

Beyond the Ribbons

Miss American Angus goes beyond the call of duty to educate, carry on family tradition.

by Micky Wilson

Producers attending many of the major Angus shows across the country this past year saw Miss American Angus Mallory Trosper hand out ribbons and promote the breed and the brand to fellow cattlemen. What they didn't see were her efforts to utilize the position to educate and inform audiences outside the showing and beyond the cattle industry.

Noticed by many, "the lady in the red jacket" — Miss American Angus — is crowned annually at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky. Every year, five young women selected from among American Angus Auxiliary scholarship applicants are eligible to compete for the title of Miss American Angus. The program is sponsored by the Auxiliary and allows one young lady the opportunity to represent the Angus breed across the nation for one year.

Mallory Trosper of Hamilton, Mo., served as Miss American Angus for 2006. Her two older sisters, Lindsey and Whitney, served as Miss American Angus in 1997 and 2000, respectively. They are the daughters of Steve and Sandy Trosper. Each of the girls went beyond the call of duty to offer educational opportunities to those around them.



In the beginning

The Trosper family started raising Angus cattle in 1956 when Steve's parents, Dean and Ina Faye Trosper, initiated the operation. Steve returned home after graduating from college to get involved with the family farm. In later years, it was only natural for the Trosper girls to start showing cattle, and for Steve and Sandy to serve as advisors for the Missouri Junior Angus Association (MJAA). Additionally, the Trosper family served as a host family for the 2004 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Kansas City, Mo.

Steve and Sandy's involvement in agriculture and youth activities lent a helping hand to their three daughters' success in junior Angus programs.

"We saw their potential as they were growing up," Sandy says. "They're very goal-oriented girls. Steve and I viewed their involvement in the Angus associations, state and national, as tools in helping

them mature into responsible adults."

"And they really liked it; that made the difference," Steve adds. "They thrived on what they were doing."

"They are so grateful for the countless friendships they enjoy through their connections in the Angus industry,"

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►Above: Miss American Angus Mallory Trosper was crowned at the 2005 North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky.

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Sandy continues. “These young ladies have friends from coast to coast and internationally.

“Their Miss American Angus experience is something I wish every young woman could enjoy. However, the American Angus Auxiliary and National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) both offer numerous other programs with tremendous enriching and learning opportunities,” Sandy continues. “The American Angus Association is such a forward-thinking organization when it comes to our youth; and the Foundation and its commitment to education is unbelievable.”

Trospan tradition

“I really wasn’t familiar with Miss American Angus until my older sister, Lindsey, was Miss American Angus in 1997,” Mallory says. “From then on, ‘the lady in the red jacket’ really stood out for me.”

After winning an Auxiliary scholarship, Mallory prepared for competition by studying for the written test, and writing and practicing her speech.

Going into the contest, Mallory steeled herself in preparation for not reaching her goal. “I didn’t want to be heartbroken if I didn’t win, and I wanted to be happy for the person who did,” she explains. “Any of the girls would have been fully qualified to do it.”

When asked what gave her the edge over the other competitors to win the title of Miss American Angus, Mallory credits her calm frame of mind and her speech on winning strategies, “Three P’s in a Pod.” (To read Mallory’s speech, see page A10 of the Auxiliary Annual Report in the February 2006 *Angus Journal*.)

Overall, Mallory thinks she excelled in the contest because of, “the way I put myself out there, and I came off as being very calm and collected. That’s the most calm I have ever been in my entire life, and I don’t know how I did it,” Mallory says.

Sandy, however, thinks she knows how her youngest daughter captured the title in such a relaxed frame of mind. “Her communication skills are excellent,” Sandy says. “Mallory can communicate with all age groups, a skill learned at a very young age through her



►Above: Miss American Angus serves as a figurehead who is often called upon to speak about the Angus breed.



►As Miss American Angus, Mallory spent time promoting the breed and brand to audiences outside the showing. She went on approximately 18 trips throughout the year, spreading the Angus message.

Grandma Trosper, who was her babysitter while also selling real estate.”

Joe Elliott, former American Angus Association president and judge for the 2006 Miss American Angus contest, agrees. “Her communication skills and knowledge of agriculture, particularly the cattle industry, set her apart,” Elliott says. “She knows the importance of the livestock industry and communicates that effectively.”

Mary McCurry, former Miss American Angus and current Miss American Angus committee co-chairwoman, wasn’t surprised that all three Trosper girls earned the title of Miss American Angus. “They are poised, articulate, focused and hard-working young ladies,” she says. “They come prepared, organized and expecting to contribute in any way they can — without being asked.”

To credit the girls’ communication skills, Steve adds, “I think their involvement in all their other organizations helped a lot. All three of our daughters served as FFA presidents, so being comfortable in front of an audience became natural to them. It just put it all together.”

Still, going into the contest having both of her older sisters chosen as Miss American Angus must have been somewhat nerve-racking.

“If I said ‘no,’ I would be lying,” Mallory says about being nervous. “There wasn’t pressure from my sisters or my parents, but I knew they hoped I could compete.”

