

NEWSMAKERS

Compiled by Lindsay King, assistant editor

Within this “Newsmakers” column we share important news and accomplishments of our members, including state association activities, birth and marriage announcements, and news of Angus members’ passing.

In passing

Arlen James Sawyer, 66, Kearney, Neb., passed away Sept. 10.



Born Jan. 30, 1953, in Madison, S.D., to Richard James and Dorothy Elizabeth (Cherrey) Sawyer, Arlen was raised on his family’s Angus farm near Howard, S.D.

He graduated from Howard High School in 1971. He was a member of the South Dakota 4-H Livestock Judging team in 1971 that competed at the national 4-H judging contest in Chicago.

Arlen studied agricultural economics with a minor in animal science at South Dakota State University (SDSU) and graduated in 1975. He was active in Block and Bridle Club, Rodeo Club, Little International, and was a member of the SDSU 1974-1975 Livestock Judging Team, one of SDSU’s most successful livestock judging teams coached by Dr. Dan Gee.

After graduation Arlen married Rebecca (Becky) Ann Schumacher in 1975. He went to work as a herdsman for Cottonwood Angus Farm of Pipestone, Minn., that same summer.

In December 1976 Arlen accepted the manager position of K Plus Angus Ranch near Bassett, Neb. Arlen oversaw the day-to-day ranch management of 700 registered cows

and fitted and showed pens and carloads of bulls at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS). He instituted an extensive artificial insemination (AI) program and did some of the first on-the-ranch embryo transplants (ET) of any U.S. operation. Before the dispersion of the herd in 1983, Arlen helped conduct six bull sales and three female sales.

In 1982, Arlen and Becky purchased a small ranch in Rock County, Neb. In 1984, Arlen became associated with Premier Angus and Silver Plume Angus as they initiated the Profitmaker Bull program.

In the fall of 1990, Arlen and Becky established A&B Cattle, which was recognized as a Historic Angus herd in 1995. Arlen judged numerous regional and national livestock events. One of his most memorable was at the 1995 South Dakota Angus Association’s state show and sale at Watertown, S.D., where the association was celebrating its 50th anniversary and honored the Sawyer family for being one of the founding families of the South Dakota Angus Association.

Arlen enjoyed exhibiting cattle at the American Royal, All-American Angus Futurity, Western National Angus Futurity and the NWSS. As a longtime exhibitor in the Yards in Denver, A&B Cattle exhibited the reserve grand champion pen of bulls in 1992 and 2002.

Arlen served on the American

Angus Association Board of Directors from 2008–2014. He was chairman of the board for Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) in 2012. He was also chairman of the breed improvement committee. In 2012 he was recognized as the Nebraska Angus Association’s Producer of the Year.

Arlen was a member of the Nebraska Angus Association, Nebraska Cattlemen’s Association, and the Sandhill Cattlemen’s Association. He is a past president of the Nebraska Angus Association and the Area II Region of the Nebraska Cattlemen’s Association. He has served on the Nebraska Cattlemen’s Classic board of directors and on the Beef Advisory Council to the Black Hills Stock Show.

He and Becky have served as advisors to the Nebraska Junior Angus Association. Locally, he has served as a two-term president of the Bassett Country Club and is an active member of the Holy Cross Catholic Church in Bassett, where he served as president of the Parish Council. He was also a card-carrying member of the United States Team Roping Championships (USTRC) and Nebraska State Rodeo Association (NSRA).

Arlen is survived by his wife of 44 years, Becky; daughter Jessica Ann Sawyer, Kearney; son Adam (Jenessa) Sawyer and grandson Augustus Sawyer, Bassett; brothers Darrell

(Karla), Rapid City, S.D., and Merlin (Leann), Brandon, S.D.; sisters Connie Stief, Sioux Falls, S.D., and Darla (Jose) Espitia, Round Rock, Texas; aunt Betty McAdaragh, Brookings, S.D.; seven nieces and six nephews; mother-in-law Irma Schumacher, Ames, Iowa; sisters-in-law Mitzi Schumacher, Lexington, Ky., and Johanna Schumacher, Ames, Iowa; and brother-in-law Mark (Susan) Schumacher, Wolsey, S.D.

