

Going the Distance

Generous individuals overcome past obstacles to provide opportunities for youth.

by Brooke Byrd

History was made at the 2005 North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky., with the sale of Lemmon Pride P217. The American Angus Auxiliary hosted the heifer auction during the Angus Reception, cried by Jerry Lehmann, to raise money for the Auxiliary scholarship fund. More than \$50,000 was raised to support Angus youth in their future endeavors.

The auction's success was made possible by the important players involved: Harvey and Nina Lemmon, Woodbury, Ga., who donated the heifer; the syndicate of Angus supporters who first purchased the heifer for \$27,000 and then donated her back; Curtis Long of Briarwood Farms, Butler, Mo., who purchased the heifer for \$24,000; and all the other supporters of this project. (See page 86 of the January 2006 *Angus Journal* for all contributors to the Auxiliary scholarship fund, as well as all other supporters.)

The generous supporters of the Auxiliary scholarship fund had their own reasons for donating, but all agree on one thing: The future of the Angus breed will be in the hands of its youth.

Sharee Sankey, Council Grove, Kan., 2006 Auxiliary president, says she is greatly appreciative to all the Auxiliary's supporters. "Legacy and heritage are what the Angus breed has been built on down through the years of history. The American Angus Auxiliary scholarship program has been available to graduating high school seniors wanting to pursue a college education for many years," she explains.

"The support from the Lemmons, Dr. Long, Angus breeders and friends will definitely have an impact on our youth who are awarded these scholarships now and in the years to come," Sankey continues. "We will be able to increase the amounts given, and the longevity of the scholarship program will be there for our future Angus breeders and leaders."

Giving back

The Lemmons donated the WCC Special Design L309 daughter to support the



► Nina and Harvey Lemmon donated Lemmon Pride P217 to the Auxiliary scholarship fund.

Auxiliary's scholarship program. Harvey's devotion to Angus youth and the future of the breed stems back to when he was just a boy. His parents helped him buy a registered bred heifer whose first calf was grand champion of the 1959 Virginia State Fair. He met his wife while showing cattle, and their future together took off from there. After college, while working as a ranch herdsman, he says, it was Nina's idea to start their own ranch.

"When we decided we were going to do something on our own, I went and told my employer. He laughed in my face, got up, opened the door and told me I couldn't make it," he remembers.

Reflecting on Lemmon Cattle Enterprises' years of success, he says, "I guess he shouldn't have told me that."

Lemmon recognizes that

his education is one of the reasons he became so successful. "It was the contacts I made in school," he says, noting that his time on the livestock judging team introduced him to such people as C.K. Allen, past American Angus Association executive vice president, and John Crouch, current Association executive vice president. He still does business with many people who were on judging teams when he was.

The Lemmons' main reason for giving their support, he says, "is the life Angus cattle have given us. We've always made our living with Angus cattle, and we wanted to share our success with Angus youth."

Lemmon offers advice to youth and a challenge to other Angus breeders. To those receiving Auxiliary scholarships, he says, "Whatever they wish to do in life, we hope that they will work hard to make the world a better place and be successful." To other Angus enthusiasts, he says, "I challenge every other Angus breeder to make a donation to the Angus Auxiliary scholarship fund. The ladies do a fantastic job helping our breed prosper."

Joining forces

The syndicate of breeders and producers who contributed a total of \$27,000 to purchase the Auxiliary heifer, later donating her back, was organized in part by Linda Brost, Harrodsburg, Ky. The idea behind the syndicate, she says, was to get as many people involved as possible. "If you have an auction, you only have one winner," she notes. "This way, all these people together were able to participate to support the scholarship program."

Brost also notes that the syndicate was mostly a grassroots group, contributing a range of \$100 to \$1,000 to the Auxiliary scholarship fund. Even small amounts are greatly appreciated, she states.



► Jerry Lehmann cried the auction that raised more than \$50,000 to support Angus youth.

Going even farther

The American Angus Auxiliary and Angus Foundation are always accepting donations for Angus youth scholarships. Visit www.angusfoundation.org or contact Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation director of development, at (816) 383-5100 for more information.

“Sometimes a \$1,000 scholarship makes a big difference in kids’ choice of college — maybe even if they can go to college,” Brost says. Past scholarship recipients have been able to use the money saved on tuition to buy important items, such as computers.

Most importantly, Brost emphasizes, “Everybody can contribute at their own level, and their contribution does make a big difference. There are a lot of kids out there who have benefited from the Auxiliary scholarship program.”

Christy Page, Winder, Ga., helped organize members of the syndicate in Georgia. “The American Angus Auxiliary scholarship program is one of the most highly recognized programs for junior Angus members,” she says. As a past Auxiliary scholarship recipient who went on to serve as Miss American Angus, Page stresses the importance of helping Angus youth. “This program has helped hundreds of junior Angus members across the country to further their education.

“I realize how important it is to award our youth for their outstanding accomplishments,” she notes. “These scholarships are only available with the financial support of Angus breeders across the country.”

Overcoming obstacles

After the heifer was offered for auction a second time, Long stepped in and, with a \$24,000 donation to the Auxiliary scholarship fund, became the winning bidder. His donation was spurred by his experiences on his path to success, and he recognizes the value of education.

“I went through considerable obstacles during my younger years in school,” Long notes. To obtain money to attend college, he hitchhiked from his hometown to Columbia, Mo., where he waited tables, changed tires

and attended classes. During summer vacations, he worked for his father at Twin City Packing Co.

After receiving a degree in agricultural biochemistry in 1956, Long was accepted into and later graduated from the University of Missouri medical school. He then interned at Kansas City General Hospital. “In 1964, I moved to Butler, Missouri; opened up a medical office; and bought my first farm,” he says. “I have been in the registered Angus business since that time and am active daily in the farming operation. Briarwood Farms is one of the oldest herds of Angus cattle in Missouri.”

As a result of his education, Long has become successful in his careers as a cattle producer and medical doctor. He was a charter member of U.S. Premium Beef (USPB). Long also performed the first laparoscopic surgery in the state of Missouri, developed a new technique for tonsillectomies and, for many years, delivered about 100 babies a year.

His hopes are that the Angus youth benefiting from Auxiliary scholarships are able to complete their educations without as many obstacles as he had.

“I feel that my education has allowed me to be successful in my enterprises,” he explains. “Having gone through these difficulties in many difficult times, I thought that a good gesture would be to donate money to the



►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.

Auxiliary scholarship fund that I might be able to help some younger people get through college in a little easier manner than I did.

“I hope these children will be able to become better citizens and be successful in whatever they may choose,” he says. “My advice would be try to do an excellent job of everything you do, and try to improve any organization of which you’re a member.”

Long also recognizes the role Angus youth will play in the future. “I wanted to help the future young people that would be the backbone of the American Angus Association,” he says. “They probably will be the future of the industry.”



►A syndicate of breeders paid \$27,000 to purchase Lemmon Pride P217 during the Angus reception at the 2005 North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE). The syndicate donated the heifer back to the Auxiliary to sell again to raise money for the Auxiliary’s scholarship fund.