

# Meet the RAAA Board of Director Candidates

The following members have thrown their hats in the ring to run for the Red Angus Association of America Board of Directors. Please read their biographies to learn more about them, their philosophies and their plans for the Red Angus breed. Election will take place on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2014, at the Red Angus National Convention in Savannah, Ga. You must be present to vote.



## Candidate for President Kim Ford

Kim Ford, Bertrand, Neb., is seeking election for President of the Red Angus Association of America.

Kim and her husband Scott own and operate Cross Diamond Cattle Co. They have two daughters: Johanna, 10, and Marie, 7.

Kim has had a life-long involvement in the Red Angus breed. Her parents, Doug and Linda Andersen, purchased their first registered Red Angus cattle two years before Kim was born. Kim was active in 4-H when growing up, and was an active member of the Junior Red Angus Association, both in Nebraska and nationally. She earned her way into the family's ranching operation through hard work. Her money from ranch labor went to buy a commercial heifer when she was 8 years old. From that first red brockle-faced heifer, Kim was able to work and trade her way to a registered herd that paid her way through college. Kim graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a bachelor's degree in agricultural journalism.

Kim, Scott and a hard-working crew at Cross Diamond Cattle Co. run equal numbers of registered and commercial Red Angus cattle. They also purchase and breed commercial heifers that they sell in their annual production sale. Involvement in different facets of the production chain has provided Kim a broad knowledge base and a great number of experienced people on whom to call on for perspective and insight.

Kim has served on the RAAA Board of Directors for six years as the Region B Director. Through that time she has served as the chair of the Registration Committee and is currently the chair of the Promotions Committee. Kim is

very involved within her community and church. She also stays very busy with the 4-H, school and community activities of her two growing daughters.

"It is truly an honor and privilege to serve the RAAA membership, the Red Angus breed and the cattle industry," says Ford. "I hope to continue this service in the role of President."

## Candidate for Region B Connie Mushrush



Connie Mushrush of Strong City, Kan., is seeking election to the position of Director for Region B.

Connie grew up in central Kansas on a farm that utilized crossbred cattle to make use of crop residue. Following graduation from Kansas State University in 1980, she and her husband Joe returned to his family's crossbred cow-calf operation. They also purchased light-weight calves out of the Southeast and double stocked them, retaining ownership to harvest. They used a Red Angus bull that first year on Simmental-Hereford cows. In 1982, Mushrushes added registered Red Angus cows. With a bull crop of three head, they retained their first herd sire and sold one bull. Today everything they do is tied to Mushrush Red Angus genetics.

Mushrush Red Angus includes Joe and Connie, Joe's parents Robert and Oma Lou, and now their oldest son Daniel and his wife Christine. Mushrushes are members of many livestock organizations and their local chamber of commerce. They make every effort to remain informed and up-to-date on all things about the beef cattle industry and the Red Angus breed. With one son and his family already back, and some of the remaining five children talking about returning, Mush-

rushes are very driven to assure that the beef industry – and certainly the Red Angus breed – are viable, available and affordable for consumers and suppliers of wholesome beef, worldwide. Their sole income is derived from their cattle entities.

Connie has served as an officer on multiple organizations. She was the Kansas Red Angus (KRA) secretary for three years and was on the planning committee for the 2007 National Red Angus convention. Prior to her service as the KRA secretary, she organized the Kansas Junior Red Angus Association. Currently, she is the president of her women's church group, is a 4-H leader and serves on the Farm Credit nominating committee for a third year. In addition, she serves on the Promotions and Junior Activities Committees for the RAAA.

Connie and Joe attend all Red Angus membership meetings. "It is a chance to put faces with names and swap stories and ideas," said Connie. "Additionally, it is where the business of the Red Angus Association of America is conducted. In preparation for the Board position I observed the Board meeting at Denver, Colo., and again in June at Denton, Texas."

"Thank you for considering me for the position of the RAAA Board of Directors, Region B," said Connie.

