

DOWN TO BUSINESS



PHOTOS COURTESY AMERICAN ANGUS ASS'N

Association elects Board, recognizes member achievement and hosts educational sessions.

by Shauna Hermel, Karen Hiltbrand & Katy Holdener

Members of the American Angus Association this November participated in an annual meeting as unique as the year 2020. Gathering restrictions created by COVID-19 necessitated modifications to balance the health of attendees and the need to conduct Association business.

The 2020 Angus Convention in Kansas City, Mo., was streamlined to a two-day meeting hosted Nov. 8-9 with limited in-person attendance and virtual options for those who preferred to participate from home.

With the National Angus Tour and trade show cancelled, the event focused on conducting the business of the Association,

including candidate/delegate activities and the Annual Convention of Delegates. Attendees, whether in person or virtual, could participate in a scaled-down version of educational sessions and program updates, along with an awards dinner and fundraiser for the Angus Foundation. Following are highlights of the event.

New officers, leadership

Delegates selected to represent their respective states at the Annual Convention of Delegates voted in

person and online to elect five new directors, a chairman and a vice chairman to the Board of Directors.

DAVID DAL PORTO, Oakley, Calif., was elected president and chairman of the Board. He and his wife, Jeanene, manage their registered and commercial Angus operation in Oakley, Brentwood and northern California. Dal Porto has firsthand experience at every level in the evolution of performance information and how to apply it. He complements that knowledge with a management background developed from experience. Dal Porto and his bull sale partner, David Medeiros, were awarded the 2011 *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand Seedstock Commitment to Excellence Award.

JERRY CONNEALY, Whitman, Neb., was elected to serve as vice

president and vice chairman of the Board. He has served on the Association Board of Directors for six years, last year as Association treasurer. The fifth-generation cattleman has operated the family ranch since 1981 with his wife, Sharon. Connealy focuses his cow herd base on productivity traits and manages two bull sales per year, selling 300 bulls at each sale.

CHUCK GROVE, Forest, Va., who is currently serving his second term, was selected by the Board in September to serve as the 2020-2021 Association treasurer. Grove became a regional manager for the American Angus Association in 1975, first serving the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. During his 39-year tenure, he also covered Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware and Ohio. Grove and his wife, Ruth, reside on the family farm and manage their 100-head Angus herd.

Directors elected

MARK AHEARN and his family established Turner Meadow Ranch





Left: Installed as officers to the American Angus Association Board of Directors are (from left) Jerry Connealy, Whitman, Neb., vice president and vice chairman; David Dal Porto, Oakley, Calif., president and chairman; and Chuck Grove, Forest, Va., treasurer.



Right: Elected as directors of the American Angus Association are (from left) Darrell Stevenson, Hobson, Mont.; Charles Mogck, Olivet, S.D.; Smitty Lamb, Tifton, Ga.; Jerry Theis, Leavenworth, Kan.; and Mark Ahearn, Wills Point, Texas.

in East Texas in the mid-1980s. Apart from his 35-year career in law enforcement, Ahearn's passion has always been raising high-quality Angus cattle. He has studied pedigrees and learned the business from the ground up. His family has grown their herd to about 200 females while being active in the Texas Angus Association, which he has served in a leadership role for 16 years.

SMITTY LAMB grew up on a small row-crop farm in East Georgia where he discovered his passion for Angus cattle at an early

age. His family has owned and operated Ogeechee Angus Farm since 1997, and it has since become one of the most reliable sources for Angus genetics in the Southeast. Since 2017, Ogeechee Angus Farm has marketed more than 100 bulls annually. Lamb has served in leadership roles with the Georgia Angus Association, and the family was awarded the Georgia Angus Association Member of the Year in 2017.

CHARLES MOGCK is a third-generation Angus breeder from South Dakota. Mogck has built

upon his family's heritage in the breed and increased their herd to 400 registered females while marketing 120 bulls annually. Mogck & Sons routinely buys feeder

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Right: Don Schiefelbein (center), Kimball, Minn., was presented the Outgoing President Award. Presenting are Mark McCully (left), American Angus Association CEO, and David Dal Porto, 2020-2021 Association president and chairman of the board.

Giveaways exceed expectations

Angus enthusiasts who registered to attend the 137th Angus Annual Meeting in Kansas City or online were entered to win one of two grand prize giveaways. The winners of the Priefert and Tru-Test by Datamars complete cattle-handling system and the versatile John Deere XUV835M Gator™ Crossover Utility Vehicle were announced Nov. 9 at the Annual Meeting.

Kelly Johnstone of Albion, Neb., took home the cattle-handling system valued at \$7,247. Designed to alleviate stress on cattle and producer, the Model S04 Squeeze Chute is Priefert Rodeo and Ranch Equipment's No. 1 selling chute of all time. Taking the "work" out of working cattle, it is designed to be easy on the cow and easy on the operator. The prize also included a Tru-Test by Datamars S3 weigh system that includes an S3

indicator and one set of MP600 load bars. The package will allow its new owner to handle their livestock safely and efficiently and to make informed management decisions in the future.

