

Association Elects New Leadership

Story & photo by *Shelia Stannard*

Ben Eggers was elected president of the American Angus Association at the organization's 122nd Annual Convention of Delegates, Nov. 14, 2005, in Louisville, Ky. His term follows that of Minnie Lou Bradley, Memphis, Texas.

More than 300 delegates elected to represent Association members from more than 40 states conducted the annual meeting and election. The meeting was at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center (KFEC) in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE).

Jot Hartley was elected by the delegates to serve as vice president of the Association, and five individuals were elected to the Association Board of Directors. Paul Hill, Bidwell, Ohio, will serve as treasurer for the year.

Eggers and his wife, Darla, live near Mexico, Mo., where Ben is manager of Sydenstricker Genetics. His responsibilities include production, herd health, nutrition, genetics, advertising and promotion, and managing the annual production sale. In 2001, the farm was awarded the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Seedstock Producer of the Year Award.

Ben is an active member of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), serving on its board of directors and several committees, as well as previously acting as the Association's representative on the NCBA board. He also served as president of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association and has been active in other agriculture organizations on the state level.

Ben is a Missouri native and the third president of the Association to be raised near Jackson, Mo.

Hartley and his wife, Renee, along with their sons, own and operate Spur Ranch, a diversified operation consisting of purebred and commercial Angus cows and stocker cattle. The ranch is located near Vinita, Okla., and hosts a production sale each fall.

Jot holds a degree in finance from

► **Below:** Board members named at the American Angus Association Annual Meeting in Louisville, Ky., are (seated, from left) officers **Paul Hill**, Bidwell, Ohio, treasurer; **Ben Eggers**, Mexico, Mo., president; and **Jot Hartley**, Vinita, Okla., vice president; and (standing, from left) directors **John Schurr**, Farnam, Neb.; **Bob Schlutz**, Columbus Junction, Iowa; **Gregg Blythe**, Madison, Ala.; **Gordon Stucky**, Kingman, Kan.; and **Bill Davis**, Sidney, Mont.



Oklahoma State University and a degree in law from the University of Oklahoma. He is a licensed attorney admitted to practice in several state and federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

He is a former director and past president of the Oklahoma Angus Association and a member of the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association.

While serving as vice president, Jot will serve as chairman of Angus Productions Inc. (API) and on the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) LLC Board. He will also serve on the Executive Committee.

Directors elected

Following are brief biographies of the five members elected to the American Angus Association Board of Directors at the 2005 Annual Meeting. More extensive biographies were published in the October 2005 *Angus Journal*.

Gregg Blythe, Madison, Ala., was elected to his second term on the Board. He is involved in his family's farming and Angus operation, and has been active in the cattle business for numerous years. During his first term on the Board, he served on the following committees: Information & Data

Management, Finance & Planning, Activities, and Public Relations. He has also been on the API Board and served as the Board chaplain.

William "Bill" Davis has spent his life in the Angus business. Today, he operates Rollin' Rock Angus near Sidney, Mont. Bill was elected to his second term on the Board.

During the past three years, he served on the

Information & Data Management Committee and the Industry Relations Committee, as well as the API and Angus Foundation boards. He is a past director and president of the Montana Beef Performance Association and past director of the Montana Stockgrowers Association.

Robert "Bob" Schlutz, Columbus Junction, Iowa, is a second-term director on the Board. He served on the Activities & Events and

Member Services committees, as vice chairman of the Finance Committee, and on the Angus Foundation and CAB boards. Bob and his family operate Da-Es-Ro Angus Farms, and he has been on the Iowa State Fair board for 14 years, serving two of those years as president.

John Schurr and his family run a purebred Angus and Charolais herd in southwest Nebraska near Farnam, where John grew up. He was elected to serve a second term on the Board. During his first term, he served on the following committees: Breed Improvement, Commercial & Industry Relations, Public Relations, and Activities & Events. He also is on the CAB Board. He and his three sons work together at Schurrtop Angus and feed cattle at the family-owned Schurr Ranch-77 Feedyard.