## Candidate for Area 5 Steve Koester



Steve Koester of Steele, N.D., is seeking election to the Area 5 – Northern Plains director seat. He and his wife Tracey, along with their teenage daughters, Kacey and Shaye, own and operate Koester Red Angus.

His diverse operation includes a fall-

calving registered herd as well as a set of spring-calving commercial cows. Steve also farms small grains and row crops on both dryland and irrigated cropland. He is the fifth generation of his family to ranch in Kidder County.

Koester Red Angus markets their fall-born bulls in the spring as 18-month-old bulls with an age advantage. Steve implements A.I., embryo transfer and DNA profiling to optimize his herd's genetic merit. He uses his commercial herd to gather additional data on herd sires.

He has served on the Promotions Committee for six years and has actively participated in RAAA National Convention since 2008. In 2009, he served on the Area 5 Convention Planning Committee for the Mahanomen, Minn., RAAA National Convention. Steve has also attended all but one Young Guns seminars and attends Brain Trust each January.

At the state level, Steve is a member of the North Dakota Red Angus Association and has been a member of the North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA) for 24 years. During that time, he served eight years as an NDSA director where he chaired or vice chaired the Ag Policy Committee for seven years. He also served on the Membership Committee for three years and was consistently one of the top recruiters during his tenure as a director.

Steve served on the Beef Task Force in North Dakota as well as the NDSA Nominating Committee. Currently, he is on the North Dakota Veterinary Student Loan Repayment program helping interview veterinary students applying to Kansas State University.

Locally, Steve is president of Trinity Lutheran Church Council and has served on the Council for two terms. He was on the Kidder County Fair Association Board, is a 4-H volunteer and recently accepted a position on the Kidder County FFA Advisory Board. In 2003, the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association awarded him with the Commercial Producer of the Year Award.

"My goal as a director is to enhance Red Angus' stature as a trusted and reliable source for the most functional, profitable cattle in all segments of the beef supply chain," said Steve.

#### **Candidates for Area 6 Barry Horsley**



Barry Horsley of Council Hill, Okla., is seeking re-election for the position of Director for Area 6 - Great Plains.

Born and raised in Virginia on a diversified livestock and row crop operation, his initial experience in the cattle industry started at an early age working with his family's registered Horned Herefords. During his youth he participated in many 4-H and FFA activities showing livestock and was a member of a very successful state 4-H livestock judging team during his sophomore year in high school. He attended Camp Community College, graduating with honors, and received an associate of applied science degree in agronomy. He then attended Virginian Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science and agricultural education. While at Virginia Tech, he was a brother of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity and a member of Block and Bridle.

After college, he returned home to begin a career in agricultural production management. He soon married his wife Pam and over the next 30 years they raised three wonderful children; a daughter Jamie, and two sons, Cal and Will, and more recently have been blessed with five grandchildren. In 2013, Barry concluded his career in production management and started his own operation known today as Horsley Farms. Also as a fourth generation cattlemen, Cal, along with his wife Shannon, became partners with Barry and Pam at Horsley Farms LLC, which serves as home base to Horsley Red Angus which Cal and Barry oversee on a daily basis. Horsley Farms consists of both owned and leased land and also includes row crop production and custom services.

Over the years his opportunities to manage such herds as Flint Hill Farm, the historic Buffalo River Ranch, Edgemont Beef and Arcadia Land and Cattle Co. served as a prelude to owning his own family operation. His operation's primary goal is to continue building and operating a sustainable beef cattle operation, with a commercial focus, built on economically relevant traits. This serves as a base for building a herd designed for forage efficiency and end product quality that uses a balanced approach to genetic inputs. Horsley Red Angus consists of 400 mother cows - half registered Red Angus and the balance consisting of high-percentage commercial Red Angus females.

Currently Barry is a member of the Red Angus Association of America and the Oklahoma Red Angus Association. It has been his honor to serve the Red Angus membership as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Marketing Committee and Alliance Committee, and he currently serves as the second vice president on the RAAA Board of Directors. He recently completed his term serving as the central region producer representative on the BIF Board of Directors.

