

New doors open for the Angus Foundation

In 1979, under the leadership of President J.E. Horton Jr., Alabama, the idea of an instrument to provide scholarship assistance to worthy members of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) was conceived by the American Angus Association Board of Directors. Association Executive Vice President C.K. Allen and Jerry Lipsey, then director of junior activities, began to formulate an operating agreement and guidelines. Shortly thereafter, in 1980, the Angus Foundation became a reality.

A foundation is poured

The Angus Foundation is a not-for-profit organization organized under the laws of the state of Illinois. Its specified purpose is to "carry on educational and research activities related to agriculture." The bylaws of the Angus Foundation provide the same broad scope of management that prevails in other not-for-profit entities. However, that is where the similarities end.

An original goal of the Foundation was to achieve financial assets of one million dollars. From its very modest beginning, the Foundation reached total assets of \$100,000 by 1990, primarily as a result of generous donations to the Angus Foundation Heifer Package auctioned prior to the National Western Bull Sale at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo., each year.

I would be remiss not to mention my friend, David McMahon of Lavaca, Ark., and publicly thank him for the support he has given to the Foundation in obtaining buyers for these heifer packages. This activity continues to be the largest annual fund-raiser for the Foundation.



Claiming new boundaries

By 1997, total assets had risen to \$500,000. Interest in the Foundation began to pick up steam in the new millennium, and by the end of fiscal year (FY) 2003, the Foundation boasted assets of \$1.5 million. These assets provided the resources to fund \$25,000 in scholarships for worthy NJAA members and to support the Leaders Engaged in Angus

Development (LEAD) conferences.

Growth is a wonderful thing to behold. However, it is not always painless. So about a year and a half ago, several of us began thinking that if \$1.5 million could generate scholarships in the amount of \$25,000, what could \$10 or \$20 million do?

If one plans to think big, there is no need of doing it in a limited way. We began to think about relationships and attitudes. We explored the reasons for successes in other foundations, such as the one at the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA). The question then arose, "How do we find the people and build the relationships needed to make the Angus Foundation into an organization that would have a lasting and profoundly beneficial impact on the lives of members of the American Angus Association?" As deliberations continued, it became obvious that if the Foundation is to enjoy further expansion, it cannot continue to be managed as a part-time entity by staff with other primary responsibilities.

A new direction

Under the capable leadership of Foundation President Abbie Nelson, Wilton, Calif., the Foundation Board of Directors, and staff members Bryce Schumann and James Fisher, a Foundation planning task force was organized and conducted in May 2003. With the help of an experienced foundation administrator and facilitator, future direction was defined, routes were mapped and a plan for future expansion of the Angus Foundation began to take shape.

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AMERICAN ANGUS AUXILIARY

President—Nancy Jo Sullivan, Marietta, OH
 For a complete listing of officers, refer to page 50.

REGIONAL MANAGERS—Refer to page 252.

CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF LLC

President—Jim Riemann, Wooster, Ohio
 For a CAB staff listing, refer to page 93.

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One recommendation was crystal clear. A full-time staff person must be appointed to build the relationships needed to take the Foundation to the next level. This action was approved by the Board in September and is in the initial phases of implementation as you read this column.

From conception to its current status, the Angus Foundation has only been involved in providing youth scholarships and supporting youth programs. Of this, we are most proud. The task force, however, indicated that other initial purposes of the Foundation were to sponsor research and education.

These goals can certainly be accomplished through the sponsorship of educational programs, seminars and conferences for the

Angus industry. In addition, there is a multitude of potential Foundation-sponsored research projects, the results of which could enhance the position of Angus in the beef industry and, therefore, further benefit Angus breeders.

The possibilities are endless and only limited by our capacity and desire to broaden our horizons. It all depends on relationships and the involvement of people who want to make a difference. What an exciting legacy it would be to leave things better than we found them!

To start this new journey, the Angus Foundation will host a "by invitation only" reception during the Association's Annual Meeting. The invitation list will include past donors who have made total contributions of \$250 or more to the Foundation. If you don't currently qualify for this group, but would like to take part in the movement to expand

the work of the Angus Foundation, we're still accepting donations.

The event will take place on Saturday, Nov. 15, at the Executive West. Refreshments will be served and a short program will feature plans for future Foundation expansion. The No. 1 print of Frank Murphy's original oil painting "In Apple Blossom Time" will sell at live auction to benefit the Angus Foundation during the reception. The print will be professionally framed and is the first of 1,000 signed-and-numbered prints.

For more information or to make a donation, contact James Fisher, reception chairman, at (816) 383-5100 or jfisher@angus.org. We'd love to see you there.



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