



# Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

## Don't lose zest for marketing

*We gathered every ball we could find. Different sizes just gave us more classes as my cousins, brother and I pretended to host a show and sale in the basement of my aunt and uncle's house. Now I would have preferred cattle, but I was outnumbered, and you have to admit, balls make more realistic pigs than cows.*

### Fun in the basement

We'd take turns being the judge of the show, and as one of us compared the "animals" in the class, the rest of us would use our whips to urge our roundstock around the ring so the judge could get a good look.

Whips with bigger flaps on the end are better for driving roundstock, in case you're wondering. Orange-colored basketballs made good Durocs. And soccer balls made a Yorkshire class. You had to be careful with the wiffle balls to make sure they didn't get out of control, as a tap could send them flying. A bad disposition might get placed lower in class. Or, the judge might be kind and allow, "The young lady's gilt was in heat today and a little unruly, but she did a masterful job getting her back under control and presented today."

Of course, the show would be followed by a sale. One of my cousins would usually try to tackle the fast-paced cry of the auctioneer as he described the format of

the sale to an imaginary crowd. Our grand champion of the day would get to sell first. For the life of me, I can't remember how bids were placed, but we'd always stop the bidding to give the owner time to describe why the animal should bring much more than the current bid. We'd pull out all the stops, from individual performance to pedigree and the value of related animals.

Of course, our sales pitch would encourage buyers to bid higher.

Who needed Barbie when you could host a show and sale?

Those days in the basement, practicing our merchandising skills, let us dream of how we would do

things when we grew up — from the breed we would raise to the traits we would value and the herd philosophies on which we would stake our reputations. I'm sure the role-playing didn't hurt us down the road as we presented our animals — pigs and cattle — before numerous judges, and gave oral reasons on livestock judging teams from 4-H to college.



Somewhere along the line, as we grew older, the emphasis seemed to move toward raising that perfect animal — selecting the genetics to provide the foundation and crafting the management skills to raise and present that animal to its fullest potential. After all, if we could raise the best stock, people would be knocking down our door to buy them. We want to be known for our cattle, not our sales gimmicks. Right?

But if buyers don't know where your door is, how are they going to knock on it?

Good merchandising creates awareness of a product among the audience that needs the product, accurately depicting its assets so potential buyers can discern a value of the product for their situation and allowing the seller to obtain the greatest price by selling the product to the buyer who values it most. It creates a win-win.

Satisfied customers come back, but that doesn't mean marketing is unnecessary once you become an established producer — not if you want to obtain the greatest price. When you make a sale, ask yourself: Did the person who needed this bull the most even know that he existed?

OK, I know that sounds a little unrealistic, but the point is, you are not receiving what your cattle are truly worth unless those that would value them the most know about them. It's not up to them to seek you out; it's up to you to let them know about you.

It's wonderful to see the enthusiasm our junior members have for marketing. Take a look at Austin Brandt's postcard on page 32 in the "Next Generation." Encourage your kids to take advantage of the contests that will help foster their marketing ability. While you're at it, practice a little marketing of your own.

E-MAIL: [shermel@angusjournal.com](mailto: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](http://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"

**General manager** — Terry Cotton, 214, tcotton

**Editorial Department** — Editor, *Shauna Rose Hermel*, 270, shermel ■ Associate editor, *Kasey Miller*, 277, kaseymiller ■ Assistant editor, *Linda Robbins*, 245, lrobbins ■ Intern, *Katie Gazda* ■ Artists, *Mary Black* & *Craig Simmons*

**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 ■ *Becky Mills*, Rt. 1, Box 414, Cuthbert, GA 31740, 229-732-6748, beckymills81@yahoo.com ■ *Troy Smith*, 44431 Sargent River Rd., Sargent, NE 68874, 308-527-3483, wordsmith@nctc.net

**Publications and Production** — Manager, *LaVera Spire*, 220, lspire

**Advertising Department** — Advertising coordinators, *Doneta Brown*, 232, dbrown; *Karri Mildenerger*, 289, kmildenerger; & *Sara Reardon*, 212, sreardon ■ Production coordinator, *Carol Beckett*, 203, 226, cbeckett ■ Advertising artists, *Mike Bush* & *Monica Ford* ■ Proofreader coordinator, *Jacque McGinness*

**Circulation & billing manager** — *LaVera Spire*, 220, lspire

**Special Services Department** — Coordinator, *Sharon Mayes*, 221, smayes ■ Assistants, *Julie Tyliski* & *Vickie Whitsell* ■ Artist, *Susan Bomar* ■ Proofreader, *Melinda Cordell*

**Web Services Department** — Web Services coordinators, *Doneta Brown*, 232, dbrown; *Sara Reardon*, 212, sreardon; & *Karri Mildenerger*, 289, kmildenerger ■ Web developers, *Tim Blumer* & *Thuy Copeland*

**Photo Department** — Photo services coordinator, *Kathrin Gresham* ■ Photo services assistant, *Colette Weipert*

**Network systems coordinator** — *Bruce Buntin*

**Board of Directors** — *Phil Trowbridge*, chairman; *Bryce Schumann*, vice chairman; *Terry Cotton*, president; *Richard Wilson*, secretary-treasurer; *Charlie Boyd II*; *Vaughn Meyer*; *Jim Rentz*; *Chris Sankey*; *Darrell Silveira*; and *Gordon Stucky*

