

NJAA Celebrates 30 Years

Green jackets create memories, motivation.

by **Barb Baylor Anderson**

Thirty years. It's hard to admit that my time spent on the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board was three decades ago — and before there were green jackets.

But like many of the past directors profiled below, the experience provided lasting memories, a firm career foundation and a passion to help the next generation of NJAA members thrive, whatever future paths they may take. These profiles provide a current snapshot of past directors and some guidance for the directors of tomorrow.

Dale Rains, Pennsylvania

“An important thing when starting any organization or business and in looking back to the first Board is don't make haste. Lay a solid foundation, and there will be very few limits to what can be done in the future. Our Board started with no rules or bylaws, goals or responsibility and an empty budget. By moving forward with a solid foundation, it has steadily grown into the youth-developing organization we see today. Visions, ideas and dreams have expanded the group in the past and will for years to come.”

— Dale Rains, 1980-1981

Rains served on the first national junior Board, having drawn a one-year term, so future terms would be staggered. He had already helped create and lead the Northeast Junior Angus Association, which included 13 states, and brought young Angus enthusiasts together to meet, work and share friendships. The first Board established an outline for the future.

Today, Rains manages a small fleet of family-owned school buses and has a small family farm operation that includes 45 registered Angus brood cows. He plans to continue with the operation that has been in his family for 98 years. Rains remains active in his state association and plans to encourage his son to become involved when he is old enough.

“I urge all youth with an interest in beef production to become part of the junior program,” he says. “There are so many different opportunities to learn about beef production, life and leadership at all levels. NJAA provides a wonderful chance to see things from a different perspective, visit



PHOTO BY CRYSTAL YOUNG, API CREATIVE MEDIA

► NJAA officers and directors share a camaraderie built on love of the breed, love of the lifestyle and dedication to serving an organization that has given them much.

new places and meet and work with new friends. Most members of the ‘has-been club,’ the past Board members, say it's the best opportunity to give back some of what they gained from a program that has meant so much to them.”

Rick Blanchard, California

“I wanted to be on the Board to further my Angus experiences nationally. Dr. Jerry Lipsey, the advisor at the time, told this country boy that I needed to get out and broaden my

horizon. He encouraged me to think outside of the box before there was a box.”

— Rick Blanchard, 1982-1984

Blanchard served on one of the first boards, and directed the NJAA as chairman in 1984. The experience helped solidify his decision to remain in the business as a career.

“I farm and run a cow herd of approximately 350 mothers. Professionally and personally, this is all I do,” he says. “We have an annual bull sale in September,

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marketing about 200 bulls, and have a female sale in October, where we offer about 100 females.”

Blanchard says the Board experience helped him develop relationships with other junior and adult Angus Association members across the country and internationally. It helped him learn how to work with people in general and people in large groups and how to remain versatile. He plans to continue to use those experiences through challenging economic times and remain focused on having the best Angus breeding program possible.

Jud Baldrige, Nebraska

“Being on the board of directors allowed me to experience the diversity of the Angus business, and know that the junior program was just a slice of something bigger.”

— Jud Baldrige, 1982-1984

Baldrige has always been involved with the Angus business, enjoying his summers participating in the state and national junior programs and showing cattle. He says being on the NJAA Board was just a natural extension of that.

“I liked the teamwork and working together with people from all over the country that offered different backgrounds,” he says. “My advice to juniors today is to have fun. You meet a lot of good people and create pleasant memories. You’ll find as you get older that many positives come from the contacts you make and the events you attend.”

Baldrige continues to raise Angus cattle on his family’s farm with his wife, Denise. The couple donated the heifer in 2008 sold to benefit the Angus Foundation.

“I want to contribute to the junior program and stay involved with the Angus industry,” he says. “It is all I have ever done and all I have ever planned to do.”

Chad Cash, Pennsylvania

“Kids get so much more exposure today and so much good comes from it. I encourage juniors to try and get on the Board and travel and meet potential mentors. Organization and leadership skills prepare you for the many great things that are ahead in life.”

— Chad Cash, 1986-1988

Cash ran for the NJAA Board because he wanted to provide representation for juniors

from the eastern U.S. He says his show cattle were not that competitive, and the Board gave him another outlet to become involved and generate ideas for the association.

Cash now owns a herd of 30 Angus cows with his father-in-law and is on the executive

committee for planning the 2011 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). He also works for Purina and markets feed for the company’s lifestyle division.

“Being on the Board was a big eye-opener for me to see the diversity and size of the Angus business. I learned there was more to the industry than breeders with just 20 cows,” he says.

