

Meet Your Staff

by Lance Ziesch

Editor's note: As part of our "Family Ties" theme, we want to introduce you to your Association family—those here at the American Angus Association dedicated to giving you the best service in the seedstock industry.

We asked Lance Ziesch to survey staff members to gain insights as to what each does for you, the membership, and why they work for the Association. As with any family, some members enjoy sharing while others are quite shy, so listings will vary in length and detail.

We also asked staff to contribute tips we could give you to help in the Association's goal of constantly improving member services.

We hope you enjoy getting acquainted with the staff—maybe even putting a face to a voice you've heard on the phone for years.

We also hope this series will be helpful in directing you to the appropriate person to handle your requests.

Part 10 of this series includes the administrative staffs of the American Angus Association and Angus Productions Inc. (API). Also featured from API are the Editorial and Web Marketing departments.

Administration

Dick Spader, 31 years
American Angus Association
Executive vice president

Responsibilities: Overall management of the Association, coordinates Board of Directors meetings and works with the Board.

"It's fun to watch members improve their breeder programs and become successful," Dick says. "The challenge is simply to develop programs and services that keep the Association the leader in the beef cattle industry."

Dick grew up with an agricultural background in South Dakota. Currently, he has a small herd of Angus cattle in northwest Missouri. He also raises Quarter Horses. He is married, with two sons in college and a daughter at home.

"My time away from the office is spent on my farm—that's my reality check and replaces golf, boating, etc.," he says. "I'm an avid horse enthusiast, and I spend a lot of time working with horses."

Pat Musil, 7 years
Administrative secretary

Responsibilities: Works directly with Spader and the Board of Directors, handles all Board meeting minutes, and plans the Saint Joseph Board meetings and any additional meetings in Saint Joseph. Also coordinates all voting information for the Annual Meeting in Louisville, Ky., which includes delegate nominations and ballots.

Pat says she enjoys all aspects of her job. "That's the positive of it," she says. "There is a lot of variety in my duties. I especially like the meeting planning."

Pat is married with four grown, married children. She has nine grandchildren ranging in

age from 12 years to 1 year. Because her family all live in the Kansas City area, she gets to spend time with them regularly. Pat and her husband, Jerry, also enjoy theatre productions, dining out and traveling.

Terry Cotton, 20 years
Angus Productions Inc.
General manager

Responsibilities: Oversees management of Angus Productions Inc. (API), which includes two publications, the *Angus Journal* and the *Angus Beef Bulletin*; the Special Services Department, which produces herd-marketing tools, such as sale books and brochures; and the Web Marketing Department, which maintains three API Web sites and many producer Web sites.

When Terry started at the Association, he was an *Angus Journal* representative in the western United States and Canada. He then moved to the Dakotas, Minnesota and Nebraska, serving as a regional manager and an *Angus Journal* representative.

He assumed the role of API general manager in September 1986.

"During these years many changes have occurred," Terry says, pointing to the growth and development of the Special Services Department and increasing advertising sales in the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, which has a current circulation of more than 60,000. "The growth and acceptance of the Angus breed has increased the information needs of our readership."

Terry attended Kansas State University and earned a degree in animal science. He lives in Saint Joseph with his family—wife, Sarah, and sons, Drew and Adam.

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► Pat Musil (left) serves as administrative secretary to American Angus Association Executive Vice President Richard Spader (right).



► Terry Cotton serves as general manager of Angus Productions Inc. (API).

PHOTOS BY SHEILIA STANNARD

Editorial

Shauna Hermel, 4 years
Editor

Responsibilities: Decides content of the *Angus Journal* and *Angus Beef Bulletin*, coordinates writing talent, and oversees production of stories and all editorial pages of both publications.

Shauna says her goal for the editorial focus of the *Angus Journal* is to cover the Angus and beef industries from an information-services viewpoint. In the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, the focus changes to covering the industry for commercial customers who are using Angus genetics. For both publications, Shauna says she'd like to have more feedback from members. "We need to know their information needs so we can fulfill them," she says.

One of the biggest challenges at the *Angus Journal* is the sheer volume of information covered between its pages. But that's also an opportunity.

"With such a diverse membership, the information needs of our readers range from the most basic to the need for cutting-edge technology," Shauna says. "Because of the volume of information we can provide, we can meet those needs. That helps us educate the first-year member and the third-generation cattleman in the same issue. That brings about the largest reward of all—knowing that we are doing something to help Angus breeders prosper."

