

Seven Vying for a Seat

Members announce candidacies for American Angus Association Board of Directors.

Compiled by Julie Mais, editor

Seven members declared their candidacies for the American Angus Association Board of Directors by the deadline for publication in the October *Angus Journal*. Seeking a first term are Robert “Rob” Adams, Union Springs, Ala.; Art Butler, Bliss, Idaho; Joe Epperly, Albion, Neb.; Robert Groom, Lyons, N.Y.; Alan Mead, Barnett, Mo.; Henry Smith, Russell Springs, Ky.; and Roger Wann, Poteau, Okla.

The delegates listed beginning on page 182 will elect five directors; a president and chairman of the Board; and a vice president and vice chairman of the Board during the Association’s 139th Annual Convention of Delegates, which will convene at 8 a.m. Mountain Standard Time (MST) Monday, Nov. 7, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Biographical sketches provided by the candidates follow.

Robert “Rob” Adams, Alabama



The Alabama Angus Association unanimously endorses Robert (Rob) E. Adams, Jr. for the American Angus Association

Board of Directors.

Adams has been a lifelong resident of Union Springs, Ala., where his grandfather established their current

farm in 1936 and bought the first Angus cattle in 1939. The only time he has lived away from the farm is the four years he spent at Auburn University earning his bachelor’s degree in animal and dairy science.

Having purchased his first Angus cow at age 8, he has been involved in the day-to-day operation ever since. The farm has transitioned over the last 40 years from a diverse cattle and row-crop farm to now only registered Angus cattle (calving about 225 cows and heifers) and timber on the 925-acre farm. They have an annual bull sale the first Saturday in January each year, and they host the Maternal Gems Female Sale the second Saturday in May.

After college Rob returned to the farm full-time for two years, but due the difficulties of the agricultural economy in the late ’70s-’80s, there just wasn’t room for two families on the farm at that time. Still living on the farm and working there every day, he chose to enter the world of finance and has been working as a financial advisor for the last 34 years. Now co-owning his own firm, Legacy Advisors, Inc., he works with small businesses and individuals in financial planning and investment management.

It’s Adams’ hope that he can use his experience on and off the farm to help give back to the American Angus Association through serving on the

Board. He says the Angus world has given him so much to him over a lifetime, that he just wants to give back some of his time and experience to an organization that has given so much to him. The American Angus Association is a service organization, and he hopes to use his experience from the farm and from being in the service industry to help guide the Association going forward. The American Angus Association means different things to different people, but that’s OK, as Adams feels that we are blessed as an organization to have tremendous diversity within our ranks. The American Angus Association needs to build on that as it grows and expands its services.

Adams is married to his wife of 28 years, Connie, and they have four children. The kids grew up active in the Alabama junior Angus program and showed at many local shows, but also attended five junior nationals and one Eastern Regional Show.

Their oldest son, Daniel, and his wife, Jessie, live back on the farm now and Daniel works full time as the farm’s operations manager. Their next son, Joseph, is an electrical engineer in Huntsville. Their twin daughters, Aspen and Layton, are sophomores at the University of Mobile where they are on scholarship playing both indoor and beach volleyball.

Rob has always been active in

leadership, whether it was through his involvement in the Student Government Association (SGA) at Auburn University serving as vice president of the College of Agriculture and ag senator, or as president of Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.

After college he served as executive secretary for the Alabama Angus Association for three years, and then served as president in 1998. He went on to serve on the Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) board and as president in 2001. Later he was a founding board member of the BCIA Foundation and served as president 2016-2020. He has served on the local county cattlemen's association and Farmers Federation boards for many years. In addition he has served as a deacon at his church for many years and as deacon chairman for multiple terms.

Rob says after many years attending the American Angus Association Annual Meeting as a delegate, it would be a great honor to have the opportunity to serve on the American Angus Association Board of Directors and spend time working for such a great, visionary organization. Therefore, he humbly asks for your consideration when you choose to vote for the next set of board members.

Art Butler, Idaho



Art Butler's dedication to the production of Angus cattle is grounded in a multigenerational commitment to the breed. He is the third

generation of Butlers to raise registered Angus cattle at Spring Cove Ranch in Bliss, Idaho. Spring

Cove Ranch was settled in 1912 by his grandfather A.H. Butler, who chose to make his desert homestead around a natural spring in northwestern Gooding County. The pioneer Butlers purchased the first Angus cattle in 1919, and Angus cattle and Butlers have roamed the ranges of Spring Cove Ranch continuously for 103 years.

