



The Front Gate

► by **Allen Moczygemba**, CEO, American Angus Association

Not just another day

At the time, the day of April 12, 1967, seemed like just another Wednesday. Granted, it was a tumultuous time for our nation. The Vietnam War was building in intensity and, in fact, in two days (April 14) U.S. planes would bomb Haiphong, Vietnam, for the first time. Opposition was beginning to grow toward President Lyndon Johnson, while the nation's culture was beginning a journey of generational change that was uncomfortable for many.

An amazing career

At the American Angus Association, it seemed like just another Wednesday. Glen Bratcher was in his fourth year as secretary of the Association, and the staff was enjoying the office building addition recently completed. Dean Hurlbut was finalizing plans for the inaugural National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest.

That's the thing about life; just when it seems like it is just another day, some event occurs that in hindsight makes one realize it wasn't just another day. That's what happened at the Association.

That Wednesday in April 1967, a young lady all of 21 years old began her career as a computer programmer for the Association. The Saint Joseph, Mo., native actually had no computer experience at the time. She had just finished up a couple of years of junior college, when a high school friend of hers

who worked at the Association referred Marg Dreesmann as her replacement.

So it began, it being a career as a software engineer — although that wasn't the title at the time — for the Association that has now spanned more than 50 years. Transitioning from punch cards and mainframe computers to PCs and Macs, Marg has been intimately involved in writing computer code that drives the organization's vast performance database for more than five decades.

On April 12 of this year — ironically a Wednesday, as well — we took time to honor Marg and celebrate her 50th anniversary at the Association. We closed the office 30 minutes early and surprised Marg with a reception for her at the Albrecht-Kemper Museum in Saint Joseph. As you might imagine, there was a great turnout with almost all of the staff in attendance, along

with many former employees, including Dean and Gloria Hurlbut.

The Monday following the reception, I found a thank-you note from Marg on my desk. With Marg's permission, I thought I'd share it with you as it represents the grace and kindness of Marg Dreesmann and why she's so beloved by all of us. Enjoy.

Dear Allen,

Kurt Vonnegut's uncle Alex once said, "I urge you to please notice when you are happy, and exclaim or murmur or think at some point, 'If this isn't nice, I don't know what is.'" Vonnegut passed his uncle's advice on to me in one of his books, and I remembered it last Wednesday evening at the art museum and murmured it as he advised. You could not have pleased me more.

It was also a nice surprise to be recognized on angus.org. Shelby put together a very nice article from my ramblings. My niece Jane said it was very, very cool of Angus. She was right. Many, many thanks, Marg.

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