



Of Grit and Determination

With a character toughened in the west Texas wilds, American Angus Association President Minnie Lou Bradley keeps her focus on industry needs.

Story & photos by *Shauna Rose Hermel*



► **Left:** In fall 2004, Minnie Lou Bradley once again traversed gender traditions as she took the reins as president of the American Angus Association. Addressing delegates of the world's largest beef breed association, Minnie Lou leaned against the podium and spun a Texas yarn about the problems the Association's new aerosol rule had caused her personal fitters in trying to make her presentable for the meeting.

The rolling plains of West Texas provide a picturesque backdrop for hunters and other guests who visit the area to enjoy a peaceful retreat. But for those who want to make a living here, there are some harsh realities: stinging scorpions, rattlesnakes, wild hogs, widow-maker sinkholes, quicksand pits that can swallow a horse and rider, pastures so big it takes all day to ride one, and mesquite thickets so dense the wildlife get lost. It's not a home for sissies.

But then, American Angus Association President Minnie Lou Bradley of Bradley 3 Ranch, Memphis, Texas, is no sissy. Not born to the land or to the business, Minnie Lou has embraced both with fervor. Success hasn't come easy, but it has come. The lessons she's learned have given her a vision for the industry and have triggered others to seek her out for leadership roles, including that of director and officer of the American Angus Association.

Blind determination

Ask Minnie Lou the secret to her success, and she'll say, "I didn't know any better." There may be some truth to that. Case in point: No one ever told Minnie Lou Ottinger that girls couldn't judge on a university livestock judging team.

"In the third grade I told my daddy I was going to go to Oklahoma A&M and be on the judging team," she recalls. It spurred her father to move his family to the country. Minnie Lou got her start in the livestock industry with a 4-H show-lamb project, followed soon after with hogs and then Angus cattle.

During her freshman year at A&M, the Hydro, Okla., native told judging coach Glen Bratcher she was going to be on his livestock judging team when she was a junior.

"He looked at me and said, 'If you're good enough, you can be,'" Minnie Lou recalls. "That's all I needed."

When Bratcher called her into his office before the first contest and explained that he wasn't going to take her because her voice was too high, she was crushed. But, she kept working out for the team, and Bratcher didn't leave her home again.

He took some ribbing for doing what he

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► **Above:** "This is probably the easiest place in the United States to ranch," Minnie Lou Bradley says of her Memphis, Texas, ranch. "We don't have to put up hay. We don't farm any. We don't have the bad winters. A lot of people think it's the worst place to ranch, but if you take care of your country, it'll take care of you."

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said he'd never do — haul a girl on a livestock judging team, Minnie Lou says. But, he was true to his word, and in 1952 she became the first female to win high individual at the National Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest in Chicago, Ill.

It might never have happened had she been a little less salty. As they were preparing reasons for the contest, a competitor saw her placing for a class of Shropshire ewes. He

told her she'd busted the class and ought to salvage it by talking them a different way when she gave her reasons.

"I said, 'You know, I placed it that way; I'll talk it that way,'" she recalls. "The judge and I were the only two who agreed on that placing among me and 220 boys. I talked a [perfect] 50."

Getting started

That same stick-to-her-guns, tell-it-like-it-is flair won over her father-in-law, Rusty Bradley, and helped convert a straightbred commercial Hereford outfit to Angus.

Minnie Lou recalls going home with husband-to-be Bill Bradley while they were in school.

"I'd never seen a calf dehorned in my life until I went home with him," Minnie Lou recalls. "I thought that was the most cruel thing I had ever seen."

After graduation, Bill joined the Army and went to Korea to serve his country. Minnie Lou went to work for the Texas Angus Association (TAA) in Fort Worth.

Rusty often invited her to the ranch on weekends, she explains. He would ask her what she would do with the cow herd. Considering the dehorning, pinkeye, cancer eye and poor udders of the Herefords, Minnie Lou argued a case for Angus bulls.

"He said, 'Go buy me a bunch,' so I did," she recalls.

She must have made an impression, because Rusty helped her purchase the land that was to be the young couple's home while Bill was still in Korea.