Bill Rishel of North Platte, Neb., won the XUV835M Gator™ Crossover Utility Vehicle. Donated by John Deere, the versatile utility

vehicle has a retail value of more than \$16,569 and features a three-person cockpit with power steering, front and rear suspension, and 54-hp gasoline engine. Rishel can use the Gator to stay warm in the winter or cool in the summer, making ranch work a breeze in any situation.



Kelly Johnstone, Albion, Neb., won the Priefert Rodeo and Ranch Equipment and Tru-Test by Datamars cattle-handling system, valued at \$7,247.



Bill Rishel (right), North Platte, Neb., won the John Deere XUV835M Gator™ Crossover Utility Vehicle, valued at \$16,569.

cattle from their customers, which allows them to collect data on those cattle. Their operation actively utilizes Association programs such as MaternalPlus® and Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®).

DARRELL STEVENSON'S grandparents were charter members of the Montana Angus Association, and his father was on the Montana and American Angus Association boards, serving as president of the latter in 1992-1993.

Stevenson continues his family's legacy by operating Stevenson Angus Ranch. Actively involved in international Angus events, in 2010 he created a partnership with two Russian businessmen to form a beef venture between the two countries. He has since overseen shipments of Angus cattle to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

JERRY THEIS is a second-generation Angus breeder and lifetime member of the American Angus Association. His parents established April Valley Farms in 1952 in Leavenworth County, Kan. Theis continues the diversified operation, now recognized as a Historic Angus Herd, and operates a mixed-animal veterinary practice. Cattle are marketed through their annual spring production sale, as well as by private treaty. He and his wife, Tonya, are actively involved in the Kansas Angus Association, which he served as a director for two terms and as president in 2010.

Century of tradition

The American Angus Association initiated the Century Award to recognize its members and families who have been in continuous production of registered Angus cattle for at least 100 years. This year, Arlen (posthumously) and Becky Sawyer of A&B Cattle, Bassett, Neb., were recognized as Century Award



Arlen (posthumously) and Becky Sawyer, A&B Cattle, Bassett, Neb., received the Century Award. Pictured are (from left) Adam Sawyer; Eva Hinrichsen, Miss American Angus; Becky Sawyer; and Mark McCully.

recipients during the Awards Recognition Dinner Nov. 8.

"The Sawyer family is a true testament to the tradition and legacy of the Angus breed, and we are proud to welcome them into the exclusive group," said McCully.

Arlen's family established their registered Angus cow herd in Howard, S.D., in 1917. It was operated by his grandfather and father. On Christmas Eve of 1919, Arlen's grandfather received his membership into the American Angus Association.

"The history and 100 years that we are celebrating are less about the place and more about the family legacy that is being handed down onto the fifth generation," said Becky Sawyer.

Arlen and Becky Sawyer's family has been involved with the Angus industry near Bassett since 1976, operating their ranch since 1984.

Today, Becky; daughter Jessica; son Adam; Adam's wife, Jenessa; and their son, Augustus, work together to manage 600 registered and commercial Angus cows in the Sandhills of Nebraska.

Heritage inductees

Throughout the past 130 years, the Angus breed has established itself as an industry leader for quality and advancement. This reputation was built by innovators and visionaries who possess drive and decision-making skills to

better the breed and the industry.

The Association celebrates these visionaries by selecting individuals each year for induction into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Four such individuals were honored in 2020: Bill Powell, Maryland; Brian McCulloh, Wisconsin; Steve Olson, Texas; and Aloysius "Al" DeClerk, Arkansas.

WILLIAM "BILL" POWELL JR. and his wife, Gail, have operated Arrowhead Angus, Thurmont, Md., raising registered Angus cattle for 80 years. Bill worked as a regional manager for the Association for 23 years, serving thousands of members in his territory consisting of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia.

He and Gail had been married for 33 years when she passed away in mid-November. They had a true



Bill Powell, Thurmont, Md., was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Pictured are (from left) Chuck Grove, Association treasurer; Eva Hinrichsen; Don Trimmer, accepting for Powell; and Mark McCully.

partnership in every sense of the word. Gail was a strong force in keeping things going on the farm while Bill traveled for the Association.

BRIAN McCULLOH. Thirty-six years ago, with 35 cows, Brian McCulloh and Dan Borgen took a chance starting a performance-based Angus seedstock program

with little idea of the outcome. Nestled in the rolling hills of Viroqua, Wis., Woodhill Angus is known for a cow base that has been built carefully over the years by emphasizing selection for a combination of data and phenotype.



Brian McCulloh (center), Viroqua, Wis., was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Presenting the award are Mark McCully, Association CEO, and Eva Hinrichsen, 2020 Miss American Angus.

Woodhill Angus began in 1984, just about the time the American Angus Association rolled out the first set of expected progeny differences (EPDs). Since then, McCulloh has strategically selected balanced-trait cattle, using the guidance of the data to build the Woodhill program to what it is today. GT Miss Traveler's traits of calving ease, marbling and extra performance proved herself to be one of the cornerstone females at Woodhill.

