



► Prepared public speakers Cooper Sadowsky (top photo), Eagleville, Mo., and Shade Frank (directly above), Cheyenne, Wyo., exhibit poise while giving their speeches.

## Strong Voices

NJAA members use public speaking to tell the beef industry story.

compiled by **Kasey Brown**, associate editor

Communication has many facets, which includes both oral and written communication. The winners of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Prepared Public Speaking Contest have excelled in both aspects. They competed during the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Indianapolis, Ind., July 6-12.

Junior and intermediate division contestants could speak on any subject pertaining to Angus cattle or the beef industry. Exploration of, and insight into, any and all phases of the industry were encouraged, with the topic prompts of current affairs, policies and trends. Senior division contestants were

asked to address how technology and testing evolved for genetic conditions and to explain how this has helped to uphold the Angus breed's merit.

Speeches in the junior division were to be between 4 and 6 minutes in length, and intermediate and senior division speeches were to be 6-8 minutes long.

This year's winners were Alexis Koelling, Martinsburg, Mo., junior A division; Lily Gisclair, Longville, La., junior B division; Abigail Schrader, Columbia City, Ind., intermediate A division; Keegan Cassady, Normal, Ill., intermediate B division; and Esther McCabe, Elk City, Kan., senior division. McCabe won a \$1,000 scholarship from the *Angus Journal* for her senior division win. The winners of the younger divisions each won \$125.

Here are their winning speeches.



# Have a Little Faith

by **Alexis Koelling**, junior A winner

**E**ach morning, before my alarm goes off, I usually wake up to the smell of coffee brewing and my mom's voice wishing Brock a good day. This morning was different. I still heard my mom's voice, but it was a voice of concern. As I listened closely, I heard my mom saying, "It's OK baby girl, you're going to be OK."

I sprang from my bed to find my mom in the bathroom with a new baby calf in the bathtub. I joined my mom's side, hoping to save the baby calf's life. It was calving season, and this baby came on one of the coldest nights yet. Although this calf was only born a few minutes before Brock found her, she was nearly frozen to death. Her mouth was so cold, her tongue was lifeless, and her poor body was almost stiff.

Side by side with my mom, we used the warm water to thaw the baby's body. Brock kept asking, "Do you think she is going to make it?" I remember looking into her big,

black eyes. They blinked back at me as I told him, "I sure hope so..."

My mom told me to just sit with her and keep rubbing her. I held her head in my lap as she looked up at me, almost begging me to help her. I did just like my mom said, assuring her she was going to be just fine; we just had to have a little faith. I said a little prayer for my new baby Faith, and when my mom and Brock came back with colostrum for her, we were pretty certain she was going to make it.

Life on the farm can be completely unpredictable. Sometimes things go just as planned, and sometimes if something could go wrong it does. One thing is for sure, even through the good and bad things, life on the farm has helped make me who I am. From learning work ethic, strengthening my faith in God, and teaching me where my food comes from, I can honestly say, because of cattle, my life is different from many other kids.

One of my favorite *Bible* verses is posted in my room, Hebrews 11:1: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I can honestly say that I learned what this means on the farm. My family members are planners. My mom always says, "Random plans produce random results."

I have seen my family be successful with this way of thinking. However, on the farm, even the most well-planned things can go wrong. This calving season, we were prepared. All cows were in the barn lot; the closest cows to calve were penned at night. As luck would have it, all the calving pens were full of cows with calves when Faith joined us in the world. Like I said before, sometimes bad things happen.

## Work and faith

I learned that keeping faith sometimes means not knowing what the outcome would be, but you trust that God's will is greater than your own. If you're patient and work hard, God knows what's best, and he has it all figured out. I know that God just doesn't give you a handout without working for it.

At the Missouri State Fair, I was going in for champion female and Brock told me, "Remember, no matter if you win or lose, you worked for it." I will never forget that day. For one reason, I won the show, but I'll never forget what he said. I know that nothing worth having in life comes easy. If you want success, you have to get up and work for it.

I take great pride in knowing that my

CONTINUED ON PAGE 128

## ► PREPARED PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST



► Winning junior division A are (from left) **Kelsey Theis**, Leavenworth, Kan., third; **Lizzie Schafer**, Owaneco, Ill., second; and **Alexis Koelling**, Laddonia, Mo., first.



► Winning junior division B are (from left) **Alexandria Cozzitorto**, Lawrence, Kan., third; **Jace Stagemeyer**, Page, Neb., second; and **Lily Gisclair**, Longville, La., first.