"When Bill's daddy and I came down here to look at this place, it was the most desolate-looking place you ever saw," Minnie Lou says, recalling the drought of the mid-1950s. "He dug up the roots and he said, 'I knew it was a pretty good buy; the roots are alive.'"

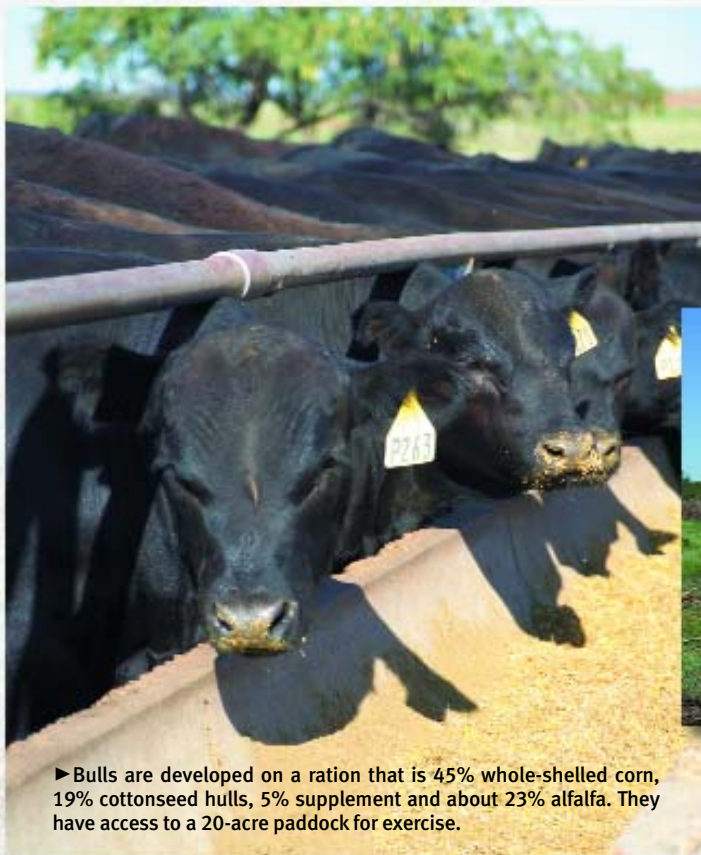
At Rusty's encouragement, they invited her parents out for a picnic on what is now called

South Jonah to show them

where she was going to live. "My dad got me off in a corner and he said, 'You're going to starve to death out here.' I thought he was probably right," she says.



► **Above and right:** The area water, with its high concentration of gypsum, isn't fit for drinking, so rural water is pumped in. "This is hollow country, and we have those big sink holes," Minnie Lou says, so storage tanks have to be limited in size. The tanks above serve as a water supply for eight paddocks in a rotational grazing system.



► Bulls are developed on a ration that is 45% whole-shelled corn, 19% cottonseed hulls, 5% supplement and about 23% alfalfa. They have access to a 20-acre paddock for exercise.



► **Left:** A mesquite tree provides shade but will take 20-30 gallons (gal.) of water per day, robbing the grassland of moisture in an environment that averages about 19 inches of rainfall per year.



► Minnie Lou says the No. 1 requirement for succeeding in the cow business is having a home for the cow. The land she and Bill purchased for \$22.52 per acre is now valued at \$500-\$600 per acre for its hunting value. Reclaiming grassland from the mesquite and cedars at a cost of \$100-\$120 per acre is a more cost-effective way to expand grazing availability.

Angus program

Unlike many of her peers, Minnie Lou says, she had no designs on becoming president of the American Angus Association. In fact, after her first taste of the registered side of the business, she wasn't sure she wanted anything to do with the purebred business at all. In the two years she worked for the TAA, she saw her fill.

"When we got married and moved out here I said, 'The last thing I ever want to see is another registered cow,'" Minnie Lou says. So, they bought Angus bulls to put on the Hereford cows with the intention of raising black baldies.

