



Through the Camera's Eye

Angus cattle and farm life across the nation are shared through photos at the 2002 NJAS.

Story and photos by **Corinne Blender**



► **Above:** From left, Christy Couch, manager of *Homestead* magazine; Julie Olson, editor of the *Charolais Journal*; and Rick Cozzitorto, food animal product manager for Agri Labs, judged 272 photo entries that depicted the color and life of Angus cattle or breeders, farms, ranches, shows, sales or scenery from across the nation.

► **Top of page:** Photos taken by National Junior Angus Association members were on display at the 2002 National Junior Angus Show in Milwaukee, Wis. A new division, around the farm or ranch, was added to this year's contest, increasing the number of entries compared to the previous year.

I imagine capturing all the color, life and beauty found along a trail stretching more than 3,000 miles across the United States. National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members entered 272 photos that captured just that while depicting Angus cattle and farm life at its best in the 2002 NJAA/*Angus Journal* Photo Contest.

Categories of Angus cattle, landscape, people and “around the farm or ranch” were judged by Julie Olson, editor of the *Charolais Journal*; Rick Cozzitorto, food animal product manager for Agri Labs; and Christy Couch, manager of *Homestead* magazine, prior to the 2002 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). The colorful entries were on display at the NJAS.

Taking pictures has not only brought more color to the NJAS, it has also allowed junior members who aren't able to bring cattle or even attend the show to participate in the weeklong event.

“My dad brought up two years ago about how since I never had any cattle around the national show that I should do a poster, or picture, or something. So, I decided just to do pictures,” Kody Cassady, Mahomet, Ill., says. Cassady swept the junior division in only his second year of entering the contest. His entry, “Breakfast Drink,” claimed overall junior division winner.

“The first one that got overall champion — the one with the calf in the stream — was pretty cool. I was trying to take pictures of a lot of calves in the stream and that one actually stood still, so that helped a lot,” Cassady says.

Even though showing Angus cattle is the predominant event at the NJAS, the photography contest opens the door for youth to experience Angus in a new light.

“Everything is different

through a lens than it is with your eye,” says Wravenna Phipps, Kearney, Neb. “The hardest part is trying to decide how far up you want your zoom and that sort of thing to really get the picture that you are seeing in your mind right when you are taking it.”

Phipps won the overall intermediate division with her picture titled, “Wow, My First Heifer Calf!” This was her first year to compete in the NJAS photo contest, but photography was introduced to her at a very young age by her grandmother.

“The picture I took of the little girl — I guess that she was so excited to show this little calf off,” Phipps says, adding that she tried to show how excited the girl was. “I think the picture did that.”

For many juniors there is more to taking pictures than getting the mechanics right. The photos share something about each of them that may not be expressed any other way.

“I have learned that photography is more than just the pictures. It is a way to express myself and to define moments in my life,” Julie Sims, Booneville, Miss., says.

Sims entered all black-and-white photographs. She not only won the senior division title, but also the grand champion overall award with her photo, titled “One-Woman Man!,” of children sitting in a barn window.

Advice from junior pros

For an 11-year-old, Cassady has the basic elements of taking pictures down pat. He says he has learned most of his camera know-how from his father and by simply practicing by trial and error.

“My dad teaches me a lot, too, about it. He taught me a lot last year, and that helped me this year,” Cassady says. “It's fun because he teaches me stuff, and then I do it by taking the pictures.”

Cassady says there are some important things to keep in mind when taking advantage of a good photo opportunity.

“Get the lighting right is one. Don’t have shadows in the picture. Try to put the animal you are taking the picture of in the center of the camera. Try to focus your best on it so that you can get a clearer picture. Try to get a lot of detail in. That’s what I do,” Cassady says.

Cassady and Phipps agree that getting a picture right doesn’t happen by just carrying the camera around on a neck strap.

“If you see one certain thing that you want to get a good picture of, you can’t just take one and hope that it turns out,” Phipps says. “My tip would be take several and then, hopefully, in one of those you will get the attitude of what you are wanting to bring out.”

A photo can show as much about the attitude of the subject as it can about the photographer.

