

North Dakota Junior Red Angus (Long Form)

In the late 1990's the need for a junior program was becoming apparent. Sharon Ceynar (Badland Red Angus, Arnegard ND) had been getting prizes for the junior livestock shows and coordinating the Red Angus sections in the livestock shows. By 1998, a core group of young individuals were coming to the forefront with the Ceynar family taking the lead. Other families and ranches that included this nucleus of individuals were the Chuck and Annette Steffan family (Heart River Ranch, Belfield ND); Troy and Annette Presser Family (Presser Red Angus, Turtle Lake, ND); Forster Red Angus, Kenny Forster Family, Richardton ND, Brian and Mary Severance Family (Severance Red Angus, Palermo, ND) and Warren & Mary Froehlich Family (Amber Lights Red Angus, Williston ND).

The focus and mission of the North Dakota Junior Red Angus Association was and is to promote education and leadership to youth interested in the Red Angus breed and to provide a foundation for future leadership and membership in the ND Red Angus Association. Membership in the NDJRAA has and continues to be open to youth from a purebred or commercial background.

The first ND Junior Red Angus organizational meeting was held in the hallway between the arena and the Ag Department classroom complex at the Dickinson State University Ag Department complex in Dickinson ND. The first NDJRAA president elected was Laci Ceynar who would later go on to serve as a "junior advisor". The first official ND Junior Red Angus Association Advisors were Sharon Ceynar, Badlands Red Angus, Arnegard ND and Annette Steffan, Heart River Ranch, Belfield ND. With Sharon's enthusiastic and charismatic personality and Annette's organizational skills this association of very young individuals started taking hold. It seemed like the fledgling association was run like a dictatorship with the advisors making major decisions since the members were so young (according to Annette most of the members were age 8 and under except for the Ceynar family who were older) and not old enough to make some decisions. Very shortly after this core group of family's other families joined which included Marc and Jodi Schriefer family (Schriefer Red Angus, Golden Valley, ND); Mary and Warren Frohlich Family (Amber Lights Red Angus, Williston ND), Kurt and Susan Froelich Family (Amber Lights Red Angus, Dickinson ND); Marlin and Julie Kapp Family, Steele ND, Dennis and Cindy Krueger Family (Krueger Red Angus, Max ND), Mark and Kathy Barentsen Family (Barentsen Red Angus, Powers Lake, ND).

Initially, the ND Red Angus Association financially supported the ND Juniors. In order to get the juniors more financially stable and to be able to function financially more independently from the NDRAA a motion proposed by Ed Olson, OHR Red Angus, Argusville, ND at the 2002 NDRAA Annual meeting to donate the funds from the resale funds of the donation heifer raffle to the ND Junior Red Angus Association. A donation semen sale conducted by the NDJRAA to be held at ND Red Select Sale was also initiated as the major yearly fundraiser for the juniors. The juniors called ranches all over the United States and North Dakota to ask for semen donations. The ranches and semen companies responded with donations from bulls such as BUF CRK CHF 824-1658 "Canyon", LMAN King Rob 8621, MLK CRK Cub 722, Glacier Logan 210 to name a few. A silent auction was initiated and held during the NDRAA annual banquet and ND Red Select Sale as another fundraiser.

Junior programming in the early days basically consisted of supporting junior Red Angus livestock shows with the West River Ag Expo in Dickinson ND being held as the State Junior Show. The first Senior Scholarship was awarded to Jamie Ceynar for \$500. The funding for this scholarship was provided by the NDRAA and given to a NDJRAA graduating senior. The Juniors and their families

were also responsible for cooking and serving the meal at the ND Red Select Sale while it was held at Farmers Livestock. The families donated the ingredients and the donations from the meal were given to the juniors. An early newsletter entitled "The Red Hot News" was produced by the juniors and sent to the NDRAA membership. The Royalty program became established in 2002 with a young Cassie Schriefer becoming the first ND Red Angus Queen. Cassie represented the ND Red Angus Association at the ND Red Select Sale, and several livestock shows.

In the fall of 2003, after many years of leadership and mentorship, Sharon Ceynar stepped down from her role as Junior Advisor. Her daughter, Laci filled in and helped advise the ND Juniors. In 2005, Annette Steffan began the process of turning the advisership of the juniors over to Kurt Froelich and Marc Schriefer. Kurt and Marc initiated events like livestock identification contests at the ND State Fair. They were also instrumental in moving the ND Junior Red Angus State Show to the ND State Fair in Minot ND upon the discontinuation of the West River Livestock Show and Expo. Jennie Lodoen, Lodoen Red Angus, Westhope ND and assisted by Caitlen Schilke (Holm) took over the advisor roles in 2009. Under the advisership of Jennie Lodoen, the ND State Fair Junior Red Angus Show became a premier event. ND juniors also became involved on the national scene especially through the North American Junior Red Angus Event (NAJRAE). After nine years of dedicated service to the NDJRAA, Jennie stepped down from being the NDJRAA advisor in the fall of 2019. The ND Red Angus Association Board of Directors under the leadership of Jodi Schriefer, appointed Annette Steffan to take helm of the junior program once again.

