



► The junior Angus members who attended this year's LEAD Conference take time from their packed schedule of industry speakers, leadership workshops and tours to pose for a group photo at KMK Acres, located near Thompsons Station, Tenn.

Junior Angus Members Are 'A Cut Above the Rest'

122 junior members attended the 2001 LEAD Conference in Nashville.

Story & photos by *Shelia Stannard*

Each year, hundreds of young, hopeful, talented people journey to Nashville, Tenn., to cut demos and break into the music business. Recently, 122 young, talented people converged on "Music City" to make their break as leaders in the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA).

The annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference took place Aug. 2-5 in Nashville, with junior Angus members and advisors representing 25 state junior Angus associations.

During the four-day event, Stewart and Casey Kennedy, Edmond, Okla., spoke to the group about setting goals. They encouraged and inspired juniors to work to achieve their goals. The Kennedys accomplished one of their own goals earlier in the summer — the development and marketing of sliced peanut butter under the name PB Slice.

The peanut butter slice, a thin layer of peanut butter wrapped in clear plastic,

much like a cheese slice, was distributed in mid-July to parts of Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas. However, as they relayed to LEAD attendees, the PB Slice didn't just happen. It took about four years of planning, research and testing — and more than 6,000 pounds (lb.) of peanut butter.

The participants also had the opportunity to increase their knowledge of the beef industry by listening to such speakers as Joe Elliott, an Angus breeder from Adams, Tenn.; Jim Hopper, director of regulatory affairs for the state of Tennessee; and American Angus Association staff members Scott Johnson and Shelia Stannard. In addition, NJAA Board members conducted workshops that encouraged personal growth and taught various skills, such as etiquette and dancing.

"LEAD was a really great experience," says first-time attendee Codie Long, Cowarts, Ala. "The junior Board members went to a lot of work to put this on and made it really

fun for all of us."

During the first full day of the conference, the group filled three tour buses to visit some of Nashville's sites and to experience its rich country music heritage. Their first stop was the Hermitage, the home of former U.S. President Andrew Jackson.

During lunch, the group cruised the Cumberland River aboard the General Jackson riverboat. And to finish out the evening, they took in a performance of the Grand Ole Opry at Opryland.

Cody Sankey, Council Grove, Kan., has attended all but two of the LEAD conferences, and this is his last year as a junior Angus member. "I always look forward to LEAD to learn more about the beef industry and to have fun with all of my Angus friends," he says.





► As part of the afternoon icebreakers, Heath Johnson, newly elected communications director, leads a section of the room in Boom-Bah-Hey to loosen up the group.



► Miranda Grissom (right), 2001 NJAA leadership director, oversees the registration process during the first day of the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development Conference. Evan Boehmer, Olivet, Mich., collects his name tag and notebook, which he'll need to keep with him in order to prevent any "disciplinary" actions — such as having to "hiney-write" or "sizzle like bacon."



► Icebreakers allow the 122 LEAD participants to get to know one another during the first afternoon. Zach Kinne (left), Eagleville, Mo.; and Lauren Chapman (right), Bryan, Texas, launch freshly folded paper airplanes with their names written on them to the middle of the room. The participants then pick up an airplane and introduce themselves to the original pilot.



► Miranda Grissom leads the middle section of the group in the "Bah" yell of the Boom-Bah-Hey cheer to see which group yells the loudest.



► The Deliverance People from the backwoods of Tennessee make a special appearance at "Your Big Break," where they competed against the Back Woods Boys and the Dixie Hicks. Performing "YMCA" are (from left) Miranda Grissom, Allison Porter, Christy Walther and Sonya Smith.



► The Hermitage, home of former U.S. President Andrew Jackson, is the first stop on the tour around Nashville. Junior Angus members tour his home, his garden and the cemetery while at the plantation located outside Nashville.



► Tyler Grissom (right), Prague, Okla., and a Minnie Pearl impersonator dance on the upper deck of the General Jackson as it cruised the Cumberland River.

► Grammy Award winning Riders in the Sky are one of many acts the juniors enjoy during the Friday night Grand Ole Opry Show. The show, divided into half-hour segments, is broadcast on the radio and features live advertising from show sponsors.





► Cody Sankey (seated, left), Council Grove, Kan.; Brittney Burns, Kickapoo, Ill.; and Kyle Conley, Clarksdale, Mo., learn about the history of the Hermitage from one of the tour guides before they enter the home of the former president.



► These young ladies from Arkansas are enjoying their time together sailing down the Cumberland River aboard the General Jackson. Pictured are (from left) Claressa Humphrey, Ozark; Allyson McGuire and Kerri McMahan, both of Fort Smith; Erin Turrentine, Bentonville; and Leslie McGee, Lavaca.



► Emily Pohlman (left), Norfolk, Neb.; and Kristen Oaks, Calhoun, La., examine the PB Slice that Stewart and Casey Kennedy created and began marketing in July. The peanut butter serving is packaged in a plastic wrap, like cheese slices, and makes peanut butter sandwiches simpler and cleaner to make. The Kennedys, who were featured leadership speakers during the four days of LEAD, spent more than four years and used more than 6,000 pounds of peanut butter to get the right consistency and flavor.



► Kayla Tuggle (left), Ithaca, Mich., is surprised when musician and Shotgun Red puppeteer Steve Hall calls her on stage during a lunch performance on the General Jackson. He asked her about the NJAA, presented her a Shotgun Red doll and posed with her for a snapshot.



► NJAA Board members (from left) Brittney Burns, Sonya Smith and Brandon Douglas present a dining etiquette workshop. Brittney and Brandon demonstrated the incorrect way to eat in a formal setting so the juniors could point out obvious mistakes before the proper dining etiquette was demonstrated.

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► Wravenna Phipps (left), Kearney, Neb.; and Claressa Humphrey (right), Ozark, Ark., ponder a beef industry question during a preliminary round of Angus Dash. Each table played a round of the board game that challenged the contestants with questions about the cattle business and the American Angus Association. Winners at each table advanced to compete against other winners in a championship round.



► Stewart Kennedy (left), challenges everyone to set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and trackable) goals as they plan their short- and long-term futures. David Rice, Perrin, Texas, volunteers to share his goals with the group.



► Becky Tiedeman (left), North Platte, Neb.; and Phil Reid, Murfreesboro, Tenn., grill steaks at KMK Acres before the Saturday night dance.



► Former NJAA Board member William Donnell (right), along with his wife, Jill (center), and Amanda Larsen, conduct vespers Sunday morning. The Donnells have a contemporary Christian music ministry called "Beyond Me." In addition, William keeps in touch with his Angus roots as part of his family's Angus ranch in Tennessee.



► While Mandy Long, Cowarts, Ala., looks on, Genna Frenzen (standing), Fullerton, Neb., describes how the people sitting at her table used various items to travel to the desert. Each person brought an item they'd take on a trip, and "trips" were taken to the jungle, desert, aquarium and barnyard. This was one of the sessions on "Exploring New Frontiers" that led to discovering that different people do things and describe things in various ways.



► "You are laying a wonderful and clear path to become leaders in agriculture and the beef industry," Casey Kennedy tells the participants at the 2001 LEAD Conference.



► Wravenna Phipps (left), Kearney, Neb.; Tyler Grissom, Prague, Okla.; and Jacob Wolfrey, White Post, Va., "sizzle like bacon" on the last morning of LEAD. From the first day, juniors were told to remember notebooks, name tags and rules. Even James Fisher, director of activities and junior activities, had to hiney-write as punishment for losing his name tag.