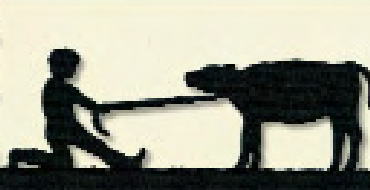
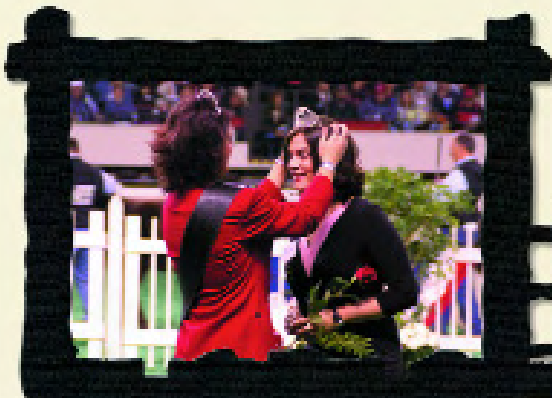


American Angus Auxiliary Annual Report



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Auxiliary Notes

► by Shirley Williams, president, American Angus Auxiliary

Thoughts for tomorrow

An excerpt from the American Angus Association 2004 Annual Report ...

“The American Angus Auxiliary has supported the American Angus Association since 1952, encouraging the promotion and consumption of beef, facilitating education, developing Angus youth, promoting the Angus breed, and organizing social programs and activities. ... Along with the changing needs of the Association and its membership, the Auxiliary has adapted in order to offer programs, services and assistance both on state and national levels.”

Tractor therapy

Running a herd of cows sometimes seems easy compared to leading a national women’s association! As individuals and as a group, we are strong, smart, capable and confident. We work hard, and we enjoy what we do. We make time for what is important, and we work until the work is done. There is strength in the differences of this “herd,” and our varied viewpoints will create progress and greater good, as long as we always recognize each member’s role and frame of reference within the framework of our organization.

One day last summer, during haying season, some really challenging Auxiliary decisions sent me to my tractor, where I stayed cutting hay for eight hours straight.

I shared my “therapy” session with my fellow Auxiliary officers. Though they laughed at my unorthodox method of working out my frustrations, about a month later when tension was running high, one of the ladies said, “Shirley, you go start your tractor. I’m going to the kitchen to bake a mean batch of brownies. We will start over with this discussion again tomorrow.”

We did start over the next day — with fresh, open minds and targeted questions that led to better ideas of how to face that particular challenge. The “tomorrow” strategy worked! (I just wish I’d had a warm, gooey brownie to enjoy while I pondered the options!) All of us learned the importance of reviewing history in order to accurately evaluate the roles we play — as individuals and as an Auxiliary — in meeting the changing needs of our industry through our programs, services and assistance today.

Year in review

Let’s review our most significant accomplishments of 2004:

- We awarded \$9,700 in scholarships to 10 deserving juniors.
- We awarded the first-ever Pat Grote Belt Buckle to the top intermediate division winner in the extemporaneous speaking contest at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).
- We added two new contests — creative writing and the quiz bowl — to the Auxiliary-sponsored Janet Castle Crystal Award, which recognizes achievements in educational contests at the NJAS.
- We received the largest group of entries to date (49 teams) in the 21st annual All-American Auxiliary-sponsored *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) Cook-Off hosted at the NJAS. Forty-four teams competed.

- Our Auxiliary Web site went live with online credit card purchasing through the Angus Sale Barn at www.angussalebarn.com. We had a record month in December!
- We were approached by Harvey and Nina Lemmon, Woodbury, Ga., with a generous offer to donate an outstanding heifer from their breeding program in 2005 to support our scholarship program.

Auxiliary conference

Projects we are working on now include our Auxiliary conference, titled “Excellence, No Exception,” scheduled for May 20-21 at the American Angus Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo.

We will work in small groups on long-range planning of future Auxiliary programs and projects, including our awards program, scholarship program, and Miss American Angus and American Angus Ambassador programs, as well as the financial challenges we face as we meet the growth and development of all our programs.

Whether you’ve been active in the Auxiliary for many years or are new to our group, we invite you to be a part of “Excellence, No Exception.” Whether you drive a tractor daily, as I do, or are locally famous for your brownies, there’s a place for you and a role for your time and talents! There are many crucial considerations to cover, and we welcome ideas and input from every member.

