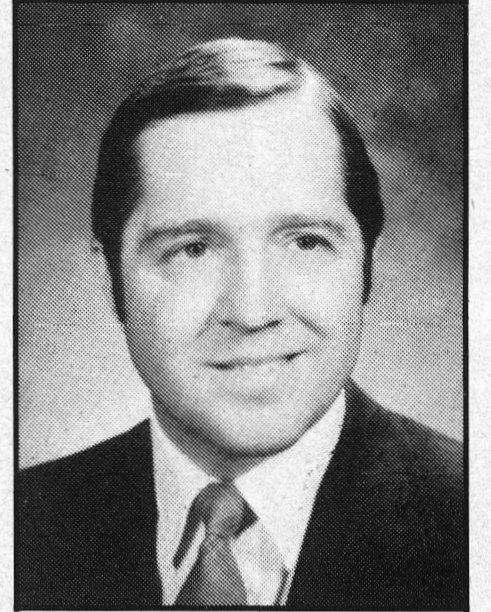


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The 1988 National Junior Angus Show just completed in Springfield, Mo. was another great junior event, one of the largest ever held, and with all the excitement, enthusiasm, and camaraderie that have come to characterize this show, and the American Angus Association's junior activities program.

It is always heartwarming and encouraging to see so many families working together. I know our future is in good hands when I see how the delegates to the National Junior Angus Assn. meeting take their job seriously, and also when I see the quality of the young people they elect, year after year, to the Junior Board.

The show is a little like the overworked iceberg simile. But it is true the National Junior Angus Show is the most visible part of a junior activities program that extends down to the very core of the Angus business—young people and their families on farms and ranches across the United States.

The Association's interest in youth began in the first decade this century when the Association, through its four field representatives, worked to establish youth heifer clubs, and interest young people in becoming involved in the registered Angus business.

It all began in earnest, however, in 1956 when the Board of Directors authorized a junior activities department and hired a full time director. From that point on programs were developed that not only influenced the Angus business, but youth activities in most other breed associations as well. National Junior Angus Shows and Showmanship contests, for example, originated in the American Angus Assn. junior activities department, but are common to most other breed associations junior programs.

Since that time thousands of young men and women have learned beef cattle management and showmanship, and developed their leadership and communications skills through junior Angus projects and junior Angus organizations.

Each year more young people join the Junior Angus Assn. than any other breed's youth organization. This involvement starts when parents buy a heifer for one of their children so they can participate in a 4-H or FFA organization or be a part of a local or state junior Angus Assn. It may be years before they even consider taking part in a national or even regional Junior Angus Show.

By the same token it takes years of experience and participation in local showmanship contests and Angus association activities before a youngster acquires the experience and maturity to win the right to represent his or her state in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest, or to be a delegate to the National Junior Angus Assn. So without the many youngsters who take part in these local activities, and without their parents and junior advisors, what goes on at the National would not be possible.

There is probably no way that we can over emphasize the importance of grass roots junior activities—all those things that are below the iceberg tip which is our National Junior Angus Show.

So even if you do not have children or grandchildren that can benefit directly from the programs, I urge you to take an active interest in junior Angus activities on a local level. Support youngsters just getting into the Angus business. Make sure they get the best quality heifer that they can afford, that they have the best management advice that you can provide, that they join their local junior Angus association and eventually that the heifer gets bred to the best possible bull in the breed.

Everyone who has any interest in junior Angus activities should attend a National Junior Angus Show at least once. But after we have marveled at this event, it is good to remember that it all begins back at home with our grassroots youth organizations, and the Association members who encourage, support and sustain them.

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