► Winning intermediate division A are (from left) **Lindsey Decker**, Philo, Ill., third; **Miles Stagemeyer**, Page, Neb., second; and **Abigail Schrader**, Columbia City, Ind., first.



► Winning intermediate division B are (from left) **Sydni Lienemann**, Princeton, Neb., third; **Jera Pipkin**, Republic, Mo., second; and **Keegan Cas-sady**, Normal, Ill., first.



► Winning the senior division are (from left) **Will Pohlman**, Prairie Grove, Ark., third; **Maci Liemann**, Princeton, Neb., second; and **Esther McCabe**, Elk City, Kan., first. McCabe won a \$1,000 scholarship from the *Angus Journal* for her first-place finish in the senior division.



**Strong Voices** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 127

heifer won the Missouri State Fair because I worked with her every day. Many kids would have looked at baby Faith, cold and lifeless, and let her die. That is the easy way out. But I knew she wouldn't have a chance of surviving if I didn't help her and fight for her.

Even though my cows are my best friends, I know they are not just pets or pretty animals grazing in the pasture. In fact, those cows are helping feed the world. As cattle

farmers we have to share with other people who may not understand this life that we are producing safe food for them to eat. Some people think beef is unsafe and some people think cows shouldn't be killed for meat. In the U.S., we raise the safest and healthiest food available.

On our farm, a cow is not a cow. We have cattle that will raise calves that grow and gain fast to produce that high-quality burger or

steak. I know that taking good care of them is an important part of me feeding the world.

Raising cattle is an important job to me. It is not just a job, but my way of life. Even on those days when nothing is going right and, as my mom says, "The plan just isn't coming together," I still love my life on the farm. Baby Faith is now 6 months old and in the pasture with all the other spring calves. Her tag is 1416 and labeled Faith, but you don't need the tag to know it's her. She's just as big as the rest, but we will always have one distinct mark to remember her cold entrance in the world. Her short ears give her away every time.

Living life on the farm, nothing is ever perfect. My story of baby Faith has a happy ending. Sometimes the endings aren't so good. Sometimes those bad things happen. However, by working hard, believing in the importance of raising cattle, and having a little faith, everything will work out just the way it is supposed to, and I wouldn't have it any other way.



▣ **EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING CONTEST**



► Winning the junior A division are (from left) **Craig Becker**, Atlantic, Iowa, third; **Rebecca Koehne** accepting on behalf of her brother **Logan Koehne**, Greensburg, Ind., second; and **Jordyn Wickard**, Greenfield, Ind., first.



► Winning the junior B division are (from left) **Madelyn Gerken**, Cashion, Okla., third; **Isabella Witte**, Wilkinson, Ind., second; and **Eva Hinrichsen**, Westmoreland, Kan., first.



► Winning the intermediate A division are (from left) **Jacob McCall**, Greenville, Va., third; and **Cale Hinrichsen**, Westmoreland, Kan., first. Not pictured is **Sarah Harris**, Buchanan, Va., second.



► For his first-place finish, **Hinrichsen** received a Harvey Rattety bronze sculpture in the name of the late Pat Grote, former American Angus Auxiliary president. Pictured presenting the award is **Cortney Holshouser**, American Angus Auxiliary president.



► Winning the intermediate B division are (from left) **Cooper Sadowsky**, Eagleville, Mo., third; **Garrett Lowes**, Anderson, Ind., second; and **Corbin Cowles**, Rockfield, Ky., first.



► **Corbin Cowles** receives a Harvey Rattety bronze sculpture in the name of the late Pat Grote for his first-place win in the intermediate B division. Pictured presenting the award is **Holshouser**.



► **Will Pohlman** (center) receives a custom-engraved Artisan belt buckle in the name of the late Richard L. Spader for his first-place win in the senior division. Presenting the award are **Sheri Spader** (left) and **Holshouser**.



► Winning the senior division are (from left) **Jacob Steph**, Tatum, Texas, third; **Maci Lienemann**, Princeton, Neb., second; and **Will Pohlman**, Prairie Grove, Ark., first.

# GEAUX CAB!

## Goodness, Exceptional, Angus, Undeniable, Excellent

by Lily Gisclair, junior B winner

**H**i, my name is Lily Gisclair. I'm a proud member of the Louisiana Junior Angus Association. Today, this Cajun kid will talk to you about how the CAB® (*Certified Angus Beef*®) brand is important to all junior members.