We have secured a block of rooms at the Stoney Creek Inn. To get our room rate of \$60 plus tax, reservations *must* be made by April 18. Call (816) 901-9600 and ask for the Angus Auxiliary block. You can learn more about Stoney Creek at www.stoneycreekinn.com.

Heifer donation

The Lemmon donation heifer will be offered in a live auction at the Auxiliary Annual Breakfast November 2005



during the annual Auxiliary activities at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky.

All of the money raised through the sale of the Lemmon heifer will be used to fund Auxiliary scholarships.

The Lemmons' breeding program is respected throughout the United States for its long-term focus on performance and its many positive contributions to the breed. The buyer of their heifer will derive the benefits of making a contribution to Angus youth and of acquiring a female whose production will prove her worth in the buyer's program. Most importantly, the collective contributions of the Lemmon family and the buyer will be further magnified when they are redistributed in dollars to support the educations of our most outstanding and deserving young people. That's what the Auxiliary has always been about, and we are refocusing our efforts in this area for the future.

Learning from history

It is interesting to note that both of these 2005 projects are being revived from plans that have proven successful for the Auxiliary in the past. The last time we hosted a "scholarship heifer" auction was at The All-American Angus Breeders' Futurity in 1996. The last time we planned a national conference for Auxiliary members was in 2001.

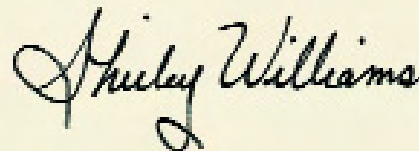
But today we have different goals to reach under different leadership, and we are operating in a different world in many, many respects. We cannot forget that both projects will have to be evaluated for their value in the past and then planned and "tweaked" so that they are truly viable for today and will achieve the results we expect for tomorrow.

I'm sure that the outstanding women who launched the Auxiliary 52 years ago would be thrilled by the far-reaching progress we have achieved! In their honor, we are challenged to focus on tomorrow and set our sights high

toward what we hope to accomplish. One thing will never change: We are a service organization. To be viable today and tomorrow, the role of our organization must continue to adapt, evolve and grow along with the breed and the people we serve.

I once read that John Wayne's tombstone is inscribed: "Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. It comes in to us at midnight very clean. It's perfect when it arrives, and it puts itself in our hands. It hopes we've learnt something from yesterday."

Now, that's a lot to ponder! I think I'll work on it this afternoon while I'm on the tractor putting out hay, and when I'm finished, maybe I'll try my hand at that recipe for a mean batch of brownies.



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American Angus Auxiliary Officers

- **President** — Shirley Williams, PO Box 789, Fort Smith, AR 72902; (479) 474-1013; fax: (479) 471-1605; williamsfairoaks@aol.com
- **President elect** — Sharee Sankey, 1124 S. 1050 Rd., Council Grove, KS 66846; (620) 767-5026; sankeys6nranch@yahoo.com
- **Secretary-treasurer** — Mary Greiman, 1960 200th St., Garner, IA 50438; (641) 923-2235; tmkcg@ncn.net
- **Advisor** — Nancy Jo Sullivan, 3904 N. Village Round Dr., Park City, UT 84098; (435) 940-1348; fax: (435) 940-1349; sjscattleco@msn.com



► Officers elected at the 2004 Auxiliary Annual Meeting include (from left) Mary Greiman, Sharee Sankey, Shirley Williams and Nancy Jo Sullivan.



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Membership Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the 2004 American Angus Auxiliary general membership meeting, Saturday, Nov. 13, 2004.

The annual meeting of the American Angus Auxiliary was called to order by President Amy Iman Bellis, Orrick, Mo. Copies of the meeting agenda and treasurer's report were handed out. A welcome was given by Bellis to all who attended. Introductions were made. Bellis noted that there were 39 members present, representing 15 states. Bellis then recognized the Executive Committee, committee chairpersons, state presidents and contacts, charter members, Distinguished Women, and past Auxiliary presidents.

Bellis made a PowerPoint® presentation, reviewing the year in front of the group to start the meeting.

Secretary's report

Sharee Sankey, Council Grove, Kan., asked to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the 2003 membership meeting, stating that they were printed in the February 2004 issue of the *Angus Journal*. Mary McCurry, Burrton, Kan., made the motion to accept the minutes as printed, and Lois Foster, Niles, Mich., seconded it. The motion passed.

