



Auxiliary Notes

► by Shirley Williams, president, American Angus Auxiliary

Lessons from the carloads

Okay, I'll admit it publicly. I may be the one and only person who truly loves the Angus Carload and Pen Show at Denver's National Western Stock Show (NWSS).

Watching and waiting

Call me weird, but spending seven hours on a Saturday in January scrutinizing bulls as they walk in one by one (and waiting), debating the merits and uses of the individuals and the groups with those around me (and waiting), and agreeing or disagreeing with the judges (and waiting) really motivates me.

As I sat in the stands this year, I contemplated a few connections between this unique evaluation process and so many other situations we face in daily life. I'm going to try the rest of the year to apply my lessons from the carloads to the workings of our organization. Here goes ...

Time to think

I know that all the waiting between the carload and pen classes is what gives most of my friends fits. But for me, the waiting is what makes this event different from almost everything else we do in today's drive-through world.

We all need time to let what we see and hear sink into our already packed minds. It is amazing how new ideas will seep in when we least expect it if we are willing to wait and let the subconscious allow them to enter our minds. Waiting for the judges' official results always creates plenty of questions for me. It's not so much about whether or not I placed the classes the same way they did; but, more importantly, did I see everything they saw?

Was I in tune with the details of the individuals that make up the strength of the group?

It takes lots and lots of little dots (and plenty of data these days) to make the big picture. How much better would I become — at everything I do — if I waited a little longer before I judge any situation based only on what I see on the surface or on my past experiences? If I waited more and gave myself time to connect all those dots, would my big picture change? (Hmmm.)

Dare to be different

As each member of a group barrels into the ring, it is easy to grasp that uniformity is the point of this competition. That's an easy connection to what every breeder is striving to achieve.

But what about the differences among the groups? Watching this show is one of the few opportunities many of us have to compare so many bulls from different environments and different management systems. Looking at the groups collectively, it becomes very clear that it is their differences that make our breed strong.

We can't forget to appreciate the different

thoughts, goals and methods among our membership, either. This national organization offers each of us a chance to lend our time, talents, views and experience in support of our industry. Though it is

sometimes challenging to remember that the organization belongs to each of us who participates, applying the differences among us with a give-and-take attitude will lead us toward purposeful and productive progress. (Aha!)

People make the process

Before the carload and pen shows kicked off, a few of us walked around out back among the bulls and the blowers. The one common denominator in the

rush of early morning preparation was the amazing number of people it takes to present so many great cattle all at one time.

Someone, somewhere made the commitment to select, finance and do the daily work required to bring each of these bulls through development to reach the ring for evaluation. It is important to remember that it takes courage and conviction to present your program in public and a competitive spirit to believe in your best effort no matter what the judges decide. To all those exhibitors who provided a full day of study and discussion for my neck of the bleachers — Bravo!

People — mostly women — have made our Auxiliary an asset to the Angus breed for more than 50 years. Our grandest achievements have been noted, but let us not forget the contributions of those who are



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2005 American Angus Auxiliary Officers

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- Officers include (from left) Mary Greiman, Sharee Sankey, Shirley Williams and Nancy Jo Sullivan.

always willing to bake a bunch of cookies, sell a packet of raffle tickets or stay late to clean up after an event. Their quiet commitment provides the energy that makes our effort swing into action. It is the power of people that makes service to our breed the core focus of our organization. We know we can do great things together, because we have done them. (Attagirl!)

Excellence, No Exception

Why not plan a weekend away from the job, ranch and family to join with a dynamic group of people (mostly women!) who have a stake in the future of the Angus breed?

Join us for "Excellence, No Exception II" May 20-21 at the American Angus Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo. To register for the conference, contact Nancy Jo Sullivan at (435) 940-1348 or sjscattleco@msn.com, or visit our Web site, www.angusauxiliary.com, and click on "Conference." You can print the registration form and mail it to us. Our headquarters will be the Stoney Creek Inn near the Association office. To get our room rate of \$60 plus tax, call (816) 901-9600 by April 18 and ask for the Angus Auxiliary block. For more information visit www.stoneycreekinn.com.

If you've been waiting for the right time

to get involved, that time is now! The different approach you can provide toward meeting our goals may be just the jump start we're looking for. Whether you're new to the breed or have always kept yourself behind the scenes, yours is the voice we've been waiting to hear. Invite a friend or come alone; there's a place for you in the future of our Auxiliary!



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