

by Julie Mais  
Editor



## The world of imagination

*My daughter is 2 ½ years old, and I'm often invited into her world of imagination. "Play with me," is one of her latest phrases. Stories are told, directions are given and creation takes place.*

A favorite activity of ours is pulling out the box of Magna-Tiles®. My daughter loves them, and I do too, really. These magnetic tiles come in various shapes and sizes and the possibilities for building are seemingly limitless. "Open-ended" play is what the child development experts would call it.

Currently she enjoys creating flat-lay designs, often laying out rows of squares, each topped with a triangle to make "houses."

For Christmas she got a few safari animals to go with the set, so together we build pens for the giraffe, elephant, monkey and lion. She can happily spend many minutes opening and closing the "gates" and putting her animals in for "night-night." Getting a toddler to spend minutes on a task is truly a gift.

As she grows and learns, new things will be created from those magnetic tiles. But it starts with shapes and structures, and how to build a solid, strong foundation

— the basics. As she gains new information in her developing brain, her creations will be bigger and stronger. I cannot wait to see what she will build.

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### Built on Angus


As I think about our industry where we have seen great innovation, genetics come to mind. Genetics are the building blocks of the Angus business. Value is captured in the genetics of the Angus cow and bull. Advancements have allowed for more information on the potential for that next sire or foundation female. Selection tools help breeders make those mating decisions that build their herd.

In this issue, "Building Blocks," we focus on the latest tools and trends in genetics. We visit with Pennsylvania breeders who have earned the MaternalPlus® distinction

through the Inventory Reporting program. By recording and submitting data, they have been able to make genetic advancements in their herd.

We learn more about accuracies and how they help provide a data-informed assessment on expected progeny differences (EPDs).

Tune into a conversation from our podcast, *The Angus Conversation*, to hear two perspectives on breeding philosophies, generational turnover and adoption of new technologies.

We all have to start somewhere. Maybe you're in the flat-lay design phase, or have moved on to building something more advanced, but, like children, we should all strive to view the world through eyes that are eager to learn and grow. 

*Julie*

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