Treasurer's report

Sankey gave the annual treasurer's report and stated that it would be printed in the February 2005 *Angus Journal* insert.

Executive Committee report

Nancy Jo Sullivan, Park City, Utah, reported that the Executive Committee reviewed all committee reports turned in by chairpersons. The Heifer Donation Committee is studying how to merchandise the female

that has been donated by the Harvey Lemmon family to the scholarship program. The Grote family and the Grote Scholarship Committee have decided to award four to six scholarships to the intermediate fresh meat division champion team in the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) Cook-Off each summer at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). The scholarships will be used toward the annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference. Sullivan discussed the "Excellence, No Exception" conference that the Auxiliary will be hosting May 20-21, 2005, in Saint Joseph, Mo. Several members had attended the previous conference.

New business

Bellis called on Linda Brost, Harrodsburg, Ky., to give the proposed budget for 2005. A handout was presented to members. Sandra Wallace, Kansas, Ohio, moved that the proposed budget be accepted as presented. Cathy Watkins, Middletown, Ind., seconded it, and the motion carried.

Bellis called on Revonda Ratledge, East Bend, N.C., Angus Sale Barn chairwoman to give a report on the Holiday Room.

Old business

Bellis called on Shirley Williams, Van Buren, Ark., for a report on creating a bookkeeper position for the Auxiliary. She stated that Elaine Williams, Lavaca, Ark., has agreed to take on the Auxiliary accounting. Foster talked to members about articles and pictures for the scrapbook. Bellis stated to the group that the Auxiliary Guidelines and 50th Anniversary books were still for sale.

Committee reports

Ways & Means — Ratledge reported on the inventory and what shows were attended. The Auxiliary Web site was made available to shoppers Nov. 12.

Advisory on Trust — Marlene

Dukehart, Sykesville, Md., stated that the committee is recommending a 3% draw, based on the value of the account. This will give the Auxiliary an amount similar to what was designated for scholarships in 2004, without jeopardizing principle. The Foundation financial officer is comfortable with this recommendation. A donation in the amount of \$250 was given by Dale and Lois Foster to the Auxiliary scholarship fund.

Audit — The audit report was completed Nov. 7 and is in good standing. Bellis reported that the accounting records would now be sent to the accountant to prepare for the year-end tax report.

Auxiliary Extension — Jane Ebert, Sparta, N.C., reported that no inquiries were made for the organization of a state Angus auxiliary group in any of the nonorganized states. Ebert recommended discontinuing the committee.

Awards — **Achievement.** Pam Patterson, Columbus, Mont., reported that the Certificate Achievement award winners were listed in the May 2004 *Angus Journal*. Applications for this award are due Nov. 1 of each year. Sonja Martin, Lavaca, Ark., will chair this committee in 2005, as Patterson is now Membership chairwoman.

Crystal. Watkins gave a report on the Janet Castle Crystal awards. This year's award winners, chosen at the NJAS in Kansas City, Mo., were Parker Rayl, Hutchinson, Kan., and Landi McFarland, Ellston, Iowa.

Silver Pitcher. Preston Pollard, Enid, Okla., and Drew Byergo, Savannah, Mo., tied for the boy's award, while Katy Satee, Montague, Texas, won the girl's award. Bellis presented the awards to the winners at the NJAS.

Richard L. Spader. The Richard L. Spader Memorial Belt Buckle was awarded to the top senior division extemporaneous speaker, Wravenna Phipps, Kearney, Neb.

Pat Grote. The Pat Grote Belt Buckle was awarded to the top intermediate



division extemporaneous speaker, Jara Settles, Hoskins, Neb.

Beef Education — Anne Patton Schubert, Taylorsville, Ky., reported that 44 teams participated in the Cook-Off this past summer. Donations were secured from five Kansas feedlots and Angus breeders to help sponsor the contest at the NJAS. In 2005 a new award will be given to the top team in the intermediate fresh meat division. This award comes from the Pat Grote Scholarship Fund, which Grote's family maintains in her memory. This will be a monetary scholarship to be used to attend the LEAD Conference that year.

Computer Technician — Bellis gave the report on the committee for Anne Lampe, Scott City, Kan., who was unable to attend. Lampe's recommendation is to discontinue the committee or include it as a subcommittee of Public Relations.

