



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Rebelling against success

I love Sprint's television commercial for its Fair & FlexibleSM plan. You've heard the banter: "... It's my way of sticking it to the man." • "But, you are the man." • "I know." • "So, you're sticking it to yourself." • "Maybe."

Does the tail wag the dog?

This dialogue says a lot about human nature and our society. We have the means and the drive to become so successful that the very things we are creating seem to take control of us. We become slaves to our own successes. And, we're so thirsty for a way to rid ourselves of feeling powerless that we're apt to act on something — even if it is harmful to us — because it is within our power to do so.

Certainly we were all for the invention of the telephone and the growth of successful telephone companies — even if efficiencies of scale meant fewer, larger companies.

Certainly we favor the ability to pick up a phone and call someone two states away. But at 12¢ a minute Monday through Friday? Surely if the phone company can afford 7¢ a minute on weekends, it can afford 7¢ a minute 24/7. And I don't want the telephone company telling me — through its pricing schedule — that I can only call Aunt Sue on weekends.

In the grand scheme of things, the United States itself could be deemed such a success story, and government, "the man."

As I attend industry meetings, sometimes I can't help but feel that Angus is the success story, and industry players are looking for a

way of "sticking it to us." Give yourselves a pat on the back for developing such a good breed of cattle and such a strong Association.

Our ace in the hole, though, is a product that is unmatched. Once you've eaten *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]), nothing else satisfies. Once you've owned a set of Angus cows, nothing else compares. Once you've sold a set of Angus calves, would you want to sell anything else? Once you've become accustomed to the programs and to the service provided by the American Angus Association, everything else falls short.

But that doesn't mean their inherent rebellious nature won't lead producers to look for alternatives to give themselves a feeling of empowerment. That means we have to work harder to be flawless. We have to be more creative in providing a sense of empowerment among our customers. And, we have to avoid sticking it to ourselves in ways that could be harmful in the long run.

Welcome, Micky

Join us in welcoming the newest member to the editorial team. Michelle "Micky" Wilson began as assistant editor with Angus Productions Inc. (API) Jan. 3, after graduating with a bachelor's degree in

agricultural journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). Hailing from a cattle and sheep background in central Nebraska, Micky is the fifth generation of her family to pursue a career in the beef industry.

During her time at UNL, she was president of the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) and vice president of marketing for the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) student chapter. She served as recruitment coordinator for the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication.

www.4cattlemen.com

For coverage of the 2006 Cattle Industry Annual Convention and Trade Show Feb. 1-4 in Denver, Colo., visit www.4cattlemen.com. Attended by more than 5,000 cattlemen each year, this is the largest meeting of its kind in the United States. Five industry organizations were to convene at the event.

Several regional winners vying for the overall Environmental Stewardship Award and for the Vision Award are Angus producers. More than 250 trade show exhibitors were to display the latest advances in animal health, management and recordkeeping. Visit the "Award Winners" page and the "Trade Show" page for convention highlights.

Speakers, committees and working groups were scheduled to address issues ranging from cattle handling to political lobbying, from public lands to tax regulations, from market outlooks to advertising schedules. Animal health and tracking systems were sure to take center stage, as was the new proposed long-range plan. For general coverage of the event, visit the "Newsroom" at www.4cattlemen.com.

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