“Taking pictures of subjects that interest you is the most important aspect to remember when taking pictures,” Sims says. “Other information that I have learned is to take pictures when you feel like it. Be sure to get close to the subject and take pictures of people when they are in action. Proper light is very important; use a flash if unsure. A little note is to take pictures between two hours after sunrise and two hours before sunset. Black-and-white film is the best to use because it is clearer and lasts longer.”

Catch the excitement

Phipps says the best thing about photography is simply the excitement of taking the pictures and hoping they will turn out like she envisions.

“It’s kind of the heat of the moment type of thing. You take the pictures, and in the back of your mind you’re sitting there thinking how you want them to turn out and how it is going to look in maybe a certain spot,” she adds.

How she sees pictures now, she says, is just as important as how she will see them in the future.

“They bring back a lot of memories. There’s something in the phrase that, ‘A picture is worth a thousand words.’ And it is really true,” Phipps says. “Looking back, my mom’s family used to show quite a bit, so we compare pictures as far as what things looked like when she was on the show circuit and what things look like now for us.”

Looking at the photos brings back a lot of memories and creates a bonding time between mother and daughter, she adds. “If you choose to talk about pictures that were taken, you have a chance to learn more and find out stuff. A lot of history is brought out through the pictures.”

Just start shooting

Being a photographer doesn’t mean you have to spend a lot of money. Sims says she enjoys using the simplest to the most expensive cameras and comparing the differences.

“I would advise other juniors who are just beginning to take pictures to buy an inexpensive 35mm camera with a good flash and a zoom.

To begin taking pictures, seek advice from a professional or try watching



► The judges of the 2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest wrote comments about the top three photographs in each of the junior, intermediate and senior divisions. Good lighting, sharp focus and Angus content captured the judges’ eyes.

photography videos from your local library,” Sims says.

Phipps says entering the contest doesn’t mean you have to get a lot of money tied up in the process — it’s more important to enjoy yourself. All the contest winners used Wal-Mart for their film processing.

Taking the pictures can be the easy part, Phipps continues.

“The hardest thing is deciding what category to put them in. If you figured out what they (the judges) are looking for ... in those categories, then you can specifically look for what you want to take to fall into there,” Phipps says. “I just take pictures and wait until after they are developed and then decide where I want to enter them for these types of contests.”

Memories may never fade

The junior show is just one event once a year. Many times the awards won each year are forgotten and replaced by others down the road. But the photos that remain will always be reminders of the past.

“Documenting history allows us to remember fond moments and those who were important to us at a certain point in our lives,” Sims says. “Pictures allow us to document farm history, maybe a favorite cow or calf, or

the beauty of its age and how it has changed. Having old pictures of friends and events that occurred in our lives gives us the opportunity to share these memories with others and, maybe someday, with our children.”

Photography is an art form that everyone can participate in.

“I would encourage everybody that if they haven’t participated, it is actually a lot of fun. Hopefully what they can learn from me is that this doesn’t have to be your focus all of the time,” Phipps says. “Don’t think, ‘What am I going to take for a picture to enter in the Angus contest.’” Instead, she advises taking pictures at and of things you like to do.

“If you like the picture, just enter it and see what happens,” she adds.

Every photo has its place amongst the color and history of Angus cattle throughout the year. The photos hung at the NJAS certainly attested to that.

“None of the pictures the judges can say is that terrible because in somebody’s mind, that was a good picture,” Phipps says. “If it is something that they are going to keep and remember, then that’s all that matters.”



2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest Results



Junior Division
Angus Cattle

1st
place



"Baby, It's Cold Outside"



Klaire Jorgensen, Exeter, Neb.

"American Black Angus"



Jess Roussel, Gramercy, La.

