

Association Elects Leadership

New directors, officers elected at 123rd Annual Convention of Delegates.

Story & photo by *Shelia Stannard*

Jot Hartley, Vinita, Okla., was elected president of the American Angus Association at the group's 123rd Annual Convention of Delegates, Nov. 13, 2006, in Louisville, Ky. He follows Ben Eggers, Mexico, Mo.

More than 350 delegates who were elected to represent Association members from more than 40 states conducted the business of the Association during the Annual Convention of

Delegates. The meeting was at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center (KFEC) in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) super-point Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show.

Paul Hill, Bidwell, Ohio, was chosen by the delegates to serve as vice president of the Association, and five

individuals were elected to the Association's Board of Directors. Jay King, Rock Falls, Ill., will serve as treasurer for the year.

Hartley and his wife, Renee, own and operate Spur Ranch at Vinita, Okla., along with their sons. The operation started by Jot's grandfather has been in the family since the 1930s, and his dad introduced Angus to the herd in the 1950s. Spur Ranch, a diversified cattle operation consisting of both purebred and commercial Angus cows and stocker cattle, hosts a production sale each fall.

Jot is a former director and past president of the Oklahoma Angus Association and a member of the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association. He is also a former director and president of Oklahoma Beef Inc. (OBI), a highly successful producer-owned bull test station.

Jot holds a degree in finance from Oklahoma State University and a law degree from the University of Oklahoma. He is a licensed attorney, admitted to practice in several state and federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

As Association president, Jot will serve as chairman of the Executive Committee and

work closely with all directors to lead the Board during the next year.

Hill, elected to serve as vice president, grew up on a livestock and peanut farm in Florida and today is a partner in Champion Hill, Bidwell, Ohio. Hill serves on the advisory board to the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) and has worked to raise funds and awareness for numerous programs that benefit Angus youth.

While serving as vice president, Hill will serve as chairman of Angus Productions Inc. (API) and the Angus Foundation boards of directors. He will also serve on the Executive Committee.

Directors elected

Following are brief biographical sketches of the five people who were elected to the Association Board of Directors at the 2006 Annual Convention of Delegates. More extensive biographies were published in the October 2006 *Angus Journal*.

Al DeClerk, Pocahontas, Ark., was re-elected to his second term on the Board. Involved in production agriculture his entire life, DeClerk and his family operate Engelberg Angus Farm, which includes 150

► Elected to serve on the American Angus Association Board of Directors are (seated, from left) Jay King, Rock Falls, Ill., treasurer; Jot Hartley, Vinita, Okla., president; Paul Hill, Bidwell, Ohio, vice president; (standing, from left) directors Cathy Watkins, Middletown, Ind.; Steve Olson, Hereford, Texas; Joe Hampton, Mount Ulla, N.C.; Rob Thomas, Baker City, Ore.; and Al DeClerk, Pocahontas, Ark.



registered Angus cows. He has had leadership positions in many organizations, including serving as president of the Arkansas Angus Association from 1998-2000. DeClerk will serve on the Activities & Events, Breed Improvement, and Industry Relations committees. He is also on the Angus Foundation Board.

Joe Hampton, Mount Ulla, N.C., is also beginning his second term on the Board. He and his wife, Robin, operate Back Creek, a seedstock operation that focuses on producing bulls for commercial producers in the Southeast. Hampton has been in the registered Angus business since 1981, and he has been involved in numerous leadership roles. He will serve as vice chairman of the Industry Relations Committee, and he will serve on the Information & Data Management and Breed Improvement committees. He is also on the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) LLC and Angus Foundation boards.

Steve Olson was elected to his first term on the Board. He developed a passion for agriculture at an early age, and after college returned to Hereford, Texas, where he and his family began their diversified agricultural operation. His herd consists of 200 Angus cows. Olson has been involved in a variety of leadership positions, including serving on the Texas Angus Association board. He and his wife, Ginger, also served as Texas Junior Angus Association advisors. He will serve on the Activities & Events and Industry Relations committees.

Rob Thomas, re-elected to his second term, owns and operates Thomas Angus Ranch with his family near Baker City, Ore. Thomas has presented talks about marketing and customer service at various national events. He is past chairman of the Oregon Cattleman's Association Beef Improvement Committee and current advisory board member for the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center. He will serve as vice chairman of the Information & Data Management Committee, and will serve on the Industry Relations and Breed Improvement committees. He will also serve on the CAB, API and Angus Foundation boards.

Cathy Watkins, Middletown, Ind., is beginning her first term on the Board. She and her family operate Beaver Ridge Farm, which includes about 70 Angus cows in addition to corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and hay. Watkins also works off the farm, and has been with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for 32 years. She is the secretary of the Indiana Angus Association and is active in the American Angus Auxiliary. During the next year, she will serve on the Activities & Events and Finance & Planning committees.