"I'm an Angus cowgirl through and through," Shauna says. "I grew up on an

Angus operation in northeast Missouri where my mom, dad, brother and sister-in-law still manage an Angus herd. I was active in the Missouri and National Junior Angus associations. The National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) was my family's annual vacation for many years."

In addition to Angus cattle, Shauna also participates in church activities and spends time with her husband of 11 years, Todd Hermel.

"One of my biggest joys since coming to work here has been becoming reacquainted with some of the folks my family and I enjoyed knowing through the bull-test station my folks managed, showing cattle when Russell and I were kids, and participating in the many Angus associations we were involved in at that time."

Christy Benigno, 2 years
Editorial artist

Responsibilities: *Angus Beef Bulletin* design and assisting with the *Angus Journal* design.

Christy originally began working in API's Web Marketing Department, placing sale books online and creating banner ads. She also gained experience in advertising layout before taking her current position as an editorial artist.

"I enjoy working with the visual aspect of a story—coming up with the layout, graphics and photo arrangement that draw the reader into the story," Christy says.

Before working for API, Benigno was a practicing respiratory therapist for 18 years. Away from the office, she enjoys traveling and attending musical plays.

"I am impressed with this company's integrity and how working here is like being a part of a big family," Christy says.

Mary Black, 16 years
Editorial artist

Responsibilities: Designs editorial layouts in the *Angus Journal*.

Mary grew up in the country, and she raised hogs with her sister for spending money. "I think pigs are so cute," she says. "I still collect pig stuff."

Mary has been married 20 years to Aaron Black. They have a son, Michael, 17, and four cats: George, Roy, Sophie and Knucklehead. They recently added a purebred Welsh Pembroke Corgie puppy to the mix.

"When we registered our puppy with the American Kennel Club (AKC), we knew we needed a great name on the pedigree," Mary says. "After researching the country, I discovered that the Wye River runs through Wales. So we dubbed him 'Jumping Jack Black of Wye.'"

Mary shares one of her most memorable experiences on staff. "Several years ago, I attended a field editors' meeting in Louisville while the NAILE was going on. I'd never been to a big cattle show, so I told Jerilyn Johnson, my editor at that time, that I wanted her to take my picture with one of the cattle," she says. "Sarah Hill of Champion Hill Farms told me to pose by her bull. Jerilyn got ready to take the picture, when the bull decided to give me a good kick in the thigh. Man, did that hurt—but I didn't cry! Sarah felt terrible. We didn't get a picture, but I think I'll live without it."

"I have made many lifetime friends at Angus—a few are more like family," she says. "It's a great place to work."

Giuli Coniglio, 1 year
Editorial proofreader

Responsibilities: Proofs all nonadvertising pages of the *Angus Journal* and *Angus Beef Bulletin* to catch and correct errors in transcription, grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage and style.

Giuli says she enjoys her work.

"I love word wrangling, especially when I get to work with a skillful, professional team, such as the one we have in API's Editorial Department."

"It may be hard to believe, but even in my off-time, I like to read," she says. "I read more fiction and poetry than news, and I also participate in a monthly book discussion group."

Away from the office, Giuli enjoys working



PHOTO BY ANGIE STUMP DENTON

► API's editorial team consists of (from left) Mary Black, Lance Ziesch, Abra Ungeheuer, Giuli Coniglio, Christy Benigno, Shauna Hermel and Brad Parker.

in her herb, vegetable and flower gardens. And, for exercise, she likes to swim a mile or two several times a week. She says she tries to spend as much time as possible enjoying the outdoors with family and friends. She lives in Maryville, Mo., with her husband, Michael Hobbs, an associate professor of English at Northwest Missouri State University.

Brad Parker, 3 years
Associate editor

Responsibilities: Helps fill the space around the ads in the *Angus Journal* and the *Angus Beef Bulletin* with useful, accurate information and attractive photographs or other illustrations.

It's very rewarding for Brad to hear a reader has been inspired by a story. "When someone has learned something or has found a new way of looking at a subject from one of my articles, that is the greatest reward," he says.

Brad says he thinks the *Journal* and the *Bulletin* could become even more useful if readers would share what they liked or disliked. "Original story ideas and photographs from our readers are always welcome, too," he says.

Brad's family has been involved in agriculture for generations, although Angus cattle are a recent endeavor. "My brother decided to raise purebred Angus as part of his Supervised Agricultural Experience Program in FFA, and now my parents' commercial beef herd includes genetics from those registered animals and other Angus bulls in the AI studs," he says.