2nd
place



"No One Crosses Over Our Culvert"



Ashley Kuehn, Durant, Iowa

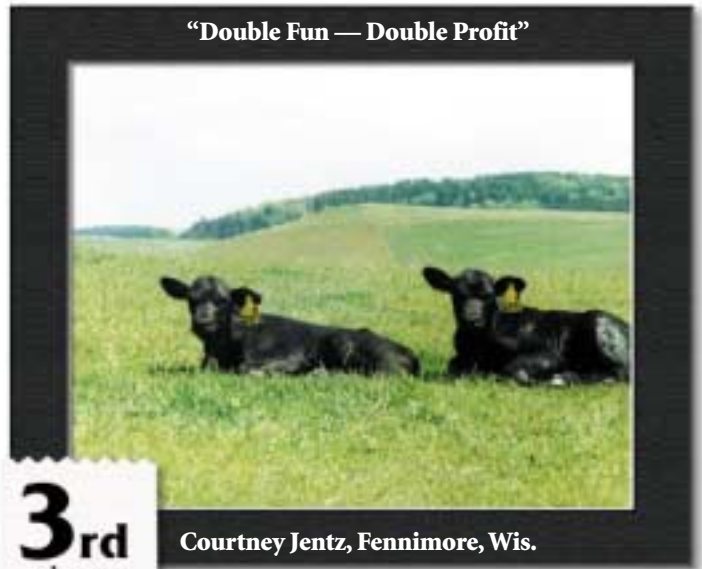
3rd
place



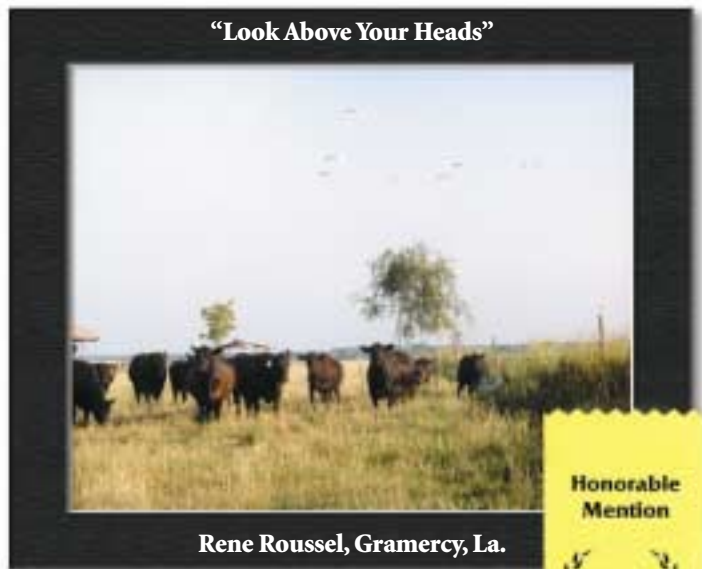
**Junior Division
Landscape**



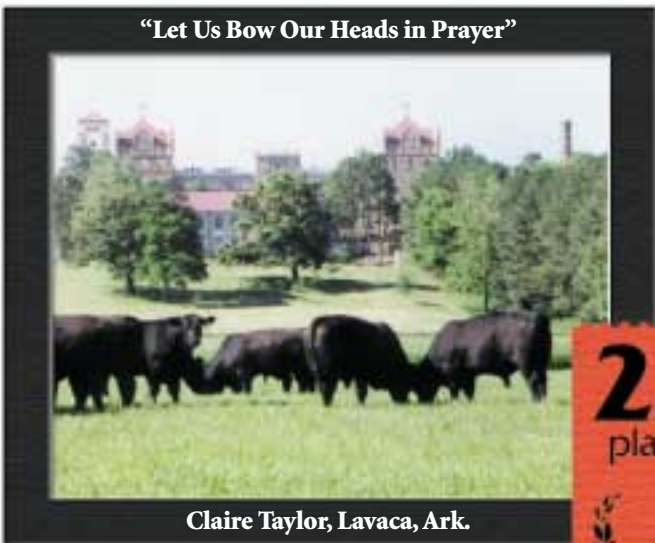
**1st
place**



**3rd
place**



**Honorable
Mention**



**2nd
place**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 224

2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest Results


CONTINUED FROM PAGE 223

Junior Division Around the Farm or Ranch

1st place
Overall
Junior Division


1st place

"Breakfast Drink"



Kody Cassidy, Mahomet, Ill.

"God Bless the U.S.A."



Robbie Parker, Idalia, Colo.

3rd place



"Icy Wonderland"




Kassandra Pfeiffer, Orlando, Okla.