Gordon Stucky, Kingman, Kan., was elected to his first term to the Board. He and his family own Circle S Angus Ranch, west of Wichita. He is past director and president of the Kansas Angus Association, and is chairman of its commercial female sale. He has also been active in BIF, his local Extension council, the Kansas Farm Bureau and the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA).



Forging a Future

NAILE attendees build toward the future with great cattle, donations.

Story by Brooke Byrd

Photos by Brooke Byrd & Shauna Rose Hermel

American Angus Association members gathered in the heart of Kentucky Nov. 12-15, 2005, for the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) and Angus events taking place in Louisville.

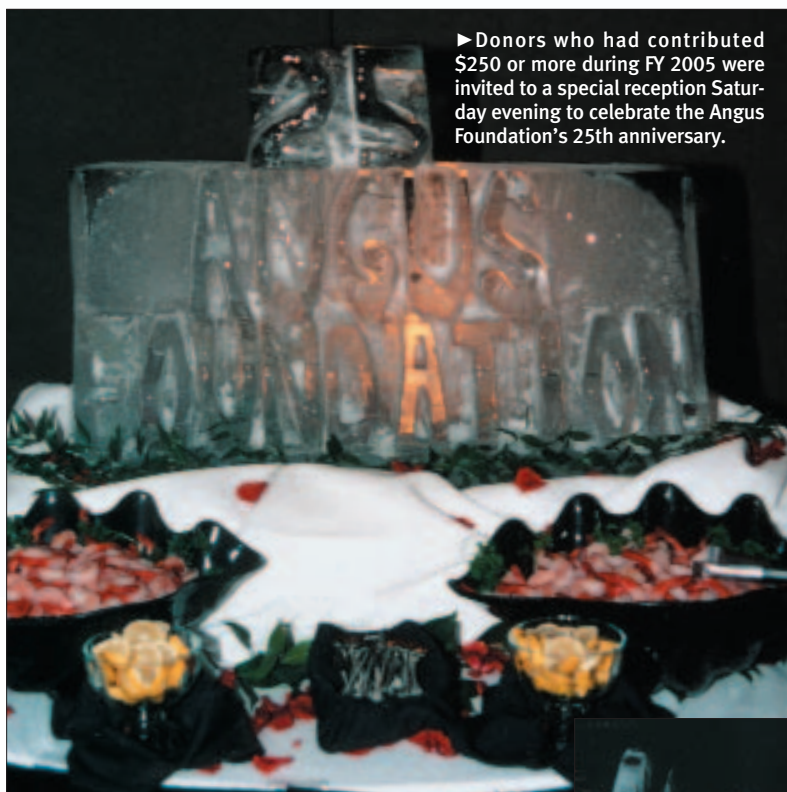
"The American Angus Association's Annual Meeting in Louisville was a well-orchestrated and fast-moving event," said John Crouch, Association executive vice president. "The large crowd in attendance was treated to a wide variety of events, which included a seminar on the current state of the beef industry, a forum in which the candidates for the Board expressed their views, the annual awards banquet and the Roll of Victory (ROV) show. What an exciting time it is to be in the Angus business!"

Foundation kickoff

Angus Foundation supporters kicked off the weekend with the Angus Foundation Annual Supporter Recognition Event and Fundraiser Saturday evening. Themed "Creating Legacies," the Foundation reception honored both the Foundation's 25th silver anniversary and major donors throughout fiscal year (FY) 2005. Crouch; Paul Hill, Foundation Board of Directors president; and Milford Jenkins, Foundation director of development, spoke about future plans for the Foundation and the necessity of generous contributors.

Event attendees then began "creating legacies" with the donation of \$25,000 by Blanford and Joan Pierce of Woodlawn Farms, Creston, Ill., to establish the Woodlawn Farms Scholarship Endowment Fund. Set to provide scholarships to Angus juniors, the Pierces took the Foundation one step further in its efforts to support Angus education, youth and research efforts. The gift marked the first scholarship endowment of its kind to be singly funded by one donor.

The donation was followed by the auction of the "1 of 1" Angus Foundation 25th Silver Anniversary American Black Angus Commemorative Winchester 30-30 Rifle.



► Donors who had contributed \$250 or more during FY 2005 were invited to a special reception Saturday evening to celebrate the Angus Foundation's 25th anniversary.



