



Up Front

► by **John Crouch**, executive vice president

Junior show a success

The heat was stifling during the weekend and Monday prior to the opening ceremonies of the 2002 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) at Wisconsin State Fair Park in Milwaukee. Then came the storm.

Extraordinary event

Morning broke to an overcast day with the temperature in the high 60s. As the sun peeked through the clouds later in the morning, it was obvious spirits were high. Your executive officer has attended many shows in the past half-century, but none wherein exhibitors, participants and observers were more pleasant. While I was not able to stay the entire week because of commitments at the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Meeting and Research Symposium, there was enough time to observe the function of this extraordinary event.

In an earlier column I encouraged Angus breeders to make a concerted effort to include the NJAS in their summer plans. Those who did were certainly rewarded with an enhanced perception of the value of this event.

The polite urgency of those in competition, not only in the show, but also in the seemingly endless additional events,

was and continues to be an inspiration not only to us as adults, but to other young persons in attendance. It is an inspiration to excel, to push out boundaries, to dream and explore new galaxies. Youth are encouraged to want, perhaps someday, to become a member of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board of Directors and wear a green jacket.

While there, several opportunities were presented to participate in discussions regarding the future of the Angus breed and the beef industry. Controversial issues, including programs within the Association to record and document information on animals with at least 50% Angus blood, were brought to my attention by several breeders in attendance. Much to my surprise, those conversations were very pleasant and positive with respect to the American Angus Association's expanding its horizons.

Progress

As I recall the activities surrounding the

first National Junior Angus Heifer Show in 1969 in Columbia, Mo., 101 heifers were shown; this year, some 33 years later, we participated in a multi-activity, weeklong event in Milwaukee where 550 exhibitors showed 950 animals.

The progress our junior organization has made during those years boggles my mind, in a good way. It seems those wearing the green jackets never got the message that it couldn't be done. They expanded their horizons, sort of like our forefathers did in 1776 and many times thereafter. They understood the changing needs of the industry and the people they served.

Focus on efficiency

The second event I attended that week saw some 680 beef industry people from 40 states and seven foreign countries descend upon Omaha, Neb. The theme of the 34th Annual Meeting and Research Symposium of BIF was "Focus on Efficiency," and indeed they did.

From a humble beginning in 1968, the BIF meeting has become the only such meeting in the world wherein representatives from academia, the research community, the media, producers, breed associations, artificial insemination (AI) and genomics companies, the packing industry, the feeding

AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997
Office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Central)
phone: (816) 383-5100; fax: (816) 233-9703
e-mail: angus@angus.org ■ home page: www.angus.org

OFFICERS

Leroy Baldwin, president, 3660 N.W. 56th St., Ocala, FL 34475 ■ **John Crouch**, executive vice president, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; jcrouch@angus.org ■ **Steve Brooks**, vice president, 7206 146th Ave. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623; brookssa@pop.ctctel.com ■ **Joe Elliott**, treasurer, 1291 Stroudsville Rd., Adams, TN 37010; resjoe@bellsouth.net

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Terms Expiring in 2003 — **Keith Arntzen**, 41 Arntzen Lane, Hilger, MT 59451; karntzen@ttc-cmc.net ■ **Minnie Lou Bradley**, 15591 CR K, Memphis, TX 79245-5003; bradley3@srcaccess.net ■ **Paul Hill**, 11503 SR 554, Bidwell, OH 45614; champion@zoomnet.net ■ **Abbie Nelson**, 12211 Pear Lane, Wilton, CA 95693; 5starangus@compuserve.com ■ **Dave Smith**, 1601 N. CR 200E, Greensburg, IN 47240; dsmith@stewartseeds.com

Terms Expiring in 2004 — **Ben Eggers**, 3939 S. Clark, Mexico, MO 65265; eggers@sockets.net ■ **Mark Gardiner**, Rt. 1, Box 292, Ashland, KS 67831; gar@ucom.net ■ **Jot Hartley**, PO Box 553, Vinita, OK 74301; jothartley@hotmail.com ■ **Jay King**, 28287 Woodside Drive, Rock Falls, IL 61071-9556; saukvalley@wmccinc.com ■ **Richard (Dick) Tokach**, 5520 CR 81, Saint Anthony, ND 58566; rctokach@westriv.com

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For a complete listing of officers, refer to page 66.

REGIONAL MANAGERS—Refer to page 114.

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For a CAB staff listing, refer to page 104.

▣ UP FRONT

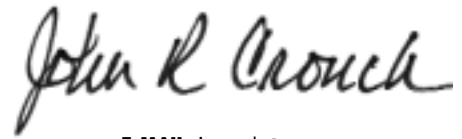
industry and industry affiliates all come together for three days of discussions. At times the presentations seemed to be filled with endless charts, tables and formulas. At the end of the day, the ideas presented by researchers, both seasoned veterans and fresh new scientists, represented new methods of analyzing and interpreting data. Genetic values for elusive, hard-to-measure traits like tenderness, cow efficiency and improved reproduction are within our grasp.

Here again, like those wearing the green jackets, these researchers never got the message that they couldn't do it. Our horizons have been expanded and the entire beef industry will benefit.

Our mission

Periodically, it is good to review our mission statement, which reads, "To provide programs, services, technology and leadership to enhance the genetics of the Angus breed, broaden its influence within the beef industry, and expand the market for superior-tasting, high-quality Angus beef worldwide."

That's America at its best. We are either advancing or retreating. There is no such thing as maintaining the status quo. Just like the organizations and events of the past, the American Angus Association and its members must continue to advance.



E-MAIL: jcrouch@angus.org