Honorable Mention



"That Old Truck"

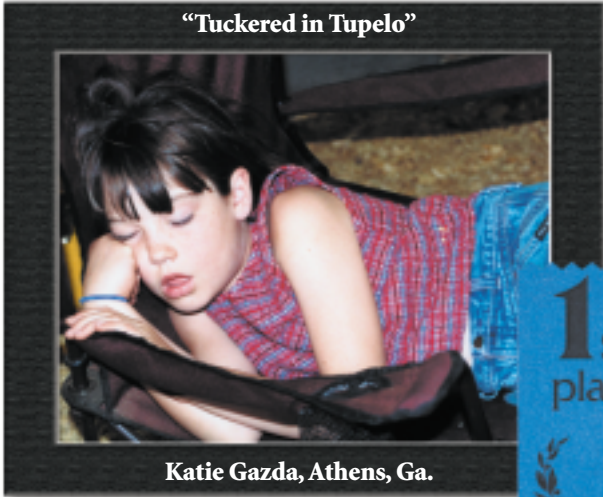


Rene Roussel, Gramercy, La.

2nd place



Junior Division
People



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2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest Results

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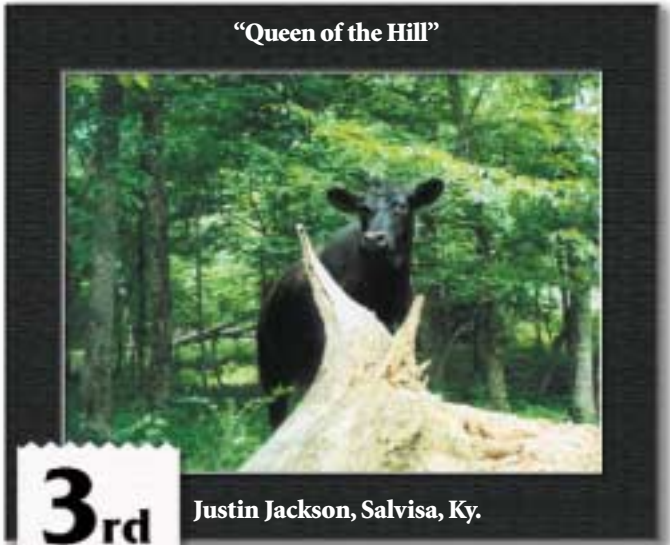
Intermediate Division Angus Cattle

1st
place

"You Found My Hiding Place"



Garrett Lampe, Scott City, Kan.



3rd
place

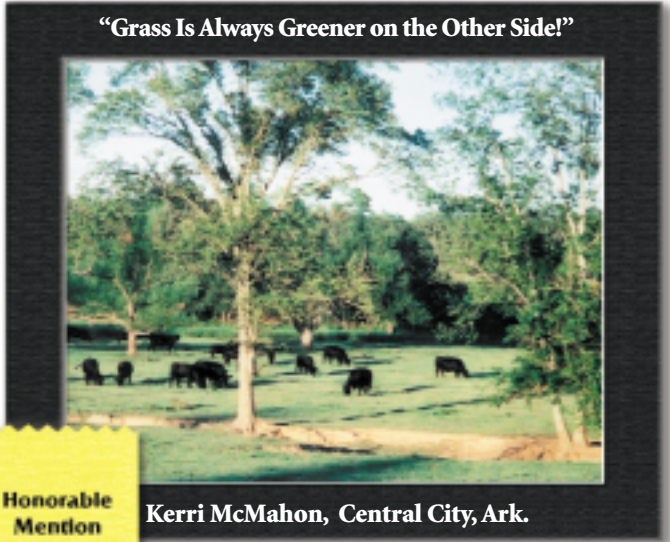
Justin Jackson, Salvisa, Ky.

