

Heritage Honors

Association inducts Angus Heritage Foundation honorees.

by **Monica Jordan**

Five individuals were recognized as inductees to the Angus Heritage Foundation during the American Angus Association's Annual Banquet Nov. 12 in Louisville, Ky. The honor recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the improvement and advancement of the Angus breed by dedicating their time, knowledge and efforts.

The 2007 inductees selected by the American Angus Association Board of Directors include John Barton, Kansas City, Mo.; Bob Hartley, Vinita, Okla.; Blanford Pierce, Creston, Ill.; and T.D. Steele, Roanoke, Va. Fred Francis, formerly of Wilmington, Ill., was inducted posthumously.

Each inductee or their family received a framed Angus Heritage Foundation certificate, and their names were engraved on a permanent Heritage Foundation plaque in the Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo. Photos and brief biographies will be included in the next printed edition of the *Angus Heritage Foundation* booklet that lists inductees from the Heritage Foundation's inception in 1983. A brief biography of each of the inductees follows.

John Barton, Kansas City, Mo.

Angus cattle were always a part of John Barton's life in west-central Oklahoma, but his initial interest in the breed developed with the purchase of his first Angus show steer.

From that time forward, he bred, managed, promoted and merchandised Angus cattle.

Barton served as a regional manager for the American Angus Association from 1967 to 1992. He traveled thousands of miles across the Midwest and Central Plains and always enjoyed working with Angus breeders. Uniquely, he was one of three brothers who served as regional managers for the Association.

A graduate of Oklahoma State University (OSU), Barton has also been a county Extension agent, and a fieldman for the Kansas Angus Association and two livestock publications, the *Breeders Gazette* and the *Western Livestock Journal*. Early in his career he was manager of Fairlawn Farms, Topeka, Kan.

In 1994, Barton was inducted into the National

Junior Angus Association's (NJAA) Honorary Angus Foundation.

Bob Hartley, Vinita, Okla.

Bob Hartley is a graduate of OSU. He is a pioneer in performance testing and carcass evaluation.

In 1958, he founded Spur Ranch of Vinita, Okla., where he built a reputation for practicality, efficiency and performance. In addition, he bred the 1971 International grand champion bull, Spur Emulous Master. He established H&H Land & Cattle Co. LLC in 1994 and continues to raise commercial and registered Angus cattle in addition to operating a stocker cattle program.

Hartley was involved in the initial planning of the Oklahoma Beef Inc. (OBI) bull test station at OSU. He served on the OSU board of regents from 1969 to 1971 and was honored as a distinguished graduate of the animal science department in 1972. He was named an OSU Master Breeder in 2000.

Blanford Pierce, Creston, Ill.

Angus cattle are and always have been a way of life for Blanford Pierce Jr. This Creston, Ill., native is the fourth generation of the Pierce family to be inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation.

Pierce led Woodlawn Farms to its historic 125-year benchmark with a strong belief in the importance of cow families. Although Woodlawn Farms dispersed in 2005, he continues to be active in the Angus business and has funded a \$25,000 educational endowment with the Angus Foundation to annually provide a scholarship to Angus youth. He has also joined the crusade as a member of the leadership cabinet to help raise \$11 million as part of the Angus Foundation's *Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus*.

Pierce is proud of the fact that four generations of Pierces have retired on the strength of the Angus cow and hopes that inspires young breeders to charge on with enthusiasm and dedication to this great breed of cattle.

T.D. Steele, Roanoke, Va.

For more than 50 years, T.D. Steele has been raising high-quality Angus cattle by maintaining extensive recordkeeping

CONTINUED ON PAGE 108



►John Barton (center), Kansas City, Mo., was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Also pictured are Gay Barton (left) and Association President Paul Hill.



►Bob Hartley (left), Vinita, Okla., receives the Angus Heritage Foundation award from Hill.



►Blanford Pierce (center), Creston, Ill., was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Also pictured are Joan Pierce (left) and Hill.

Heritage Honors CONTINUED FROM PAGE 107

and performance data. While working on his master's degree at Virginia Tech, he and his father founded Lynn Brae Farms, Roanoke, Va.

He was instrumental in the formation of the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) in 1955 and spearheaded the first performance bull test at Culpeper, Va., in 1957. When the cow herd expanded, Steele and his son, Roger, purchased property near Maple Hill, Kan., launching Mill Brae Ranch, where the breeding herd is maintained.

Following his three-year term on the Certified Angus Beef LLC Board, he was elected to the American Angus Association Board of Directors and served as its president from 1994-1995.

Steele has also been successful in real estate development throughout the Roanoke Valley and has served on several agriculture and service-oriented boards within his community.

Fred Francis, Wilmington, Ill.

As one of the architects of the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) program, Fred Francis coined the term "Pathfinder.®" He was raised on a livestock farm near Joliet, Ill., during the Great Depression and went on to receive his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois (U of I). Francis was a member of the U of I animal science staff and coached the livestock judging team.

In 1950 he left the university system to farm full time and founded the Illinois and Chicagoland Angus associations within the same decade. Francis began working with the American Angus Association as a part-time classifier in 1958. In 1968, he was named breed improvement specialist for the Association and was appointed director of breed improvement in 1974.

Always an educator, Francis served as the livestock judging coach for Kankakee Community College in the 1980s. He died in 1995.



►T.D. Steele (center), Roanoke, Va., was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Also pictured are Dixie Steele (left) and Hill.



►Fred Francis, formerly of Wilmington, Ill., was posthumously inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Pictured accepting the honor are (from left) Jeff Beavers, Lockport, Ill.; Ronald Strawson, Kankakee, Ill.; Dr. Dave Nichols, Manhattan, Kan.; Bill Francis, Steve Francis, Helen Francis Boggan, all of Wilmington, Ill.; Hill; Phil Francis, Paradise Valley, Ariz; and John Francis, Boise, Idaho.