Art was born in 1955 and attended grade school and high school in the small town of Bliss, Idaho, population 200. He participated in livestock 4-H as a student and later as a leader for more than 20 years, and was inducted into the Idaho 4-H Hall of Fame in 2011. He attended the University of Idaho where he earned a degree in animal science in 1978, was a member of the Farmhouse Fraternity and of the Livestock Meat Animal Evaluation Team.

After college graduation in 1978, Art returned to Spring Cove Ranch to continue the family tradition of raising registered and commercial Angus cows and kids. He and his wife, Stacy, son, Josh, and daughter, Sarah, manage the 350-head cow herd and host an annual production sale at the ranch on the second Monday in March, selling bulls and females. The family sells feeder cattle and farms 500 acres, growing alfalfa, sweet corn, field and silage corn and other grains.

Art carries on his family tradition of incorporating all available technology and production tools to enhance the Spring Cove cattle genetics and management. Artificial insemination (AI) was first used on the ranch in the early '70s with fresh semen delivered by bus. Art enrolled the herd in the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) program in 1974 and began using

embryo transfer (ET) in 1991. He also used the Structured Carcass Evaluation program to prove many of the Spring Cove herd sires, incorporated ultrasound scans for carcass traits and in 2022, every calf born at Spring Cove Ranch is parent-verified through DNA and tested for genomic traits.

Art has been committed to developing markets for Angus feeder calves and has encouraged many of the Spring Cove Ranch bull customers to enroll in AngusSource and now in AngusLinkSM. He is a rep for Western Video Market through Stockman's Market and prioritizes helping his bull customers market their high-quality feeder calves sired by Spring Cove Ranch bulls.

Art has served as a past president of the Idaho Angus Association and on the Idaho Cattle Association Board of Directors. Art and Stacy Butler were the recipients of the 2019 Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Seedstock Commitment to Excellence Award. Spring Cove Ranch and the Art Butler Family received the Century Herd Award from the American Angus Association in 2019.

Joe Epperly, Nebraska



Joe is a third-generation Angus breeder raised in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. The Epperlys' Angus herd, ADR Cattle Co. LLC, still occupies the same ground. He spent most of his youth exhibiting livestock, helping on the family farm and working at the family's livestock market.

Growing up, he was active in 4-H and FFA, along with state and national Angus organizations. He

Continued on page 172

was president of his 4-H club and FFA chapter and served as vice president of Virginia FFA. Joe spent many years on the board of the Virginia Junior Angus Association, and held the offices of treasurer, vice president and president before joining the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB).

He attended Virginia Tech with the intention of becoming a civil engineer. Three years and an internship later, he followed his heart back to animal science, graduating with a bachelor's degree. While at Virginia Tech, Joe worked as a herdsman at the research farm for Bill Beal. He served as a teaching assistant and was on the judging team. Following college, Joe moved north to Murcielago Farms in Scottsville, Va., to work as a herdsman. During this time, he was approached by Bob Hough at the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF) and offered its commercial marketing director position. It was a decision that would change the course of his life. Joe moved to their headquarters in Denver, but his position soon evolved into more responsibilities.

Joe quickly worked his way up to assistant executive director. This position afforded him the opportunity to monitor day-to-day performance inquiries and travel to speak on both commercial marketing and performance measures. He gained oversight to member services, association activities and performance programs. Joe also served as interim activities director and advisor to the junior board.

Among his many accomplishments in this position, Joe was instrumental in moving to SNP (single-nucleotide polymorphism) parentage, launching

blended genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (EPDs), handling DNA in-house, changing registry systems, and moving to single-step genomic evaluation.

While at NALF, Joe served on the advisory board for the USDA Project for the Improvement of Feed Efficiency in Beef Cattle, the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Board of Directors, and the International Limousin Council Executive Board. He spoke to groups in more than 30 states and four foreign countries during his time there.

In fall of 2017 Joe accepted the position as director of genetics and sales at Wagonhammer Ranches in Albion, Neb. Wagonhammer is a 100-year-old operation in the Nebraska Sandhills owned by the Wolf family. Joe oversees and implements the genetic selection for the three ranches encompassing 1,000 registered and 1,600 commercial cows. He also works with the team at their 5,000-head feedlot, where they feed their own and customer cattle for programs such as CAB.

Wagonhammer markets around 250 bulls annually through their production sale in March and through private-treaty sales. The operation uses AI extensively in both its registered and commercial programs. Joe has expanded the ET and *in-vitro* fertilization (IVF) programs, implanting more than 200 embryos annually.

Wagonhammer sells commercial and registered bred heifers annually through private-treaty sales, along with a select group of show heifer prospects and registered cows in their November female sale. They are involved as a seedstock partner in both Top Dollar Angus and Superior

Progressive Genetics working for their commercial customers.