Distinguished Woman — Bellis reported the committee was presented with the name of an outstanding American Angus Auxiliary member for consideration. She was to be presented with this honor at the Auxiliary Annual Breakfast on Sunday, Nov. 14.

Finance — Brost reported that the Finance Committee was looking for avenues for fund-raisers for the Auxiliary. During the Auxiliary Annual Meeting in Louisville, Ky., her committee would be hosting a silent auction, live auction and a drawing from raffle tickets for three nights hotel stay at the Executive West Hotel.

Historian — Foster congratulated the Executive Committee on another eventful and exciting year for the Auxiliary. She thanked the many Angus publications and state Angus newsletters for the detailed reports that she received for the scrapbook. Foster reported that the most recent scrapbook and other items of historical interest would be on display during Auxiliary events in Louisville.

Legislative & By-Laws — Pam Bailey, Douglass, Kan., reported that no amendments to the bylaws were made this year.

Liaison — At the beginning of the meeting, Bellis presented the same

report that was presented to the American Angus Association Board of Directors in September.

Membership — The committee saw a shift in chairwomen in the middle of the year, from Mary McCurry to Patterson. Patterson worked on switching the membership listing from Microsoft Access to Microsoft Excel. The next step will be updating membership listings such as address changes, marital status

and deceased lifetime members. A definition of the actual membership year needs to be in print and visual to new and renewing members.

Miss American Angus — Mary McCurry reported that the committee was busy preparing for the 2005 Miss American Angus (MAA) competition, which would start later in the afternoon. This year marked the first year that all

CONTINUED ON PAGE A10

Table 1: American Angus Auxiliary 2004 receipts and disbursements^a and 2005 proposed budget^b

Income:	2004 Actual	2004 Budgeted	2005 Budgeted
Annual meeting ^c	\$4,059.00	\$5,000.00	\$4,100.00
Beef education ^d	2,406.11	1,200.00	1,200.00
Membership dues	1,305.00	3,000.00	1,200.00
Awards	669.81	800.00	800.00
Miss American Angus			
Travel ^e	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Expense	2,690.00	1,500.00	2,500.00
Ways & Means	38,155.89	25,000.00	43,025.00
Money Market Transfer	5,000.00	0.00	NA
Miscellaneous	317.00	0.00	NA
Special events	0.00	0.00	800.00
Grote memorial	0.00	0.00	NA
Grote nut income	210.00	2,000.00	200.00
Scholarships	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
Total income	\$62,312.81	\$46,000.00	\$61,325.00
Expenses:			
Annual meeting	\$6,682.28	\$6,000.00	\$4,800.00
Beef education	2,724.80	2,500.00	1,650.00
Awards	669.81	675.00	800.00
Miss American Angus			
Travel	4,205.95	5,000.00	5,000.00
Expense	4,527.08	3,000.00	1,500.00
Money Market deposit	5,000.00	0.00	NA
Ways & Means	35,786.03	15,000.00	36,500.00
Officers' expense	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
Phone	849.97	900.00	850.00
Postage	697.45	500.00	600.00
Printing	500.82	400.00	400.00
Professional fees	15.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Dues	0.00	25.00	25.00
Miscellaneous	3,895.08 ^f	3,000.00	500.00
Special events	0.00	0.00	500.00
Grote memorial	0.00	0.00	NA
Grote nut expense	230.00	1,000.00	200.00
Scholarships	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
Total expenses	\$72,784.27	\$46,000.00	\$61,325.00

^a2004 receipts and disbursements are for the fiscal year Nov. 1, 2003, through Oct. 31, 2004.

^bThe 2005 proposed budget is for the fiscal year Nov. 1, 2004, through Oct. 31, 2005.

^c\$2,350 is from the American Angus Association.

^d\$1,200 is from the American Angus Association.

^e\$5,000 is from the American Angus Association.

^fFigure includes the purchase of a trailer.

female state scholarship winners were contacted prior to the NJAS and provided with information on the Miss American Angus contest. The purpose was to allow them to make an informed decision, in a timely manner, on whether or not they wished to compete in the MAA contest. The end result was that all participants were notified at the same time and had equal opportunity to prepare for the contest.

Scholarship winners were announced separately from the MAA contest participants at the NJAS awards ceremony. Each state female scholarship winner was then sent a letter with the specifics of the MAA contest, along with information on MAA's role. A letter of intent was included, and each state scholarship winner and her parents were asked to sign and return the letter. These responses were forwarded to the

scholarship committee.