Though Mallory was very calm during her preparation for Miss American Angus, the other girls had different experiences.

Lindsey was probably the most nervous just because it was the unknown, Steve and Sandy say. First time experiences are always more difficult than the second or third time through it.

“As I remembered, we did not have the use of our kitchen table for approximately six months, as she occupied that area with her scholarship application,” Whitney said in the Auxiliary 50th Yearbook of Lindsey’s preparation prior to the Miss American Angus contest. In addition to serving as Miss American Angus in 1997, Lindsey also served on the NJAA Board of Directors from 1998 to 2000.

In contrast, “Whitney was very calm,” Sandy says. “I think we were more nervous for Whitney because she *was* so calm.”

Steve and Sandy remember Whitney being somewhat less prepared for the speech component of the contest than their other two daughters. But about Whitney’s speech, “Lindsey’s comment was, ‘Mom, don’t worry about it. It won’t be canned. It’ll be fresh.’ And it was fresh all right, because she didn’t start memorizing it until we picked her up at MU (University of Missouri) on the way to Louisville. The funny thing is she gave it without a hitch,” Sandy says, laughing.

Going the extra mile

All three Trosper girls took the opportunity presented by the position of Miss American Angus to promote the beef industry, Angus cattle and especially *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) beyond the bounds of the showring.

“We felt since they had the honor of being Miss American Angus, there should be more to it than just going to shows,” Steve says of his daughters’ involvement with the Miss American Angus program. “Sandy and I encouraged them to get more involved and to look for other opportunities to promote Angus.”

“I know the older girls originally thought the role should be expanded and that the young women who hold those positions are

Family tradition

Three Angus families have had multiple daughters serve as Miss American Angus. The following lists their names, home state, and years they wore the red jacket.

Mary Elizabeth (Smith) McCurry; Tennessee; 1971-1972
Beverly (Smith) Everett; Tennessee; 1976-1977

Kathy (Votaw) Dubbs; Nebraska; 1973-1974
Kerri (Votaw) Kliewer; Nebraska; 1977-1978

Lindsey (Trosper) DeWitte; Missouri; 1996-1997
Whitney Trosper; Missouri; 1999-2000
Mallory Trosper; Missouri; 2005-2006

Additionally, there has been one mother-daughter duo serve in the position as Miss American Angus.

Sharon (Harrold) Sommers, Indiana, 1968-1969
Jill (Sommers) Harker, Indiana, 1993-1994



► Mallory was the third Miss American Angus in her family. Her two older sisters, Lindsey and Whitney, served as Miss American Angus in 1997 and 2000, respectively.

quite capable of doing more than just presenting awards,” Sandy adds.

One of the first educational visits Mallory made was to Everett’s Steakhouse in Columbia, Mo. “I questioned customers on CAB, if they knew what it meant and how good of a steak they were getting when they receive CAB,” Mallory says. “I also went around to the tables to people ... and talked to them about what they had chosen to eat for dinner that night, why they had made that choice, and if they knew what CAB was.”

In addition to visiting a CAB restaurant, Mallory visited her former elementary and high school, talking to all age groups of students.

“With the kindergartners, my focus was making them understand you don’t just get milk from cattle — that there’s beef,” Mallory says. “Beef was the big thing I was stressing with them because when I

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asked the question, 'What comes from a cow?' the first response was 'milk.'

The fourth-graders knew beef came from cattle, so with them, Mallory stressed beef's nutritional content.

"The fourth-graders had a good time with the crown," Mallory says. "The little girls asked many 'queen' questions, such as, 'Are those diamonds real?' I said, 'No, they're not real.' Their response was, 'Well, you're not a real queen then!' So it was interesting to see their perspective."

"With the freshmen in high school I talked to the ag class ... about perseverance and setting goals," Mallory concludes about her school visit.

In addition to restaurant and school visits, Mallory helped for a few weeks in the Junior Activities Department at the American Angus Association in preparation for the 2006 NJAS.

Lindsey and Whitney also offered similar educational opportunities during their reigns as Miss American Angus.

Opening doors

Based upon a suggestion by Elliott, and because of the Trospers' girls' extra effort, in March 2006 Auxiliary leaders met with representatives of the Association and Angus Productions Inc. (API),

at the Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo. A brainstorming session was conducted to expand the role of Miss American Angus and to utilize the unique skill set that Miss American Angus brings to the breed.

Whitney and Sandy were there to add their perspective. "We took their experiences and are in the initial phase of expanding Miss American Angus's responsibilities at some of the major livestock shows where venues to interact with school children are already in place," McCurry says. "It will become a part of Miss American Angus's responsibility starting this fall. We have to realize, though, that the time commitment needs of a full-time college student and the travel involved serving as Miss American Angus must be evaluated at all times to keep that balance working."

Elliott fully supports the expansion of the role of Miss American Angus, and feels the position should be used as a vehicle to communicate agricultural issues to nonagricultural contemporaries. "I look at this position as an opportunity to further communication," he says. In the future, "Miss American Angus looks like an ambassador of goodwill for the Angus breed and agriculture in general."