► **Above:** A one-of-a-kind, silver-plated rifle was offered for auction during Saturday evening's Angus Foundation reception.



► **Left:** Fred Johnson (left) of Summitcrest Farms, Summitville, Ohio, and Doug Dalton (right) of Daltons on the Sycamore, Gretna, Va., both longtime supporters of the Angus Foundation, enjoy Saturday evening's Angus Foundation reception.

Dave McMahon and family of Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Ark., purchased the rifle for \$10,000. Limestone LLC, Stillwater, Okla., and Express Ranches, Yukon, Okla., offered the contending bid to auctioneer Tommy Barnes, Gallion, Ala.

At the end of the evening, Foundation donors joined in a toast, offered by Doug Dalton, Gretna, Va., to the Angus Foundation's past, present and future. "Tonight's theme, 'Creating Legacies,' I believe very appropriately describes the work that all of us are doing as supporters and donors to the Angus Foundation," Dalton said. "Through our gifts and support, we are all advancing the vision and dream that the founders of the Angus Foundation held 25 years ago."

In 1980, the Angus Foundation had slightly more than \$7,000 in assets, Dalton said. "Tonight we celebrate with over \$3 million in assets."

Before offering the toast, Dalton spoke of Angus members' responsibility to create legacies for future generations of Angus youth and breeders.

Auxiliary report

The annual meeting of the American Angus Auxiliary took place directly after the Foundation reception. Most of the meeting was devoted to discussing prospective changes in the bylaws. Auxiliary members amended the bylaws to include gender-neutral language to allow the participation of men; to change the fiscal year to match that of the Association; and to update finance, trust and other committee obligations to include the responsibilities of the Angus Foundation in managing the Auxiliary scholarship fund.

Auxiliary members did not approve an amendment that would have required a majority vote instead of a two-thirds vote to amend the bylaws. Also, an amendment that would have formed a board of directors including the officers and regional directors did not pass.

The 2005 Auxiliary president, Shirley Williams, Van Buren, Ark., passed the pin and gavel to the 2006 president, Sharee Sankey, Council Grove, Kan. Williams will take on the office of advisor. Other new Auxiliary officers were elected, including Nancy Thelen, Saline, Mich., secretary-treasurer, and Mary Greiman, Garner, Iowa, president-elect.

The Auxiliary Breakfast took place Sunday morning with the theme "Well-behaved women seldom make history." With decorations from the Arkansas Angus Auxiliary, participants enjoyed a great breakfast and the clogging skills of National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Director Kindra Wood, Holly Pond, Ala. Jara Settles, Hoskins, Neb., gave her award-winning speech from the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) about marketing strategies, telling those present, "We as Angus breeders must search out every option available to help market our product."

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► **Left:** NJAA Director Kindra Wood, Holly Pond, Ala., displays her clogging skills at Sunday morning's Auxiliary Breakfast.

► **Below:** Blanford and Joan Pierce of Woodlawn Farms, Creston, Ill., present a check for \$25,000 to the Angus Foundation to establish the Woodlawn Farms Scholarship Endowment Fund, the first endowment of its kind to be solely sponsored by one donor.



► The Dave McMahon family of Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Ark., purchased the one-of-a-kind rifle at Saturday evening's reception. The \$10,000 bid will further the mission of the Angus Foundation.



► **Left:** Officers of the American Angus Auxiliary for 2006 include (from left) Nancy Thelen, Saline, Mich., secretary-treasurer; Mary Greiman, Garner, Iowa, president-elect; Sharee Sankey, Council Grove, Kan., president; and Shirley Williams, Van Buren, Ark., advisor.

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Award winners from the NJAS were recognized, including winners of the Janet Castle Crystal, Silver Pitcher, Black Kettle and Auxiliary Scholarship awards.

Those present at the breakfast also received note cards with a drawing by C.J. Brown titled "Don't fence me in." Williams encouraged those present to use the cards to "tell a unique woman in your life what her courage, originality and creativity have meant to you and that you realize you are more of who you are because of her influence."

