

# BIF Wraps Up in Biloxi

Angus Media provides news from the BIF Annual Convention in Biloxi, Miss.

by Angus Media staff

**M**ississippi State University and the Mississippi Extension Service hosted the 47th Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention June 9-12 at the Beau Rivage Casino and Hotel in Biloxi, Miss. The event draws a wide audience each year, ranging from breed association professionals and cattle producers to researchers and industry representatives.

Industry-leading education and discussions on the latest scientific advancements in the beef industry were at the forefront of the three-day event.

Angus Media provides complete online coverage of BIF meetings and events at its event coverage website [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com). There you'll find summary articles from each session, audio recordings, proceedings papers, and PowerPoint presentations given by speakers, as well as video interviews conducted at the convention and announcements of award winners. Topics covered at this year's convention include rebuilding the nation's cow herd, sustainability in the beef business and the latest genomic tools to aid cattle producers in selection decisions.

## Honoring excellence

Throughout the conference, BIF honors cattle producers who exemplify its mission to improve the efficiency, profitability and sustainability of beef production. This year, Angus producers topped the coveted Seedstock and Commercial producer of the year categories.

**McCurry Angus Ranch, Burrton, Kan.**, was recognized as the 2015 Seedstock Producer of the Year. McCurry Angus Ranch is a family-owned and -managed operation that utilizes 2,000 acres for home-based operations, with satellite operations in Chase and Greenwood counties. Buffalo, S.D., is the embryo transfer (ET) base for 150 commercial Angus-based cows.

McCurry Angus consists of 400 registered-Angus cows split between spring- and fall-calving herds, and 250 spring-calving commercial-Angus cows.

About 175 bulls are sold yearly in a spring production sale and private treaty. Target customers are commercial cattle producers. Females are marketed primarily private treaty. Spring-born commercial steer calves are marketed through Superior Livestock's online auction.

The ranch got its start in 1977, with the marriage of two third-generation Angus breeders. Andy and Mary McCurry began their start-up operation with seven registered-Angus heifers representing pedigree lineage of seven distinct cow families, no land, no facilities and no equipment. Today, 95% of the current herd traces back to those foundation females. For more on McCurry Angus Ranch, see page 116.

**Woodbury Farms, Quenemo, Kan.**, was honored with the 2015 BIF Commercial Producer of the Year award. Located in Osage County, Kan., on the eastern edge of the Flint Hills, the operation was started in 1881 when Fred H. Woodbury purchased his first 80 acres near Olivet, Kan. The fourth generation of Woodburys now operates land in four counties, managing 5,000 acres of native and tame grasses and 400 acres of cropland.

The cow herd consists of 400 spring-calving cows of which 175 are registered Angus and 225 are commercial Angus and black baldies, along with a few red baldies that stem from a Hereford cow base.

All calves are backgrounded after weaning, with a majority of the steers being sold through the local sale barn. About one-third of the heifer calves are retained for replacements, and most of the remaining calves are sold in a production sale in March, along with about 40 yearling bulls from the registered herd.

A small number of steers and heifers are entered in the annual Flint Hills Beef Fest hosted in Emporia, Kan. Cattle are summer-grazed on the Flint Hills, then finished at a commercial feedyard where carcass data

is gathered. For more information on the Woodburys, see page 120.

## Pioneers

BIF honored Paul Genho and Tom Woodbury with the Pioneer Award. The award recognizes individuals who have made lasting contributions to the improvement of beef cattle, honoring those who have had a major role in acceptance of performance reporting and documentation as the primary means to make genetic change in beef cattle.

**Genho** received a bachelor's and a master's degree in animal science from Brigham Young University, before obtaining a doctorate in beef cattle reproduction from the University of Florida. Genho is a large contributor to university direction and the direction of U.S. agricultural programs. He has served on 11 different search and review committees at three universities, as well as various government agencies.

Throughout his career, Genho has served on numerous committees and advisory boards for multiple organizations, including Neogen, the Texas Beef Council, the Florida Beef Council, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

His input while serving on the advisory board for the National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium (NBCEC) from 2001 through 2012 encouraged cooperation between many competitive universities. This collaboration helped to facilitate better beef research programs related to genetics and extension. Genho's leadership set a new direction for the organization, which even today continues to follow new approaches in genetic evaluation,

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► Tom Woodward (left), Broseco Ranch, receives the BIF Pioneer Award from Steve Munger, retiring BIF president.



► Joe Cassady (left), retiring BIF executive director, receives the Continuing Service Award from Munger.

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selection, genomic use and new trait development.

His career has taken him through various leadership positions, including regional manager of Deseret Cattle and Citrus, general manager of livestock and ranch operations at King Ranch, and president of farm and land reserve at Ag Reserves Inc. Currently, Genho is giving back to the next generation by serving as a visiting professor at the University of Florida.