Changing this process allowed each of the contestants to operate on the same timeline and to be able to prepare for the contest equally. This also allowed media personnel to know who would be competing for MAA.

Close contact has been maintained with Phipps, 2004 MAA. During the past year, Phipps has traveled more than 19,000 miles while serving as an ambassador and promoter of the Angus breed. A complete list of her appearances for the year was presented in the Miss American Angus Committee's report. Long-term goals of this committee include expanding the role of Miss American Angus.

Nominating — Bellis appointed Bailey and Wendy Petteway, Zolfo Springs, Fla., to serve on the 2005 Nominating Committee, and they accepted. Watkins and Schubert were nominated from the floor to also serve on the committee.

Foster made a motion to cast a unanimous vote for the committee names listed, and Ardyce O'Neill, Logan, Iowa, seconded it. The motion passed. Sullivan gave the report of the 2004 Nominating Committee for the 2005 officer team. The committee is recommending Mary Greiman, Garner, Iowa, as the new secretary-treasurer. Greiman and her husband, Ted, and their two sons, Kyle and Cole, farm 1,600 acres and have a finishing hog operation along with their Angus cow herd. Greiman is employed as the Hancock County 4-H Youth Coordinator. She is a past president of the Iowa Angus Auxiliary and will be a great asset to the Auxiliary. Foster moved to accept the slate as presented, and Nancy Thelen, Ann Arbor, Mich., seconded it. The motion was carried.

Bellis then stated that she would be resigning from the advisor position for 2005 due to health reasons. Bailey moved to nominate Sullivan to serve as immediate past president and advisor. Gail Deitrick, Zanesville, Ohio, seconded the motion, and it was passed by the membership.

Program & Hospitality — Brost reported on the committee for Sandra

McCurry, Mount Hope, Kan. The silent auction would close in the lobby of the Executive West on Monday at noon. Breakfast tickets were still available.

Public Relations — Darla Eggers, Mexico, Mo., reported that the Auxiliary had six half-page ads in the *Angus Journal* to use for 2005. A Web site has been designed by Angus Productions Inc. (API) Web Marketing Department for the Angus Sale Barn.

Scholarship — Shirley Williams reported that 26 applications were submitted from 20 states. Winners were announced during the awards ceremony at the 2004 NJAS. The scholarships went to five girls and five boys, totaling \$9,700.

Ambassador Program — Wallace presented a handout to members, listing program basics, selection processes and duties. She stated that the committee feels this program would give juniors another outlet for higher achievement. The committee sees the Ambassador's role as a spokesperson for the American Angus Association and the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA).

State auxiliary reports

Gigi Hunter, Fair Grove, Mo., reported that Missouri will be hosting the National Angus Conference and Tour in 2005. Eggers will be the chairwoman.

Announcements

With no other business, Bellis made an announcement to members about the Auxiliary breakfast at 9 a.m. on Sunday morning, stating that tickets were still available. She also encouraged everyone to buy *Angus Legends: Volume I*, the book that Tom Burke, Rance Long and Kurt Schaff of the American Angus Hall of Fame wrote. Burke is donating \$10 from the sale of every book to the Auxiliary. Kathleen McGuire, Fort Smith, Ark., made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Wallace seconded and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.

— submitted by Sheree Sankey,
2004 secretary-treasurer



Table 2: American Angus Auxiliary summary of financial accounts^a

Checking Account

Account balance 11/01/03	\$14,465.03
Income	+62,312.81
Expenses	-72,784.27
Ending balance 10/31/04	\$3,993.57

Money Market Account

Account balance 11/01/03	\$7,304.57
Interest	+29.95
Account fee	-36.00
Ending balance 10/31/04	\$7,298.52

Auxiliary Education Venture Fund

Account balance 11/01/03	\$22,786.46
Ending balance 10/31/04	\$22,013.64

Pat Grote Memorial Fund

Account balance 11/01/03	\$11,039.83
Ending balance 10/31/04	\$11,070.31

Angus Foundation Scholarship Account

Account balance 10/01/03	\$180,346.82
Donations	+2,500.00
Investment income	
Interest	+7,098.35
Realized gains	+3,767.84
Unrealized gains	+2,202.10
Account fee	-751.74
Scholarships awarded	-9,700.00
Ending balance 9/30/04	\$185,463.37

^aThis summary of financial accounts is for the fiscal year Nov. 1, 2003, through Oct. 31, 2004.