At the Angus Reception Sunday evening, Angus breeders stepped in to help the Auxiliary step up its scholarship efforts. The sale of Lemmon Pride P217, donated by Harvey and Nina Lemmon, Woodbury, Ga., highlighted the evening. A syndicate of breeders purchased the heifer for \$27,000, and then donated her back to the Auxiliary to resell. Curtis Long, Briarwood Farms, Butler, Mo., was the final bidder at \$24,000.

Tim O'Neal, Branch, Ark., and "Friends

from Arkansas" purchased the No. 1 "Belle" ornament for \$1,000 to raise money for the Auxiliary scholarship fund. Anne Hagen created the numbered ornaments for the Auxiliary, which is selling additional numbered originals for \$125 each. O'Neal and the Friends from Arkansas gave the No. 1 ornament to Williams in honor of her years of service to the Auxiliary. Petteway Citrus, Zolfo Springs, Fla., then purchased the No. 50 "Belle" ornament for \$600.

Champion auctioned

Also during the Angus Reception, an original Frank Champion Murphy painting, "Champion!" (see the cover of the September 2005 *Angus Journal*) sold to McMahan, on behalf of Limestone LLC, for \$15,000. The auctioned painting raised funds for the 2006 NJAS, to be hosted by the Indiana Angus Association. McMahan also purchased prints No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for \$1,000 each.

Connie Uden of TC Ranch, Franklin,

Neb., purchased print No. 500 for \$800; and Barry and Ami Goldstein of Brookefield Farms, Hartford, N.Y., purchased print No. 75 for \$700. Auctioneer Jerry Lehmann, Lake Ozark, Mo., cried the auction.

Additional numbered prints of "Champion!" are available through the Angus Foundation.

A step ahead

"We have long referred to Angus as 'The Business Breed,'" said 2006 Association President Ben Eggers, Mexico, Mo., in introducing the speakers for Sunday afternoon's educational forum. "How well our business operates depends on our ability to maintain our leadership role in the beef industry and to steadily increase our market share.

"Understanding this industry is vital for individual breeders to maintain their competitive advantage as we go forward," he continued. "Our two speakers this afternoon



► **Left:** "Conventional thinking has never caused a single innovation," Vern Pierce, University of Missouri beef economist, told attendees of Sunday afternoon's educational forum.

► **Right:** During Sunday's educational forum, Tom Brink of Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding LLC offered three "headwinds" and four "tailwinds" Angus producers need to realize to face the future.



► McMahan (left) visits with artist Frank Champion Murphy after spending \$15,000, on behalf of Limestone LLC, for the original artwork "Champion!" which was offered to raise money for the 2006 NJAS in Indianapolis, Ind.



► A syndicate of breeders paid \$27,000 to purchase Lemmon Pride P217 at Sunday evening's Angus reception. The syndicate then donated the heifer back to the American Angus Auxiliary to sell again to raise money for the Auxiliary's scholarship fund.

will challenge your thought processes, make you proud of what the Angus breed has accomplished, and give you some insight as to what the future holds for all of us.”

Speakers Vern Pierce, University of Missouri beef economist, and Tom Brink, vice president of cattle ownership and risk management for Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding LLC, gave Association members the upper hand on what to expect in the future.

Pierce spoke about misplaced opportunities for making money in the cattle business and warned producers against leaving money on the table. He pointed out a growing trend of people with more money to spend on convenience items, and spoke about the need to move beef from a commodity to a “meal solution.” He noted that producers, processors and retailers are all going to influence future decisions in the food chain.

The economist stated that visionary leaders take their organizations forward. “Conventional thinking has never caused a

single innovation,” Pierce said. Angus producers will be faced with two choices, he noted. They can either stay where they are, or move ahead.

Brink began his talk by explaining that Association members should be proud because Angus is the biggest of all the registered breeds, but they should also realize the percentage of Angus seedstock in the U.S. is tiny compared to all the cattle in the commercial industry. He offered three “headwinds” and four “tailwinds” producers need to realize to face the future.

Headwinds are those challenges producers must be prepared to face in the future, Brink noted. The first challenge is that the high level of Angus market penetration will make continued growth a challenge. He also discussed the problems with the increased rate of Yield Grade (YG) 4s and what can be done to fix the problem, as well as the increased use of hybrid seedstock throughout the industry.

