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Board Commentary

by Steve Andras, RAAA President

I look forward to the chance to write an article that is on the lighter, less technical side of breeding Red Angus cattle--the type of article that people enjoy reading, and I enjoy writing. Such is the case with this submission. To start, I'll recap some highlights from the convention. To end, I'll share some fun stuff that's happened across my desk.

2007 Red Angus National Convention

Red Angus breeders from across the country (and world) converged on Dodge City, Kansas, this past September. In our business, there's no more fitting location to hold a convention than in an old cowtown that helped shape our industry.

Aside from old legends, novelties, and folklore, Dodge City remains a very significant part of the beef industry landscape. Surrounded by enormous feedyards and high-volume packing plants, Dodge plays a most crucial role in our livelihood as producers. Available to convention goers, were the opportunities to tour feedyards, packing plants, an ethanol plant, as well as the opportunity to see the Wedel Red Angus headquarters and feedyard. There was such a positive response from the many Red Angus breeders that took advantage of these once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

The convention was well-attended and was (as usual) a great time to catch up with old friends, and make new friends. From here, I'd like to highlight a few of the events that transpired: We were fortunate to have Dr. Keith Bertrand from the University of Georgia address the delegation on the necessity of our newly adopted GPS. His insightful presentation answered most of the questions that breeders had with regard to GPS. Dr. Bertrand, we thank you for your time, diligence and advice. Another highlight that convention attendees were fortunate to hear, was an impromptu speech by Colonel Dave Hough, Dr. Bob Hough's brother. He presented a perspective on the Iraq conflict that America's media will never share. His optimism, confidence, and dedication to the defense of our freedom was a breath of fresh air, and was such an encouragement me and to the rest of the breeders at convention, as evidenced by the numerous standing ovations. Colonel Hough, thank you for your time, and especially your service to our country.

I wish to congratulate the many award winners and thank them for their contributions to our great breed. Further, I would like to welcome and congratulate our

newest national board members, Martin Morgan and Dr. Tom Woodard, I look forward to working closely with you both. I would especially like to thank Terry Boyles and Kelli Brown for your tireless service and valuable contributions on the Red Angus board, as well as your wise counsel, perspective, and friendship over the past several years. Your association is grateful to you. I would also like to thank the Kansas Red Angus Association for the tremendous amount of work that they put into making this convention such a success. It was a wonderful time and you all are to be commended. Last but not least, I'd like to thank everyone for the kind words and gracious support in my re-election as President of our great organization.

On a lighter note...

This year, I will (Lord willing) celebrate my 60th birthday...though with each passing birthday, my desire to celebrate, decreases exponentially. However, since the term that everyone uses is "celebrate," I suppose I will celebrate. As everyone over the age of 30 knows well, time flies! In the fourth chapter of James, in the Bible, we read that our life is like a vapor that appears for a little time, then vanishes away. -So true. I always use this phrase to describe my age: "I don't feel old, but the guy that watches me shave sure has aged!" With this, I wanted to share an email (that now applies to me) that you will surely enjoy:

PERKS OF BEING OVER 60!

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
3. No one expects you to run--anywhere.
4. People call at 9 pm and ask, did I wake you?
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can eat supper at 4 pm.
9. You can live without sex but not your glasses.
10. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
11. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
12. You quit trying to hold your stomach in no matter who walks into the room.
13. You sing along with elevator music.
14. Your eyes won't get much worse.
15. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
16. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
17. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.

In the busyness of all, be sure to set aside extra time to spend with those you love (and I'm not talking about your Red Angus cows).