



Teaming up to Raise Dollars

Michigan junior Angus members organize four fund-raisers and win the first project of the year contest.

Story by **Courtney Wimmer**; photos courtesy of **Michigan Junior Angus Association members**

Raising enough money within a few months to feed exhibitors and their families at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) may seem like a difficult goal for a state junior Angus association. Active members of the Michigan Junior Angus Association (MJAA) — all 25 of them — would not agree.

Not only did they help provide a hot breakfast for more than 1,100 attendees of the 2002 NJAS in Milwaukee, Wis., they earned enough money to support many other MJAA activities. In the end, they raised more than \$4,800.

Their dedication and hard work was recognized at the 2002 NJAS when they were named the winners of the first project of the year contest. The contest made its debut at the 2002 NJAS with six state junior Angus associations submitting displays, pamphlets and descriptions of their projects.

Michigan juniors Renee Thelen, Saline, and Jessica Scrimger, Clifford, served as co-chairs for the Michigan project,

“Teaming up to Raise Dollars.” Thelen says the Michigan juniors just wanted to help the Wisconsin juniors make the 2002 NJAS a success.

“We were asked by Mrs. Mindemann of Wisconsin if we would be interested in sponsoring a meal, and our advisors brought to our attention that the Wisconsin association isn’t much smaller in size in terms of active members than we are,” Thelen says.

“We know ourselves that we

don’t have a facility to host a national show,” she continues. “In discussion at a board meeting, we decided we were going to sponsor a meal and work together to raise money and help them out, because we can’t do it ourselves.”

To reach their goal, Michigan juniors organized four fund-raisers. They sold calf key rings, parked cars and collected admission fees at an art show, conducted a dollar auction and promoted the sale of Angus embryos.

Ryan Sweeney, 2001–2002 National Junior Angus Association Board vice chairman and Michigan native, suggested the Michigan juniors enter the fund-raising activities in the project of the year contest.

“We decided that we had done four different fund-raisers — all for a cause other than ourselves, and we thought it would be a good idea to enter the contest,” Thelen says.

The contest also provided an opportunity for Michigan juniors to show other state junior Angus associations what *they* could do as an association.

“Since we are a smaller state, we don’t get as much publicity as some of the larger associations where there are more members involved,” Thelen adds.

The display at the NJAS provided an opportunity to show the teamwork of the MJAA, Scrimger says. “I hope other associations could see the power of a small association that comes from working together.”

► In addition to collecting admission fees, MJAA members parked cars at the art show. The two-day fund-raiser earned \$1,200 for the junior association.



► Above: Bundled up to stay warm, Michigan Junior Angus Association members collect admission fees during a two-day art show in Ann Arbor, Mich. Twelve juniors and 11 parents assisted with the fund-raiser.

The fund-raisers

The first fund-raiser the juniors initiated was the sale of Angus key rings.

“We thought they were a really cute idea and brainstormed a little and decided we would sell them at different shows,” Thelen says. “It ended up being really successful, because people from other breeds would buy them and paint them different colors.”

This fund-raiser allowed younger junior members to get involved and walk around at state shows, private treaty functions or different cattle events, selling the key rings. Thelen says these younger members were often the top salespeople.

The project, which raised \$810, is something the association continues to do to raise funds for other projects.

The second fund-raiser was a dollar auction. Before the auction begins, bidders trade in their larger bills for an equal amount of \$1 bills. A random amount of time is allotted for each item up for bid. As a person bids, a dollar is taken from him or her. Whoever gave the last dollar when time runs out gets to keep the item.

“This is a nice way our breeders can spend \$20 on the different auction items and maybe not end up with anything, but still be supporting us without a large financial commitment,” Thelen says. The dollar auction raised \$430 for the junior association.

The Michigan juniors raised \$1,200 during two cold days in March parking cars and taking admission for an art show. The original agreement was for \$500 per day, but because they did such a good job they received a \$200 bonus. The activity also allowed juniors to visit with each other as they warmed up in the basement of the local Farm Bureau office. Parents helped organize who would bring lunch and drinks.

The final fund-raiser was an Angus embryo auction at the 2002 Michigan Beef Expo Angus Sale. Two Michigan Angus farms, Thistledeew and Bordner Angus, offered to



►Above: Two Michigan Angus farms, Thistledeew and Bordner Angus, donated a portion of their embryo sales at the 2002 Michigan Beef Expo Angus Sale to the MJAA. The donation raised more than \$2,400 to help sponsor breakfast at the 2002 National Junior Angus Show in Milwaukee, Wis.



►Right: Angus key rings were a popular item at state shows, private treaty functions and different cattle events. This project, which raised \$810, is something the MJAA continues to do to raise funds.

donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale of their embryos to the junior program. This generous donation earned more than \$2,400 for the MJAA.

The benefits

The MJAA was able to raise more than enough funds to fulfill their commitment to help sponsor the breakfast at the NJAS. The remaining profit was used to produce handbooks for

all their officers, directors and advisors and to provide two socials at state shows where the junior association provided meals for show exhibitors and families.

The MJAA allocated funds for their Cook-Off teams, scrapbook, project of the year and team sales to help the state be more competitive at the NJAS. They purchased a tabletop display to promote the Angus



►Michigan juniors entered four fund-raisers into the project of the year contest at the 2002 NJAS. Project displays had to include pamphlets, a three-ring binder and a display board.

breed and their state association. Awards for the Michigan Junior Angus Preview Show were also purchased using the profit from the four fund-raisers.

For many members of the MJAA, this project earned much more than a monetary reward. It was an opportunity to set a goal, develop a plan, reach it and witness the success of teamwork. The wealth of knowledge, friendship and achievement the Michigan juniors gained is worth more than any amount of money.

“My favorite part of the project was to see everyone’s enthusiasm as we reached our goals,” Scrimger says. “The fund-raising projects gave our group a common goal to work at together. As we became successful, our juniors were able to see the power of teamwork. Our project definitely brought us closer as an association.”