Each of the points I will discuss today can be useful not only for kids but entire families. First I'll discuss CAB (Certified Angus Beef LLC) history and product information, beef nutritional values, then move on to menu preparation and purchasing tips, a little Cajun cooking and finally conclude.

The Certified Angus Beef program was officially formed in 1978. The brand provides assurances that the beef is consistently flavorful and tender to consumers. Sixty million pounds of beef are sold per month, equaling \$6 billion in sales annually. This is the largest, most successful brand of beef. This history information is provided on the CAB website. Did you know that a CAB cut must first qualify for USDA Choice or Prime, then meet the 10 standards? The United States Department of Agriculture grades each cut of beef — Prime and Choice are at the top end of the grades. CAB cuts are expected to be the best.

There are three CAB product brands offering consumers choices — for example, grass-fed only or extra marbling with superior tenderness. Traditional product, Prime brand, and Natural brand are the three different options. We are probably most familiar with the traditional product. The Prime brand offers a juicier taste and is only USDA Prime; less than 1.5% of cattle earn this brand. The third type is Natural — these cattle have been on a strict vegetarian diet and receive no antibiotic shots ever. This cut [meets] the 10 standards as well.

### Nutritional value

Now let's talk about some nutritional values about beef. There is a lot of misinformation about the nutritional values

compared to other sources such as fish, poultry and pork. Beef has a lot more nutritional values than what some people might think. According to <http://beefnutrition.org> (located on the National Cattlemen's [Beef Board] website), beef is an exceptional source of 10 essential nutrients: protein, B<sub>12</sub>, selenium, zinc, niacin, B<sub>6</sub>, phosphorous, choline, iron and riboflavin.

For example, a 3-ounce (oz.) serving of lean beef contributes less than 10% of calories to a 2,000-calorie diet, yet it supplies more than 10% of the daily value for 10 essential nutrients. You'd have to consume 18 oz. of cooked chicken breast to get the same amount of zinc and at least 7 oz. of cooked chicken breast to get the same amount of iron as in 3 oz. of cooked beef.

In addition, lean beef supplies significantly fewer calories and more nutrients than many plant proteins. A 3-oz. serving of lean beef (about 150 calories, on average) provides about the same amount of protein as 1 cup of cooked black beans (341 calories), but in less than half the calories.

It's our job as junior Angus members to spread the word about the nutritional value of Angus beef.

When it comes to purchasing beef, there are tons of tips available online. My focus is the junior member, and my most important tip is buy whatever you like the best. If you are tired of the same thing, maybe try something new and treat your family. At our house, my mom plans our menus for the week. We also live 30 minutes from the nearest grocery store, so it's important to plan ahead. This is a perfect opportunity to sit down with your parent and add that special dish.

The CAB website has an option to select recipes by cooking style or cuts of meat. My parents are selective about what kitchen appliances I'm allowed to use, so that does limit my cooking-style options for now. Going to the grocery store with a specific list helps with cost. CAB provides an exceptional

product for the cost. My family has the Angus beef chart posted in our kitchen. It helps identify where on the carcass you find cuts. You can get that resource from your regional manager. Also, every month the *Angus Journal* spotlights a recipe.

### Kid-friendly recipes

Alright "cher," I'm "fixin'" to tell you my favorite kid-recipe choices, including some Cajun choices. At least once a week, I cook tacos with 1 pound (lb.) of CAB ground meat. I also cook fajitas with 1 lb. of CAB flank steak (that's usually a value meat selection). Another favorite is meat and gravy, like all good country kids love. I use CAB round steak and bake to enhance tenderness and bake in the oven for a couple hours on low heat.

Of course all Cajuns love dirty rice. It's primarily a combination of rice and CAB ground meat. The rest is each family's special blend. My parents and I also make homemade Natchitoches Meat pies — that includes CAB ground meat, garlic, onions and bell peppers, and other Cajun spices that bakes in a homemade pastry dough. It's one of the official state foods of Louisiana. We also love smothered "number seven steaks," which is a cut from the 7-bone chuck pot roast. Your butcher can cut the steaks from this roast. This tastes best after cooked for a long time.

In conclusion, I've discussed some brief history of the CAB brand, nutritional value of Angus beef, menu preparation and grocery tips, and kid-friendly recipes.

GEAUX CAB — Goodness, Exceptional, Angus, Undeniable, Excellent, Certified Angus Beef. I hope you've enjoyed listening, and please visit our Louisiana booth to purchase an authentic Cajun cookbook.

"Ca C'est Bon, Cher!" (That's good, friend.)

Thank you.