"I believe that my years of experience in management and the beef cattle business continue to prepare me for the responsibilities and challenges that I will face if re-elected to serve," said Barry. "But, more importantly, is my continued desire and passion to work with the cattle and people of Red Angus. We are so very fortunate to have had founding members, as well as current members who, for over six decades, have had the foresight, vision and core policies that have allowed Red Angus to be so very successful in today's beef cattle industry."

#### **Benji White**



Benji White, B & L Red Angus, of Putnam, Okla., is seeking election to the Area 6 - Great Plains director seat.

Benji and his wife Lori, along with their son, Blane,

own and operate B & L Red Angus in west-central Oklahoma. Their family ranching business is focused on raising registered Red Angus cattle.

They have been marketing Red Angus and Angus semen for years and have custom A.I.-bred thousands of heifers on ranches throughout their region. This has grown into a custom heifer-development program at their home. They also have a commercial cow-calf herd where they retain ownership of the calves through the feedlot and sell them on a value-based grid.

Whites have concentrated their program on Red Angus after years of experience in raising both Red and Black Angus cattle. They love the Red Angus breed because of the quality of the cattle, especially the superiority of the more functional, fertile, docile and productive females.

“We chose to become actively involved in RAAA because of all of the genuine people in this organization that have welcomed us with open arms over the years,” said Benji.

They have sold cattle by private treaty and more recently through several different auctions, and are making plans now to host their first annual sale at their ranch in the spring of 2017.

“I have chosen to run for the board because I want what is best for this breed and our members,” said Benji. “I want to serve this organization that continues to stay true to its Core Policies and Strategic Plan. I believe it is important to actively listen and seek input in order to make well-thought-out and informed decisions to help the Red Angus Association of America continue our amazing growth into a very bright future.”

### Newley Hutchinson



Newley Hutchison of Canton, Okla., is seeking election to the Area 6 – Great Plains director seat.

In 1893, Newley’s great, great grandfather traded a shotgun and \$50 to a homesick settler from Iowa for a sandy quarter of land in northwest Oklahoma. One hundred twenty-one years later, this same quarter of land is where Newley, his wife Mandy, and their two sons, Brock and Newt, call home. Since that trade, the Chain Ranch has developed into a six-generation, owned-and-operated family business with 10 ranches in Oklahoma and Kansas as well as several leased properties.

Newley plays a major role in all management operations of the Chain Ranch. The ranch runs a commercial cow-calf operation. They keep their weaned calves and run them on wheat pasture, then either develop them as seedstock or market them as fat cattle through a value-added, all-natural program.

The ranch also hosts the Oklahoma Red Angus Association Sale where seedstock cattle are marketed. The ranch uses three breeds in its commercial crossbred program – Red Angus, Limousin and Angus. They have three registered nucleus cowherds that they use to raise their own herd bulls to use back on their commercial cows. The genetic integrity of the herd is maintained through a selective A.I. breeding program as well as embryo transfer. The ranch also farms wheat, alfalfa, canola and milo.

Mandy and Newley, along with their sons, also own and operate several other ag-based businesses – Hutch’s Cattle, which consist of a registered and commercial Red Angus cowherd, H & H Ag Operating LLC, which is a custom harvesting and trucking company, and Chain Ranch Outfitters LLC, which is an outfitting and ag tourism service in Oklahoma and Kansas.

Growing up on the ranch, Newley attended Seiling Public Schools and was actively involved in 4-H and FFA. He also attended Oklahoma Christian University.

Newley has served as the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association Northwest District Director, Oklahoma Wildlife Management Association Board of Directors, Oklahoma Ag Tourism Board of Directors, and is currently the Vice President of the Oklahoma Red Angus Association and is an active member of the Longdale Community Church.

“Just like my ranching heritage, the RAAA also has a heritage,” said Newley. “I strive to enhance the blessings that I have been given and would also like to serve in the same manner for the Association. I feel all breeders, no matter the size, should be represented equally and without self-serving objectives. If elected I would be honored to help guide this organization into the future by listening to those that put me in the position, and by preserving the core fundamentals of the Association, which is what sets this breed apart and makes it relevant in beef production.”