Joe continues to serve on multiple boards, including the Boone County 4-H Council, Nebraska Angus Association (NAA) and BIF. He says he would be honored to serve the Angus membership, and would appreciate your support.

Robert Groom, New York



The New York Angus Association has unanimously endorsed Robert B. Groom as a candidate for election to the

American Angus Association Board of Directors.

Robert was born on a dairy farm in Cheshire, England. He graduated from high school in 1984 at the age of 16. A year later he and his family moved to the 360-acre diversified stock farm of East Tullyfergus, Perthshire, Scotland.

He established the Tullyfergus Aberdeen-Angus Herd in 1987. As a first-generation breeder, the herd was built slowly as he studied the breed and its history. Funds to expand the herd were earned by operating a contract sheep-shearing business in June and July, where several people were hired to help him shear 30,000 ewes.

In 1989 he undertook a three-month study tour of the Angus breed in the United States, living and working with families raising Angus cattle in many different areas of the country.

Robert married his wife, Linda, in August of 1993, and rented the nearby farm of Balwhyme, used entirely for the production of registered Angus and malting barley.

A herd of commercial Angus cows was used as recipients for embryos from their American donor cow and to promote the maternal and performance characteristics of the Angus breed to other producers.

In the United Kingdom (UK), Robert was appointed to the technical committee of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society (A-ACS) in 1996. During the time he served, this committee was primarily concerned with DNA parentage testing and estimated breeding values (EBVs). In 1997 he was elected to the council of the A-ACS. He served on the council for two years prior to coming to the United States in the fall of 1998. The Tullyfergus herd was dispersed in September 1998, and set a UK record for a registered Angus calf.

Since coming to the United States to pursue their “American Dream” in October 1998, Robert and Linda have reestablished the Tullyfergus Angus Herd near Lyons, N.Y. A 75-cow registered operation, producing bulls for commercial and registered cow-calf producers, show heifers and steers. In addition they provide management for a 70-cow commercial herd that produces top-quality steer calves and replacement females, recipients for embryos and club-calf prospects. They make more than 600 acres of dry hay each summer for feed for the two herds and to sell. A small amount of cash-cropping and custom round-baling is also undertaken.

Robert is an active member of the New York Angus Association (NYAA) and the New York Beef Producers Association (NYBPA), having served as president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. He is currently a director and co-junior advisor. He served as chairman and vice

chairman of the western region of the NYBPA. In 2007 he was awarded the “Beef Promoter of the Year” award by the NYBPA and NY Beef Industry Council. The following year NYBPA presented him their highest award, Cattleman of the Year. In addition he has organized numerous promotional and educational events for both the NYAA and NYBPA to further the positive message about Angus genetics and beef consumption. He was selected to participate in the Beef Leaders Institute (BLI) program in 2009.

Bulls are sold by private treaty across the northeast, and each fall the herd hosts a production sale to offer some select females and top-quality commercial Angus females. This sale has been gradually expanded to assist other breeders and customers to market their cattle and commercial feeders.

Linda is a research associate at the University of Rochester Medical Center. They have three children, Oliver, 25; Charlotte, 21; and Evie, 16. After three years of legal work status, they decided in September 2001 to start the process to attain legal permanent residence in the United States (a Green Card). It was granted in April of 2008. After five more required years of residency, Robert and Linda both became citizens in 2014 (their daughters are natural born U.S. citizens).

All their children have shown cattle at local fairs and state fair. While the older two have moved on to pursue other interests, Evie continues to be an enthusiastic showman and undertakes all the halter-breaking and show cattle management. Gemma Wark, an intern from Scotland in 2015 and 2016, has reestablished the Tullyfergus herd in

the UK using genetics exported from the herd in New York.

Robert was elected to the Lyons Central School Board of Education and served five years, including one as president. He was appointed to the board of the United States Cattlemen’s Association in 2021 as director for Region 15.

Those who know Robert appreciate his energy, enthusiasm and common sense. He has proven himself as a critical thinker and problem solver. He is a great student of breed history and pedigree.

Robert humbly asks for your consideration and support in electing him to the board.

Alan Mead, Missouri



Alan Mead declared his candidacy for the American Angus Association Board of Directors with encouragement from fellow members and

a desire to give back to the Association that has given so much to him and his family.

Mead is a third-generation Angus breeder from Barnett, Mo., and has been involved in all phases of cattle business his entire life. His experience spans from fence building, forage production, and showing cattle in 4-H and the junior Angus program, to now currently having three production sales annually, marketing close to 700 bulls per year.