**Strong Voices** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 129

# Pretty and Productive?

by **Abbi Schrader**, *intermediate A winner*

**T**he time has finally come. I've been waiting for it since last winter. It's time to pick out a bull to breed [to] my 4-H heifers. There's one that catches my eye; he's high-headed, clean-fronted, with a lot of muscle expression. I point him out to my dad but, to my disappointment, he turns him down. I tell my dad all the characteristics about the bull that I think would go well with my heifer. He agrees, but then shows me a row of statistics called an EPD at the bottom of the sire's picture. I question why that matters, and my dad begins to explain why EPDs are so important to evaluate.

EPD stands for expected progeny difference. An EPD is a statistic about a bull's estimated birth weight, calving ease and weaning weight along with other information. When examining EPDs, you generally want to see low numbers with the exception of statistics such as weaning weight, yearling weight and yearling height. Generally, a bull with lower EPDs regarding birth weight will have less calving difficulty. A bull with higher EPDs concerning birth weight will give you more calving troubles.

Eighty percent of all calves that are lost close to or at birth are healthy. So if that entire 80% is healthy, why do they die? The answer is common, especially among cattle herds that have small-framed heifers with big bones and oversized joints. Small pelvises, fetal position of the calf and poor health conditions of the cow also contribute to this problem. The answer: calving difficulty. Another term for this is dystocia. Dystocia is a huge problem in the cattle industry because it causes an annual loss of \$750,000,000. That's a ridiculous amount of money that could easily be reduced if breeders would just take time to make sure that their cows are put into an appropriate situation to calve.

## Learning through data

Many cattle breeders have come to the conclusion that the sire's EPDs have a large impact on how easily a calf is born, along with how much it will weigh and appear in the coming months. To promote cows that can effectively give birth without much assistance means you have to match genetics

that have low EPDs regarding birth weight. Taking time to look over a sire's statistics will definitely make your calving season easier.

With that being said, another factor that contributes to calving ease is the health of the cow. Cows that are underfed throughout the gestation period are more prone to give birth to sick, weak calves possibly resulting in death, and if not, they most likely won't be completely healthy. An underfed cow is also more likely to not produce good colostrum. Colostrum is the liquid that a calf must drink when it is first born; it contains vital minerals, fats, proteins and vitamins.

It is also difficult for a cow that is overweight to easily give birth. Internal fat surrounds the uterus and birth canal, making

it harder for the cow to have the calf smoothly. Based upon this information, a nutrient-deprived cow greatly contributes to calving difficulty. At the same time, a cow that is overfed will also struggle to give birth. As you can see, you must provide your cows with the proper amount of nutrients.

Another factor contributing to calving ease is the length of the gestation period. In the last 10 days of the gestation period, a calf can gain 1 to 1½ pounds per day. So if the length of the gestation period is continually extended, then the possibility of dystocia increases. Although you can't completely control when a calf is born, you can breed your cow to a bull with a shorter gestation length.

Out of all the calves that die near birth,

---

# The "S" Word

by **Keegan Cassidy**, *intermediate B winner*

**W**hat's in a word? Do words matter? A word can be a very powerful thing. A single word can create joy or sadness, content or anger, connect people or divide them. In agriculture we have faced many "buzzwords" over the years that create controversy. Today the current buzzword is sustainability, and it has, unfortunately, proven to be divisive.

On one hand, farmers and ranchers have long understood the concept of sustainability, even if they have never even used the word. They want their land to be more productive each and every year. They want to pass their farms and ranches along to their children and grandchildren. On the other hand, consumers and activist groups opposed to modern agriculture have tried to define the term sustainable agriculture as production systems that must be small, natural, organic or even free-range. Sustainable beef production is in everyone's

best interest, and it has become vital for our industry to fully embrace the definition of sustainability.

## Forming a definition

The International Food Information Council Foundation discovered that two-thirds of Americans say they have given at least some thought to whether the food they purchase and consume is sustainable. As a response to this, many said they buy local foods from farmers' markets, or foods in recyclable packages. Consumers obviously want to do the right thing when purchasing their food.

However, how can we expect them to know what to do when we can't even define it? Foodservice giant McDonald's is now working to buy product from farms that only produce sustainable beef. They are looking toward producers to define this idea and create criteria. If we work with



► **Right:** National Junior Angus Board directors Jessica Radcliffe and Cory Watt help manage the contest, collecting judges' score sheets and tallying the scores.