Elliott also thanked McCurry for her work with the Miss American Angus program. "She has a tremendous grasp of the

A Q&A with Miss American Angus Mallory Trospers

What Angus events did you attend in your role as Miss American Angus?

I attended all of the required events, such as Certified Angus Beef LLC's (CAB's) Building Blocks Seminar, National Western Stock Show (NWSS), Western National Angus Futurity, Atlantic National, National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) and North American. I did attend a variety of sales and shows not required. Some of the sales I attended where: Sydenstricker, Belle Point, Circle A, Foundations Forever, and Wallace Cattle Co. Additional shows included the Fort Worth Stock Show, Missouri Angus Futurity, Missouri Angus Preview, Missouri Junior Cattlemen's, All-American Angus Breeders' Futurity, Missouri State Fair and American Royal.

What educational activities did you pursue beyond the showing in your role as Miss American Angus?

I pursued two different educational opportunities in my role as Miss American Angus. My first event was going to Everett's, which is a CAB-licensed steakhouse. I visited with customers as they entered and with those already seated at their tables. I discussed what the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand was and the premium product they were receiving.

The second educational opportunity was

going back to my elementary and high school. I visited with kindergartners and fourth-graders about beef and its nutrients. I passed out coloring pages to kindergartners and CAB foam balls to fourth-graders. On the high school level I spoke with the freshman agriculture class about setting goals and how the things you do now will impact your future.

In all, how many trips did you take?

Approximately 18.

What's the most challenging aspect of the role?

I think the most challenging aspect would have to be holding the title of Miss American Angus during your first year of college. There are numerous adjustments for new college students as they familiarize themselves with this major transition. I had to learn how to study. I no longer had the structured schedule of high school, and that meant putting my time-management skills to work ... overtime!

What was the most rewarding part of being Miss American Angus?

The most rewarding part of being Miss American Angus has to be the countless opportunities bestowed upon me. I met many unbelievable people throughout the

year and developed some very lasting friendships. The opportunity to promote CAB and become a noticeable spokesperson for not only CAB but the beef industry as a whole was a great reward and an exceptional learning experience.

How did you come up with ideas for educational opportunities?

My idea for going to Everett's was a CAB marketing opportunity my two sisters did when they were Miss American Angus. I like to think of it as a borrowed idea, not a stolen one.

I knew from other agriculture projects I did in high school that young students are not particularly informed about the importance of beef in their diet. I spoke with my high school agriculture teacher about coming to speak to some of his classes, and we both decided "setting goals for your life" was a much-needed subject of discussion for the freshman class. Many students do not necessarily feel it is important at this stage in their life, but it is critical to start looking down the road and making a plan for yourself.

What classes or activities best prepared you to be Miss American Angus?

I would have to say my advanced English classes prepared me for all the writing I

importance of this position,” he says, “beyond the glitter that others may associate with this role.”

Where they are now

The Trosper sisters haven't slowed down since their involvement with the Miss American Angus program. Lindsey, married this past August, works in public relations at Barkley, Evergreen & Partners in Kansas City, Mo., and Whitney works in commercial and residential real estate at Prudential Kansas City Realty.

Mallory is a sophomore this fall at the University of Missouri–Columbia, majoring in biochemistry. Her plans after college are to go into the medical field through the ACES/PRIMO program. “If you go to a medical school in the state of Missouri, practice medicine in the state of Missouri for up to five years, and locate your practice in a medically underserved area, then your medical school loans will receive a certain percentage of forgiveness each of those five years,” Mallory explained of the program.

Mallory also has one year of junior eligibility left, which she will spend serving her second term as president of the MJAA, a position she has worked up to through her participation in the organization.



► Mallory is the daughter of Steve & Sandy Trosper. The Trosper family started raising cattle in 1956 when Steve's parents initiated the operation.



have done throughout the year. The FFA contests I participated in — such as public speaking, livestock judging and team sales — all prepared me for the speaking aspect of the role. Combining these two forms of communication taught me to write speeches and present them to a group of people in a manner that would hold their attention.

What advice would you give to girls preparing to apply for the position?

For girls planning on applying for a scholarship, it is crucial to keep accurate records of their involvement in all activities with their church, community, school and Angus/beef associations.

My advice to the girls who are preparing for the contest is to pace yourself. Don't try to cram all of your studying and speech preparation into the last month. When it's

► Mallory visited her former elementary and high school, promoting beef as well as perseverance and goal-setting.

time for the contest, take a deep breath, calm yourself and, most importantly, be yourself!

What advice would you give to next year's Miss American Angus?

My advice to the 2007 Miss American Angus would be to get as involved as possible. You can only hold the title once, and you don't want to have any regrets when your reign is over.

Remember your very important position as a role model to literally thousands of youth across the country. Eyes are always on you, whether you have your crown and banner on or not.

You are a distinctive figurehead representing the Angus breed, and you will be called upon in a split second to speak about the cattle and/or Angus industry, so be personable and knowledgeable.

Most importantly, take pride in what you stand for, enjoy your year as you fulfill the Miss American Angus role so generously provided by the Auxiliary, and *count yourself as one very lucky young lady.*