

Yon Named Miss American Angus

South Carolina junior scholarship winner becomes 2010 Angus ambassador.

by *Crystal Albers*, assistant director of communications/web editor, American Angus Association

Sally Yon of Ridge Spring, S.C., was crowned Miss American Angus Nov. 16 during the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky. Yon was crowned just prior to the announcement of grand champion bull during the Super-Point Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center (KFEC).

The annual Miss American Angus contest is sponsored by the American Angus Auxiliary and provides one Angus junior an opportunity to promote the breed both inside and outside the showing. As an Angus ambassador, Miss American Angus assists with shows, educational events, field days and additional activities to educate others about the breed and the benefits of Angus beef.

Each year, five young women are chosen as candidates for the position through the Auxiliary's



► **Sally Yon**, Ridge Spring, S.C., was crowned the 42nd Miss American Angus at the 2009 NAILE Super-Point ROV Angus Show Nov. 16 in Louisville, Ky. She will represent the Angus breed at numerous beef industry events during her reign, traveling the country as an ambassador for the breed.

scholarship program. Also competing for the title were JanLee Rowlett, Hurricane Mills, Tenn.; Lindsey Grimes, Hillsboro, Ohio; Kelli Retallick, Glen Haven, Wis.; and Hannah McCabe, Elk City, Kan. Each completes a written test, delivers a prepared speech, completes an interview and answers impromptu questions from a panel of judges.

Yon was the winner of the fourth-place, \$1,400 Auxiliary scholarship awarded earlier this year during the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). She lives with her parents, Kevin and Lydia, and brothers Drake and Corbin, at Yon Family Farms near Ridge Spring, where the family raises approximately 800 head of Angus cattle. Yon is involved in state and national junior Angus associations, where she shows cattle and participates in other activities.

She succeeds 2009 Miss American Angus Katie Gazda of Athens, Ga.

This year's Miss American Angus contest was officiated by Yvonne Hinman, Hinman Angus, Malta, Mont., former president of the American Angus Auxiliary; Lori Franklin Stickley, regional manager with Helms Briscoe, Saint Paris, Ohio, former NJAA Board Member and 1989 Miss American Angus; and Jot Hartley, Spur Ranch, Vinita, Okla., former American Angus Association president.



2010 Miss American Angus Contest Sponsors

Diamond Sponsorship — \$1,000 or greater

- American Angus Association, travel allowance
- *Angus Topics*, Ernie Bingman, cover page feature article and official photo

Emerald Sponsorship — \$300-\$999

- Cherry Knoll, Margaret & Bob Duprey, Pa., overall contest sponsor
- TenRoc Angus, Mike & Linda Cornett, Texas, engraved contestant photo frames and general contest sponsorship
- Jim Baldrige's Secret Seasoning, Becky Tiedeman, Neb., jacket
- Weaver Angus, Jerry Weaver, Ill., jacket
- Harry Bachman, Md., contestant luncheon & Atlantic National Angus Show lodging
- Details by Design, Diane Johnson, Texas, contestant professional etiquette seminar
- All-American Angus Breeders' Futurity Committee, travel allowance to attend All-American Angus Breeders' Futurity
- Texas Angus Association, Fort Worth, Texas, travel allowance to attend Fort Worth Stock Show
- American Angus Hall of Fame, Tom Burke, Mo., leather

scrapbook and *40th Anniversary of the National Junior Angus Show — Volume I*

Ruby Sponsorship — \$200-\$299

- Seldom Rest Farms, The Dale & Lois Foster Family, Mich., crown and leather sash
- McCurry Bros. Angus Ranch, Brad, Greg, Geoff and Barry McCurry, Kan., custom leather tote
- Marands/McCurry Angus Ranch, The Andy and Mary McCurry Family, Kan., engraved jewelry for contestants
- Olson Cattle Co., Steve & Ginger Olson, Texas, luggage

Pearl Sponsorship — \$100-\$199

- Eberlee Farms, Bill & Jane Ebert, N.C. — luggage
- Jill (Sommers) Harker, Janelle (Sommers) Deatsman, Sharon Sommers, Ind., custom belt buckle
- Futurama Farms, The Steve Trosper Family, Mo., overall contest sponsor
- Miss Katie Gazda, 2009 Miss American Angus, Ga., official pin

Integrity and Me

by **Sally Yon**, 2010 Miss American Angus

Integrity. It is a powerful trait, and I submit to you, today, that you must *Learn It, Earn It*, then *Live It!*

Since my early childhood I have seen this plaque on our office wall. It is closely aligned with one of the Codes of the West and reads:

*When two people meet,
An agreement made,
The terms of the deal,
The plans are laid.
Each one gives their seal
By the grip of their hand
On their word of honor
They take a stand.
These days there are contracts
All written out
There in nothing
To dispute about.
But if a person won't stand
On his word understood,
A piece of paper
Won't make it good.*

As a youngster, I never gave this poem much thought. As a young adult, I am beginning to understand its significance in both business and in life.