Miss American Angus

Chelsey Warfield wins 2005 title.

A new Miss American Angus was crowned during the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky. Chelsey Warfield, Andersonville, Tenn., was awarded the title preceding the selection of the grand champion bull in the NAILE Roll of Victory (ROV) and National Angus Show.

Each year, five young women who are outstanding junior Angus members are eligible to compete for Miss American Angus. The program is sponsored by the American Angus Auxiliary, allowing one young person the opportunity to represent the Angus breed across the nation.

This year's five contestants included Kristen Oaks, Calhoun, La.; Dana May, Mineral Point, Wis.; Kindra Wood, Holly Pond, Ala.; Ricka Boehmer, Williamston, Mich.; and Warfield.

Candidates vie for the title by taking a written test, answering impromptu



questions, taking part in personal interviews and preparing a speech on a specific topic. This year's speech topic was "A Choice of Paths."

Judges for the 2005 Miss American Angus competition included Bill Borror, Tehama Angus Ranch, Gerber, Calif.; Elsie Covey, Alderhurst Farms, Snohomish, Wash.; and Jill (Sommers) Harker, a former Miss American Angus, Hope, Ind.

Mary and Emily McCurry, Burrton,

Kan., serve as co-chairwomen of the Miss American Angus committee.

Warfield is the daughter of Philip and Darla Warfield, Andersonville. She attends the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, where she is studying food science and technology. She eventually hopes to obtain a master's degree in the subject so she can combine her interests in food safety and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or pharmaceuticals. She also plans to continue work on her

Angus operation with a goal of owning at least 40 head of Angus cattle before she graduates from college. The speech she presented during the Miss American Angus competition follows on page A12.



Miss American Angus contest gift sponsors

Contestants' engraved glass frames
Champion Hill and Shoulderbone Plantation

Contestants' embroidered blankets
Corner Post Angus

Contestants' silver bracelets
Rocking P Farm

Miss American Angus silver belt buckle
Circle A Ranch

Miss American Angus jacket
Becky Tiedeman/Jim Baldrige's Secret Seasoning

Miss American Angus leather bag
The Cecil McCurry family

Brighton leather planner
Weaver Angus Farm

Jeweled crown pin
The Andy McCurry family

Jeweled crown ring
Wravenna Phipps

Leather scrapbook and *Angus Legends: Volume I*
American Angus Hall of Fame

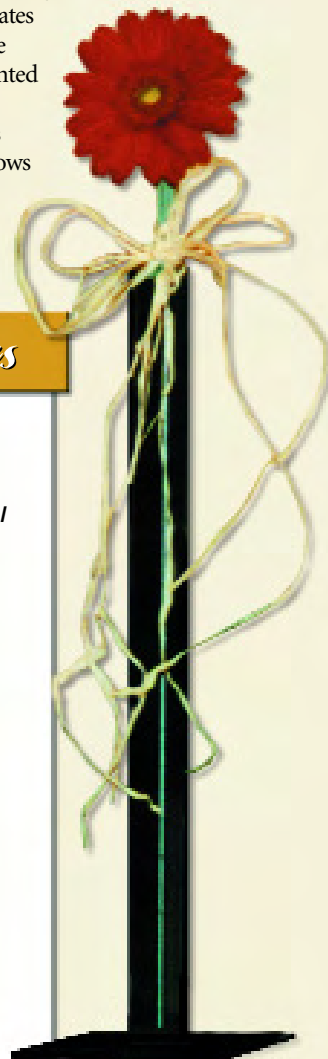
Official photo and feature article
Angus Topics

South Dakota Black Hills jewelry
Koupal's Angus Ranch

Vera Bradley® luggage
Eberlee Farm, Coldwater Creek Farm, Olson Cattle Co. and Vintage Angus

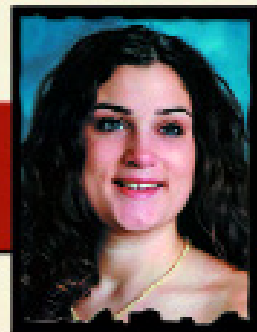
Miss American Angus banner, crown, and wardrobe and stationery allowance
American Angus Auxiliary

Miss American Angus travel allowance
American Angus Association



A Choice of Paths

by Chelsey Warfield



Imagine this. You're traveling down the interstate, passing exits along the way and looking for yours. Exit 19, Hard work; Exit 45, Sacrifice; Exit 76, Determination. Wait, what's that one, far, far ahead? Do I see Exit 123, Rewards, and Exit 144, Success?

