

# Value, Top-End Performance

Doug and Sharon Stevenson are donating the elite female for the 2017 Angus Foundation Heifer Package.

by **Sarah Hill**, projects editor

The Angus Foundation Heifer Package is one of the Angus Foundation's major annual fundraisers. Each year, a prominent Angus breeder is extended the invitation to donate an elite Angus female from the heart of their herd to the Angus Foundation.

The package includes other perks, including 30 days of free insurance from American Livestock Insurance Co., Geneva, Ill.; free transportation to the buyer's ranch provided by Lathrop Livestock Transportation, Dundee, Ill.; and an advanced reproductive technology package from Trans Ova Genetics and its cloning division, ViaGen, Sioux Center, Iowa. All in all, it's a highly valuable investment.

## Giving back

Donating the female for the Angus Foundation Heifer Package is not new for

Basin Angus Ranch. Doug Stevenson, Basin Angus Ranch owner, proudly states that the Stevenson family donated a heifer 20 years ago.

"We thought it was time to do it again," he says. "We think we have something that would be of excellent value."



"We are thrilled that Basin Angus Ranch, Joliet, Mont., is once again donating the female for the Angus

Foundation Heifer Package," says Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president. "We are so grateful for the Stevenson family's continued support of the Angus Foundation. The female will be an outstanding addition to any Angus breeder's herd."

"The Angus Foundation is important to the long-term success of the breed and the American Angus Association," Doug says. "We want to do everything we can to support

the Angus Foundation's mission. We have previously been fairly aggressive supporters of the Angus Foundation: We've donated pregnancies, bought packages in various auctions, made cash gifts and supported in many different ways."

Doug's interest in supporting the Angus Foundation hits close to home, as he's benefitted personally from programs supported by the Angus Foundation. He served on the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board of Directors from 1984 to 1986, and his kids have all been active in the NJAA.

"The Angus Foundation must continue to support important research and the development of new tools and educational programs for membership and leadership programs for juniors and young breeders," Doug says.

## Family affair

Doug's wife, Sharon, works full-time on the ranch with recordkeeping and is also one of the herd's top AI technicians.

"She's a city girl. We met in college, and she didn't have any ag experience, but she learned quickly by getting right in the middle of it," says Doug. The couple has three children.

Brittany is in her final year of a pharmacy doctoral program at the University of Montana, and just got married. Her husband, Trevor, grew up on a commercial cattle operation and works on Basin Angus Ranch. Trevor is being groomed to take over the ranch from Doug someday.

Leisa is a junior at Montana State University majoring in agricultural education, while Nicole is a junior in high school.

Shane Whiteman has also worked full-time on the ranch for 16 years. He is involved in helping with production and marketing cattle.

## Ranch history

Stevenson Angus Ranch had been around for many years prior to Doug's parents, Wayne and Marion, establishing Basin Angus Ranch in 1973. Doug and his siblings were all involved from the start.

"We started as a small, yet progressive operation," says Doug. "We only had a couple hundred cows at that point. My parents were very lucky that a banker was willing to lend them money to get started."

The Stevenson family worked hard and the ranch grew. Doug took on management decisions while still in high school, including recordkeeping and breeding.

In 1986, Doug graduated with a degree in agricultural economics from Montana State University. He went on to pursue law at the University of Montana, graduating in 1989.



► The Stevenson family includes (from left) Trevor and Brittany (Stevenson) Berg; and Nicole, Leisa, Sharon and Doug Stevenson.



►Basin Lucy 1037 is the female with the highest beef value dollar value index (\$B) in the Basin Angus Ranch herd. She is a phenomenal power cow, around which the Stevensons plan to build an even stronger cow family for the future of the ranch.

►WR Journey 1X74 recorded the No. 6 \$B index among 24,373 active Angus sires as evaluated Aug. 12, 2016, with an exceptional combination of calving ease, performance, docility and end-product excellence. Journey ranks within the top 5% of current sires for 11 of the measured traits and indexes available on an Angus pedigree.

