



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Seeking leaders

As I visited with Minnie Lou Bradley for the "President's Perspective" story (on page 73), we discussed how to get more members interested in running for the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association. It is a considerable time commitment, but it is also a tremendous opportunity to grow, to give back to the breed and to take responsibility for its future.

Appreciation

Those who have stepped up to the plate and taken that responsibility are to be commended. It does take time, and it is often a thankless job. It has to be discouraging to be heckled for decisions by those who have not put in the time to evaluate the situation or had the same resources to study or the diverse brain trust with whom to consider options.

It is a team of leaders. Look now and into the Association's rich history, and you see among the directors the people who have truly made a difference in the cattle business.

There is no one type. They have come from diverse backgrounds — from cowboys to lawyers, businessmen and doctors; herd managers and owners; small and large herds. Their Angus operations range from selling show prospects to selling bulls for commercial cattlemen to marketing seedstock for purebred herds.

In fact, it's that diversity that helps broaden boardroom discussions to consider the ramifications of decisions on each segment of the Angus industry so the Board

can make the decisions that are best for the breed as a whole.

Board members' similarities rest in their passion for the breed, their desire to see the Angus breed continue its dominance in the industry, and their professionalism in being able to step away from their personal programs and make decisions that are in the long-term best interests of the breed.

Time and time again I have seen them plead their case to the group, then sit back and listen to the valuable contributions of others. Time and time again they have started a discussion with various viewpoints, hashed through the controversial topics and arrived at a better plan than originally pitched — and one to which the group as a whole can ascribe.

But, then again, that is their responsibility to you. You elect them to commit the time to study the industry. You elect them to evaluate the situation. You elect them to come to decisions that serve the best interests of the breed.

So, back to the original question: How do we get more members to run for the Board? I don't have an answer. Do you? What would

it take to get you to run for the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association?

National conference

Kudos to the Association staff for a tremendous 2005 National Angus Conference & Tour. Pre-conference seminars provided tips for how to utilize Association programs and services. Tour-goers were offered a wonderful look at Missouri breeding programs on display at Ol' MacDonald's Farm, Savannah, as well as at Circle A North, Huntsville; Fox Run Farms LLC, Mexico; and Sydenstricker Genetics, Mexico.

From its kick-off Tuesday evening with keynote speaker Tom Field to the conference's conclusion Wednesday morning, this was the most thought-provoking, worthwhile conference I have attended. Not every message was comfortable to hear, but attendees left with a broader vision of what the future holds for the seedstock sector.

Angus Productions Inc. (API) provided real-time coverage of the event, thanks to the sponsorship of Purina Mills, LLC, at www.nationalangusconference.com. PowerPoint® presentations, audio downloads and summaries of the speeches are available online.

If dialup Internet access requires unreasonable download times, CDs or DVDs of audios of the conference are available for a minimal fee. An order form is available on the site for you to print out and either mail or fax in. If you'd like to order by phone, contact LaVera Spire at (816) 383-5220.

E-MAIL: shermel@angusjournal.com

ANGUS PRODUCTIONS INC.

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; 1-800-821-5478; fax: (816) 233-6575; office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (Central)

home page: www.angusjournal.com

Staff are listed by name, phone extension and e-mail prefix. All direct phone numbers are "(816) 383-5..."; all e-mail addresses are "...@angusjournal.com"

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Field editors — *Barb Baylor Anderson*, 305 Valley View Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025, (618) 656-0870, anderagcom@sbcglobal.net ■ *Kindra Gordon*, 11734 Weisman Rd., Whitewood, SD 57793, (605) 722-7699, kindras@gordonresources.com ■ *Janet Mayer*, 259 Mile Hill Rd., Johnstown, PA 15909, (814) 322-4687, jmayer5013@aol.com ■ *Becky Mills*, Rt. 1, Box 414, Cuthbert, GA 31740, (229) 732-6748, lovettmills@alltel.net ■ *Troy Smith*, HC 72, Box 18A, Sargent, NE 68874, (308) 527-3483, wordsmith@nctc.net

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