**Woodward** is a graduate of Texas A&M University with degrees in livestock production and a doctorate in reproduction. Following college, he served the Texas Agriculture Extension Service for 15 years in various positions, including assistant county agent, livestock specialist and district agriculture agent.

Woodward managed the Ranch and Farm Management Department of Texas American Bank for eight years. Currently, he is general manager of Broseco Ranch, where he has served for 26 years, and vice president of Broventure Co. Inc.

Throughout his career, he has been a major proponent of collecting data and using it to make genetic change. He has been a

leader in adoption of BIF-approved selection tools and employing the latest technology.

Woodward has led a life of service and leadership to the beef industry. He has served in a number of organizations, including NCBA, and on various committees. He served as director and chairman of the board of Ranchers Renaissance, director and vice president of the Red Angus Association of America, director of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, director and honorary vice president of the Southwestern Livestock Show and Rodeo, and as nonresident fellow for the Noble Foundation.

At Broseco Ranch Woodward has been recognized as Commercial Producer of the Year by the Texas Simmental Association and Breeder of the Year by the Red Angus Association of America. He was recognized in 2007 as BIF Commercial Producer of the Year.

### Continuing service

BIF honored four individuals with its Continuing Service Award, which is presented to those who have made major contributions to the organization. This includes serving on the board of directors, speaking at BIF



► Paul Genho was awarded the BIF Pioneer Award. Receiving the award in his honor were his two sons, John Genho and David Genho. Pictured are (from left) John Genho; David Genho; and Mark Enns, BIF Western Region secretary.

conventions, working on BIF guidelines and other behind-the-scenes activities. As BIF is a volunteer organization, it is this contribution of time and passion for the beef cattle industry that keeps BIF moving forward.

Receiving the award were Andy Boston, Purdue University Extension; Joe Cassady, retiring BIF executive director; Lois Schreiner, Kansas State University (K-State); and Chris Shivers, American Brahman Breeders Association (ABBA).

**Boston** is a prime example of continuing service. He has attended more than 25 BIF

symposia and has served on a number of committees and working groups.

He was first introduced to BIF in the early 1970s while pursuing his doctorate in animal breeding at Oklahoma State University. After completing his degree, he taught animal breeding classes and conducted beef cattle crossbreeding research at Louisiana State University.

Boston moved to Canada in the mid-1970s, where he became actively involved with BIF while serving as Chief of the Federal Provincial Canadian Beef Cattle Performance Evaluation Programs. He represented Agriculture Canada and the Canadian beef cattle industry on the BIF Board and spearheaded the country's move to greater utilization of BIF's guidelines and conferences based on what BIF was implementing throughout North America.

In the late 1980s, Boston spent time as an agriculture professor at Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky., where he taught classes and managed the university's farm.

To return working one-on-one with beef producers, Boston accepted a position with Purdue University Extension and has served in that role for nearly 20 years. He has become a trusted resource for outreach programs, research analysis and management decisions for cattlemen throughout the state of Indiana and beyond.

**Cassady** served as BIF executive director from 2009 to 2015. In this role he coordinated the activities of the board to ensure that its directives were properly executed. He was responsible for documenting the activities and finances of the federation and fostering its long-term vision by keeping abreast of the industry, monitoring new technologies and assisting the board in incorporating those technologies into its overall mission.

Cassady currently serves as head of the Department of Animal Science at South Dakota State University, a position he accepted in 2013. Prior to moving to SDSU he served as professor in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at North Carolina State University (NCSU), where his research interests were in quantitative and molecular genetic applications to improve food animal production, including feed efficiency and hair shedding in beef cattle. He has also worked as a research associate in genetics and breeding for the Agricultural Research Service with the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb.

Cassady obtained a bachelor's degree in animal science from Iowa State University in 1993 and a master's degree and doctorate in animal science from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1995 and 1999, respectively.

**Schreiner's** timeless effort and organization have been critical to the function of BIF and its board, making her one of the most deserving individuals there is of this award.

Since 2002, she has worked to coordinate all the activities for the BIF board, including management of business and details for the federation. During her time volunteering for the organization she has worked with three separate executive directors.

Born and raised in Frankfort, Kan., Schreiner began working as a receptionist for K-State straight out of high school at the age of 17. While working both full and part time

for the university, she was able to raise five children with her husband, John. Today she is the administrative specialist for extension programs in the animal science department.

Along with her busy family life, Schreiner has been instrumental in the organization of many departmental programs and events, including Cattlemen's Day, Swine Day, Sheep Day, the Swine Classic and the Stocker Conference. For each of these events she is behind-the-scenes contacting and working with all exhibitors and facilities staff, making certain everything is ready.

