

# Vying for the Board

Ever wonder what it takes to get a seat on the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association?

by *Shauna Rose Hermel*

It doesn't take a million dollar war chest, a brilliant political advisor or camera time kissing babies to run for a seat on the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association. It does take a genuine desire to serve the members and the breed, a thick skin, and a willingness to put forth ideas for others to consider — and often critique.

It is imperative for the breed to have quality candidates apply and attain seats at the director's table. After all, once the ideas are pitched and discussed, when all is said and done, the future of the Association rests in decisions made by the officers and directors of the Board. As a member, you assert your influence by either running for the Board yourself, or supporting candidates that best represent your member needs.

The Bylaws of the Association set forth rules for electing candidates to fill unexpired terms, but normally, delegates to the Annual Convention each year elect five directors to a three-year term. Board members just completing their first three-year term may declare to run for re-election, while the Association counts on other members to step up to fill the positions vacated by retiring directors.

To adequately serve the membership, the Board should reflect the membership. Now is the time to announce your candidacy or to encourage the leader you want to represent your interests to run as a candidate for election to the Board this November.

## Who can run?

Article IV, Section 4.2 of the Bylaws of the American Angus Association specifies that directors "shall be at all times either Active Life Members or Active Regular Members" of the Association. Regular and Life Members must be residents of the United States, including its territories or possessions, or Canada. A Life Member is considered active if "they have engaged in the registration of purebred Angus cattle within the last three (3) years." A Regular member is considered "active" if he or she joined the Association in one of the last two fiscal years or paid annual dues in the current fiscal year.

Other than that, the Bylaws provide few stipulations as to who should be a director

## YOUR ASSOCIATION

*Your Business*  
THIS MONTH: Running for the Board

In February we embarked on a series of articles to highlight the structure and rules governing the American Angus Association with the goal of helping you make the most of your membership experience. We started with a look at the Association's committee structure. In March we explained the process of nominating delegates to the Annual Convention, and in April we presented a brief overview of how the Board functions. This month we discuss how to declare your candidacy for the Board.

and how a member is to declare their candidacy for the Board.

Many state Angus associations conduct their annual meetings in the winter, and often those intending to run for a Board position will seek the support of their state association's board of directors or their state's membership at that time. A state field day, tour or preview show may also serve as launching pad for a candidate to gather state support. While it is not necessary to have this state support, it generally bodes well in the election process.

## Declaring intent to run

Once an individual has decided to declare their candidacy, he or she should inform Association CEO Bryce Schumann via a letter of intent. The letter doesn't have to be

**"Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it."**

— *Marian Anderson*

fancy or formal, but letting the Association know will place the candidate's name on the official ballot, and will give the candidate access to information about the election process, a list of delegates and two sets of mailing labels to the delegates and alternate delegates.

The *Angus Journal* traditionally publishes short biographical sketches of the Board candidates in the October issue, giving delegates and members an opportunity to learn a little about the candidates before heading to Louisville, Ky., for the Annual Convention in November. To be published in the October issue, candidates must submit their biographies (500-600 words) and photo to editor Shauna Hermel by Aug. 15.

It is not required that a candidate have their biography published in the *Angus Journal*, but it is a good way to introduce candidates to a broader circle of the membership, letting members know their background and what they hope to achieve as a director. As with any election, the name of the game is to become known as a favorable candidate before the election in November.

During Angus events at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, declared candidates are given 10 minutes each on stage to introduce themselves and their platform during the Candidate Forum Sunday afternoon. After their introduction, each candidate is asked to respond to a set of questions selected by the officers from among those submitted by the audience.

If they want to know more about the candidates, delegations may ask candidates to participate in a state or regional caucus in Louisville prior to the Convention of Delegates.

Finally, a delegate may nominate a candidate from the floor during the Annual Convention. In such case, delegates would be instructed to write in the name of the nominee on the ballot.

Once nominations cease, it's all done but the tallying.



**Editor's Note:** If you have additional questions about running for the Board, contact Schumann or Diane Strahm at 816-383-5100.