2nd
place

"I'm Glad the Snow Is Over"



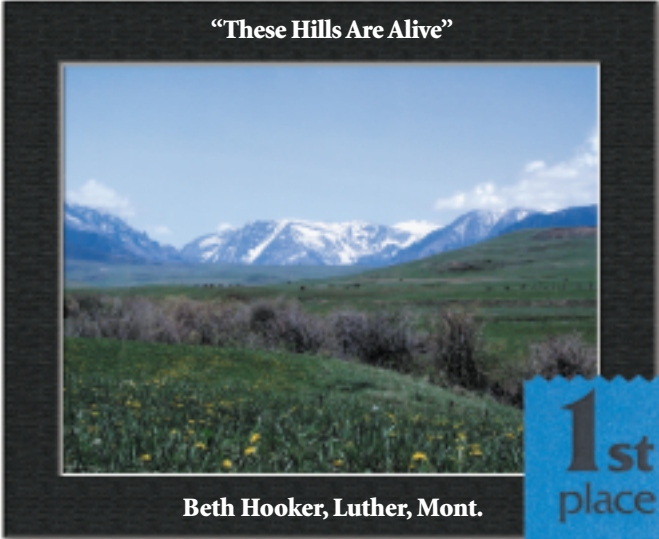
Clayton Lampe, Scott City, Kan.



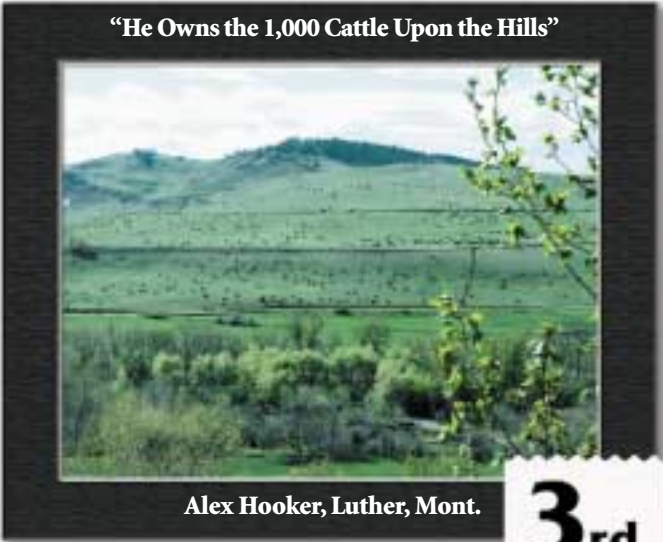
Honorable
Mention

Kerri McMahon, Central City, Ark.