It didn't take long to realize that, stocked with commercial cattle, their 3,000-acre ranch wasn't going to be enough. "One day I said, 'You know, we're never going to be able to do anything but exist, and maybe educate our kids, with commercial cattle,'" she notes.

Then Minnie Lou remembered taking phone calls while at the TAA from commercial producers who wanted help finding Angus bulls — but they said they wanted bulls that would make them money, not the short, dumpy blacks that were winning in the showing.

"I told Bill if we could raise the kind of cattle the commercial man wanted, maybe we could sell them," she says. They bought 10 registered cows in 1957 and joined the American Angus Association in 1958.

As they grew their program, which now includes about 350 cows on 11,500 acres, the Bradleys kept commercial producers' interests at heart, adapting their herd to meet those needs. A believer in Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA), Minnie Lou says she compares her costs to the average costs of the 129,000 area cows enrolled in SPA.

"We try not to spend any more money than any commercial man on our cows," she explains. Cow costs, including land and labor, average about \$300 per cow. Minnie Lou shoots for an efficient cow that can withstand harsh weather, targeting an 1,100-pound (lb.) female that will wean a calf half her bodyweight. While first-calf heifers are brought up to the barns to watch during calving, cows calve unattended in two-section pastures.

Minnie Lou believes in using her own bulls, saying, "If he's not good enough for me, he's not good enough for the commercial man." She does artificially inseminate (AI) some of her heifers to reference sires to help establish expected progeny differences (EPDs), but the rest are bred naturally in multi-sire pastures. DNA-typing is used to identify sires.

She has incorporated embryo transfer (ET) to capitalize on superior dams. To

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Peer Review

During their time together as directors of the American Angus Association, Board members get to know each other on a different level than most producers. Here's what past and current Association leaders had to say about Minnie Lou Bradley's role as a leader of the Angus breed.

"Minnie's greatest contribution in her leadership role as a director and officer of the Association has been her no-nonsense business approach to the issues facing the beef industry. Her ability to assess current and future needs of commercial beef producers, combined with her commonsense approach, has distinguished her as a true industry leader."

— John Crouch

"Few people, male or female, in the cattle business or any business, have had the foresight to see, the vision to dream, the wisdom to remember, the common sense with which to judge, the self respect to admit a mistake, or the tenacity to hold the course that Minnie Lou Bradley has exhibited while serving the members of the American Angus Association."

— Joe Elliott

"Minnie Lou commands respect, and knows how to ask the right questions to get right to the heart of the matter. She has no qualms taking a stand on a controversial subject, and I doubt she ever has."

— Ben Eggers

"Minnie Lou Bradley has a unique capability to keep a meeting, an idea or a perspective focused in a positive direction, using a firm hand of leadership buffered by a very unique sense of humor. She has had her work cut out to keep some of us on the Board on a straight and narrow path!"

— Bill Davis

"Minnie Lou's willingness to share her vast knowledge and lifelong experiences with all the different segments of the cattle industry has been a great help to the AAA Board over the years. While Minnie Lou has great patience, her frustration will show when the Board spends an extraordinary amount of time discussing an issue that affects only a small portion of our membership. Many times she has gotten us back on track by stating, 'Boys, if you are not helping the commercial cattleman, you are wasting your time.'"

— Richard Tokach

"Minnie Lou Bradley has experience and knowledge in all aspects of the beef industry. She is a pusher for progress and change. Just like Merrill Lynch, when Minnie Lou speaks, everyone listens."

— Dave Smith

"Nine years ago, I read an article titled 'Beef's Tough Lady.' At that time, I said to myself, 'I would like to meet that person.' Little did I know that, a few years later, I would be sitting next to her in the boardroom of the American Angus Association. The first sentence in the article proclaimed her as 'not afraid of adversity.' After all, who stepped forward to moderate the informational seminars on the derivative? From that moment on, one would realize what a skillful and determined leader she would be."

— Jay King

"Minnie Lou's greatest contribution while serving on the Board has been her vision of all that is and all that could be. She never restricted her views of what the future could hold. Even with all of her experience, she readily embraces new challenges and ideas. In fact, she often issued the challenges and the ideas to the Board and the membership. I will always relish the opportunity I had to serve with one of the great leaders of our industry and our time."