"It was a stroke of luck to find a place among the Angus family for my first job after college," he says. "This continues to be a great learning experience, and the personality and ingenuity of the people in this business always amaze me."

Abra Ungeheuer, 1 year
Editorial assistant/Web marketing assistant

Responsibilities: Prepares standing columns for publication in the *Angus Journal*, works closely with the American Angus Auxiliary in producing its annual yearbook, posts editorial content of both publications to the World Wide Web, and updates the e-Classifieds and "Angus Almanac" online. Also maintains the Angus e-List, which is a timely electronic beef industry news source.

Abra says she enjoys working in two different API departments.

"Every day, something new happens, and I enjoy the opportunity to help out with so many different projects. Splitting the time between departments actually works out well," she says.

Abra grew up on a farm, and her family farmed until the mid-'80s. She was active in FFA during high school, which sparked her interest



► The API Web Marketing Department consists of team members (from left) Ray Palermo, Tanya Peebles, Angie Denton and Abra Ungeheuer.

in working in the agricultural field, she says.

In her spare time, Abra likes to write letters and to create simple crafts, especially activities that involve children.

"I like to 'explore' stores and tourist attractions in the area, too," she says. "I'm also a leader for the youth program, AWANA, at my church. Most of my time outside of work is spent with friends I have made since I moved here."

Lance Ziesch, 3 years
Editorial assistant

Responsibilities: Writes feature stories, takes photographs, edits copy and collects information for standing columns in the *Angus Journal*. Also coordinates the "Angus Almanac," the calendar of events published in each issue of the *Angus Journal* and *Angus Beef Bulletin*. He also designs page layouts for the *Angus Journal* and the *Angus Beef Bulletin*.

"I really like writing personality profiles," he says. "With the caliber of people in the Angus industry, you can discover some really interesting stories."

Lance was raised on a small family farm in southwest Kansas, near Hanston. His family raised crossbred cattle and registered Quarter Horses, amongst a menagerie of other farm animals. He graduated from Kansas State University in May 1998 with a degree in agricultural journalism.

Lance is involved in various college-age ministry activities at Frederick Boulevard Baptist Church in Saint Joseph. He also serves as one of the adult leaders of the Missouri Western State College Campus Crusade for Christ chapter. He enjoys many outdoor activities, from horseback riding to fishing and camping. He also likes books, movies and music of about any kind. He has two married brothers and two nephews.

Web Marketing

Angie Stump Denton, 6 years
Web marketing director

Responsibilities: Works with Angus

breeders to establish their presence on the Internet. Also helps design and update breeder Web sites and online sale books.

Angie says it's rewarding for her to hear how much a Web site or an online sale book has helped a breeder's marketing program. "When I see how many hits a site is getting and where the browsers are coming from, I realize the importance of what we do," she says.

Angie grew up on a cattle and row-crop farm in northeast Kansas. She was active in 4-H and FFA and served on the National Junior Polled Hereford Council. She's also a graduate of K-State.

Angie and her husband, John, own a home with a small acreage between Saint Joseph and Kansas City. They are expecting their first child in November.

During her time as associate editor for the *Journal*, Angie had opportunities to visit ranches and to meet the producers one-on-one. "I really enjoyed going out in their pastures and listening to them talk about their production and management practices," she says.

Angie also enjoys working with Angus breeders and helping them with their marketing programs. "It's exciting to think about how e-commerce and online marketing will affect our members in the next five to 10 years," she says. "I couldn't think of a better group of people to work for—members of the American Angus Association."

Ray Palermo, 6 months
Web designer

Responsibilities: Designs and maintains Web sites for Web Marketing clients and also designs other visual communications as needed.

Prior to coming to API, Ray lived and worked in the Houston, Texas, area.

"Having always worked for large companies before moving to Saint Joseph, I have to say that it is a real pleasure to see the organization and teamwork that is present in this group. Everybody has been very nice and

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supportive and has really helped me to adjust to my new job here at the *Journal*.”

Ray says he enjoys the freedom and responsibility he has to make decisions concerning his work. Although keeping up with software updates and browser issues while he's designing Web sites can be the most challenging part of his job, he admits that the opportunity to arrive at solutions for these problems is also the most rewarding.