Intermediate Division
Landscape

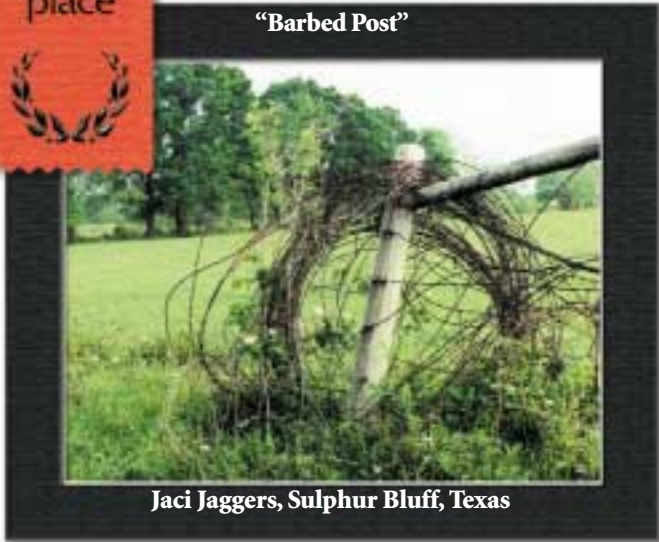


1st
place

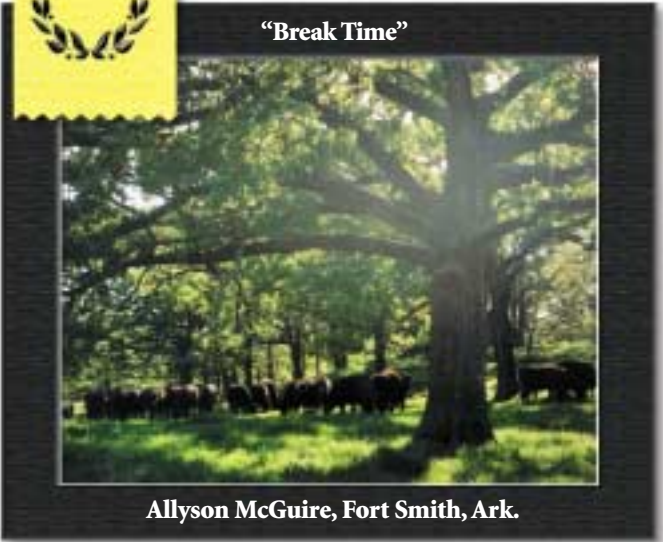


3rd
place

2nd
place



Honorable
Mention



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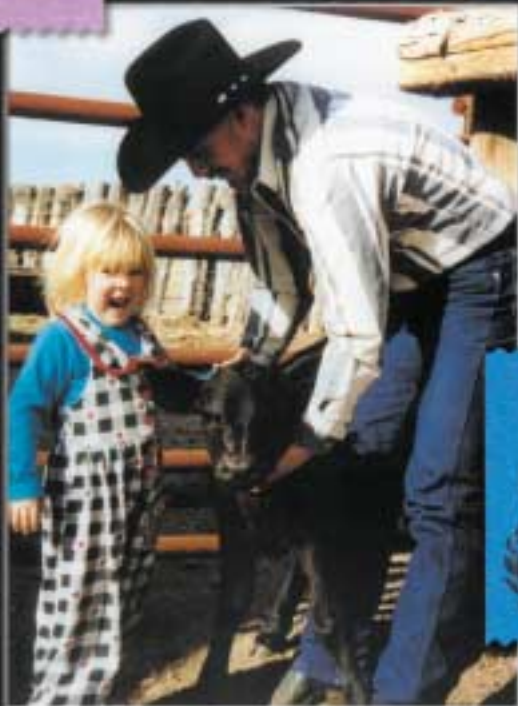
2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest Results

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 227

Intermediate Division People

1st
place
Overall
Intermediate
Division

"Wow, My First Heifer Calf!"



Wravenna Phipps, Kearney, Neb.

1st
place

3rd
place

"Our Beautiful Arkansas Princess"



Haley Rieff, Bentonville, Ark.

Honorable
Mention

"Clayton"



Garrett Lampe, Scott City, Kan.