I am Chelsey Warfield, from Andersonville, Tenn., and I'd like to talk to you today about how I have made choices for the direction in my life — how I have made a choice of paths.

Many paths to choose

As I look over my life up to now, all 19 years, and think about what brought me to this very moment, I keep thinking of the choices I've made. Just like me, the choices you have made in your life have brought you to this very moment.

A choice is really a risk disguised. You make a choice, and at the same time you risk losing an opportunity. For example, I chose this year to show at the Tennessee Junior Livestock Expo, which ran the same dates as the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). I lost the opportunity to show at the NJAS, but I gained the experience of showing my last year of 4-H eligibility with my 4-H and FFA friends in my state. Every choice has a consequence, and sends you farther down that path, whether you realize it or not.

What influences our choices? What made me choose my path vs. [the path of] other girls from my high school, some of whom unfortunately are having babies at this young age?

I believe that personal ambition and dreams, self-esteem, and family support have made the difference in the choice of paths I've taken.

Choosing to dream

Let's talk about personal ambition and dreams. Without a destination in sight, you cannot choose a path to follow! I once had a small dream, maybe too small to be a real "ambition," but it

was my dream: to be a Tennessee Angus Princess and wear a tiara, handing out ribbons in the cattle shows.

It was so exciting the day I got to wear the tiara and sash. I felt important. As a princess, I attended the Queen's Brunch at the 1997 NJAS, where I saw then-Miss American Angus Lindsey Trosper. She was well-spoken and very professional, and that's when I decided that I wanted to be Miss American Angus one day.

As I got older, my dreams grew. At first, I was just happy caring for my heifer and taking her to shows.

Later, I wanted to learn to groom my animal, make breeding decisions and learn all about the embryo transfer process in our herd.

I had goals for school activities, too. I wanted to become a chapter FFA officer and participate in the speaking contests in my chapter, then in my region and then in my state. I set a goal to compete in Beef Production Entrepreneurship Proficiency in FFA, and I achieved a state winning application and then a National Silver Award. I made a goal of becoming valedictorian, and I worked very hard to meet that goal.

Setting goals and stretching myself to reach them are now something that I continue to do, and I enjoy the challenge. I believe that one of the things that influenced me in my choice of paths has been the personal ambition and dreams I have had.

Completing the journey

To choose a path, you have to believe that you can complete the journey. Self-esteem is important in path-choosing. Let me share with you a story that shows a little about how self-esteem has played a role in my choice of paths.

In 1997 my parents and I attended our first NJAS in Perry, Ga. I remember this well. We brought no cattle, as this was a learning expedition. We had no idea what the NJAS was about; we just knew it was a big show and that there

were some junior activities involved.

So, I prepared a speech for the contest. I really believe my first boost of self-esteem came when I won fifth place in the prepared speaking contest, and my name was called for all to hear. My mother still reminds me that I commented on the way home, "The National Junior Angus Show is like Disney World!" I was so excited to be around kids who had the same love for Angus cattle that I did. I see that same excitement in younger members who are attending their first NJAS.

Family directions

Families are what the Angus business and junior activities are all about. I realize family support has been an important factor in my choice of paths, as it is with other junior members. When I went to the barn one early morning and found my show heifer dead, it was my family who helped me through it. When another of my heifers developed an ugly abscess, it was my family who taught me to treat it. When I got frustrated and angry with a stubborn calf, it was my family who taught me lessons of patience.

It was my family who made me practice and practice and practice those speeches. And it's my family who saw me as the little girl who could, and led me along the right paths. Without my family behind me every step of the way, I wonder what choice of paths I would have taken?

Looking back in the rearview mirror, I see the results of paths taken, and I'll always wonder about those "exits" I passed up. But, look, I see more exits far, far ahead, like Exit 123, Rewards, and Exit 144, Success.

I know there are more exits up ahead and more decisions to make about the direction in life I'll take. But for now, I hope I've given you a little insight into one junior's experience in making that choice — my choice of paths.