Today, Brian and his wife, Lori, manage the operation, hosting its annual bull sale once a year since 1986.

STEVE OLSON. In 1979, a large tornado hit Wichita Falls, Texas. While the tornado created destruction in the

North Texas area, it created an opportunity for Steve and Ginger Olson. Following the tornado, Ginger's family found a business opportunity in construction and were looking to disperse their Angus cow herd. Since purchasing the original Angus herd from Ginger's family and with the help

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Steve Olson (center), Hereford, Texas, was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Presenting are Eva Hinrichsen (left) and Mark McCully.

of Steve's parents, Olson Land and Cattle Co. has expanded its operation to become one of the leading seedstock and farming operations in West Texas.

Steve has been an active member in the Association since they joined in 1980, serving on the Board of Directors and as president in 2015. All three of their children served on the National Junior Angus Board, and their two daughters both served as the Texas Angus Queen and Miss American Angus. The Olson family regularly hosts ranch tours, chefs and outsiders looking for more information on behalf of the CAB brand.

ALOYSIUS "AL" DECLERK. Al and Vicky DeClerk, owners of Engelberg Angus Farm, met in Louisville, Ky., in 1993 and have been dedicated to the Angus breed and agriculture ever since. Al's parents, A.C. and Hellen DeClerk bought their first cows in 1943. Soon after, they purchased their American Angus Association Lifetime Membership in 1945.

Al and Vicky's love for the Angus industry has been evident their entire lives. Standing 6 foot 6, Al was an imposing presence, but honest and humble; people listened when he spoke. Vicky gained experience working as herdsman at a ranch in California prior to meeting Al. Later, he served as president of the Arkansas Angus Association, he was on the American Angus Association



Five young ladies competed for the title of Miss American Angus during the American Angus Association's 137th Annual Meeting Nov. 8 in Kansas City, Mo. Pictured are (from left) Mattie Harward, Richfield, N.C.; Ellie Kidwell, Walhonding, Ohio; Lauren Gilbert, Oldfield, Mo.; Emma Nowotny, New Braunfels, Texas; and Kady Figge, Onaga, Kan. The five competed via a written quiz, an interview and a prepared speech before a panel of three judges. Kidwell was announced as the 2021 Miss American Angus during the Association's Awards Recognition Dinner.

Board and he spearheaded the first Northeast Arkansas Angus Association Annual Sale.

Heritage Award inductees are displayed in the halls of the American Angus Association



Aloysius "Al" DeClerk, Pocahontas, Ark., was posthumously inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation. Pictured are (from left) Eva Hinrichsen; Vicky DeClerk, accepting; and Mark McCully.

headquarters, and a newly created website houses photos and bios of inductees from 1983 to present.

To learn more and to watch videos of the Heritage Foundation winners, visit AngusAwards.com.

Miss American Angus

After two days of interviews, speeches and a test, Ellie Kidwell was crowned the 2021 Miss American Angus Nov. 8.

Kidwell grew up in Walhonding, Ohio, where she purchased her

first Angus heifer from her grandpa in 2010.

Fast-forward to 2016 when she bought her first show heifer and attended the Eastern Regional Angus Show. It was the first event that sparked Kidwell's passion for the National Junior Angus Association. After attending her first regional show, Kidwell decided to take advantage of all opportunities within the Association.

That passion led Kidwell to earn the title of Miss American Angus, for which she will spend a year attending shows and advocating for the Angus breed and the cattle industry in her signature red jacket.

"I know in this role, I will get to talk to a lot of people because I am going to stick out in a crowd," Kidwell said. "I'm eager to make industry connections, meet with the leaders of this breed, and interact with junior members as I have goals of being on the junior board one day."

Kidwell is a student at Kansas State University where she is working toward a bachelor's degree in animal sciences and industry with a business minor. After graduation, she plans to attend veterinary school to specialize as a large-animal chiropractor and stay

involved in the cattle operation she started with her mom and sister.

ROV winners

The Association offers the Roll of Victory (ROV) Show Program to recognize show-winning animals, their sires, dams, breeders and owners. The ROV season runs from June 1 through May 31. Points for select shows are accumulated throughout the season. Three of the winners for the 2019-2020 show season were recognized at the Awards Recognition Dinner Nov. 8.

SHOW HEIFER OF THE YEAR was Seldom Rest Bardot 8021, owned by Sara Sullivan of Dunlap, Iowa.

SHOW BULL OF THE YEAR was HAG McK Model 1748, owned by Dameron Angus Farm of Lexington, Ill.; Sexing Technologies of Navasota, Texas; and the Haggards of Modoc, Ind.

BREEDER OF THE YEAR was Express Ranches, Yukon, Okla. Express Ranches has won Breeder of the Year every year since 2012, a nine-year streak.

For more information about the ROV program, visit www.angus.org.

For more coverage of the Annual Meeting, visit the Newsroom at angusconvention.com. |