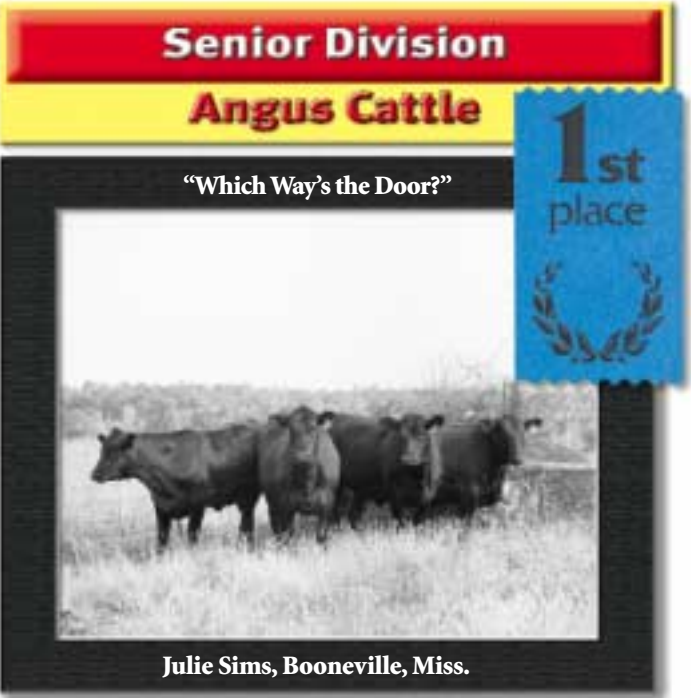
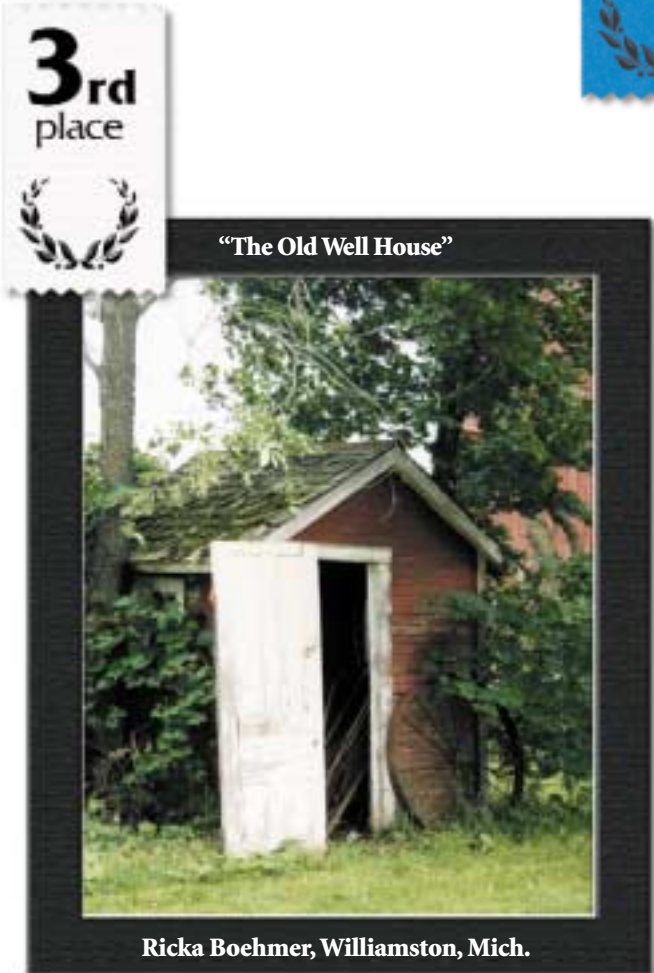
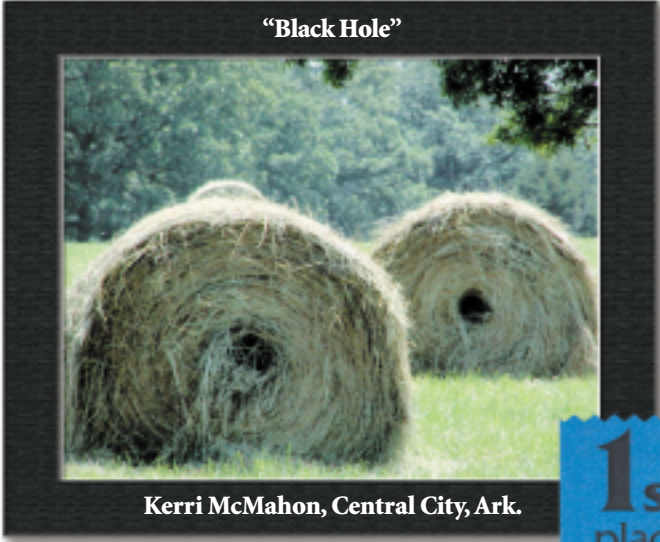
2nd
place

"Looking Back"



Reed Parker, Idalia, Colo.

