



The Story Begins With

The Treasure Chest project provides an easy way to donate to the Angus Foundation and keep the legacy of treasured cows going for future generations.

by **Katie Allen**

At times when we drive down the highway, we see those Angus cows grazing peacefully just beyond the fencerows. The sight of them makes us smile. As we seek help from a family member to feed hay or

count cows on our own farms and ranches, we're reminded how those cows provide for family time and an opportunity to learn and grow together. For many of us involved in the Angus breed, we are proud of the cows that

bring joy, fulfillment and promise in our lives.

Treasure Chest project

In 2011, the Angus Foundation introduced the Treasure Chest project, a fundraising

My favorite Angus cow

Angus cows are important to all of us, and these Angus juniors, who have been supported in some way from the Angus Foundation, remember the Angus cow that made the most impact on their lives.

JanLee Rowlett, Hurricane Mills, Tenn.

Several weeks prior to the 2009 National Western Stock Show (NWSS), Tennessee native JanLee Rowlett and her family were having second thoughts about making the long trip to Denver to show a heifer named Duck River Blackcap 714, or "Tyra."

"My parents both worked off the farm, I had three siblings to consider, and it was a busy and expensive time of year," Rowlett says. Her parents told her the next year might be better to show at the NWSS. Accepting their decision, Rowlett looked forward to Christmas.

"When it came, I could not have been more excited to find that Santa had left a poem hanging on the tree explaining that in only a few days, my mom, dad, twin sister and I would be on a plane to the Mile High City," Rowlett says. "It was a trip I will always remember, and bringing home with us a reserve division champion banner was the cherry on top."

Tyra was indeed a very special heifer to Rowlett, now age 20 and a junior at Oklahoma State University. Not only did Rowlett have her first experience showing at the NWSS with Tyra, she also won her first

blue ribbon with the heifer at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), a goal she chased for six years.

Rowlett missed her senior prom to travel to Reno, Nev., where she showed Tyra at the Western National Angus Futurity, but she says she gladly traded her gown and corsage for her jeans and showstick, just to have another opportunity to show Tyra.

"It wasn't just new cities and events that Tyra led me to, her show career paved the way to the photo backdrop on several occasions,

and we enjoyed some unbelievable accomplishments that I was so fortunate to be a part of," Rowlett says. "Tyra was proof that the reassurance my parents had offered so many times before was true: That good things do come to those who wait, hard work does pay off in the end, and never give up on the things you want the most."

Tyra is an Angus female that is not only special to Rowlett personally, but she is special to her entire family.

"Tyra represents a huge milestone for us, a culmination of years of time, work and money invested into our herd in an effort to raise a successful show heifer that would become a great donor cow

someday," Rowlett says. "She did just that, and I will always love her for it."

Juniors like Rowlett benefit from Angus Foundation programs, including the Treasure Chest. She is a current director on the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board and has received the \$1,000 Angus Foundation general scholarship, as well as the Angus/Talon Youth Endowment Scholarship for three years.



Your cow herd is your treasure chest — enriching your life as well as your pocketbook. When it comes time for those cows to hit the final trail, they can provide yet another treasure through the Angus Foundation's Treasure Chest program.

PHOTO BY SHAUNA ROSE HERMEL

With the Angus Cow

project that allows the legacy of treasured cows to live on through other Angus youth, education and research projects. Angus breeders can participate in the Treasure Chest project by donating the auction proceeds of a cull cow or cull cows to the Angus Foundation. Those donations can be made from the breeder to the Angus Foundation, or the breeders can simply request that their livestock market submit the auction proceeds directly to the Angus Foundation.

“Progressive Angus breeders want to make a difference and bring about positive outcomes with their hard-earned resources. Treasure Chest is important, and its results can change lives,” says Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president. “Participation by Angus breeders is easy. You, too, can change the life of an



Angus youth through the scholarships resulting from Treasure Chest and advance

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64

Michaela Clowser, Milford, Neb.

Her name is affectionately “Mia,” but her registered name is JMC Right Time Barbara 504. This Angus female is special to 16-year-old Michaela Clowser of Nebraska. A BT Right Time 24J daughter out of a Northern Improvement cow, Mia was the first calf from Clowser's first Angus cow.

“Mia is my favorite cow because she is quiet, easy going and has a very nice disposition,” Clowser says. “We work well together, and my mom says we have the same personality.”

When Mia was born, she became Clowser's first bred-and-owned heifer, and Clowser says she was proud to be building her very own herd. Clowser showed Mia at the 2006 NJAS in Indianapolis, Ind., as a heifer, and with her bull calf, Max, at the 2008 NJAS in Des Moines, Iowa.

