholarship application, to compete.

“Once we have announced [the five female] scholarship winners at the NJAS (National Junior Angus Show) then those five girls will get a phone call and a letter from our Miss American Angus committee chair, asking them if they would like to run,” Sullivan says, adding that they have until Aug. 15 to decide. “We are really going to hold to that date, so that if we do want to ask someone else to join, she has time to prepare.”

Miss American Angus is expected to attend six major shows throughout the year, including the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo.; the Western National Angus Futurity (WNAF) in Reno, Nev.; the Atlantic National in Timonium, Md.; the Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show; the NJAS; and the NAILE in Louisville, Ky. Schubert says that other shows, including the All-American Angus Breeders’ Futurity, Louisville, Ky., invite Miss American Angus to attend as well.

“I am encouraged to attend as many other Angus shows, sales and functions as possible,” Hill-Dukehart says. “We haven’t had a Miss American Angus in my area since the early 1990s and I have been trying very hard to attend many events in the neighboring states of Pennsylvania and Virginia as well.”

