



Foundation Fundamentals

► by *Milford Jenkins, president, Angus Foundation*

Why not give?

Some time ago I prefaced that at a later date I would raise with you the thought-provoking question of “why not give financially to the Angus Foundation?” “Why not give financially to the Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus?” No one else can answer these questions but you.

The background

In my professional fundraising role with your Angus Foundation, I have a responsibility to pose these crucial questions for your consideration.

When interviewing in early 2004, my platform included implementing new fundraising strategies to exponentially increase the number of contributors, since only a combined total of 57 members, allied industry interests, friends and Angus enthusiasts were charitably supporting our organization at that time.

Significant progress and growth has been realized with more than 775 contributors in 2008, 568 in 2009 and a very respectable 655 this past fiscal year, considering the continued challenging economic environment.

The competition

Competition today is fierce, with countless worthwhile 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations and causes annually vying for one’s charitable financial gifts and available resources. Countless factors such as an organization’s mission, vision, goals, project(s) being funded, timing, size of request, emotions and feelings enter one’s individual thought processes when determining who will benefit from their hard-earned charitable resources.

The Dec. 2, 2010, issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* featured results of a recent survey titled “America’s Wealthy: What Spurs Them to Give.” It illustrated 72.4% of 800 affluent households indicated one of the three reasons donors most often cited as a major motivation for donating to a

charity was the feeling their gifts could make a difference.

One would have to presume, or at least I do, that underpinning this response is the initial internal desire to indeed make a difference. They then just needed more information to arrive with confidence to the belief their financial gift could, in fact, make a difference.

The question

As with any charitable organization, the Angus Foundation can produce strong convincing evidence, quantitatively and qualitatively, to build the case for existing donors, including myself, that our collective financial gifts are making a difference. We are making a difference in the lives of our members and future generations of Angus breeders through the education, youth and research activities supported by our organization. These activities are made possible because of the financial

support of Foundation donors.

Our recent *Their Story is Our Story* annual report inserted in the December *Angus Journal* and *Current Impact of Foundation* on www.angusfoundation.org are just two communications used to “tell our story.” If you haven’t already, I encourage you to review these informative resources to learn more about the wide breadth and scope of your Angus Foundation’s impact and outreach benefiting the Angus breed and our members.

Yes, admittedly, the reality is that only you can be the judge of whether you feel your gift(s) to the Angus Foundation, or any

charity or cause you support for that matter, could make a difference.

But for me, the real heart of this column’s message is the same as when I posed the “elephant on the table” question in my interview that day of “where does the Angus Foundation rank in the hierarchy of Angus breeders’ charitable organizations they give financially to and charitably support each year?”

In other words, when an Angus breeder gives thought to charitable giving, either outright cash on an annual basis or consideration to estate planning, does the Angus Foundation and Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus come to their minds?

If not, why not?

With us now being in this, the final year of the campaign, your Angus Foundation directors, Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus Leadership Cabinet and management invite you to review the evidence, think about your passion for raising Angus cattle and give serious consideration to making a financial gift or pledge — regardless of size — to the campaign.

Feel free to call and visit with any of these individuals or myself about the Angus Foundation and the opportunities available to you through the campaign for your charitable financial gifts.

Still skeptical about whether your gift, small or large, can make a difference? Visit with any of our Angus youth scholarship recipients, attendees to Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD), participants in Raising the Bar Leadership Training Conferences, or producers who’ve attended Cattlemen’s Boot Camps or Beef Leaders Institute (BLI). Ask any of them how the Angus Foundation changed their lives.

So, why not give financially to the Angus Foundation?

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Author’s Note: Visit www.angusfoundation.org for more information regarding the Angus Foundation, scholarships and the campaign.

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