80% of those deaths are caused by dystocia. In fact, the cattle industry loses \$750,000,000 each year because of calving difficulty. Three factors that immensely affect dystocia are a bull's EPDs, the health of the cow, and the length of the gestation period. If breeders take more time to consider what sire they choose, provide their cattle with appropriate nutrients, and breed their cows to bulls that have a shorter gestation period, those numbers will dramatically decline, and the cattle industry will be much more prosperous. Now when I look at bulls to breed to my heifers, not only do I look at their physical appearance, but I pay close attention to their EPDs to limit dystocia in our calving season.



# Defining Sustainability

companies like McDonald's to identify and discover sustainability, we can be successful in clearly defining it. That way consumers don't have to wonder about sustainability when they are at a restaurant or a grocery store.

So where is this buzzword coming from? Why do we even need to worry about sustainable agriculture? By the year 2050, we will add another 3 billion people. Think about that. That's 3 billion more mouths to feed. Sustainability is vital right now to support our population for the future. As I mentioned before, consumers are thinking about sustainability. I mean, who wouldn't want sustainable agriculture? McDonald's would not care about serving sustainable beef if they did not think people care about this. With growing consumer and industry interest, sustainability will continue to be an issue. The last thing we need is for consumers to select other sources of protein

they perceive to be more sustainable than beef.

Protecting our environment and preserving natural resources is something farmers have always been aware of. Being raised in the Midwest, I am familiar with examples of current practices that can help define the word sustainability. In our area, our soils are premium. We grow some of the highest-yielding crops found anywhere. Huge supplies of byproducts from these crops, including corn gluten feed and crop residues, are ideal ways to economically raise beef cattle. Couple this with utilizing livestock manure to replenish nutrients back to the soil and you have defined sustainability.

In addition, the University of Illinois has been working to improve feed efficiency by finding which breeds and lines of cattle don't have to eat as much to still gain the same amount. Dr. Jude Capper, livestock sustainability consultant, says, "It's not about

the size of the animal, but about the pounds produced."

## Consumers' perceptions

People's perception of sustainability is still fuzzy. One way to increase their interest and make them look for it in the store is to mention the benefits. Sustainability will not only benefit the environment but also the economy. By reusing natural resources and improving efficiency, it will be cheaper for the farmer and the consumer, unlike organic or free-range, which will cost more for the consumer and aren't necessarily better. No question, being sustainable will improve agriculture, the economy and the food industry dramatically.

Because of McDonald's dedication to producing sustainable beef, our industry can improve remarkably in the coming years in the area of sustainability. As beef producers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 132

**Strong Voices** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 131

we need to be proactive in assisting these corporations such as McDonald's when they come to us looking for answers. The director of sustainability research of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Kim Stackhouse-Lawson says, "This is an opportunity for the beef industry by giving a definition and supporting that definition with positive stories." It is important that beef producers recognize the benefits of practicing sustainability and understanding its meaning. This has become a priority for all fields of agriculture.

With the development of GMOs

(genetically modified organisms), as well as more efficient production practices, agriculture will continue to improve sustainability. No matter what steps you take on the farm, it all comes down to the consumer.

Kasey Brown, associate editor of the *Angus Journal* writes, "Consumer trends are changing. More consumers tell retailers they want meat from responsibly raised animals, and what's more, they want proof."

It is their responsibility to recognize, understand and support sustainability. Looking forward we need to encourage them to make the right choice. That way, when

consumers see it on the shelves of grocery stores, it has a positive connotation in their minds.

The "S" word, sustainability, may seem overused and misunderstood. No doubt it will mean different things to different people. The ultimate impact of this industry buzzword may still be unknown, but our beef industry does have a seat at the table with an awesome opportunity. Let's agree upon a definition of beef sustainability for all of us that is based on science and will help improve the demand for beef worldwide.



# I Love Lucy to CSI

by **Esther McCabe**, senior winner

Let's take a walk together through history to the early 1950s. Lucille Ball and Arthur Godfrey were the television celebrities of the day. The average new car cost \$1,800 and a postage stamp was a whopping 3¢. But probably more important to all of us in the room today was that in the Angus breed, dwarfism was beginning to appear at an alarming rate.

According to Keith Evans' book, *A Historic Angus Journey*, dwarfism created panic within the breed as members and the Association itself sought to understand the problem. This created friction among some Association members when dwarfism-carrying animals were bought or sold.

## Dealing with dwarfism

Association efforts to identify dwarfism carriers and eliminate them from the breed angered some who owned them, and the affected members wanted the Association to slow down. On the other hand, members who had not been struck by dwarfism called for more preventative action on the part of the Association.