“During college and law school, I continued being involved with the ranch and handling sire selection and making breeding decisions,” he says. Doug practiced law for a short period, but returned to the ranch full time in 1990.

“In the spring of 1994, I took over full-time management of the entire place,” he says. By that time, Doug’s brother was working on a separate operation, while his sister and brother-in-law continued working at Basin Angus Ranch. In 2010, Doug and Sharon became the sole owners of the ranch.

### Doing things a bit differently

“We have 800 purebred cows that are marketed in several ways,” says Doug. Two hundred of those cows are kept as part of a herd in Paris, Mo., and marketed by private treaty from there.

“We’ve had cows there for 15 years,” says Doug.

Basin Angus Ranch hosts an annual bull sale in March and sells a lot of bulls by contract to several longtime, large, progressive, commercial customers.

“We custom-develop bulls for those guys,” Doug adds. “Some of them have bought bulls from us for 15 to 20 years, and some even longer than that. They’ve been very closely tied to our program, and we have a long-term plan for those customers. We decide several years in advance what sort of genetics they want next in their herds, and each year, we provide

those herds with the bulls they need.”

While contract sales might be considered novel in the Angus industry, Doug says the program works well for them.

“Initially with those customers, we tried to have a plan and then sold those bulls at auction,” Doug says. “The customers were trying to buy the bulls they wanted the way they wanted, and it never quite worked out. So we work closely with those commercial breeders to give them exactly what they need.

It’s a data-driven selection process, and we get really top-notch cattle by being on a planned system.”

### Herd philosophy

Doug points out that the most efficient use of beef cattle is to raise them on land that isn’t good enough to be crop ground.

“We’ve tried to raise the kind of cattle that will have real added value and still breed for cattle that will be able to handle tougher range conditions that we run on and a lot of our customers raise cattle on,” he says.

“Where our ranch is located in Montana, we’re semi-arid, borderline desert country,” Doug says. “Our average moisture, including snow, is 10 to 12 inches per year, so we run on really dry conditions. The cattle have to travel for water and feed and have to be able to maintain themselves and do it without supplementation in the summer.

“We feel that if we run our cows in those conditions that, in turn, work for our customers to run their cattle, then we can produce the right kind of cattle for them,” Doug adds. “Within that philosophy of raising cattle, we want cattle adapted to low-quality forage that are fertile, and we’ve selected for very top-end carcass traits and feedlot performance.”

**American Angus Association** REGISTRY NUMBER  
AAA #18479169

Carry/In: 20P Percentage: 20P  
 BASIN LUCY 6265  
 A-30060 Basin Angus Ranch Joliet MT  
 A-30060 Basin Angus Ranch Joliet MT

Production EPD										Maternal EPD										Carcass EPD									
W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7	W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7	W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7
1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10

C/A FUTURE DIRECTION 3331 AAA #18479169  
 W/R FUTURE DIRECTION 3331 AAA #18479169  
 W/R JOURNEY 1X74 AAA #18479169  
 Z BAR 3000 NEW DESIGN 7001 AAA #18479169  
 Z BAR 100 LACE 3182 AAA #18479169  
 GARDENS WARE AAA #18479169  
 GREEN GARDEN LAKE 525 52 AAA #18479169  
 VISHKOV FAVORITE 3047 AAA #18479169  
 BASIN LUCY 1037 AAA #18479169  
 BASIN LUCY 3028 AAA #18479169

Production										Maternal										Carcass									
W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7	W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7	W	WW	ADG	ADFI	ADFI2	ADFI3	ADFI4	ADFI5	ADFI6	ADFI7
1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10

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 Chief Executive Officer

►Basin Lucy 6265 (reg. #18479169) is the heifer chosen to headline the 2017 Angus Foundation Heifer Package.

**Editor’s Note:** For more information on giving to the Angus Foundation, visit [www.angusfoundation.org](http://www.angusfoundation.org).