



Kathryn Coleman

Defining decisions

Don't blink. Before you know it, you'll be on the last page of a chapter in your life.

As junior members, we are faced with difficult decisions every day that influence the present and future of each of our operations. Young Angus breeders typically lean toward the generation of breeders before us. This aspect of seeking more learning opportunities helps enlighten us about the importance of decisions we may not realize play a bigger part than the ones we face daily.

The day-to-day decisions made by ranchers may be as simple as what heifers to put on which pasture or what animals to keep or cull come the fall. Decisions don't come lightly when you have good or bad years, and you must compile a strategy to keep the operation afloat and still make it enjoyable.

The advantage we have as young breeders is that we can observe what has worked for those who have worked tirelessly to make their mark on the breed from the ground up. There are also those who have paved the way and have shown fellow breeders what can arise from the defining decisions you make on your

personal operation.

"Defining decisions" has a different meaning for every breeder. Express Ranches, well known for its success in and out of the show ring, is faced with decisions that help continue its success as an operation.

"The biggest decisions I face [are] the breeding and marketing aspect of the ranch. They're the most crucial decisions," Miles Shout says, as he explains of how they improve their operation each year.

Hunter Angus, another operation that has made an imprint in recent years, has shown that defining decisions have allowed them to advance through their herd, sales and the breed itself.

The Hunters, once in the shoes of many young Angus juniors, were shooting for the stars to keep their passion alight in the breed, as it plays such a huge part of what we all do and why we continue to be a part of this industry.

Rachel Hunter explains that on a smaller scale of a farm like theirs, they must define decisions that will

not only benefit them and their herd but also potential customers.

She says, "Our motto is quality over quantity, and that means being more efficient in your decisions and your timing — especially when it comes to breeding, marketing and customer service."

Hunter explains the importance of taking advantage of every avenue social media has to offer. For example, the more accessible online-only versions vs. hard-copy mailing sale books.

As you can see, no matter what scale of herd or operation you may be working with, the most crucial decisions involve breeding and marketing. The importance through the marketing aspect is that we must take advantage and utilize all platforms of social media to benefit our operation and allow for more growth opportunity.

There is an opportunity anywhere you look to benefit your operation in the long run.

— Kathryn Coleman

Bronze and Silver Awards

Olivia Fine, Brazoria, Texas; Brantley Humpert, Windthorst, Texas; Daniel Brenlen Humpert, Windthorst, Texas; Ava Leibfried, Hazel Green, Wis.; and Avery Mather, State Center, Iowa, have earned the

National Junior Angus Association's (NJAA) Bronze and Silver awards, according to Caitlyn Brandt, events and education director of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Mo.

The Bronze and Silver awards

are the first two levels of the NJAA Recognition Program that began in 1972. Junior Angus breeders must apply for the awards, then meet point requirements in many areas of participation before receiving

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the honors. Applicants are evaluated in areas of junior Angus association activities and leadership, participation in showmanship, contests and shows, using performance testing to improve their herd, and their progress in producing and merchandising Angus cattle.

From Brazoria, Texas, **Olivia Fine** attends Angleton Christian High School. She is Michael Fine's 17-year-old daughter. Fine is a member of the NJAA and the Texas Junior Angus Association (TJAA). She has served her state as royalty and currently serves as director.

Fine has shown at the local and state level. She has participated in the Raising the Bar conference and attended Angus Convention.

From Windthorst, Texas, **Brantley Humpert** is the 13-year-old son of Misty Wolf. He attends Midway ISD and is a member of both the NJAA and the TJAA. He has served his state association previously as director.

Humpert has shown at the local, state and national levels. At the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), he participated in the extemporaneous public speaking, team sales, public speaking, quiz bowl, photography, poster, graphic design, creative writing, Skill-a-thon and livestock judging contests and the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Cook-off.

He also has participated in the mentoring program.

Daniel Brenlen Humpert is 14 years old. The Windthorst, Texas, native is Brantley Humpert's brother and currently attends Midway ISD.

He is a member of the NJAA and the TJAA. Daniel has participated in shows at the local, state and national level. He has also attended the NJAS. There, he competed in the

extemporaneous public speaking, team sales, quiz bowl, photography, poster, creative writing, public speaking, Skill-a-thon and livestock judging contests and the Cook-off. Additionally, he participated in the mentoring program and has received a scholarship.