Before everything was brought under control, it nearly caused a split — both within the Association and between the Association and the publishers of the *Aberdeen-Angus Journal*. In fact, the *Journal* even published an article refuting all known scientific evidence at that time and

hypothesizing that dwarfism was a nutrition-related problem.

Of course, in time, breeders generally accepted, in fact, that it was a genetic concern and through the efforts of the Association being open with breeders and encouraging breeders to report dwarfs back to them, dwarfism was pretty much eliminated. However, this was at a high price for many individual breeders, since certain lines of cattle were blacklisted from the breed, and many prominent breeders went out of business.

In the 1970s, the Association developed a new way of reporting and handling genetic defects, as several new defects were discovered during that decade. These would include *Heterochromia irides* (white eye), double muscling, osteopetrosis (marble bone disease) and syndactyly (mule foot). The only way, at that time, to test a bull for defects was to mate him to his own daughters or known defect carriers. However, the Association was very proactive in collecting information and communicating the information back to the breeders. While some breeders felt it was airing our dirty laundry, the industry seemed to appreciate the Association's candor.

But let's take a deeper and more practical look at the effect of genetic defects. We pride ourselves in being breeders of Angus cattle and, while this is true, we are also in the people business just as much as the cattle

business. The way we react to problems and situations that will eventually come up is what will set both the breed as a whole and we as individual breeders apart.

You see, in the early 1950s there was absolute panic and dissention among breeders. Dwarfism was increasing at an alarming rate and breeders weren't sure what caused it, not to mention how to control it. Arguably the most influential breeder in the first half of the 20th century, Sam Fullerton of Miami, Okla., who served six terms as president of the American Angus Association and was the owner of Sunbeam Farms, was severely affected by the wide-spread hysteria. The Sunbeam name in a pedigree name came to be considered as undesirable.

Later on in the 1970s, former American Angus Association President Phil Trowbridge was involved in proving a bull to be free of syndactyly. However, in a November 2013 *Angus Journal* article he stated that after all the time, finances and effort involved, it did not matter. People were not going to accept the bull because of his pedigree.

## DNA leads the way

Fast-forwarding to the 21st century unfolded the discovery of new genetic defects, more contemporarily referred to as genetic conditions in the Angus breed. Deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA, has completely changed the landscape for genetic

testing. Even though it is very frustrating for breeders when a new condition is discovered, by DNA testing we can save 50% of the direct progeny of a simple-recessive gene. New-age genomic evaluation results from a panel of DNA markers, commonly referred to as DNA SNPs, which is an acronym for deoxyribonucleic acid single-nucleotide polymorphisms.

Individual SNPs do not tell us very much, but having a panel of critically selected SNPs for multiple traits is a completely different story, not only within the realm of testing for genetic conditions, but a multitude of other heritable traits. As we come into the DNA age, Angus has been and must continue to lead the charge for new technology.

Maybe because of replacing *I Love Lucy* with *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* on our televisions, most people generally believe in the science of DNA testing. No longer should people react with fear of the unknown. We as breeders will have to realize that genetic conditions will continue to come along and calmly categorize them as to how seriously

they will affect our individual breeding programs and the breed as a whole.

Looking into the future, I truly believe the highest hurdle that we will have to overcome is all breeders must realize that there are genetic conditions in nature, and we simply have to breed around them. However, as Angus breeders, we must first convince ourselves of this and then present this to the beef industry in a scientific-based approach.

The fact is that some of the bulls that have made the largest contribution to the CAB acceptance rates have later been discovered to have genetic conditions. The breed and particularly the incredibly successful *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> program would not look like they do today without these bulls having been involved. Honestly, it would be very difficult to imagine how different our industry would look without these genetic contributions.

To put it simply, we are not living in the 1950s. Lucille Ball and Arthur Godfrey are now watched on television only from nostalgia or to remind us of the “good ol’

days.” We are not going to have 3¢ stamps anytime soon, but we have the technology to test and sort cattle for genetic conditions.

The Angus breed has and will continue to uphold its merit in the beef industry by using solid science to make our decisions. The Association’s programs have simply led the way for the commercial beef industry. These programs reach as far as Certified Angus Beef to having the largest database for EPDs in the industry to 50K and GeneMax<sup>™</sup> testing.

The breed’s open policy of complete disclosure adopted in the 1970s has served us well coming into the DNA age. Our confidence in ourselves as stewards of our breed will no doubt serve us well as we go into the future.

It has been said, “The best way to predict our future is to create it.” I say, “Let’s get started.”