Intermediate Division
Around the Farm or Ranch

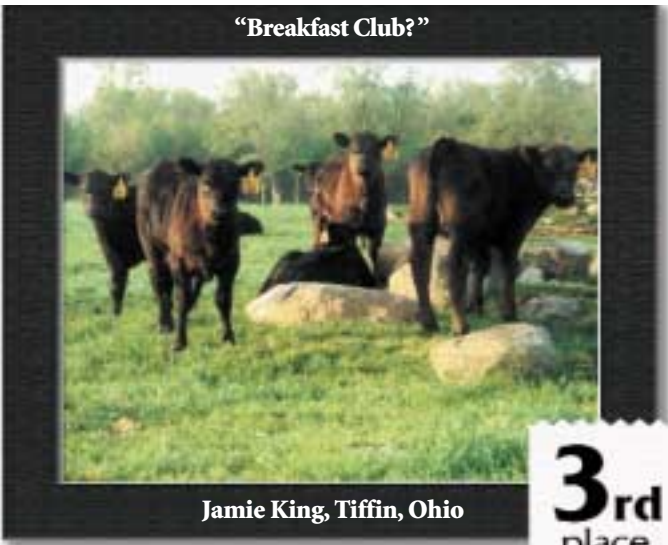


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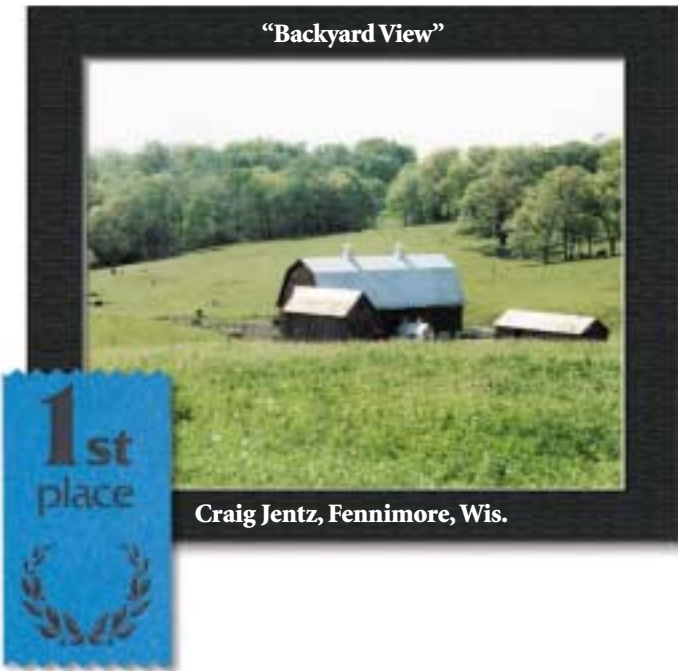
2002 NJAA/Angus Journal Photo Contest Results

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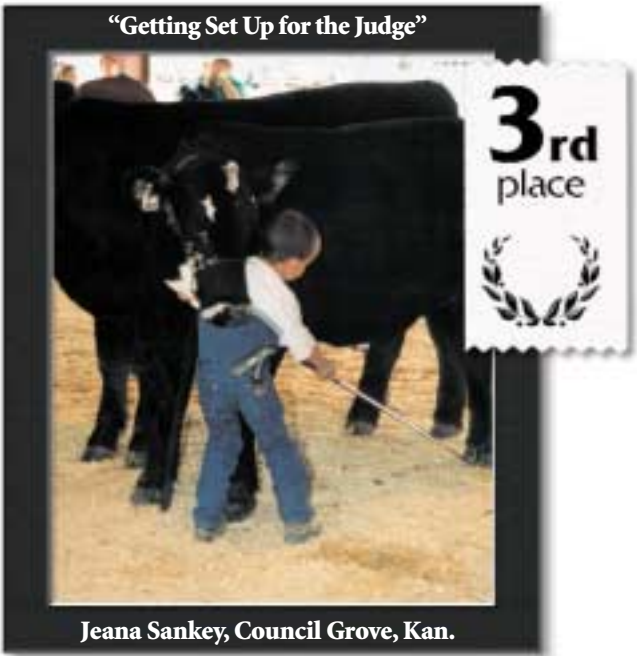
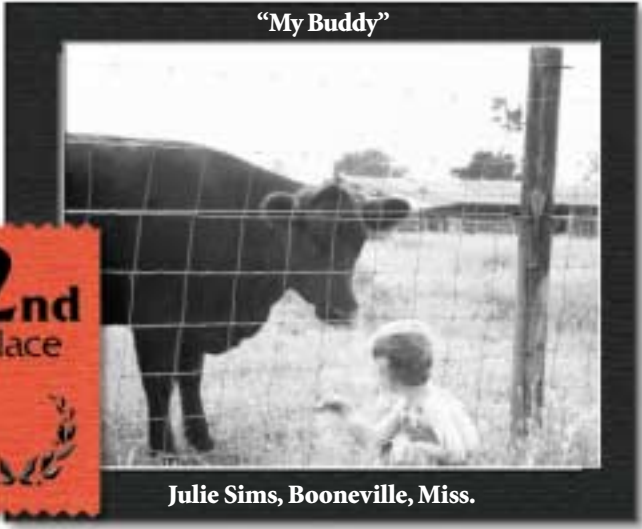
Senior Division Angus Cattle CONTINUED



Senior Division Landscape



**Senior Division
People**



**Senior Division
Around the Farm or Ranch**

