

# Leading the Vision

Howard and JoAnne Hillman, Sioux Falls, S.D., believe in the value of giving back to the breed that has done so much for them and their family.

by **Katie Allen**

**T**radition. It is described as a ritual, belief or object passed down within a society. It develops our foundation, guides our lifestyle choices and establishes the core of who we are. Perhaps most importantly, it is a word that resonates for many who look to the past to build the future.

For members of the Hillman family, tradition means giving of themselves to maintain the integrity of a breed that has been good to them for more than 100 years.

From 1908 to 1999, their Angus seedstock operation, Bon-View Farms of Canova, S.D., produced quality, elite cattle through ups and downs, financial prosperity and hard economic times, and the sacrifices of many. Bon-View Farms has had many successful appearances in national showings through the years and offered genetic advancements to the Angus breed through annual production sales. Even after their dispersal sale in 1999, Howard and JoAnne Hillman have continued to support the breed, volunteering their time to the American Angus Association and the Angus Foundation.

## Leading a vision

One of many Angus leadership roles Howard has accepted is that of chairman of the Leadership Cabinet for the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus*, the Angus Foundation's first capital campaign. Launched in 2006, it aims to raise \$11 million for education, youth and research by Dec. 31, 2011.

Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president, says in addition to their personal financial support, members of the Leadership Cabinet, including Howard, have been instrumental in communicating to their Angus peers and friends from across the country the importance of raising money to support the Angus breed's future.

"This group has served in a complementary capacity to the Angus Foundation's Board of Directors and staff," Jenkins says. "They have helped us develop relationships to expand our outreach capabilities and enabled us to involve far more people than ever before in our organization's programs."

Howard's duties as chairperson of the Leadership Cabinet have included conducting three or four meetings per year, heightening interest in breeders and Angus enthusiasts in donating to the Angus Foundation to help it reach its \$11-million goal and working with other cabinet members to bring continuity to fundraising efforts throughout the duration of the campaign. He says the dedication of the cabinet members, fundraising event volunteers and the Angus Foundation staff has helped the campaign reach many milestones.

"We've been able to accomplish many things in spite of tough economic times," Howard says. "I appreciate the efforts of the cabinet and donors of all kinds who contributed various amounts. All sizes of gifts have helped build on to the \$11 million goal."

## Shared enthusiasm

JoAnne has also been a supporter and advocate for the campaign and encouraged Howard to bring his ideas and experience to the Leadership Cabinet.

"Howard still has a great love for the



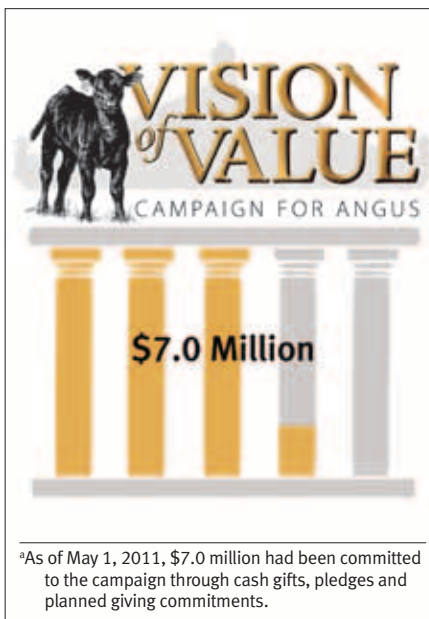
► Angus enthusiasts Howard and JoAnne Hillman, Sioux Falls, S.D., have given to the future of the breed through their leadership, their vision and their own significant gift to the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus*.

Angus business, and I wanted him to contribute what he could," she says.

In searching for a person to lead the Leadership Cabinet, Jenkins says Howard immediately came to mind.

"Upon first meeting and getting acquainted with Howard and JoAnne, their high levels of passion and love for the Angus breed were clearly evident to me," he says.

**Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus status toward reaching fundraising goal of \$11 million by Dec. 31, 2011\***



## The Leadership Cabinet

The *Vision of Value: Campaign for*



► "Through this fundraising effort, the Angus breed will be empowered to continue its prominence in the beef cattle industry," Howard Hillman said as he kicked off the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus* at the 2006 Angus Foundation Supporter Recognition Event. That event marked the launching of the Angus Foundation's first capital campaign.



► Hillman says he is most proud of his role as an Angus breeder. The day-to-day running of his Angus operation and breeding and raising quality Angus cattle he calls the most challenging, yet rewarding, duty he has ever had. “We left the Angus business in ’99 and thought it was as good as it was going to be,” Howard says. “It’s been amazing what the breed has accomplished in the last 10 years.”

“I found in Howard and JoAnne a deep appreciation for the potential impact and crucial role the Angus Foundation could play in providing for the Angus breed through our mission of supporting education, youth and research activities.”

Aside from his role as chairperson of the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus Leadership Cabinet*, Howard has helped in many other leadership capacities for the Angus breed. He has served on the American Angus Association Board of Directors, including as president in 2001. Additionally, cattle shows across the country have benefited from Howard’s time and talents as a judge.

### An Angus breeder first

Despite his leadership and notoriety in

the Angus breed, Howard says he is most proud of his role as an Angus breeder. The day-to-day running of his Angus operation and breeding and raising quality Angus cattle he calls the most challenging, yet rewarding, duty he has ever had.