The late Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, attributed his success to a simple principle. He believed in being truthful and direct under any and all given circumstances, and in living by the golden rule — simply put, to treat others the way you want to be treated. I find this to be a solid definition of *integrity*.

So how do we achieve this elusive quality?

Learn it

We must first *learn it*, and what a great hands-on experience we have in the Angus industry. Until beginning college this fall, every morning when I woke up and looked out my window I have seen Angus cattle. Angus cattle have always been the source of my family's livelihood, and I have watched for many years as my parents try to provide the ultimate in customer satisfaction through selling only high-quality breeding stock, painting a fair and accurate picture of the product, and then following up after the sale.

I know firsthand the importance of accurate reporting of performance data after turning in a 100+ birth weight on a bull calf from my Pathfinder®, a favorite former show heifer. The resulting high-

birth EPD (expected progeny difference) made him a poor prospect for most of our bull customers, who place a high priority on calving ease, and I saw my herd sire prospect become a steer. How painful it was for me to watch the \$3,000 picture I had painted in my mind fade into a steer worth way less. However, no amount of money could restore the trust that would have been lost had I turned in a weight that would have made him acceptable, and then caused a customer loss of income due to calving difficulty, which I could have prevented.

Showing heifers has also presented me with the temptation to think that maybe that heifer born on Dec. 31 really wasn't found until Jan. 2, thus putting her in a better position to place well. But I would have known, and that would be enough. No blue ribbon is ever worth compromising your reputation. Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not.

Earn it

After we *Learn It*, we must *Earn It*. A great example of earning integrity can be seen in our own *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand. Since 1978, the CAB Brand has been committed to quality and producing a consistent product.

Consumers don't care that over half a billion pounds of *Certified Angus Beef* is sold each year in over 30 countries around the world. They do care about a consistent, delicious eating experience each and every time they buy CAB, which is exactly what has earned the CAB brand the label of integrity that it enjoys today.

This is what sets both products and people apart — when they can be depended upon to be or do what they say they are, time after time.

As a young Angus breeder, I earn my integrity by being the same person every day, and not changing who I am to suit the crowd I am with. Growing up as “the girl who showed cows” has given me a unique identity among my peers. I am happy to say I have never been anything less than delighted to talk about my experiences with cattle and didn't even mind when a group of friends, in good humor, coined me as their Champion Angus Heifer. I earned this nickname because I proudly

wore a jacket to school that was nicely embroidered with the message that I exhibited the Champion Angus Heifer at a livestock show.

I agree with the principle that you should never separate the life you live from the words you speak. It is, in fact, hard for me to separate who I am from Angus because so much of what has shaped me into the person I am today was learned on an Angus farm. Showing our cattle to prospective customers, answering farm phone calls, being responsible for daily chores, winning — and maybe even more importantly — losing in the showing, and helping new juniors get started are all intertwined as experiences that are continually helping me *Earn* my integrity.

Live it

Learn It, Earn It, then *Live It*. Though I am only 18 years old, I know that I have the opportunity to influence, for better or worse, those around me. An old Japanese proverb says, “The reputation of a thousand years may be determined by the conduct of one hour.”

As a young Angus breeder, I recognize the importance of this statement. A tantrum in the showing, gossiping about another junior or creating strife in any organization are occurrences that are not easily erased. On the flip side, being a good winner or loser, taking on a leadership role, or giving encouraging words to the little girl in pigtailed dragging around a 1,200-pound heifer at her first show, will stick.

I have watched the Miss American Angus competition at Louisville every year since I was that little girl in pigtailed. What a great privilege Miss American Angus has to be a role model, spokesperson and ambassador for the Angus breed!

In a nutshell, integrity is doing the right thing, simply because it is the right thing to do. I'll close with this story about an old cabinetmaker, who was diligently working on the back of a fine cabinet, on a part that would, in all likelihood, never be seen.

One of his co-workers said to him, “Why worry about that? No one will ever know.”

The old man simply said, “I'll know.”

That, to me, defines integrity. My goal as a young Angus breeder is to continue to do my part to maintain our breed's position as the leader of the beef industry by modeling integrity as I continue to *Learn It, Earn It* and *Live It*.

