

Each time the family was challenged, it regrouped to start again.

Ralph did not marry until he was 41 years of age when he met a school teacher, Muriel Small. Muriel had moved to Englewood, Kan., as a young girl. To this union two children were born, Henry and Helen.

Henry was born Sept. 14, 1931, in Ashland. He grew up on his parent's farm where one of his earliest achievements was learning how to milk the family cow. Soon after, it also became his job to gather eggs and feed hogs. Henry often told about those chores and remembered that he did not enjoy them much. At age 9, he began to drive his father's Caterpillar tractor, pulling a 24-foot combine during the summer harvest of 1941. Henry often noted that the tractor would start running 30 minutes later than it should — while he milked the cows. He also reminded everyone that after he became the boss "we no longer milked cows." Henry graduated from Ashland High School in 1949.

With an early dislike of even small-town dairying, Henry turned to raising beef as soon as he could. In January 1947 he showed a home-raised Angus steer as the reserve champion Angus steer at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver. The steer was brought home and shown again the following September at the Kansas State Fair, earning grand champion honors. One of the prizes for the champion steer was a \$100 credit from the Kansas Angus Association (KAA) to be applied to the purchase of a registered-Angus heifer. Henry purchased two Angus heifers, launching Gardiner Angus Ranch's genetics business.

Mary Nan Arnold came to Ashland in 1955 to teach vocal music to grades 1-8. She also gave private piano lessons to any children whose parents wanted them to learn piano. A mutual friend, Pauline Baker, introduced Nan and Henry in Ashcraft's Drug Store. They married May 29, 1957.

Gardiner Angus Ranch, started by Ralph and enhanced by Henry, is currently operated by the fourth and fifth generations of the Gardiner family. Cattle have been the principal business of the Gardiner family since the ranch's inception in 1885.

Henry graduated from Kansas State University (K-State) in 1953 with a bachelor's degree in animal husbandry. While attending K-State, he learned the basic principles of animal breeding and selection, including how to artificially inseminate (AI) cattle. At the time AI was a new technology. Early adoption of emerging technologies became a lifelong pattern and a way of life for Henry. His vision and courage shaped the future of Gardiner Angus Ranch. That lifelong passion included a determination to

Geppert hired as regional manager for Northern Plains

Rod Geppert, Fort Pierre, S.D., is the new regional manager for Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. Geppert began his role Feb. 2 and brings more than 20 years of experience in the beef cattle business.

A native of South Dakota, Geppert looks forward to getting to know Association members and their customers, helping them market their cattle and grow into the future.

"I've been a cattleman all my life, and with prices like we are seeing today, there's no better time to be in the cattle business and no better organization than the American Angus Association," Geppert says.

As a regional manager, Geppert will represent the Angus breed at various cattle events, sales, shows and other activities throughout the territory. Breeders are encouraged to ask him questions about Association programs and services, or for help locating Angus seedstock. He can also advise producers on marketing opportunities available through the Association, including advertising through the *Angus Journal*, *Angus Beef Bulletin* and other multimedia avenues.

Geppert holds a bachelor's degree in ag extension with a minor in animal science from South Dakota State University. Throughout his career, he has been involved in several aspects of the cattle business — from ranch management to extension and education, as well as being a respected livestock judge and coach for 4-H youth in the state. Geppert has served as a livestock educator in his region and as the 4-H youth livestock leader and show manager for the state for many years. He was a coordinator for the South Dakota State Fair.

Most recently, he was a farm and ranch manager for Farmers National Co., where he was responsible for managing 45-plus farms and ranches in South Dakota. He was also an associate real-estate broker specializing in farms and ranches.

Geppert has been involved with his family's operation, RGSC Geppert Cattle, for many years.

"With bull sale season on the horizon, I can't wait to hit the ground running and start traveling throughout the territory," Geppert says.

Contact him at rgeppert@angus.org or 605-295-3673 for assistance locating Angus seedstock, marketing cattle or for advice on Association programs and services.



Rod Geppert

make the beef industry better for commercial cattlemen and for consumers. Henry's passion was marked by a diligence and dedication to the industry that is seldom seen in any business.

Following graduation from K-State, Henry was drafted into the U.S. Army and spent the next several years stationed in Augusta, Ga., and overseas in Germany, where he served as a radio repairman. He specifically enjoyed his leave days when he could venture out and look at Angus cattle.

Henry incorporated techniques to maximize genetic improvement of the herd, including AI, as a standard ranch practice in the mid-1950s. AI became the ranch's only method of breeding cows beginning in 1964. No cleanup bulls have been used to breed cows at Gardiner Angus Ranch since that time. Even though he was using the so-called "best bulls of the Angus breed" for sire selection, from 1964 to 1980 the average weaning weight of steer calves on the ranch improved very little. All that changed in the fall of 1980, when the American Angus Association's first *Sire Evaluation Report* was published.

Henry was one of the very first to realize that accurate expected progeny differences (EPDs) determined by the American Angus

Association were the key to genetic improvement. From that day forward he dictated that the Gardiner Angus Ranch breeding program would be based on a total AI breeding program using only proven Angus sires with high-accuracy EPDs.

This simple, yet effective use of the best breeding information in the industry allowed the ranch to thrive for the past 35 years. Gardiner Angus Ranch grew from a break-even business selling 52 bulls in 1980 to the second-largest purebred Angus herd in America, selling more than 2,300 bulls and 1,000 females annually.

Henry offered Gardiner Angus Ranch as a cooperative research facility to many universities. Cooperative research has been conducted on the ranch by scientists from K-State, Auburn, Colorado State, the University of Illinois, Oklahoma State, and Virginia Tech. Research performed on the ranch has ranged from measuring the serving capacity of bulls (libido) to refining estrus synchronization, AI and embryo transfer (ET) systems for beef cattle.

In 1987 Gardiner Angus Ranch began using ET to enhance the genetic improvement program. In the beginning the use of ET was modest. Today, nearly 3,000

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38