— Mark Gardiner

"A great contribution made by Minnie Lou came after the death of Richard Spader. She served on the search committee and helped keep the members grounded while finding his replacement.

"Her honest, fair evaluation has enabled us to reach new heights through not only keeping our Angus team together, but giving encouragement to add new, energetic and talented individuals to our team. In her year as president, we have reached a new high in registrations, and all segments of AAA have seen innovation and growth."

— Paul Hill



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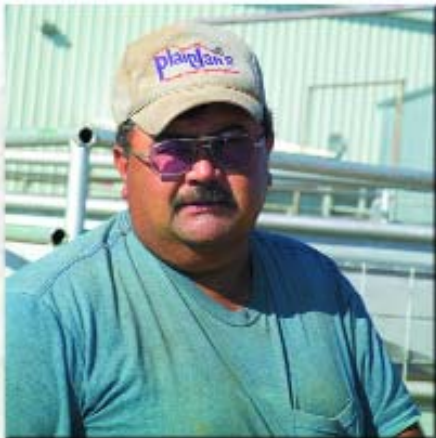
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qualify for the program, donors must first bear eight calves with a 365-day calving interval and a 105% ratio for calf weaning and yearling weight.

Weaning and yearling weights are not a high priority at Bradley 3 Ranch, as those traits are often at odds with an efficient cow herd, Minnie Lou says. But, the herd excels in terms of cow energy savings (\$EN) and convenience traits. Feet and legs are a priority, as are disposition and carcass quality.

Broader industry

Unhappy with the price she got on a young bullock she took to market, Minnie Lou embarked on another venture — feeding her cull calves out and selling locker beef to add value. She lined her back porch with freezers and peddled the meat. As success came and convenience stores started selling B3R meats, she started buying a few



► Gerardo “Chic” Saenz, ranch resource manager, took the position working for Bradley 3 Ranch to learn more about cattle. Minnie Lou, who describes him as a true genius, says he is a model citizen and reminds her to appreciate the conveniences often taken for granted.

steers to meet demand. That’s when she noted the difference in eating quality.

As the labor of handling two to five carcasses every two weeks increased, she thought about quitting the business. But, daughter Mary Lou, who was in school majoring in accounting and keeping the books for the ranch, told her she couldn’t, as it was the first time the ranch had a positive cash flow.

When her brother, Monte, was killed in a car accident, Mary Lou came back home to the ranch. She decided to quit her bank job and enter the meat business. Outgrowing the capacity of the locker plant, the Bradleys used a city business-development grant to build a packing plant in Childress, Texas, complete with a retail counter.

It wasn’t necessarily an easy go, but the duo built B3R Country Meats into a burgeoning business. To feed the plant, they fed cattle for other ranchers, returning data and information to producers so they could make herd improvements. They also incorporated premiums and discounts for carcass quality.

Minnie Lou says she learned one of her greatest lessons from her daughter, who managed the packing plant. Mary Lou told her she wanted to start furnishing the beef for Minnie Lou and the three men she had working for her at the time.

“Within three weeks, I had weaned those boys from eating beef,” Minnie Lou laughs. “I called Mary Lou up and said, ‘This is horrible. It’s got blood splashes in it. It’s got gristle in it. It’s got bruises. It tastes awful.’ [Mary Lou] said, ‘You sent me that kind of cattle. You produced it, now you eat it.’”

It was a wake-up call to think that was what the average consumer was getting when they purchased beef, she says. And, it shed new light on the packing industry.

“People hate the packer because they think he makes a lot of money, but if the cow-calf man made as little per calf as the packer, we’d all be broke,” she says. Minnie

Lou tells cattlemen they ought to be a packer for one day just to experience the problems cattlemen send them.

“I’m not saying they are angels,” she says. “I’m saying they are the customer who buys your product. You don’t do that to your customer. You work with him, because he’s paying you every day. He’s paying you to stay in business.”