Tailwinds are opportunities producers can take advantage of for success. Brink emphasized that Angus beef’s current popularity with the consumer is a huge advantage. “Angus beef is everywhere,” he said. Secondly, he noted, Angus popularity continues throughout the production system. “No individual breed is even close to what you have,” he stated.

A third tailwind Brink encouraged producers to take advantage of is what he called the “amazing Angus EPD (expected progeny difference) machine.” Finally, he said, low quality grades in the southern U.S. leave room for Angus expansion.

Brink told the crowd, “You’ve got to align yourself to the commercial industry, not the other way around.”

Breed business

After the educational program, Association members met the six men running for five positions on the Association Board of Directors in an open meeting with Board candidates. Each candidate explained his background and desire to serve the American Angus Association Board of Directors and answered two questions selected from among those submitted by the audience.

On Monday, the Annual Meeting kicked off with comments by Minnie Lou Bradley, 2005 Association president. She addressed the history of the Angus breed and the need to move forward into the future. “Sometimes we have to continue to make changes,” she said. “Are we afraid to look at other things? That will get us in trouble.”

Bradley reminded those present that they affect more than \$26 billion as a part of the overall cattle and beef industries. To prepare for the future, she said, “We at the American Angus Association have a choice — what will we choose?”

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► Curtis Long (left) of Briarwood Farms, Butler, Mo., bid \$24,000 to take home the heifer donated by Nina and Harvey Lemmon (center) of Woodbury, Ga. Also shown are Sharee Sankey (right), 2006 American Angus Auxiliary president, and Wayne “Doc” Smith, former fieldman of the Missouri Angus Association.



► Tim O’Neal (left), Branch, Ark., and “Friends from Arkansas” purchased the No. 1 “Belle” ornament for \$1,000 during the Auxiliary’s scholarship fundraising auction. The group gave the ornament to 2005 American Angus Auxiliary President Shirley Williams (right) of Van Buren, Ark., shown with daughter Elizabeth.



► Petteway Citrus, Zolfo Springs, Fla., purchased the No. 50 “Belle” ornament for \$600. Pictured (from left) are Roy Petteway, Elizabeth and Shirley Williams, and Wendy and R. Roy Petteway.



► Murphy, pictured with wife, June, was available to personally sign prints during Sunday evening’s Angus reception.

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Crouch gave a recap of Angus and Association events throughout the year, and provided an update on new Association programs and services (see “Up Front,” page 40 of this issue). He also recognized current and past Board members and officers. He noted that the Association’s five basic core strategies are in place to propel the Angus breed into the future. Crouch also warned that the future “will not be like it is today.”

State delegates to the Annual Meeting then re-elected Gregg Blythe, Decatur, Ala.; Bill Davis, Sidney, Mont.; Bob Schlutz, Columbus Junction, Iowa; and John Schurr, Farnam, Neb., to serve their second three-year terms on the Board. Gordon Stucky, Kingman, Kan., was elected to his first three-year term.

Delegates also elected Eggers president and Jot Hartley, Vinita, Okla., vice president. Hill

was elected treasurer in an earlier voting by the Board.

In his first comments as American Angus Association president, Eggers said, “We’ve been overwhelmed by almost unbelievable accomplishments.” He also noted, “One of the great strengths of the Angus breed is the people.”

Celebrating achievement

At the Annual Banquet Monday evening, attendees enjoyed *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) prime rib provided by U.S. Premium Beef (USPB) as the Association recognized outstanding achievement.

Among those honored, Wravenna Phipps, Kearney, Neb., received the 2005 Barbara Smalstig Outstanding Leadership Award.

Morris Pipkin, formerly of Republic, Mo., was posthumously inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation, with James and Joann Pipkin accepting the award. Bill and Barb Rishel, North Platte, Neb.; Harvey and Nina Lemmon; and Vance and Connie Uden, Franklin, Neb., were also inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation (see “Rewarding Years of Dedication,” page 190).

Leo Baker, Saint Onge, S.D., was honored as a retiring American Angus Association Board member.

