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Alex Cozzitorto

## Grateful, thankful and blessed

*I think everyone can agree the past 18 months have brought much uncertainty, change and discomfort. However, for me, the past 18 months have been critical in allowing myself time to be reflective.*

As I am writing this article at my kitchen counter, I am looking at a sign above my kitchen cabinets that reads, "In all things, be thankful, grateful & blessed." I walk past that sign every day, but I'm not sure I've really ever taken the time to digest what it means for me in my life.

*In all things be thankful.*

For me, this means that even in suffering, there is so much to be thankful for. A little over a month ago, my grandmother passed away after an 18-year-long battle with cancer.

I was thankful after 18 years of suffering, hospitals, doctor's appointments and treatments, she was peacefully called home. I was also thankful for the 20 years of love and memories I was lucky enough to experience with my grandma.

This phone call from California brought heartache to my family, but

even in that time of sadness, I was able to still have a thankful heart.

*In all things be grateful.*

I have so many reasons to be grateful, and I try to live every day with a grateful heart. I always try to remind myself my worst day could be the best day of someone's life.

Last November I found myself finding a lot of reasons to complain, so I made a list of 100 reasons to be grateful. Putting that pen to paper opened up my eyes to the little parts of daily life that are beautiful and are often taken for granted.

*In all things be blessed.*

My life is overflowing with blessings. I think we live in a culture that likes to highlight the flaws in our lives, instead of highlighting the blessings. I firmly believe if everyone chose to find the blessings, our world would be a much different place.

We all have a cross to bear, but even under the weight of that cross, there is a blessing. I have been blessed with the opportunity to wear the green jacket to represent the junior breed association that has helped cultivate me into the person I am today. This breed has given me some of my forever friends, lifelong mentors and the confidence to dream bigger.

With the year coming to a close, I challenge everyone to live everyday being thankful, grateful and blessed.

Take the time to be reflective over this year. Be thankful for those who have come before you to lay the foundation for your life, be grateful for the little moments and look to find the blessings amidst the chaos of everyday life.

— Alex Cozzitorto

## Bronze and Silver Awards

TaraLee Hudson, Belvidere, Neb., has earned the National Junior Angus Association's (NJAA) Bronze and Silver awards, according to Jaclyn Upperman, events and education director of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Mo.

The Bronze and Silver awards are the first two levels of the NJAA Recognition Program that began in 1972. Junior Angus breeders must apply for the awards, then

meet point requirements in many areas of participation before receiving the honors. Applicants are evaluated in areas of junior Angus association activities and leadership, participation in showmanship, contests and shows, using performance testing to improve their herd, and their progress in producing and merchandising Angus cattle.

Belvidere, Neb., native, **TaraLee Hudson**, is the 20-year-old daughter of Corey Bill and Gina Hudson. She

currently attends the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she studies animal science and agricultural economics.

Hudson is a member of the NJAA and the Nebraska Junior Angus Association. Last year she received the Nebraska Angus Association scholarship. At the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), Hudson has participated in the livestock judging and skill-a-thon contests and the mentoring program.

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## 2021 Minnesota Junior Angus Field Day, June 11-12, Worthington



Elected to serve as directors on the Minnesota Junior Angus Ass'n board (from left) are Lydia Coonrod, Hastings; Alyssa Nesler, La Crescent, Pipestone; Charlie Armstrong, Owatonna; Dawson Johnson, Pipestone; Jaden Borman, Holland; and Taylor Ford, Lake Wilson.



Crowned as Angus royalty (from left) are Emily Coonrod, Minnesota Angus princess; Shelby Lang, Buffalo Lake, Minnesota Angus princess; and Lydia Coonrod, Miss Minnesota Angus.



Receiving scholarships (from left) are Charlie Armstrong and Austin Lang, Buffalo Lake.



Winning top honors in senior showmanship (from left) are Bodin Mayer, Peterson, champion; Cory Altena, judge; and Katie Fitzgerald, West Concord, reserve champion.



Winning top honors in intermediate showmanship (from left) are Taylor Ford, champion; Cory Altena; and Emily Coonrod, reserve champion.



Winning top honors in junior showmanship (from left) are Scott Swanek, Dexter, champion; Cory Altena; and Cora Mayer, Peterson, reserve champion.

## 2021 Missouri State Fair FFA Angus Show, Aug. 12, Sedalia



Winning top honors in showmanship (from left) are Allena Allen, Trenton, reserve champion, and Mardee Sadowsky, Eagleville, champion.

## 2021 Missouri State Fair 4-H Angus Show, Aug. 12, Sedalia



Winning top honors in showmanship (from left) are Annaliese Mead, Barnett, champion, and Nolan Dehn, Dearborn, reserve champion.

## 2021 Iowa State Fair Angus Show, Aug. 17, Des Moines



Erica Chapman, Tipton, won premier exhibitor.