Along with attending the Angus Convention, Daniel has participated in the LEAD (Leaders Engaged in Angus Development) and Raising the Bar conferences.

Ava Leibfried is a 17-year-old from Hazel Green, Wis. The daughter of Nick and Jessica Leibfried attends Cuba City High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Wisconsin Junior Angus Association. She has served her state as secretary and is currently the chairman.

Leibfried has shown at the national level. At the NJAS, she has participated in the mentoring program and quiz bowl contest and served as a voting delegate. She has also participated in the LEAD conference and submitted weight data to the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) program.

State Center, Iowa, local, **Avery Mather**, is the 20-year-old daughter of Joe and Allison Mather. She attends Iowa State University, studying agricultural business. She is a member of the NJAA and the Iowa Junior Angus Association (IJAA), where she has served her state as director, second vice president and president.

Mather has shown at the national level. Along with the Cook-off, she has participated in the extemporaneous public speaking contest and served as a voting delegate at the NJAS. She has also attended the Raising the Bar conference four times.

Mississippi Angus Ass'n Annual Meeting, May 6, Raymond



Juniors were presented with the Mississippi Angus Ass'n Scholarship award. Pictured (from left) are C.W. Franks, presenting; Claire-Mann Taylor, Tishomingo, recipient; and Kristopher Beatty, Pulaski, recipient.

Washington Junior Angus Field Day, May 14, Ellensburg



Winning overall showmanship (from left) are Hadlee Hanson, Ellensburg, Wash., junior champion; Keely Thayer, Ellensburg, Wash., reserve junior calf champion; Cora Clift, Ellensburg, Wash., senior champion; Sydney Rylaarsdam-Schoo, Grangeville, Idaho, reserve senior champion; Sydney Dodge, Pendleton, Ore., intermediate champion; and Kaine Geddes, Connell, Wash., reserve intermediate champion.

Editor's note: Photo by Hannah Muhlbeier Photography, courtesy of American Angus Association.

Western Regional Junior Angus Show, April 15, Reno, Nev.



Winning top honors in senior showmanship (from left) are Mary Wood, presenting; Kyli Kraft, Fort Collins, Colo., champion; and Madalyn Rohr, Elbert, Colo., reserve champion.



Winning top honors in intermediate showmanship (from left) are Mary Wood, presenting; Fallon Gohr, Madras, Ore., champion; and Sophia Veenendaal, Kingsburg, Calif., reserve champion.



Winning top honors in junior B showmanship (from left) are Mary Wood, presenting; Tymber Billman, Rigby, Idaho, champion; and Kelsey Vietheer, Cottonwood, Calif., reserve champion.



Winning top honors in junior A showmanship (from left) are Mary Wood, presenting; Case Conley, Sulphur, Okla., champion; and Kyrstyn Abell, Redmond, Okla., reserve champion.



Winning top honors in peewee showmanship are Jackson Conley (left), Sulphur, Okla., and Paisley Crawford (right), Atascadero, Calif.



Jayne Dickerson (right), Paradise, Kan., won premier junior breeder and premier exhibitor. Also pictured is Mary Wood, Miss American Angus, presenting.



Receiving the Western States Angus Auxiliary scholarships (from left) are Carla Malson, Western States Angus Auxiliary, presenting; Cindy Kinder, presenting; John Kinder, Hagerman, Idaho, Western States Angus Auxiliary Scholarship recipient; Sydney Dodge, Pendleton, Ore., Western States Perpetuating Memorial scholarship recipient; and Tarisa Toth, presenting.



Cadence Bass, Nampa, Idaho, received the Western States Angus Auxiliary and Nugget Hotel Casino Education scholarship. Pictured (from left) are Cindy Kinder, presenting; Cadence Bass, recipient; Carla Malson, Western States Angus Auxiliary, presenting; and Amanda Flangas, Nugget Hotel Casino executive vice president of sales, presenting.



Kady Vejraska, Omak, Wash., was crowned the Western States Angus queen.

Editor's note: Photos by Katie Colyer, courtesy of American Angus Association.