“I don’t miss the 15-, 18- and 20-hour days, and trying to find good help on the farm is hard,” Howard says. “But I do miss the opportunity to breed cattle. I miss seeing my friends, acquaintances and customers in the business.”

Howard says it is important to recognize that while breeders and others in the industry have struggled

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Angus is led by the Leadership Cabinet chaired by Howard

Hillman of Bon-View Farms, South Dakota, and co-chaired by Jim Coleman of Vintage Angus

Ranch, California, and David McMahon of Belle Point Ranch, Arkansas. Other members of the campaign leadership cabinet include: Dick Beck, Three Trees Ranch, Georgia; Mark Gardiner, Gardiner Angus Ranch, Kansas; John Morgan, Morgan Angus, Georgia; Abbie Nelson, Five Star Land & Livestock, California; Bob Norton, BioZyme Inc., Missouri; Blanford Pierce, Woodlawn Farms, Illinois; Anne Patton Schubert, Kentucky, representing the American Angus Auxiliary; Ron Simek, Canyon Creek Angus, Wyoming; Eddie Sydenstricker, Sydenstricker Genetics, Missouri; Jake Tiedeman, Nebraska, former chairman of the NJAA Board of Directors; Bob Weaver, Weaver Angus Farm, Illinois; and Laurie Widdowson, SandPoint Cattle Co., Nebraska. Ex-officio members include Paul Hill, Champion Hill Angus, Ohio; and Robert Schlutz, Da-Es-Ro Angus Farms, Iowa.

If you would like to learn more about the Angus Foundation or contribute to the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus*, log on to [www.angusfoundation.org](http://www.angusfoundation.org).



► A leadership cabinet has been established to help the Angus Foundation reach its campaign fundraising goal of \$11 million by Dec. 31, 2011. Pictured are (from left) cabinet members Eddie Sydenstricker, Sydenstricker Genetics, Mexico, Mo.; Bob Norton, BioZyme Inc., Saint Joseph, Mo.; Pat Goggins, Vermilion Angus Ranch, Billings, Mont.; Blanford Pierce, Woodlawn Farms, Creston, Ill.; Laurie Widdowson, SandPoint Cattle Co. LLC, Lodgepole, Neb.; Jake Tiedeman, North Platte, Neb., former chairman of the National Junior Angus Association; Anne Patton Schubert, Taylorsville, Ky., representing the American Angus Auxiliary; and Jim Coleman, Vintage Angus Ranch, Modesto, Calif., honorary co-chairman. Other cabinet members are named in the accompanying article.



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with the economic state of the country the past few years, the American Angus Association and Angus Foundation have also struggled to make ends meet. Despite this, he says, Angus leaders have done a great job increasing demand for Angus beef.

“It’s a direct compliment to the Angus breed knowing the demand that is out there for the product,” he says. “The word ‘Angus’ has set a standard for the industry, but it is more than just a word. It is backed up with quality and consistency to meet the consumer demand today.”

This demand is a testimony to those who have worked hard for the Angus breed and who have given of their time, talents and monetary support to keep that demand strong. Continued hard work will lead Angus to new heights.

“We left the Angus business in ’99 and thought it was as good as it was going to be,” Howard says. “It’s been amazing what the breed has accomplished in the last 10 years.”

### Looking to the future

Although the *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus* concludes at the end of this year, Howard says the work of the Angus Foundation will be ongoing, and it will continue to need funds to support education, youth and research well into the future.

Jenkins concurs that it will take the support of many generous people, such as the Hillmans, to help the Angus Foundation reach its future goals.

“The Hillmans have always stepped forward to lead the way,” Jenkins says. “Howard and JoAnne’s devotion to our

*Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus* was accentuated by their announcing their own leadership gift in the early stages of the campaign. They’ve been an inspiration to all of us, with both their leadership and charitable giving to the Angus Foundation.”

Why do the Hillmans continue to give so generously? While we all tend to want to take more than we give back, and it’s hard to think in the other direction, Howard says people need to stop and realize you can receive a lot by giving back a little.

“As Angus breeders and people who are interested in the breed and the association, the work never ends,” Howard says.

“Fundraising is always challenging, but people have to have the feeling to give back to a business that has done so much for them. A lot of wealth in the cattle industry has involved the Angus breed.”

JoAnne says that throughout the campaign, many people have stepped up to the challenge of giving back to the breed by contributing time and money, and these contributions have benefited everyone, large- and small-scale breeders alike.

“Be involved and support the Angus Foundation and Angus Association, and you’ll benefit in the end,” JoAnne says.

From setting trends in Angus cattle, to winning national shows, to donating unconditionally to the Angus Foundation, the Hillmans exemplify the tradition of what we know today as the Angus breed. It is their belief that this example will help others realize the importance of carrying that tradition forward.



► Howard and JoAnne Hillman attended the 2008 Angus Foundation Gala and Auction titled, “That Old West Magic,” hosted at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Pictured are (from left) two actors of “The Legends of Texas”; JoAnne; Howard; Bob Funk, event host and owner of Express Ranches, Yukon, Okla.; Glenn Helm, “The Legends of Texas” representative; and Robert Taylor, sculptor of the Vision of Value Angus bull bronze.