

by Julie Mais
Editor



From where I stood

Writing a story, and bringing a scene to life, starts with observation. Tuning into your senses and, in turn, describing what you saw, heard, tasted, touched or smelled, can help describe a setting — taking your reader along with you.

This past July, I had the wonderful opportunity to observe the greatest Angus youth event of the year. From the ringside, behind a camera and even sitting at a judge's table, I felt I had the best seat in Louisville, Ky., as Angus families descended on the Bluegrass State July 14-20, for the 2019 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Here are a few things I took in:

Five senses

I grabbed a seat in the stands of Broadbent Arena overlooking the iconic green shavings. A mural of Churchill Downs set the stage for "Win, Place and Showing for the Purple" Opening Ceremonies. I was sitting in stadium seats near Angus families as the lights came down, and the spotlight illuminated each state group as they were introduced — representing the nearly 800 youth prepared to compete in shows and contests in the days to follow.

Is there really any better smell than a show barn? Walking through the stalls and taking in the tantalizing mixture of shavings, hay, feed and cattle hair-care products in the air was like being home to me. I was instantly taken back to 10 similar summers I spent with my family traveling across the country to junior nationals.

When Anne Patton Schubert called me in late spring to ask if I would

help judge the American Angus Auxiliary-sponsored All-American Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) Cook-Off, I knew I was in for a treat. And I was right. With each tri-tip roast recipe I tasted, my senses ignited. The meals prepared by those young Angus juniors were delicious, but I was even more impressed with their knowledge of the CAB brand, their courage to prepare and present a skit and enthusiasm for the beef industry.


This year I was privileged to attend the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Annual Meeting. Young delegates from each state gave up their Tuesday evening to hear from National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) candidates, ask thoughtful questions and make decisions for the NJAA. The passion and knowledge I heard from each candidate gave me confidence in the future of the Angus breed and the cattle industry. We truly are in good hands.

While I didn't get my hands on a heifer, I did get my hands on a camera. With my Nikon over my shoulder, I walked the stalls and took in contests. Holding that heavy lens up with my left hand, and clicking away with my right pointer finger, I captured the memories so often shared among youth who participate in the NJAS — a hug from a parent, tears of joy, a proud smile.

In this issue

This September issue, "In Good Hands," is dedicated to the next generation. It's only fitting we included nearly 80 pages covering the NJAS, an event long-known for helping youth develop skills for in and out of the show ring. We also share stories and management tips for Angus breeders both young and seasoned.

In addition to traveling to shows, the staff in Angus Media and the *Angus Journal* staffs have had a busy summer. On Aug. 12, we welcomed Brett Spader as our next Angus Media president. Read more about him on page 198 and in an upcoming issue.

Our team was also well-represented at the Livestock Publications Council (LPC) and American Agricultural Editors' Association (AAEA) contests in July. *Angus Journal*, *Angus Beef Bulletin* and the American Angus Association staff brought home numerous awards, which we will detail for you in the next issue. I have, however, penned this column for the first-place association publication in the 2019 LPC general excellence category. 

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie".

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