



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Taking care of business

As you read this issue, I hope you are filled with the same sense of optimism for the future of “Angus: The Business Breed” as I was proofing it.

Reason to be optimistic

It’s hard to spend a day with Bill and Jennifer Davis and not come away with a stronger sense of confidence in the industry. A third-generation rancher and second-generation Board member, Bill predicts the next three years will be some of the best the Angus business has known. Read why in “President’s Perspective” on page 44.

He’s not alone in his optimism.

Attendees of the American Angus Association’s National Angus Conference & Tour had opportunity to listen to a host of reasons Angus breeders should be optimistic. Opening speaker Tracey Erickson shared why the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand has reached new records in an economy that would predict reductions in consumption of premium products. Closing speaker Randy Blach presented a state of the industry, offering to attendees reasons why the beef industry — especially Angus producers — are poised to take advantage of profit opportunities. And speakers in between offered similar good news. We give you a glimpse of those presentations in “Angus

Producers Meet in Montana” on page 60.

There’s more available online, including photo galleries and audio at www.nationalangusconference.com, Angus Productions Inc.’s online coverage site. The Association provides video footage and a photo essay at www.angus.org.

If David Allan Coe wrote “The Perfect Country Song,” Steve Suther and Miranda Reiman may have to tie for the honor of writing “The Perfect Angus Story.” Steve’s story “Missouri Shows U.S.” (see page 133) and Miranda’s “The

Growing Angus Advantage” (see page 151) both relay phenomenal success stories built on Angus genetics — one on the female side, the other focused more on the terminal side.

In his “Moving Forward” column on page 20, Association CEO Bryce Schumann shares a far different year-end report than we saw last year. Several business indicators within the organization point us toward a bright future.

Challenges can be overcome

Being optimistic does not mean ignoring the challenges, and we have several ahead.

In his series on Them Against Us (see pages 190, 192 and 194), Wes Ishmael outlines some challenges (animal rights, anti-technology sentiment and government regulation, respectively). Presenting at the National Angus Conference, Charlie Powell of Washington State University explained some of the challenges instantaneous communications vehicles pose to agriculture and the beef cattle industry.

But challenges can be overcome and may even present opportunities in themselves. For example, Kindra Gordon’s article “Big Future for Small Farms” (page 68) shows how smaller-scale producers may be able to take advantage of the locavore movement to develop direct sales. Her story “Accentuating the Positive” (page 78) provides examples of producers in California and Montana taking matters into their own hands to broadcast a positive image for the beef industry.

Other articles in this issue — and most other issues of the *Angus Journal*, for that matter — offer insights on programs and services of the American Angus Association and its entities and profile the success stories of producers using those programs and Angus genetics to succeed in today’s beef industry.

As Bill Davis says, some of the most challenging issues, like the overall economy, we have little control over. But some we do. As an Association and as individuals, we need to be positive and proactive, taking the steps we need to take to take care of business.

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