Banquet speaker Jim Whitt, Tulsa, Okla., spoke about “cowboy psychology.” Actually roping Eggers at one point, Whitt explained, “Without purpose, our only motivation is reward or punishment.”

People can go beyond the ordinary, he explained, if they realize their purpose and focus on it. Instead of stepping over dollars to pick up pennies — being focused only on survival — to succeed, cattle producers must create a cause. To Whitt, that means, “We’re not in the cattle business; we’re in the food business.” To be successful, he said people

have to ride for the brand and have loyalty to what they believe in.

Winning the crown

The Auxiliary’s Miss American Angus program took center stage before the ROV bull show champion drive. Five contestants, including Bridget Driscoll, Williamsburg, Iowa; Katrina Dubs, Billings, Mont.; Courtney Rump, Galva, Kan.; Julie Thelen, Saline, Mich.; and Mallory Trosper, Hamilton, Mo., participated in interviews, gave speeches and answered impromptu questions in the quest to become the 2006 Miss American Angus.

After recognizing the 2005 Miss American Angus, Chelsey Warfield, Andersonville, Tenn., judges Joe Elliott, Adams, Tenn., Association past president; Troy Marshall, Burlington, Colo., editor of *The Seedstock Digest*; and Jamie Meyer, Douglas, Kan., former NJAA Board member and Miss American Angus, crowned Trosper the new Miss American Angus.

Educational opportunity

Members learned more about the Association’s Angus Information Management Software (AIMS) program during two workshops conducted by AIMS director Scott Johnson. Both the Sunday evening session for new users and the Monday morning session for advanced users were well-attended.

Johnson explained updates in AIMS version 2.4.

In the showing

In the green shavings and bright lights of Freedom Hall, Angus breeders led 242 head before judge Jack Ward, Plattsburg, Mo., for the Super-Point ROV show Monday and Tuesday. NJAA members led 171 head before judge Kyle Rozeboom, Dresden, Tenn., on Sunday. For complete coverage of the ROV and junior shows, see pages 177-183 in this issue, or visit www.angusjournal.com/louisville.

Board assignments

The Board of the American Angus Association meets twice during the lineup of Angus events at the NAILE — Saturday to conduct regular business and Tuesday to make committee assignments. Committee and Board appointments are as follows.

Executive Committee — Ben Eggers, chairman; Jot Hartley; Paul Hill; Dave Smith; and Richard Tokach.

Activities & Events Committee — Jay King, chairman; Gregg Blythe, vice chairman;



► Mallory Trosper is the 2006 Miss American Angus. Mallory is the daughter of Steve and Sandy Trosper and is a freshman at the University of Missouri–Columbia. As Miss American Angus, she will promote the Angus breed and serve as its ambassador at numerous shows and events during this year.



► Executive Vice President John Crouch addresses the delegates of the 122nd Annual Convention of Delegates during the Association Annual Meeting Monday afternoon.

Al DeClerk; Norman Garton; Paul Hill; Bob Schlutz; and Dave Smith.

Information & Data Management Committee — Richard Tokach, chairman; Joe Hampton, vice chairman; Jarold Callahan; Bill Davis; John Schurr; Gordon Stucky; Rob Thomas; and Philip Trowbridge.

Finance & Planning Committee — Paul Hill, chairman; Bob Schlutz, vice chairman; Jarold Callahan; Jay King; Rob Thomas; Richard Tokach; and Philip Trowbridge.

Industry Relations Committee — Dave Smith, chairman; Bill Davis, vice chairman; Gregg Blythe; Al DeClerk; Norman Garton; Joe Hampton; John Schurr; and Gordon Stucky.

Angus Productions Inc. (API) Board (9 elected members) — Jot Hartley, chairman; John Crouch, vice chairman; Terry Cotton, president; Gregg Blythe; Jarold Callahan; Al DeClerk; Norman Garton; Paul Hill; Dave Smith; and Richard Wilson, secretary/treasurer.

Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Board (9 elected members) — (chairman, to be announced); John Crouch, vice chairman; Jim Riemann, president; Bill Davis; Ben Eggers; Joe Hampton; Jot Hartley; Jay King; Bob Norton; John Schurr; and Richard Wilson, secretary/treasurer.