Working for his grandfather and parents on their family farms until leaving to attend college, Mead’s drive and determination was thoroughly instilled. After completing his undergraduate degree, medical school and his

Continued on page 174

residency, Mead returned to the area in 1994 as a board-certified anesthesiologist practitioner, serving his local community while harboring a new vision for Mead Farms.

Beginning with approximately 20 cows, Mead persevered to reach his production goal to be a performance-oriented herd focusing on the needs of commercial cattlemen. Since that time, Mead Farms has been one of the leading Pathfinder® herds both in Missouri and nationally. In 2022 Mead Farms has 66 Pathfinder dams, which is the highest number in the nation. The Mead family takes great pride in this accomplishment, as the Pathfinder program fits the basic philosophy of Mead Farms.

Under Mead's leadership, the farm has grown to more than 7,000 acres and close to 1,500 registered Angus cows in addition to Charolais, Hereford and Red Angus cattle. Mead Farms is dedicated to the profitability of its customers and focuses on fertility, feet, udder structure, performance, and cattle that meet and exceed CAB requirements. The farm employs an intensive AI and ET program.

Mead has two daughters who are actively working as the fourth generation of Mead Farms. Juliette and Annaliese enjoy showing at the local, state and national level in 4-H, FFA and the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA). Additionally, they assist with daily operations and play a large role in the Mead Farms annual production sales. Juliette received her American Farmer Degree in 2021 and is currently president of the Missouri Junior Angus Association. With Juliette in college, Annaliese continues to take on additional roles within the farm.

Appreciating the experiences

others have offered him, Mead puts a strong emphasis on giving back to his community. Mead served on the Missouri Angus Association Board of Directors from 2010-2017, including a term as president. Mead is a member of the Morgan County Cattlemen's Association, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). He has also served on the local YMCA Board of Directors and the local hospital board of directors for the past seven years. Additionally, he serves on the Finance/Audit Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee of his local hospital board of directors. Mead has also served the hospital as the chairman of the Credentials Committee and serves on the Medical Executive Committee. He has been chairman of the Anesthesiology Department for the last 25 years.

Mead would welcome the opportunity to help direct the many outstanding programs and services of the American Angus Association offered to registered and commercial cattlemen across the country. Through his own involvement as well as that of his daughters in the junior program, Mead has gained a strong appreciation on the importance of preparing our next generation of Angus breeders through progressive programming that will keep Angus on the forefront. Mead's life, work and volunteer experiences have a strong track record of gathering information and making informed decisions, as well as approaching problems with an open mind to allow for successful outcomes.

Alan Mead says he would be humbled if given the opportunity to serve as a proactive member on the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association. Mead

is unanimously endorsed in his candidacy for the American Angus Association Board of Directors by the Missouri Angus Association Board of Directors.

Henry "Bryan" Smith, Kentucky



The Kentucky Angus Association (KAA) unanimously endorses Henry Smith of Russell Springs, Ky., as a candidate for the

American Angus Association Board of Directors.

Henry is a fourth-generation Angus breeder who grew up on a diversified family farming operation located in south-central Kentucky. The farming operation consisted of a registered Angus herd, burley tobacco, corn, soybeans, wheat for feed and cash market.

Growing up, Henry was active in 4-H, FFA, the Kentucky Junior Angus Association (KJAA) and the NJAA exhibiting Angus cattle. He graduated from Russell County High School and furthered his education in agriculture and animal science at Western Kentucky University. He purchased his own farmland at the age of 18 and began growing his own Angus herd. For 28 years, he has successfully operated Smithland Angus Farm with his late father, Charles "Bud" Smith.

Smithland Angus recently hosted its 26th annual bull and female sale offering both purebred breeders along with commercial breeders an opportunity to enhance their Angus genetics. Henry currently owns and manages 225 registered Angus cows and a small commercial herd for recipients. Henry has improved their

Angus herd through AHIR records, utilizing AI, ET, ultrasound and genomic information.

Henry has taken a leadership role in several local, regional and state organizations. He has served on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Board, County Agricultural Improvement Program (CAIP) board and as past president of the Russell County Cattlemen's Association for several years. Henry is currently serving on the KAA board as president. He is a current board member and past president of the Central Kentucky Angus Association and served on the NJAA Executive Committee in 2019.

Henry was sponsored by the Angus Foundation to attend the 2019 Young Cattlemen's Conference. He remains an active member of the NCBA. Since 1996, Henry has been selected as a voting delegate at the Angus Convention. Henry has been recognized by KAA for Performance Breeder and Herdsman of the Year. Henry serves on the boards of directors for Kentucky Farm Bureau, First Bancorp, Inc. and First National Bank of Russell Springs, Ky.

