



# Up Front

► by **John Crouch**, executive vice president

## Service should be No. 1

*In the course of my brief existence upon this planet and as a result of my involvement with the American Angus Association, I have been afforded the opportunity to travel. The anticipation of seeing new and exciting places and meeting people with different lifestyles has always been appealing. And, of course, travel by air has made possible travel to faraway places that were heretofore inaccessible.*

### Seeking service

Some years ago, in order to attract more business, most airlines adopted frequent flyer programs — programs that reward road warriors with free trips commensurate with the number of miles traveled on that particular carrier.

Having said that, my wife, Judy, and I were excited about attending the reunion of the Boones Creek High School Class of 1958 in May. This event was of particular importance to us, as at the 30th reunion we became reacquainted after years of pursuing other endeavors. As we were planning this trip, sandwiched between an American Angus Association staff meeting and the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) annual meeting, we decided to capitalize on frequent flyer mileage that resulted from our purchase of an American Airlines' Citibank

MasterCard, which is jointly in our possession.

"It's no problem," I related. "I'll just call them up and make the arrangements."

And I did just that.

The "1-800-fast service" number I called rang four times before a recording welcomed me to the airlines' awards program. I am sure you can guess the rest of the story — the recording told me to press 1 for arrival and departure information, press 2 for reservations and so on. Finally, the recording said to press 4 for award redemption. I pressed 4.

Another recording aired, telling me to go to a specific Web site for redemption and I would be rewarded with 1,000 additional points, or press 1 for a living, breathing human. I pressed 1.

Another recording informed me that due

to the extremely high volume of calls, my call would be answered in the order in which it was received. I was treated to music, lots of music, whilst I patiently waited ... for 35 minutes.

Finally, a very nice lady came on the line. I informed her of our desire to travel from Kansas City, Mo., to Johnson City, Tenn., on a specified date, along with my desire to return three days later and Judy's desire to return six days later. This was not the right thing to request. It is better to travel together on the same days, but perhaps it could be worked out.

I was informed that with my particular rewards program, only one seat was available during our requested time of travel, but should I be able to travel at a later date, the airline could accommodate my request; the problem was I would miss the event. However, there was another program wherein we could leave some time after midnight, and three stops and several hours later we'd arrive at our destination. We may as well have driven, but that would have taken four days, so back to the drawing board.

"There is another program for domestic flights," she said, "that requires the expenditure of 100,000 points called 'Anytime Travel.'" To make a long story short, we were able to arrange our travel with only two stops between departure and destination; however, it still required nine hours to fly 600 miles.

What is my point? ... *Service* — or a lack thereof.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

## AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997  
Office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Central)  
phone: (816) 383-5100; fax: (816) 233-9703  
e-mail: angus@angus.org ■ home page: [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org)

### OFFICERS

**Joe Elliott**, president, 1291 Stroudville Rd., Adams, TN 37010; resjoe@bellsouth.net ■ **John Crouch**, executive vice president, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; jcrouch@angus.org ■ **Minnie Lou Bradley**, vice president, 15591 CR K, Memphis, TX 79245; bradley3@srcaccess.net ■ **Ben Eggers**, treasurer, 3939 S. Clark, Mexico, MO 65265; eggers@socket.net

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Terms expiring in 2004**—**Ben Eggers**, 3939 S. Clark, Mexico, MO 65265; eggers@socket.net ■ **Mark Gardiner**, HC 1 Box 292, Ashland, KS 67831; gar@ucom.net ■ **Jot Hartley**, PO Box 553, Vinita, OK 74301; jot\_hartley@hotmail.com ■ **Jay King**, 28287 Woodside Drive, Rock Falls, IL 61071; saukvalleyangus@essex1.com ■ **Richard (Dick) Tokach**, 5520 CR 81, Saint Anthony, ND 58566; rctokach@westriv.com

**Terms expiring in 2005**—**Leo Baker**, 11440 Angus Lane, Saint Onge, SD 57779; msbaker@mato.com ■ **Gregg Blythe**, 3207 Old River Rd., Decatur, AL 35603; clydec7@aol.com ■ **Bill Davis**, HC 57, Box 4075-1, Sidney, MT 59270; rolnok@direcway.com ■ **Robert (Bob) Schlutz**, 260 Colonel's Drive, Box 66, Columbus Junction, IA 52738; rwschlutz@aol.com ■ **John Schurr**, 40842 Farnam Rd., Farnam, NE 69029; john@schurrtop.com

**Terms expiring in 2006**—**Al DeClerk**, 3914 Engelberg Rd., Pochontas, AR

72455; eafterd@cox-internet.com ■ **Joe Hampton**, 2600 Back Creek Rd., Mount Ulla, NC 28125; rhampton@webkorner.com ■ **Paul Hill**, 11503 SR 554, Bidwell, OH 45614; champion@zoomnet.net ■ **Dave Smith**, 1601 N. CR 200 E., Greensburg, IN 47240; dsmith@stewartseeds.com ■ **Rob Thomas**, 42734 Old Trail Rd., Baker City, OR 97814; thomasangus@eoni.com

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**Vice presidents: Finance**—Richard Wilson ■ **Information & Data Programs**—Bill Bowman ■ **Industry Relations**—Jim Shirley  
**Departmental staff: Activities & Junior Activities**—James Fisher, director; Shelia Stannard, assistant director ■ **Administrative Secretary**—Diane Strahm ■ **Angus Information Management Software**—Scott Johnson, director ■ **Commercial Programs**—Jim Shirley, director ■ **Finance & Accounting**—Richard Wilson, director; Kenny Miller, assistant director ■ **Foundation Development**—Milford Jenkins, director ■ **Industry & Member Communications**—Sara Moyer, director ■ **Information Systems**—Lou Ann Adams, director ■ **Member Services & Office Management**—Bryce Schumann, director; Carol Waller, assistant director ■ **Performance Programs**—Bill Bowman, director; Sally Northcutt, genetic research director

### AMERICAN ANGUS AUXILIARY

**President**—Amy Iman Bellis, Orrick, Mo. For a complete list of officers, refer to page 46.

**REGIONAL MANAGERS**—Refer to page 148.

### CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF LLC

**President**—Jim Riemann, Wooster, Ohio  
For a CAB staff listing, refer to page 103.

**Members come first**

I never cease to be appalled at the complete disregard that businesses have for providing service to their customers. Airlines are no different from the American Angus Association. We are service organizations, airlines providing a means of transportation from point A to point B, and our breed association providing services to its membership.

Through the entire hassle of obtaining transportation, I remembered just how

important our members are. The only reason we, as a breed association, exist is to provide unencumbered, courteous and prompt service to our membership. If there is a mistake on your registration certificates, transfers or performance information, it is our desire to correct it ... our fault, your fault, anyone's fault or no one's fault; we want to correct it. If you call and receive a recording, it simply means the person with whom you wish to confer is not available because he or she is assisting another

member. Please leave a message. We will return your call — at Association expense.

It is our aim to provide the very best service possible at a low cost. Your Board of Directors and staff are committed to this pledge. If you have recommendations that enable us to improve our programs and service, please let us know your thoughts.



**E-MAIL:** [jcrouch@angus.org](mailto:jcrouch@angus.org)