



# The Front Gate

► by **Allen Moczygemba**, CEO, American Angus Association

## Angus Convention

*As we gather in Fort Worth for the National Angus Convention and Annual Meeting, I thought it would be good to take a look back in order to see how the Association got to this point in time.*

### Origins

The journey began with the inaugural meeting of the Association being hosted in November 1884 in Chicago. That was the second year of existence for the American Aberdeen-Angus Breeders' Association, as the organization was then known. The meeting was hosted annually in Chicago for the next 90 years. In 1975, the annual meeting was moved to Louisville after the closing of the International Live Stock Exposition in Chicago.

Louisville then became the home of the annual meeting until 2013, when the Association announced plans for its first National Angus Convention & Trade Show to be hosted in conjunction with the annual meeting.

The concept for the National Angus Convention had been discussed for a number of years. Key staff members had become convinced that the Association

members deserved an annual convention that allowed them to hear outstanding keynote speakers, participate in forward-looking educational sessions, and have the opportunity to enjoy a bustling trade show that would allow allied industry partners to exhibit their products and/or services to the leading Angus breeders in the world. More important, it would allow for members to have a chance to network with each other in a relaxed social setting.

However, the decision to host an annual convention was a point of concern with some of the membership. Their concerns were twofold. First, there was the long tradition of holding the meeting in Louisville in conjunction with the cattle show. Second, it would require a significant financial investment to host an event of this nature with no guarantee that members would travel to a different location each year.

Fortunately for the Association, the

convention was an overwhelming success. The inaugural event, which was hosted near the airport in Kansas City at the KCI Expo Center, drew members from across the country and allied industry support was strong. The second national convention was hosted in Overland Park, Kan., while last year's convention was in Indianapolis. Each successive year, attendance and allied industry support have continued to grow.

Now we're in Texas — the state with the Association's largest membership base. There have been six presidents elected from Texas, beginning with George Graham of Wichita Falls in 1962. Minnie Lou Bradley was the first, and to date only, female to serve as president in 2005, while Steve Olson of Hereford was the most recent, serving in 2015.

Fort Worth is a host location that folks are excited about, but there's no group more excited than the Texas Angus Association. The 2017 convention will be the largest to date with approximately 2,300 folks in attendance — with 20% being made up of members of the Texas Angus Association.

While the Texas Angus Association is deservedly proud to host the National Angus Convention, it's also a special time for me. As you know, Texas is home. It's where my roots are and where Venetta and I raised our sons. It will be good to be back home, hosting the Association's premier event in a state that, over the years, has had a significant and positive impact on the Association.

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