With his involvement in small and large organizations, Henry understands the struggles of small and large farm operations along with the budgeting and financial constraints.

Henry married his wife, Melissa, in 1997. They have two children, Bryanna, 17, and Blane, 14. Bryanna is serving as the vice president of the KJAA and board of directors for the Kentucky Junior Cattlemen's Association. She represented Kentucky as a voting delegate at the NJAA and is currently the Kentucky Angus Queen. Bryanna is very involved in her high school

FFA chapter as the president and serves as the vice president for the Lake Cumberland region. Blane is currently serving on the board of directors for KJAA and is starting his first year in FFA. Henry and his family are active in showing their Angus cattle on a local, state and national level with emphasis placed on the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) and Raising the Bar conferences, agricultural development and serving. He spends countless hours making an impression, teaching values of the family farm, hard work, and dedication to instill the love and passion of agriculture and the Angus breed into his children.

Henry believes in the power of the Angus cow to continue to be the foundation of the beef industry, for both the producer and consumer worldwide. Henry is committed to the advancement of this great breed and strongly believes in giving back to the organization that has been so important to him and his family for five generations. Henry has spent his entire life, hands on, raising and promoting Angus cattle; along with serving agricultural organizations.

Henry is patient, willing to listen and has commonsense approach in his thinking. He will always keep the memberships' (large and small) best interest in mind, all while striving to be very informed before making decisions. He says it would be a great honor to serve the Angus membership on the American Angus Association Board of Directors and humbly asks for your support.

Roger Wann, Oklahoma



The Oklahoma Angus Association unanimously endorses Roger Wann as a candidate for the American Angus Association

Board of Directors. Roger is a native of Poteau, Okla., and was raised on a multigenerational family commercial cow-calf ranch. The early breed makeup of the family ranch did not include Angus. After a purchase of a dozen commercial Angus cows from a family relative and the addition of an Angus bull from Belle Point Ranch in Lavaca, Ark., the benefits of Angus genetics became clear and a direction was set.

While a student at Oklahoma State University (OSU), Roger was an employee at Oklahoma Beef Inc. (OBI), a multibreed central test facility. Charles McPeake oversaw OBI at the time. The performance and marketability of the Angus bulls impressed Roger a great deal. Later he would be a student worker at the OSU Purebred Beef Center under Bob Kropp. The value of the Angus cow herd at OSU was the last step in a learning curve that would lead him and his family into the Angus seedstock business.

After completing a bachelor's degree in animal science at OSU, Roger earned a master's in physiology of reproduction from Texas A&M (TAMU) under Ron Randel. Upon realizing that continuing to pursue a career in academics could lead him farther away from a cow than he wanted, Roger left TAMU to begin a career with ABS Global in 1988. His interests and focus for the last 34 years have been to assist and teach cattle producers

Continued on page 176

the value of efficient reproductive management programs. Roger has worked extensively to continue the focus in efficient reproduction across Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, with additional duties from 2003 to 2008 in Georgia, Florida and Alabama.


Roger; his brother, Danny; and their dad, Jim, began the process of converting the family commercial ranch to an Angus seedstock operation in 1989. They hosted their first production sale in 2003, and this past spring marked their 20th annual production sale. Wann Ranch currently ranks No. 10 in the state of Oklahoma for registrations and markets 120 to 140 bulls annually. Roger and Danny are very hands-on with the operation of the family ranch. They are responsible for all the AI, forage management, herd health, data submission, calf registrations

and management of their production sale. Wann Ranch also received the Oklahoma Beef Council's Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Ranch of the Year award in 2014.

Wann has just completed a term on the board of directors for the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association (OCA). He has also served six years on the production policy committee for OCA. He was instrumental in leading discussions concerning new policy as well as the decision to renew or amend expiring policy.

Roger is the current vice president of the Oklahoma Angus Association. He, along with Angus regional manager, Jeff Mafi, and fellow Angus breeder, Mark Sexton, have been instrumental in the development of the Oklahoma Angus-sponsored Angus feeder-calf sale. This premier event has been hosted at Oklahoma

National Stockyards, and has successfully showcased the value of Angus genetics with emphasis being placed on the additional value of AngusLink verification. As he takes the reins of the Oklahoma Angus Association (OAA) next March, Roger will continue the efforts of OAA to provide marketing and educational opportunities to members and customers while streamlining and focusing the operational processes of the state association.

The American Angus Association as well as its member breeders are the definitive leaders of the industry today. The primary reason for Roger's American Angus Association board candidacy is to provide blue-collar, grassroots viewpoints concerning all issues, with the goal of keeping the Angus breed at the forefront of the industry. 

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