

CATTLE CULTURE

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

Angus, Always

The Angus family never fails to support its members.



I was just 7 years old when I met my first Angus heifer. My cousin and I had grown up close, and we often found ourselves in friendly competition throughout many of our hobbies. Then when Dawson let me help wash his first Angus heifer, I knew this wasn't an activity I could be left out of.

From the moment I entered the Angus industry, I've never had any doubts this was a place I could call home for the rest of my life.

I've been writing this column for almost a year now, and if you've been following along, you've joined me in my memories of my first heifer, Elizabeth, the personal growth I experienced as a National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member and so much more.

Today I want to focus on the idea of the Angus family. It sounds like a cliché Hallmark card statement, but I can tell you this family is a very real thing.

Coast to coast

When I was heavily involved in my state junior association and enjoying the thrill of the show ring, I had my initial encounter with a sense of belonging in the Business Breed.

Everywhere I turned, people had a

smile on their face. People went above and beyond to help me achieve my dream. From the simple

helping hand assisting my tiny, 8-year-old self reach adhesive cans that were stacked just out of reach, to soft voices offering advice centered around exhibiting my Angus heifers, I was surrounded by a wealth of knowledge.

At each event and even at home in the barn, I knew that I was just steps away from someone who was happy to help me navigate the world of raising cattle.

There are no "silly questions" in the Angus industry, even when those questions come in a never-ending stream from a new Angus enthusiast.

Regional managers never batted an eye when I needed a little extra help in the ring. Older NJAA members waited until I wasn't looking to shake their heads and smile as I learned how to manage spacing between heifers in the profile lineup. Seedstock breeders reached out to make sure I was successfully following the schedule they had created with me when I purchased a new heifer.

My parents and I rarely hauled cattle outside of California for shows, but the ties I had to the Angus

family were on a national level. I may have been young and limited in my experience of the opportunities available across the country for Angus members, but the pride I felt for the breed was strong.

Beyond the warm and fuzzy

We all know while it's easy to present families as a picture-perfect group who is always loving and kind and patient, but that's not always the case. Families can have their messy moments, and they understand on the flip side of those Hallmark holiday moments, there are also times of frustration and misunderstanding.

Much like your immediate family, the Angus family knows things as an agriculturist are not always centered around the warm and fuzzy feelings.

Our work gets dirty, complicated, frustrating and downright hard sometimes. We all have moments where we feel defeated or beat down.

Yet the Angus family never abandons a member. We stay strong because we know we are better together. We proudly bear the name Business Breed.

You are a part of a family that supports you and is proud of you. Help spread this message of love and support with your fellow Angus breeders and enthusiasts.

Never forget that we are Angus, always. 