At the December 2019 NDRAA Annual meeting, the ND Junior Red Angus Association reorganized with Betsy Huber, Judd, ND and Donny Forster, Dickinson ND being the first members. At this meeting, Annette introduced the idea of the County Buckle program to the NDRAA membership for approval. Annette had seen a County Buckle program that the Montana Red Angus Association was doing in Montana. Youth who won a grand or reserve overall in a female or market division at their local county fairs were eligible to win a buckle with ND Red Angus Breeders sponsoring the buckles and NDRAA picking up the additional non sponsored buckles. The buckle sponsorship was promoted in conjunction with the Sponsor Campaign which has different levels of sponsorship. The idea was received favorably and while Annette was making the pitch and before the approval of the NDRAA membership, Troy Presser (Presser Red Angus) handed Annette a check for \$250.

In October 2019, Ron Clementson (Turtle River Cattle Company, Grand Forks, ND) approached Annette about resuming the donation semen sale. Annette was reluctant to do this as it was a bit overwhelming to be in the process of reorganization and take on this project. Ron volunteered to call producers and get the donations. Ron gathered 12 bulls and a total of 85 units of semen to be auctioned off at the 2019 ND Red Select Sale with all the proceeds going to the ND Junior Red Angus Association. The auction was broadcasted on DV Auction for the first time and \$5000 dollars were raised. The NDJRAA recognized Ron at the 2021 Annual Banquet with a vest for his efforts and time in organizing the donation semen sale.

Annette was also on the lookout for additional advisors to help with the responsibilities of reorganizing the ND Juniors. Sara Lee (Krueger), one of the early NDJRAA members and former ND Red Angus Queen moved forward to help. Sara and her husband, Paul, had two young girls that loved Red Angus and the family wanted to see the tradition of the ND Junior Red Angus Association continue for their children as well as other children. The third advisor came in the personality of

Shaye Koester, who was at the time serving as President of the National Junior Red Angus Association and was still in college. Shaye brought youth, ideas and a passion for education and promotion of the Red Breed to the table. The Trio of Annette Steffan, Sara Krueger and Shaye Koester has proven to be effective and progressive. Annette is the main advisor, Sara in charge of shows and events and Shaye is responsible for education.

The epic year of 2020 hit and COVID stopped the progress of people's lives as well as any events or activities. The North Dakota State Fair was canceled as well as most junior livestock shows and activities in North Dakota. However, Sara Lee (Krueger) called Annette and asked if ND Junior Red Angus could host a private show. Sara approached her parents, Dennis and Cindy Krueger, about hosting the event on their farm near Max ND. Successfully, the first "Buckaroos & Yahoos Field Day" took place on June 2020. Twenty-three juniors attended and elections were held for an officer team and to try to start building a program of work. Reed Wendel, LaMoure, ND was elected President, Maddy Miller, Bismarck, ND Vice President, Jamie Geyer, Lisbon ND, Secretary, Gage Edwards, Amidon ND, treasurer, Tana Lee, Mikoti ND and Cassidy Job, Baldwin ND Historians, Elodie Kuhn, Napoleon, ND and by the end of 2020 NDRAA had a membership of twenty-five.

In 2021, the NDJRAA established the Junior and Senior Top Hand Awards given in two age categories, 14 years and under (\$250) and 15 to 21 years of age (\$500). The award is based on advocacy of the beef industry, in particular, the Red Angus Breed and leadership that has been exhibited by the nominee through the NDJRAA as well their communities and regions. The "Rise Up" calls were established in 2021 to educate NDJRAA youth about the beef industry. The calls are conducted over "Zoom" and are open to all NDRAA and NDJRAA members. Topics included are "The History of Red Angus", Beef Quality Assurance, Beef Advocacy, The Life Cycle of A Beef Animal, Beef-What's on Your Plate just to name a few.

In 2022, the mentor and "rise up" awards were established to recognize adults or organizations that have played a role in supporting and influencing the ND Junior Red Angus Association. The Donation Semen Sale generated over \$9000 in 2022. By 2022, the membership grew to 43 members. In 2022, the decision was made to pay the National JRA dues for all NDJRAA dues paying members.

A record Donation Semen Sale was held in 2023 generating \$29,200 gross, averaging \$150/straw! This sale allowed the Juniors to have the ability to present 3 scholarships (1-\$1000, 2-\$500 scholarships) at the 2024 NDRAA Annual Awards Banquet. In addition, the Juniors purchased their own computer and gave a computer to the NDRAA as a Thank You for all their support. The Juniors also had their bylaws reviewed by legal counsel to make sure these bylaws were compatible with the ND Red Angus Association's bylaws.

Presently, one of the goals of the NDJRAA is to educate the members on different areas of the beef industry and focus on leadership development.