



Foundation Fundamentals

► by *Milford Jenkins, president, Angus Foundation*

Someone else will do it.

“... 100 times!”

I gasped and responded, “You got to be kidding me.”

My third-grade teacher, Mrs. Yarbrough, sternly fired back, “For that Milford, you can write it 250 times, and it will be due at the beginning of class tomorrow morning. Is that clear?”

Recognizing any chance for negotiating further with her had long passed, I grudgingly responded, “Yes, Mrs. Yarbrough.”

Corrective measures

So what was I to write 250 times to earn my way back into Mrs. Yarbrough’s good graces? *If this whole class were just like me, what kind of class would it be like?*

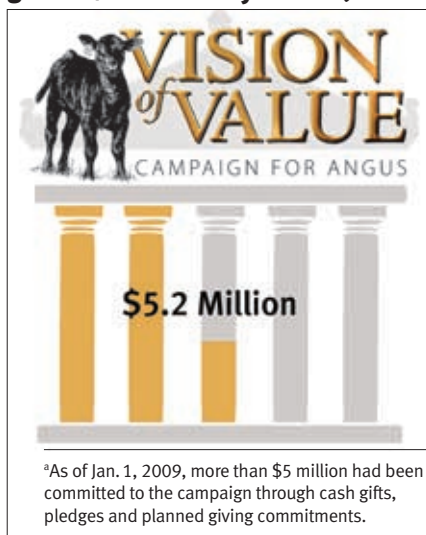
To add misery to insult, it was only early September. It was going to be a long school year for me with Mrs. Yarbrough!

Although I attributed my perceived misbehavior to simply being a typical ornery and mischievous boy at that age rather than a slow learner, I admittedly do seem to recall having to write that statement on more occasions thereafter when I somehow found myself back in Mrs. Yarbrough’s doghouse.

Never one without words, I always had a choice answer to her question in my mind, but I wisely (and fortunately for me) kept it to myself, as I figured she probably wouldn’t find it as funny as I did at the time.

Humor aside, as the years passed and

Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus status toward reaching fundraising goal of \$11 million by Dec. 31, 2011^a



I became active in 4-H, FFA, football and student council, followed by FarmHouse Fraternity, Collegiate FFA, Alpha Zeta, student senate and a number of other organizations while an undergraduate at Oklahoma State University and since during my professional fundraising career, I began to understand the importance of what Mrs. Yarbrough was teaching me, even through her corrective measures for students misbehaving under her tutelage.

Involvement

Ironically, somewhere along the way, while I was in high school prior to my being elected to Oklahoma FFA state vice president followed by state president my sophomore year in college, I came across this narrative titled “Membership,” which reads:

“Some members keep their organizations strong,
While others join and just belong,
Some dig right in, some serve with pride,
Some go along, just for the ride,
Some volunteer to do their share,
While some sit back and just don’t care.
On meeting days some always show,
But then — there are those who never go,
Some always pay their dues ahead,
Some get behind for months instead.
Some do their best, some build,
some make,
Some *never* give, but always take.
Some lag behind, some let things go.
Some never *help* their organization grow.
Some draw, some pull, some don’t,
some do.

Which of these are you?”

— Author Unknown

Ever since I first read this powerful, thought-provoking message, I shared it in countless motivational speeches to FFA

youth and later with my own students during my tenure as an agricultural education instructor back in Oklahoma in the late 1980s.

Whether considering our participation in youth or adult and professional organizations, the message’s timeless application is universally true, regardless of the organization’s size and purpose.

Against this measure, I know I’ve failed miserably on many occasions in organizations that I’ve been involved in through the years. I’ve shunned responsibilities as an officer, dropped the ball on an assignment as a committee member, declined to volunteer my time to help at an event, and unselfishly held tightly to my God-given talents instead of effectively using them to help my fellow members advance the organization’s mission and achieve its goals and objectives.

As hard as it was for me to learn, my teacher’s unforgettable lesson continues to serve me well today, some 30 years later. I think of it not as a reminder of my shortcomings — for they are many — but rather as an inspiration and challenge to me in my life’s walk, professionally and personally, and involvement in organizations. I do know that I can do more to pull my share of the load.

What if they don’t?

So what does this have to do with supporting your Angus Foundation and giving to the Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus that you’re accustomed to reading about in my columns? Only you can answer that question by thinking about your own involvement as an Angus breeder in this exciting endeavor for your Angus organization.

It is indeed easy to think someone else will do the work for us. But, what if they don’t?

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