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**Shivers** has been the executive vice president of the ABBA since 2004. He initially joined the staff in 2000 upon completing a bachelor's degree in agriculture and extension education from Mississippi State University.

His early responsibilities included director of association services/youth where he directed an F<sub>1</sub> certification program, research and breed improvement programs and the activities of the American Junior Brahman Association, among other duties.

During his tenure a number of innovative

programs and educational opportunities have been initiated to assist members with tools to better their herds and ultimately become more profitable. Because of these efforts, the organization has seen increased growth and remained viable.

Shivers has served in several industry capacities, including as the Texas Purebred Cattle Alliance president in 2010-2011, secretary of the American Breeds Coalition and the U.S. Beef Breeds Council, as well as serving on the BIF board of directors.

**Ambassador**

BIF honored E.C. Larkin, *Gulf Coast Cattleman*, with the Ambassador Award. This award is given annually by BIF to a member of the media for his or her efforts in spreading the news of BIF and its principles to a larger audience.

An active member of the livestock communications industry for the last five decades, Larkin's résumé includes time with the *Polled Hereford World* magazine, the *Western Livestock Journal*, the *Beefmaster Cowman* and his current

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position as publisher of the *Gulf Coast Cattleman*.

Larkin is a Texas native who graduated from East Texas State University in 1966. About 10 years later, he purchased the *Gulf Coast Cattleman* and moved the publication to San Antonio, Texas. The magazine has covered the coastal state region since 1935, with primary distribution in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Florida. Larkin and his editorial team are known for their commonsense, down-to-earth approach to content.

Many would call Larkin an icon in the southern region, and it's fitting that he is being recognized for his contributions to the Beef Improvement Federation during

the conference hosted by Mississippi State University and the Mississippi Extension Service.

A member of the Livestock Publications Council for many years, Larkin served as president from 1984-1985 and was inducted into the organization's Hall of Fame in 2001. He and his wife, Margie, have three children, all graduates of Texas A&M University.

**Student winners**

The Roy A. Wallace BIF Memorial Fund was established by Select Sires to honor the life and career of Roy Wallace, who worked for Select Sires for 40 years, served as vice president of beef programs and devoted his life to the improvement of beef cattle.

Two \$1,250 scholarships are awarded each year, one to an undergraduate and the other to a graduate student. Criteria for selection include a demonstrated commitment and service to the beef cattle industry; a passion for the areas of beef breeding, genetics and reproduction; academic performance; and personal character.

This year's recipients are Matthew McIntosh, University of Connecticut, and Joshua Hasty, Colorado State University.

**McIntosh**, an animal science and fine arts major, has been investigating the role of cattle in society with an emphasis on reproductive physiology and ruminant nutrition. He serves as president of his collegiate Block & Bridle chapter and serves as a teaching assistant and tutor in animal science. He plans to pursue a master's degree focusing on sustainable

agriculture, specifically working in the area of feed efficiency.

**Hasty** is pursuing a doctorate in meat science. His passion for agriculture began in his Texas FFA chapter and then led him through championship seasons in meats judging at both Clarendon College and Texas Tech. He later served as coach of the meats judging team at Fresno State. Hasty wants to use his skills and experience in a beef industry career that will positively impact the future of the world's beef supply.

The Frank Baker Memorial Scholarship Award essay competition for graduate students recognizes outstanding student research and competitive writing. The award honors Frank Baker, who played a key leadership role in helping establish BIF in 1968.

Winning this year's awards are Justin

Buchanan, Oklahoma State University (OSU) and Jamie Parham, South Dakota State University (SDSU).

**Buchanan** obtained three degrees from OSU — a bachelor's in animal science, as well as a master's and a doctorate in animal breeding and genetics.

His dissertation and paper submission focused on estimating genetic parameters and deriving gene networks for fatty acid profiles and carcass traits in Angus cattle. His current position is focused on incorporating genomics into a large commercial beef cattle operation. The goal of the project is to evaluate potential genetic and economic gain achieved by the use of marker information in breeding value estimations and selection decisions for a vertically integrated beef cattle operation.

**Parham**, graduate student at SDSU's College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, was awarded a scholarship for her essay entitled, "The effect of discovery bias on genomic selection and why it can no longer be ignored." Her submission was based on the research project she is currently conducting at SDSU.

Parham, who is originally from North Carolina, earned her bachelor's degree in animal science at North Carolina State University. While there, she met Joe Cassady, former executive director of BIF, who encouraged her to pursue a master's degree in animal breeding and genetics at SDSU.

For more detailed descriptions, including photos, of the award winners, visit the Awards page at [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com).