Mary Lou eventually assumed total responsibility for the family meat business. By the time she sold it in 2002, they were feeding 36,000 head a year and processing 700 carcasses a week.

Selected to lead

Minnie Lou’s industry perspective has set her apart as a leader in the beef industry.

“Minnie Lou is one of the most qualified people who has ever sat on the American Angus Association Board,” says Richard McClung of Wehrmann Angus, New Market, Va., who first encouraged Minnie Lou to run for the Board. “Her wealth of experience, foresight and futuristic thinking make Minnie Lou one of the real leaders of this industry.”

Dave McMahan of Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Ark., also prodded her to run for the Board. “She knows the livestock business and works with vigor,” McMahan says. “This lady is one of those few great ones: American, Texan, Okie through and through. We (the Association) needed her, and she came through.”

“Minnie Lou has been a leader in the beef cattle industry from the first day she tried out for the collegiate judging team at Oklahoma A&M University,” fellow Board member Richard “Dick” Tokach says. “Her real-world experiences in all facets of the cattle business make her one of the most unique individuals in the industry.

“Minnie Lou has firsthand experiences with the struggles of commercial cow-calf operators and the challenges of the seedstock business,” he continues. “She has operated a small feedlot and launched a nationally recognized branded beef business, along with an accompanying packing plant.

Minnie Lou has been quick to point out that the only way to ensure the long-term profitability of the cattle business is for all the industry segments to work together, and not at the expense of one another.”

“Her experience in the commercial industry has served the membership well by keeping our breed grounded in the reality of beef cattle production in the United States,” former Board member Mark Gardiner of Ashland, Kan., says. “She has been one of the great leaders of the American Angus Association.”



► Disposition is a priority on the Bradley 3 Ranch. Foreman Darrell Bryant works yearling cattle on horseback to accustom them to being cut away from the group and singled out. The effort makes it much easier to work cattle the remainder of their time on the ranch.



President's Perspective

A Q&A with American Angus Association President Minnie Lou Bradley.

by *Shauna Rose Hermel*

Q The Association reached a milestone this year, registering 324,266 head, 8.5% more than last year. To what do you attribute that growth?

A I don't think there's any doubt that it's our performance information. People don't buy bulls like they used to. These people know what bulls they're going to buy when they come here because they've studied all this information. You get a cowman who's going to buy 100 bulls a year, and in 10 minutes you have the bulls all picked. With the information the American Angus Association has been able to furnish, they feel so much more comfortable than they do with other breeds.

CAB (Certified Angus Beef LLC) data shows the premium for Angus calves. Then, they go to the auction barn and see the difference in what calves are bringing. It's not so much the black color, but it's the information and being able to use that information to get a premium.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention the staff of the American Angus Association, Angus Productions Inc. (API) and CAB. They are the best in the business, and they work hard to provide the services and publications that keep us at the forefront of the industry.

Q This year Texas led the nation in the number of new Association members. What do you think the reason is for that?

A I think you can attribute a lot to CAB. A lot of these people like to go to auction markets, and when they see these black calves bringing more money, they want to be a part of that. Everybody wants to be associated with a winner.

There are a lot of people getting into the business who have never had cows before. If they've got five acres, they're going into the cow business, and they're going into the Angus business.

Q What challenges do new producers coming into the business face?

A Anything small is going to have a hard time surviving just because of sheer numbers. One feedtruck can feed 400 cows or 20 cows or five cows. Numbers make the thing work financially. Can I get a person in to ultrasound five head? Or am I going to have to go someplace?

I think we'll see more people joining forces, having a sale with four or five consignors, and maybe a resurgence of test stations where people can take their three or four bull calves.

They're going to have to do like some of

the sale barns and put cattle together, but the cattle will have to be bred alike, they will have to look alike and be tagged alike if those people are going to survive. And, a lot of them won't survive; a lot of them will lose interest and get out.

Q What challenges do you see for traditional cow-calf producers?