Angus Arrival

Nick and Abi Rippy, Shelbyville, Tenn., announce the birth of their son Wyatt Andrew on Aug. 30. He weighed 8 pounds, 1 ounce, and was 20.25 inches long.



Nick manages Pleasant Valley Farms near Shelbyville where they raise Angus cattle and Tennessee Walking Horses.

In recognition Merck Animal Health Scholarships

As part of its ongoing commitment to advancing the practice of veterinary medicine, Merck Animal Health awarded \$90,000 in scholarships to 18 bovine veterinary students.

The company presented each student with an American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) Bovine Veterinary Student Recognition Award, as well as a \$5,000 scholarship, at this year's 2019 AABP Annual Conference, held in St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 12-14.

"Merck Animal Health is proud to honor these students with this important scholarship," says Justin Welsh, D.V.M., executive director of livestock technical services, Merck Animal Health. "This group of

exemplary students embodies Merck Animal Health's mission to advance the science of healthier animals, and I am confident they will go on to strengthen veterinary causes in support of this mission as they continue to grow their careers."

The following Angus members received the 2019 AABP Bovine Veterinary Student Recognition Award: Morgan Richard, Louisiana State University; and Austin Wenck, University of Wisconsin.

Minish honored by Virginia Tech

Gary Minish was honored by the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences on Sept.



28, for his lasting legacy at Virginia Tech, including the scholarship endowment set up in his honor and his past work as coach of the livestock judging team.

Gary Minish was one of the first to champion leaner, more heavily muscled, and faster growing cattle over the less profitable, smaller, and fatter cattle of the 1950s and early '60s. His influence helped shape the modern beef cattle phenotype, long before the introduction of genomic technology.

Raised on a purebred beef cattle farm in Iowa, Minish competed in and won many livestock contests. As a teenager, he won the Iowa State Fair and the American Royal Livestock Show in Kansas City, which paid his way through an undergraduate degree at Iowa State University (ISU).

While pursuing his Ph.D. at Michigan State University (MSU), he worked closely with renowned cattle expert Harlan Ritchie on developing

a scoring system for judging cattle on frame size, muscle and fat scores.

Minish joined Virginia Tech in 1962 as an assistant professor and livestock judging team coach. Early on, Minish began fielding invitations to speak at breed association conferences. By his second year at Virginia Tech, he was invited to judge major market steer competitions. He also managed the Virginia Tech herd and evaluated carcasses at the meat processing facility on campus, experimenting to identify optimum cattle type.

"I could see obviously, that at the time, we had a lot of early-maturing cattle that were producing over-fat and light-muscled carcasses, and that needed to change," Minish says of the "belt buckle" cattle.

Minish introduced breeding that created the modern cattle body type that produces the ideal ratio of muscle, fat, and frame size. His findings were all the more impressive considering he did all of this based on phenotype, categorizing cattle visually for carcass merit.

At Virginia Tech, Minish was the first director of Virginia Tech's Agricultural Technology program. Over the course of his career, Minish served as an academic advisor to over 1,000 students, coached 20 high-performing intercollegiate livestock judging teams, and served as founder and senior advisor to the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.

In 1994, Minish was appointed department head of the Virginia Tech Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences. He also served as associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech as undergraduate enrollment doubled to more than 650 students.

In the classroom and among

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the faculty, Minish was known as personable, funny, inspiring, and good at handing out nicknames.

In 2001, Minish retired from Virginia Tech. Following a worldwide search in 2004, Minish was appointed dean of agricultural sciences at Southern Illinois University, where he remained until his retirement in 2010. Minish and his wife, Roberta, now live in Plano, Texas.

“I spent over 40 years in academia,” Minish says. “And the time with the students was the most memorable and most rewarding.”

His accomplishments in the field were so extensive that he was inducted into the national livestock hall of fame in 2012 — the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery — receiving more than 100 endorsements for

the honor. In 2015, Minish was also inducted into the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame.

2019 Iowa State Fair Angus Show, Aug. 13, Des Moines



Ted Greiman, Garner, Iowa, left, was presented with the Bob Schultz Memorial Award. Pictured presenting the award are Mary Schultz, center, and Doug Schroeder, right.



Nellie Meinders, New Sharon, Iowa, center, was presented with the Lyle Haring Award. Pictured presenting (back row, from left) are Ted, Brad and Don Greiman.

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