“Mia was a true enjoyment to show as a heifer,” Clowser says. “Though we never won a class together, she shined as a mama cow.”

In fact, showing Mia and Max in Des Moines was one of Clowser's favorite show experiences. Clowser says Max was a big bull calf, and at 7 months old he was half as big as his mother.

“I remember standing behind the backdrop getting ready to go into the ring,” Clowser says. “All the other calves were acting up, and that made the mother cows act up. But not Mia and Max. They stood there calmly looking around. I could only imagine Mia thinking, ‘Well, Des Moines is nice, don't you think, Max?’ Thinking about it made me

laugh. I placed second in my class that day, and I was really excited and proud of Mia and Max.”

After selling Max the following February at the Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic, Clowser began to realize that Mia was earning her keep.

“She has given me some of my favorite show cattle, but I'm biased,” Clowser says. “On Jan. 20, 2011, Mia had a heifer calf that looked just like her and had the same laid-back attitude. I named her ‘Mini Mia.’ This year, Mia has a SydGen Doc 9017 heifer by her side, and the saga continues.”

At 10 years old, when she first led Mia into a showing, Clowser couldn't have known at the time just how influential her special heifer would be. What she learned from Mia extended past that showing.

“Like most 10-year-olds, I would get upset if she wouldn't cooperate or wouldn't focus on the task at hand,” Clowser says. “She taught me patience and to keep working hard at what I want to achieve. I also learned to be kind and gentle when working with my cattle. She taught me group dynamics and to be respectful and mindful of others, because that's how

she acts within our cow herd. Mia will always have a special place in my heart and in my herd.”

Clowser, who attends Seward High School in Seward, Neb., is an active member of the NJAA. She has participated in many activities supported by the Angus Foundation, including LEAD, and she was also an associate editor of the NJAA-staffed publication, *The Scoop*, which is released online annually.



The Story Begins With the Angus Cow CONTINUED FROM PAGE 63

the education of our members and research benefits for the advancement of our Angus breed and beef industry.”

Glen Swanson and his wife, Judy, of Durant, Iowa, have financially supported the Angus Foundation in many ways through the years, including donating cull cow proceeds through the Treasure Chest project.

“I thought it was a wonderful opportunity for my wife and I to contribute,” Swanson says. “The Angus Foundation is such a good program and really helps the youth of the Angus Association.”

Swanson’s father started the family’s Angus herd in 1948, and the farm is currently home to about 60 registered cows. As a young person, Swanson enjoyed being involved in 4-H and showing cattle, an interest he passed down to his three daughters, Julie, Glenda and Bonnie, and his grandchildren. He says his family has benefited from the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), which the Angus Foundation supports through youth scholarships and activities, including Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) and Raising the Bar, among others.

“We need to do everything we can to

support our youth,” Swanson says. “It doesn’t have to be a large sum. If a lot of people give a little, it ends up being a lot.”

How to participate

Swanson says the process of donating the cull cow proceeds was very simple. He told the staff at the sale barn to make the check payable to the Angus Foundation and to send it directly to the Angus Foundation’s office.

“The money was taken out right from the start, and I didn’t miss it,” he says.

“Our organization will still recognize the Angus breeder and his or her ranch for the funds we receive from the livestock auction facility,” Jenkins says.

Currently, cull cow prices are at historic highs, much due to the low herd numbers nationwide and increased beef demand worldwide.

“Outright cash gifts from progressive Angus breeders are, of course, welcome at any time,” Jenkins says. “Certainly, with all of us cattle producers enjoying historic high prices for our cull cows, our cash flow has increased, so what better way to give something back to the Angus breed

and pay tribute to that Angus cow for the outstanding job she’s done in your Angus herd over the years, than to give the sale proceeds of that treasured cow to the Angus Foundation.”

Donating cull cow proceeds through the Treasure Chest project truly creates a full-circle effect. These cull cow funds provide more opportunity for Angus juniors to receive scholarships, Angus breeders to attend educational workshops to better their operations, and researchers from across the country to find more solutions for farmers and ranchers to apply within their own herds.

When we think about our own Angus story, the story likely begins with the Angus cows that have meant so much to us, but unlike most stories, this story doesn’t have to end, thanks to the Treasure Chest.

Donations to the Treasure Chest can be mailed to the Angus Foundation, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506. For more information about the Treasure Chest, contact Jenkins at 816-383-5100 or mjenkins@angusfoundation.org.