“I’ve made many contacts and use the leadership and public speaking skills I got from being on the Board. I may not be in the Angus business full-time, but I will get more involved in the future, if that is the path my kids want to take.”

Lisa Hawkins Moser, Michigan

“I always admired the folks in the green jackets. Several Michigan Angus kids had served as junior directors, so I had a lot of mentors. I wanted the opportunity to give back to Angus youth and make a difference like so

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many before me had done. Now that I’m a parent, I’ve supported and encouraged my children to be involved in junior activities, in part, because of the great experiences I had with my Angus involvement.”

— Lisa Hawkins Moser, 1989-1991

Moser’s time as a Board member and as vice chairman for the NJAA Board in 1990 led to an internship with the *Angus Journal*. The events sparked her passion for writing. Moser has spent her career working with magazines and the livestock industry. She teaches the agriculture student magazine course at Kansas State University (K-State) and is a marketing specialist in the K-State College of Agriculture Department of Communications.

“Being on the Board gave me a lifelong calling to serve others that I still carry with me today. I help my college students learn new skills, teach 4-Hers photography and use



► Lisa Hawkins Moser (back row, left) is still active in the cattle business, raising Hereford cattle with her husband, Dan, and three children. Her parents and in-laws each raise Angus cattle.

my leadership on our church board," she says. "You form lifelong bonds. Even 20 years after my Board experience, I still keep up with people who served with me."

Moser is still active in the cattle business, raising Hereford cattle with her husband, Dan, and three children. Her parents and in-laws each raise Angus cattle.

"Along with showing cattle, we encourage our children to get involved in leadership and participate in contests. When the time is right, we hope they will see the merits of serving on a national junior board. We will be right there encouraging them," she says.

Cheremie Viator, Louisiana

"I don't think there was ever a doubt in my mind that I would work in some segment of agriculture, particularly the beef industry. Serving on the Board solidified my abilities and confirmed my passions for working with young people and the beef business."

— Cheremie Viator, 1990-1992

After growing up as a junior Angus member, Viator found getting to wear the green jacket an opportunity to help younger junior members. Doing so was a goal of hers from an early age and, she says, certainly the pinnacle of her junior career.

"In South Louisiana, we had several

families that boasted long-standing junior Angus adventures and successes, and I was fortunate to have their support and encouragement along the way," she says. "I was allowed to expand my communication, public speaking, organizational and prioritization skills. No task is too small or too large — then or now."

Viator recently accepted a marketing position with Silver Spur Ranches, a group that grazes Angus, Charolais, Red Angus and

commercial cattle in Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico. She has also assisted with embryo and semen exports worldwide.

"I believe that NJAA Board experiences enable junior members to be leaders within their communities and in the beef industry," she says. "My passions in life have always been to raise 'good kids and good cattle.' I don't see myself ever straying very far from supporting junior activities or beef production. I always strive to find opportunities to promote agriculture to

consumers, voting constituencies and our political leaders."

John Dickinson, Illinois

"The biggest takeaway is the true strength of this breed and the people involved. After interacting with youth across the country, I saw the potential of the NJAA. I recognized these young people were going to make a major impact, whether they stayed in the cattle industry or not.

That realization got me excited about the Angus breed and its future."

— John Dickinson, 1995-1997

Dickinson was attracted to the NJAA Board after conversations with previous NJAA directors from Illinois. Several impressed upon him the value of the position.

"I had been involved with the Angus breed all my life. My experience on the NJAA Board solidified my decision to pursue a career in the industry," he says. "The Board broadened my outlook,

especially as a 19-year-old kid that went to college 70 miles from home, and hadn't seen much more than cornfields and hog sheds before."

Dickinson created Parnell Dickinson Inc. in March 2007 with two partners. The full-service auction management firm specializes in livestock marketing. He also serves as director of breeding and marketing for Canyon Creek Angus, a 250-cow Angus operation near Cody, Wyo. He handles breeding, promotion and

advertising for the ranch.

"The NJAA Board can be extremely rewarding to those interested in service-based work that can afford the time commitment," he says. "You have a duty to develop the next classes of leaders. The most productive boards know the value of the membership and use members as a chief resource. Some of the most talented individuals from the NJAA may never have worn a green jacket, and those talents need to be found and utilized."

Brent Scarlett, North Carolina

"If you are interested in seeing the country, making lifelong friends, developing personal and professional skills, all while working with Angus cattle, then the NJAA Board of Directors is a position you should seek."

— Brent Scarlett, 1996-1998

Scarlett says he idolized the directors in green jackets as he was growing up and showing cattle. He wanted to learn more

about the cattle industry, but he also wanted to be a director to give back and try to feed young people's hunger for the Angus business.