A We have got to produce the most fertile cow in the world, because it all starts with fertility. In the rolling plains of Texas, with about 129,000 cows enrolled in SPA (standardized performance analysis), we're only weaning an 84% calf crop. When you divide the number of pounds that you wean against the number of cows that you exposed, you fall about 150 pounds from your average. We've got to improve that. We have to wean more pounds on less feed.

The most expensive period in a calf's life is from the time he's weaned until he's fed out — the cost of the calf and then feed. Paul Engler, the second-largest cattle feeder in the United States, will tell you we have not made an improvement in feed efficiency. Hogs have. Chickens have. Some will attribute the lack of improvement to feedyards selling feed, but if those feedyards own the cattle, feed efficiency is very serious to them, and to a retained owner it's very serious.

So, we've got to work on efficiency — cow efficiency, feedyard efficiency.

We're losing so much land, it's going to be harder and harder for our commercial cowman to expand on account of grassland increasing in price. Around the city, property taxes are forcing many to sell. A home for a cow is the most important thing we have to have to succeed.

Labor is a challenge now, so we have to get cows that can take care of themselves as much as possible. We have to look at disposition, because it takes a lot fewer people to handle gentle cattle than wild cattle. Disposition affects health and feed efficiency, and it affects the carcass, which can lead to discounts.

And, the cost of everything — a lot of commercial cattle people don't want to know their costs. Cowmen tend to do things more with their hearts than their heads. But, it's a business.

Q Some say that in the future we won't be able to supply a high enough standard of living to keep the youth on the farm. Is that a problem here?

A Absolutely. We see that here. Then, when momma and daddy die, it's

divided up amongst all the kids, but it's not big enough to do anything with, and so then it goes to somebody buying maybe just a house and a horse and then cows.

I really worry about whether America will be able to feed itself one of these days, and then I see Brazil coming in and China coming in, all with cheaper labor.

But, we have the highest-quality and the most-efficient cows. There'll be a place for the Angus cow. More countries are getting more wealth, and it seems like the first thing they want to do is eat good beef. As long as they want to do that, and if we don't go off on some big tangent, and we keep saying quality is important — and taste and tenderness — and keep working to make the cow more efficient, we can compete with these other countries that have cheaper labor.

You know, an 1,100-pound cow — whatever color she is, whatever height she is — is going to eat about the same. Why not produce a calf that is the highest quality and will bring you the most money?

Q What additional challenges do Angus breeders face?

A When you're on top, you become a target. If we make a mistake or two, there are those who are ready to take advantage.

Breeders tell me we need to sit still and not do anything — that we're doing too much. We can't sit still. You're either growing and going forward, or you're going backward.

Whoever would have thought we'd have all the information we have available today? I don't put anything past us anymore on our knowledge and our ways of getting it. I don't know what we'll see in the future, but I think it is going to be a good ride if we'll get on it. If we get a kicking, squealing horse and we can't get on him, we'll probably be left behind.

Q Other breeds are promoting heterosis to compete with straightbred Angus. How do we counteract that? Or should we counteract that?

A I think the first cross is great for the commercial man. I do not believe in composites. Period. A composite has already used up the heterosis, and I don't think you'll ever have a composite that will breed true.

Still, I can't argue with a guy who uses a Charolais bull on a set of Angus cows. I can't argue with that because what sells to the packer is pounds of saleable meat. If we get our cows with the kind of muscle we need in the meat, we're probably going to lose fertility, and fertility is most important.

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Q The American Red Angus Association has published its intent to join forces with a group of other breeds to process data. What challenges does that pose to the American Angus Association?

A I think we always need to be concerned about those kinds of things. We ought to be concerned and on our toes. It tells you a couple things, but primarily those associations can't do it by themselves. They are in dire need of help.

Whether joining forces will work out and whether they have the capabilities of handling six breeds is still a question. There is power in numbers and that's what they are trying to gain. I think it might be a big challenge for them. We know what we spend on computer systems and software.

We have to stay abreast of those things, evaluate them and see what the challenges are.

Q Are there any opportunities for us?

