



Convention 2007 - A Junior Perspective

By JRA President: Amber Boyles, Kernersville, North Carolina and
JRA 1st Vice-President: Marianne Mendoza, Valley Springs, California



Flat land, straight roads, and lots of grain elevators. For those of us that flew into Denver, that is what we saw on our joy ride to Convention in Dodge City, Kansas. I had never been to Kansas before, but my brother told me it was going to be exactly what we saw.



Five of the JRA Board members met in Denver on Tuesday evening and planned to leave around 7 pm to start our six hour drive to Dodge City. However, the airlines had different plans for us and we didn't get started until about 10 p.m. We tried to drive the whole way through, but our navigator was tired and we made an overnight stop in Colby, Kan. We finished our drive Wednesday morning and were able to give the junior report to the RAAA adult board of director's meeting. The rest of the day was spent getting our booth set up and having a festive supper with entertainment by a western and gospel singer who could yodel!



Thursday during general session, each member of the JRA Board presented a portion of our "Year in Review" report to the rest of the attendees of Convention. The powerpoint presentation summed up all the activities the JRA has done over the last year and we gave some highlights of the events we have left for the year. For the third year in a row, Canadian Angus Association CEO Doug Fee, donated Calgary Stampede posters and a ceramic Red Angus cow to benefit the JRA. The posters were auctioned off during lunch on Thursday and a special thanks to Mendoza Red Angus, Calif.; BOLA Red Angus, Texas; Mark Harbin, Texas; Susannah Lindsey, Texas; Marilyn Hart, and Lazy D Ranch,

N.M.; for purchasing posters. Thursday after lunch we had the Junior Activities Committee meeting and discussed potential fundraisers, Round-Up 2008 and ideas for the year to come. Thursday evening, we stepped back to days of the Wild West at Boot Hill on Front Street where we were entertained with a shoot out between the good guys and the bad guys that run the "town". The JRA board headed back to the hotel to start a night full of baking as we each prepared a dessert to be auctioned at lunch Friday.

On Friday, the JRA Board finished every last detail on their baked goods, including getting them positioned on exclusive, one-of-a-kind, ceramic platters. After elections during the general session, a bronze of Cherokee Canyon was auctioned off to benefit the JRA. Thanks to Doug Frank, ABS Global, for donating the bronze to the JRA and to Martha and Jack Roberts, Las Cruces, N.M., for purchasing the bronze. Also during the general session, the JRA auctioned off the Canadian ceramic Red cow, which was carefully transported across the border by Doug Fee and the Canadian Red Angus Association. Thank you to Hurley and Sarah Jenkins, Caddo Mills, Texas, for purchasing the ceramic cow. From the general session, everyone went into the "dome" to eat lunch, but before lunch began, we auctioned off our grand works of culinary art that we carefully baked and placed on the Red Angus ceramic plates. Thanks to: Nellie McPhee, Calif.; Howard Bobbitt, Tenn.; Rita McPhee, Calif.; Bryan Gill, N.D.; Guy Peverley, Colo.; John Jung, S.D.; and junior





Gage Spence, Texas for purchasing our very tasty (at least we hope) desserts. Following the noon meal, we had some great down time which allowed us to rest, do school work, and get all gussied up for the banquet Friday night. At 6:25, the silent auctions on the State Baskets provided by the JRA Board and Montana Red Angus Association, semen donation from Big Red Genetics and all the entries in the JRA Photo Contest were closed to bidders and everyone fought to get in their last bids! Thank you to: Amy Gilchrist, Iowa; Atkinson Red Angus, Tenn.; Mushrush Red Angus, Kan.; Padgett Red Angus, Kan.; Lampley Farms, Tenn.; JD Red Angus, S.D.; Panhandle Cattle Co, Neb.; Miriam Foshee, Ala.; Moore Family Ranch, Jane Whitley, Ala.; Circle M Red Angus, N.C.; Coley Cattle Company, Iowa; Mary Hart, N.M.; Sue Sliger, Texas; Lane Ladewig, Texas; Prairie Red Angus, Nathan Nelson, Minn.; Alaina Burt, Minn.; Shirm's Red Angus, Okla.; Jean Croissant, Colo.; Cortney Bowden, Ill., and Susan Wedel, Kan., for purchasing our silent auction items.

Saturday found us packing and loading our luggage into the van and heading east to an Ethanol plant where we had a very informative tour and learned the process of making Ethanol; which, it turns out, is very similar to the making of alcohol because Ethanol is just 200 proof alcohol made from corn or milo. Cattle producers in the area have a continuous source of distiller's grains for use in their feeding systems. We then toured one of the many Cargill feedlots, where they store mountains of corn and silage to feed their 135,000 head of cattle housed there. The cattle are shipped daily back to Dodge City to Cargill's processing plant. Frank and Susan Wedel welcomed everyone to their ranch where we were fed well and took shelter in the sale barn, away from the wind of the prairies. This is where we said good bye to all the wonderful Red Angus breeders and made our way to a hotel in Colby, Kan., where we watched a huge lightening storm from our room, and had a peaceful night of sleep. The next day, we made our way back to Denver, ate lunch together and said good bye, got on our respective flights and all made it home safely.

All in all, we had a great experience with Convention - though it was tiring for our team, the opportunities to work together, meet and interact with lots of Red Angus breeders, plan our JRA year and present JRA activities at meetings were awesome. We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who supports the JRA in any manner! We are able to continue our programs due to your generosity! ■