

A Texas Challenge

by Kelli Armbruster

Klaus and Bonnie Birkel, owners of Camp Cooley Ranch, Franklin, Texas, are encouraging Texas Angus breeders and the Texas Angus Association to raise funds to support Angus education, youth and research efforts through the Angus Foundation. Camp Cooley Ranch will again host and underwrite a celebration at the ranch on Saturday evening, April 26, at 5:30 p.m., featuring a *Certified Angus Beef®* (CAB®) dinner and live entertainment. All Texas Angus breeders and supporters are invited to attend.

In January 2007, the Birkels pledged \$250,000 toward the Angus Foundation's ambitious Vision of Value: Campaign for Angus goal to raise \$11 million by Dec. 31, 2011, if Texas Angus breeders and the Texas Angus Association raised \$250,000 in matching funds at \$50,000 per year for the next five years.

"Far exceeding anyone's wildest

expectations, Texas Angus breeders and friends not only rose to the challenge, but committed more than \$250,000 in outright cash gifts and multiyear pledges in the first year alone toward The Texas Challenge. It is safe to say that Texas Angus breeders met the challenge," said Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president.

After the overwhelming success of last year's event, the goal has been increased to \$1 million, with Texas Angus breeders challenged to raise another \$500,000. By hosting The Texas Challenge II, the Birkels are again showing their dedication and commitment to

furthering the success of the Angus breed.

As Klaus has previously stated, "I am devoted to this because I believe it is essential that we provide the next generation of young cattle raisers with the knowledge and skills essential to stay competitive and to make a business out of raising cattle. Additionally, there are still many open questions that

research can answer about how to manage and raise cattle in a better way. Education and research must be continual and focused toward our industry's special challenges. Bright young individuals must be encouraged to stay in this business and must see what is possible."

"After last year's success, the Texas Angus Association felt that we as Angus breeders and friends of the Angus Foundation could do so much more to support this worthwhile cause. We applaud last year's efforts, but also recognize that we have a long way to go," said Rocky Bunting, Texas Angus Association president. "I am confident that we will rise to the challenge of completing our goal, but it will take the support of every Texas breeder and friend of the Angus breed."

With the ultimate fundraising goal of \$1 million by Dec. 31, 2011, The Texas Challenge II allows donors the freedom to designate how their gift will be used by the Angus Foundation, with choices including educational programs, youth activities and/or bovine-related research. As a part of this fundraising initiative, a Texas Angus Association Scholarship Endowment Fund has been created to enable donors to support the next generation of Angus breeders with educational scholarships awarded to Angus youth from Texas through the Angus Foundation.

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