A The door is wide open. And, if we don't walk in, we're not as smart as we think we are. Our biggest problem and our greatest asset is our membership. It is so diverse. But, the challenge is, how many of our members understand (1) our industry and (2) that we're only going to succeed if the industry succeeds?

My challenge this year to the fellas has been let's think of what we really contribute to the American economy and to the agricultural economy.

We're in the leading role right now in the industry, and we need to understand our financial impact. We harvest, on the average, 126,000 cattle a day. If they weigh 1,200 pounds and bring 84¢ per pound, that equates to \$127 million dollars a day. If you estimate a 70% Angus influence, that means Angus breeders are contributing \$88.9 million a day to the economy. In the business world, a dollar is supposed to roll 10 times, so we are affecting \$889 million a day.

That's what people don't understand. We're not this showring, blue-ribbon thing. The cattle industry is the largest of all agricultural products, and we need to start thinking in that direction rather than wondering who's going to judge the next show. We need to ask, "Can we keep that 70%? Can we add to it? What if we could take \$10 off the cost of producing each calf, add \$10 to its value or both?" That's what we're all about.

How we get there, I think, is by doing the kind of things we've done in the past and taking the bull by the horns some. Maybe that's where we are — we've got all our cattle dehorned now and we can't take 'em by the horns.



► "I've always said when a person joins the American Angus Association, he ought to get the sharpest pocketknife ever made and someone ought to tell him how to use it, because not every bull is going to be a herd bull."

— Minnie Lou Bradley

Q Do you think we have anything to worry about with the National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium (NBCEC) compiling a database as large as ours?

A I don't think we have to worry about it getting larger; I think we have to worry about it being correct and who is going to operate it. I would like for the American Angus Association to be in control of the data.

I fear it getting into private hands — and likely a packer. If that happens, I think you will see the packer tell the rancher, "I'll buy your calves, but you're going to breed your cows to this bull, and they're going to be under our control."

We have more experience in data processing than anyone else, and we don't have any selfish interest in it. We're the leaders in data processing, and we know more about it. I think we should proceed with multi-breed evaluation, but it's got to be something that doesn't cost us money. It has to be financially sound. And we have to maintain the integrity of our database.

What's got us here will keep us here if we keep on our toes. But when you are number one, somebody's after you, and you are going to have to reach out. It's a global society now. We're not just dealing in the United States. We've got to sell meat throughout the world. We've got to have information, quality and efficiency. And, we can only do it through numbers.

So yes, if we don't keep on our toes, we have lots to worry about. If we go forward and the Board continues as it has in the past to take leadership roles, we'll be OK.

Q As president of the American Angus Association, what do you want people to remember you for?

A I hope they just think that I'm an OK person and that I tried to be fair and honest. I know a lot of them will say that I'm too straightforward, but that's the only way I know to be.

Q What's been the hardest part about being a Board member?

A The time commitment and the learning curve. I had a big learning curve. I had to learn a lot in terms of protocol. Of all the meetings I sit in on, it's probably as well-run according to protocol as any. I have never in eight years seen a really heated argument. Everybody has been professional. Even when we disagreed, everybody acted like gentlemen and ladies, and I appreciate that.

I'd like to see more people run for the Board. A big organization like this ought to have several people running each year. Some people say they don't want to run and get beat. I don't think they should look at it that way.

My mother always said, "You've got to be active." When I told her after I'd moved here that I just didn't feel like part of the community, she said, "If you get active in church you'd be a part. You've got to take a part in something before you can feel a part of it." If it's your income, you need to find the time.

And, we need people who understand the industry, because we will go as the industry does, or we can help shape the industry.

Q What does it take to be a Board member?

A It takes a person who's willing to grow and look at all sides of an issue with no personal agenda; one who's dedicated to the improvement of the breed and who wants to understand the entire industry; one who has the guts to talk straight to the members and tell them after much study and thought that the decision was made one way or the other; one who honors confidentiality when needed; and one who realizes we are in a global economy and who understands and realizes we must be a willing partner. There are countries that are coming on that can produce cattle cheaper than we can, so quality and our database are the only things that can keep us the consumer's choice.