"The Board provided a deeper understanding of the inner makeup of the cattle industry. It also provided me with the skills to communicate with people, talk about all aspects of the cattle business, develop relations with other members of the large animal community, and work on a team-based approach to

practicing veterinary medicine," he says.

Scarlett is a veterinarian and owner of a four-doctor large animal veterinary practice, Scarlett Mobile Large Animal Services. He works specifically on large animals and performs carcass ultrasound for the state of North Carolina.

"The Board opened my eyes to a lot of different places and people, and allowed me to see a lot of good Angus cows," he says. "My dad and I are still raising and marketing registered Angus. We also market our own beef locally. I hope that my daughter, Caroline, and niece, Sage, will be ready to show calves in a few years."

Jamie King, Ohio

"When I ran for the Board, it seemed like a long shot. I hadn't participated in as many contests or shown as much as previous directors. All of the Ohio juniors pitched in and helped as much as they could during my campaign, and when my name was announced it was a win for all of us. After that summer, the Ohio juniors were energized. Ohio went into junior nationals as a team ready to see what they could accomplish next."

— Jamie King, 2002-2004

Since serving on the NJAA Board, King has remained immersed in the cattle business. She is the director of member services and communications for the Ohio Cattlemen's Association (OCA) and Ohio

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Beef Council. She also serves as an advisor for the Ohio Junior Angus Association and is still involved with her family's Angus operation.

"At the time I was on the Board, I didn't realize how recognizable that green jacket made us. But I now know that anytime I need something, I can always reach out to my Angus network," she says. "Our breed does a great job of rallying behind its junior programs and making sure kids have every opportunity possible at every level."

King says participation on the Board also taught her about time management and setting priorities. She has used those skills in her position with the cattlemen's association.

"OCA had a very strong youth program when I started, but I've helped add a leadership conference and other opportunities," she says. "Being on the Board taught me what it takes to coordinate events and activities. I use those skills almost on a daily basis. It sometimes got tough juggling everything, but it was worth it."

Jenni Beck Winegarner, Texas

"I've come to appreciate that it's the diverse experiences of the people involved in the Angus breed that make it so great. I'm dedicated to making the most of every opportunity that comes my way with the understanding that, once it's time, I'll be as equipped as possible to carry on as the third generation of my family in the Angus business and, God willing, give the fourth generation the same wonderful opportunities I've been provided."

— Jenni Beck Winegarner, 2002-2004

Winegarner was a latecomer to the NJAA Board, although involved in the business all her life. She decided to run when she was 21 to get an additional two years of involvement in the Association. She found that even the process of running for the Board makes candidates better people.

"Not only did I want the opportunity to give back to the Association, I viewed it as the final honor I could seek. Setting goals and aspirations and seeing them through is what the Association is all about," she says. "You develop invaluable skills and end up with friendships that will last a lifetime."



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Currently, Winegarner serves as political director for U.S. Congressman Mac Thornberry. She lives with her husband, Josh, in Amarillo, Texas. She previously worked for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) in Washington, D.C.

"I go to work each day, developing a career that will someday afford me the opportunity and the resources to devote myself to the Angus business. If there's one thing that is certain, I will give my children the opportunity to experience the same lifestyle," she says. "I'm living proof of what

epitomizes so many Angus families: This business isn't something you simply do

for a living. If you truly love it, it becomes who you are."

Alicia Kramer Miller, Illinois

"To pinpoint just one thing I learned would be a disservice to the hundreds of ways that I grew as a person. One thing that really sticks out to me, though, is how much attitude can affect any task and the mood of those around you. There is no doubt that things in life can be stressful, overwhelming, and frustrating. However, the way that you deal

with those things can either make or break the task, and I learned that from my experience."

— Alicia Kramer Miller, 2004-2006

Miller hoped to connect with more NJAA members through her time on the Board, and inspire young people to become more involved. Today, she co-chairs the facilities committee for the 2010 Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show to take place in Illinois.

"I truly enjoy being in leadership positions, working with others, and working on projects that help advance the industry," she says. "I feel that my experience on the NJAA Board has significantly broadened my network of contacts around the country, and that has proven very beneficial when marketing the cattle and pigs we now raise."

In addition to employment with 1st Farm Credit Services as a crop insurance coordinator, Miller and her husband, Marcus, have a small herd of Angus cattle and raise Berkshire show pigs. Three of her siblings also have active Angus herds.

"I hope when we have children old enough to show, our herd will be established," she says. "I value the experiences I had with NJAA, and like to give back any way I can. So many people gave their time and resources to help me, and I want to return that favor. If you are the type of person with the desire to help others realize their

potential, you should seek a position on the Board. It will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life."

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