In addition to being a Web designer, Ray is also a union musician with the Saint Joseph Symphony. He and his wife, Cheryl, have three daughters. Their oldest daughter is married, and their younger two are in preschool and first grade.

Away from the office, Ray enjoys playing with the family's wolfhounds.

Tanya Peebles, 1 year
Web marketing assistant

Responsibilities: Posts breeder sale books online, which includes compiling footnotes, photos and other relevant information to be posted and searched; tracks the number of hits per Web site; and takes orders for show photos.

“I like getting to work at the American Angus Association. Growing up in the Angus business, you wonder where it all takes place. To get to work here and be part of that is very rewarding,” she says. “I also like getting to talk to breeders and to meet new ones.”

Tanya grew up in Virginia raising Angus cattle. She has been a member of the Association since 1989 and a participant in the National Junior Angus Show since 1994. She held various offices in the Virginia Junior Angus Association (VJAA) and was named its outstanding senior member for four consecutive years.

“My most rewarding NJAA experiences were receiving my Gold Award in 1999 and exhibiting the grand champion cow-calf pair and reserve grand champion owned female in 1999 in Tulsa, Okla. Also placing third in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest at that same event was a memorable moment,” she says.

Outside the office, Tanya enjoys playing softball and watching baseball, in particular the Atlanta Braves. She also enjoys the outdoors and being around animals. She still owns cattle in Virginia and tries to take in as many Angus shows as her schedule will allow.

Tanya graduated from Virginia Tech in May 2000 with a bachelor's degree in animal and poultry sciences with a minor in agricultural economics. During college, she was active in the Block & Bridle Club and was a member of the 1999 Virginia Tech livestock-judging team.



Editor's Mailbox

► Readers' viewpoints submitted to our staff

Sale books are still bothersome

I am still not happy with the way sale books are attached into the *Journal*. This insert I'm sending you came in a *Sunset* magazine. The white strip, as you will note, is perforated, so it was easy to take the insert out of the magazine. And the perforation was close to the spine, so it didn't bother the magazine.

Maybe you could consider a perforated strip in the future. Thank you.

— Sandra Gould
Scio, Ore.

Editor's note: Thank you for your comments and your example. We will check into it and see what the costs are and whether it is something our printer can handle.

Thanks for a great sale book, API

Thank you for such a wonderful looking sale book. We do appreciate the fine, fine work. Also, wanted to let you know that we will be using that same map background next year. It will be the Trail Sale of '02. ...Thanks again.

— Paula Carpenter
Deer Creek Ranch
Saint Jo, Texas

Kudos for the September issue

I just got the new *Journal* yesterday and what tremendous coverage of the 2001 NJAS (National Junior Angus Show). I was so impressed by all the photos and the articles, and the purple color throughout was wonderful. The photo of Marilyn on the cover was perfect. I just can't say enough about the coverage except THANKS!

I think my favorite piece was the “Move Over, Soccer Moms.” That was a scream, and it really hit home as it's soccer season here and taking kids to practice with the trailer in tow is pretty common around here.

I just wanted to congratulate you all on a wonderful issue. My hat is off to you all.

— Carla Malson
Malson Angus
Parma, Idaho

Thinks half-Angus grays should qualify for CAB®

Recently we sent a load of market steers and a load of heifers to U.S. Premium Beef (USPB). We had raised and fed them on our farm here in western Kansas.

These cattle are out of the best black cows we can find and some top-notch Charolais bulls in our area. These cattle did well on the USPB grid.

There is only one problem. The half-Angus, half-Charolais are gray, which makes them ineligible for *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) certification.

This troubles me very much, when you take into consideration that thousands of black cattle that have little or no Angus blood in them become eligible for the CAB premium every day.

We wouldn't trade our Angus cow herd for any other breed, but I feel we are being penalized for using what we and many others feel is the best cross there is for Angus cows.

I have heard that the Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Board of Directors has considered changing the rules so that these half-Angus gray cattle can qualify for CAB premiums.

I feel the time to change is now.

— John Keller
Keller Family Farms
Saint Francis, Kan.

Where's 'Ever' Day'?

I have missed the writings of Tom McBeth (“Ever' Day Things”). Can you tell me when they will return to the *Journal*?

— Lou Ooley
Double O Angus
Bedford, Ind.

Editor's note: Thank you for your inquiry regarding Tom McBeth and “Ever' Day Things.” With our magazine redesign, we have made numerous changes to our editorial content. We have decided to discontinue the “Ever' Day Things” column. This month we are running the final installment.