Angus Foundation Board (9 elected members) — Paul Hill, chairman; John Crouch, vice chairman; Jarold Callahan; Bill Davis; Joe Hampton; Robert Schlutz; Dave Smith; Rob Thomas; Philip Trowbridge; and Richard Wilson, secretary.

Richard Tokach was selected to be the Board's representative to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), and Dave Smith was named chaplain. Paul Donnelly will serve as parliamentarian.

The following dates were established for the 2006 Board calendar:

- TBD — New director orientation, Saint Joseph, Mo.
- Feb. 22-24 — Board meeting, Saint Joseph, Mo.
- June 7-9 — Board meeting, Big Cedar Lodge, near Branson, Mo.
- Sept. 6-8 — Board meeting, Saint Joseph, Mo.
- Sept. 25-28 — National Conference & Tour, Boise, Idaho
- Nov. 11 — Board meeting, Louisville, Ky.
- Nov. 13 — 123rd Annual Meeting, Louisville, Ky.
- Nov. 14 — Board meeting, Louisville, Ky.

Incoming president's perspective

If we only remember one quote from Minnie Lou Bradley, I hope it is this one: "Boys, if you are not helping the commercial cattleman, you are wasting your time."

We need strong junior programs, and our exhibitions and seminars draw new people to the Angus world, but the basis of our operations has to be:

- ▶ supplying Angus bulls for the commercial industry that do what we say they'll do; and
- ▶ programs that help commercial producers enhance their bottom lines.

Across the country, and even in many foreign countries, as John Crouch alluded to, the name Angus is synonymous with quality. It's:

- ▶ the inherent quality of the Angus breed with regard to maternal and foraging abilities;
- ▶ the quality of Angus beef on the plate;
- ▶ the quality of the numbers coming out of the database;
- ▶ the quality of our regional managers in the field;
- ▶ the quality of our communications arm at API (Angus Productions Inc.);
- ▶ the quality of our Angus Auxiliary;
- ▶ the quality of the Angus Foundation;
- ▶ the quality of our Web site, IS (Information Services) Department and member support programs;
- ▶ the quality of our shows and events;
- ▶ the quality of our junior programs;
- ▶ the quality of our commercial relations programs; and
- ▶ the quality of the people on the other end of the phone when you dial (816) 383-5100.

This quality is the result of many Boards making tough decisions during tough times and tough decisions during good times, many staff members going the extra mile to do their part, and the support of the membership for the programs rolled out over the years that have resulted in the great success story we enjoy today.

But we all know change is occurring in the beef industry faster than ever. It will be up to this Board, and increasingly so for future Boards, to take the necessary steps to keep our membership competitive, and give them the tools to be successful.

In his book *Leading the Revolution*, Gary Hamel writes, "When Bill Gates says, 'Microsoft is always two years away from failure,' he's not defending himself yet again from the charge of being a monopolist. Gates understands the competitive reality of the new age. He knows that it's not only product life cycles that are shrinking; strategy life cycles are getting shorter, too.

An almost stupefying pace of change ensures that any business concept, no matter how brilliant, will, over time, lose its economic efficiency. The difference between being a leader and a laggard is no longer measured in decades, but in years, and sometimes months. Today, a company (or an industry like ours) must be capable of reinventing its strategy, not just once a decade or once a generation in the midst of a crisis, but continuously — year after year."

Mike MacNeil, research geneticist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) at Miles City, Mont., at the 2005 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Conference said, "It takes the beef industry 12 years to achieve 50% adoption of new technology." Do you know of any other industry that takes this long to adapt? If we are to stay competitive in the food protein marketplace, which is what we are in, we must continually evaluate and innovate — through all phases of the system.

Thank you again for the trust you've placed in me. I will do my best to uphold it.

— Ben Eggers, 2005-2006 American Angus Association President



▶ **Left:** Eddie Sydenstricker, Mexico, Mo.; Richard Eggers, Jackson, Mo.; and Sheri Spader, Rosendale, Mo., escort Ben Eggers to the podium to accept his election as president of the American Angus Association.