



South Carolina Angus Association News

Sharon Furr

February 2017 and March 2017

Happy Hearts Day – and if you’re just now reading this in the Cattle Connection, Happy Belated Hearts Day!

Let me first just start out by saying, wintertime in the South just doesn’t get any better than this, does it? I am sure there are peach famers and fruit producers out there, that are hating it, due to the buds and blooms popping out already, but for me as a cattle producer and grass farmer!!! I am loving it!

Being SCAA Secretary, I’ve been on the road all over the place in the last month, traveling to different sales and different farms. My days spent with you, looking at your cows and your operations, well it’s just been beautiful. As many of you know, March is always the month for Spotlighting Angus, and for me it’s always just such a wonderful time of year. My list of unbelievable amazing people, well it’s pretty long and year after year after year, I find myself picking and choosing very carefully, there are so many wonderful Angus Producers in our State, that I think so much of, that I just love, and that I want to know more about, that sometimes, just sometimes, it’s hard to decide!

I am given such a grand opportunity, when someone on my list says; ‘yes, you can come out, we’d love to have you’, that I find myself giddy thinking, they said yes - they would let me come out, walk and ride around, chat about their cows, talk about their genetics and their programs, and just allow me the opportunity to spend time with them personally, it’s an overwhelming feeling and experience, it’s just wonderful!

My first Angus Spotlight will be on Baker Farm and Equipment, and the home of Marcia and Bobby Baker. I have always had a love for Bobby Baker. I met him many years back, and somehow, as different as we were, we became friends and have remained friends ever since. I always see Bobby Baker at sales. Sometimes we pass each other on the road, rushing to get to a certain sale. We've even been stranded on the same stretch of highway, road closed due to a snow storm, trying to get to a sale, but no matter where I see him, he has never been anything different than Bobby Baker my friend and awesome Angus producer, and he has always brought a smile to my face.

I began my day with Bobby around 10:30am on a Friday morning. The day was bitter, but sunny, and as long as the Ranger was turned so that the windshield faced the wind, the sun would warm you right up. Bobby is the third generation, farming this land. Bobby's granddaddy was a row crop sharecropper, and his daddy raised hogs, cows, and corn. Bobby learned as a little boy about raising corn and picking corn. They picked all their corn by hand and took it to Buford Feed Mill, or the FCX to be ground. Bobby also picked corn to sell on the side of the road, (40 cents a dozen), and this was where his first money came from.

He went on to graduate High School and Majored in Mechanical Engineering, at York Technical College. Believe it or not, when talking with Bobby about all his careers, and listen - he had quite a few.....7 to be exact, I had no idea what a 'jack of all trades' he really was. They ranged from working in an Art Department, to tool and die, to machining, to working in a boiler room, running heavy equipment, which might I add, he loved, to another machine shop, to opening his very own bait and tackle shop, which flourished and grew, adding on a grill and a liquor store on Lake Wateree, back to running a machine shop, to finally, believe it or not, after being asked if he'd ever be interested in teaching, and praying about it really hard, he began teaching machine shop at Lancaster Career Center and he taught for 23 years, here's where he found his real calling, touching lives. During his time teaching he also ventured into starting up his very own grading business, which he has enjoyed all thru the years.

In 1990 Bobby bought his very first cows, and he bought them from Mr. Earl Thrailkill. Said he paid .90 cents a pound for them! Crazy right?! His first year and his first mistake was having his daddy help him buy his first bull.....a Charolaise.....white!

His second year and his second mistake was buying a Santa Gertrudis bull.....mean as hell.....but you see they say, third times the charm, so nothing do but Bobby go out and buy his very first black bull, and it would be none other than BLACK ANGUS! He went black and he never looked back.

Now a-days, he's running 53 registered brood cows, 12 registered bred heifers, and 20 registered open heifers on the farm, right there at the house. Not to mention having long yearly bulls and coming two-year old's raising off as well. Down the road a piece is his commercial herd, which consist of about 16-18 brood cows.

He's since retired from the State, and farms and runs equipment full time! But his real love is raising cows and growing out bulls! He's been selling bulls since 1997 - his genetics stem from Yon Family Farm with mamas and bulls, to Clemson Bull Test Bulls - Burton Family Farm, to Black Crest mamas, to Black Grove mamas, to Tokeena Angus. He studies constantly trying to

learn as much as he can on epd's and breeding. He is now doing a lot of A.I. and learning how to better his genetics in his herd thru A.I.

When I arrived that day, what I failed to tell you is this, right out behind the house at the barns he had girls up and ready for breeding, k-mars a red glow, he had mothers eating hay and just hanging out relaxing. We walked thru his barn facility and he made the comment to me, "I don't have your usual working chute, I don't have to, the girls are all gentle and when I call them they come!", I needed no explanation for this though, all of this made sense to me as we walked around in all the pastures that day. All of his cows, and babies, and bulls, none jumped up, none skidded away, they all just hung out right around us, waiting to be touched and talked to, waiting to be looked at, just waiting. I knew exactly what he was talking about, you see I had seen it first-hand that day, the daily interactions of a producer with his herd, and the gentle calm voice from Bobby. Bobby's offering of cattle is awesome, his love for his cattle is second to none!

As I began this day, I knew I liked Bobby Baker and I knew he was my friend, but what I saw first-hand from my friend and cattle producer was this; he is a good man, he is a great cow man, he is a loving man, he is a true man, and he is a Godly man. These are some awesome traits to have! I had a grand time at your farm Bobby, and I just want to say thanks for spending your day with me!



My next stop, several counties over, would be Clinton Farms, and home of Robin and Lee Clinton. It was on a Monday afternoon around 4:00 pm when I arrived, both work full time jobs with two different school districts, Robin with York School District, and Lee with Clover School District, so we arranged our time later in the day. Lee works in field maintenance at all the schools and Robin works as a Librarian and has just earned her doctorate! They have been married going on 7 years, and have a lovely farm and home. Lee told me as we were talking about his work and the farm that, "Working for the school district is like being on retirement after running a dairy for all those years!" I thought that was awesome!

Clinton Farms began years ago, and has come a long way from its dairy days as Clinton Dairy. Lee is 3rd generation, on the family farm and loves every minute of it. I say this not lightly, for it is ever so obvious and oh so evident in the first few minutes you're with Lee, walking and

talking. He loves his cows and they love him. He knows who they are, and what they are bred too, who their calf is out of, and can just call it right off the cuff, I loved it. My kind of lingo!

The entire farm was all cotton for years and years until the boll weevil came thru. In the 50's Lee's granddaddy started the dairy with just a few head of cows. Lee's daddy and uncle would eventually join in the dairy business, and some years later his uncle Bobby would get out and start working for Select Sires. His daddy continued milking and so did Lee. As Lee put it, "I was driving tractors at age 2 and milking at age 12". He went on to finish high school and attended Erskine College in Business, but that was ever fleeting and lasted all of one year, his heart was back on the farm. He came back to the family dairy and went from working at the dairy to running the dairy. Their cow herd head count went up to 500 with 250 lactating/milking cows, and the rest dry or replacements. In 2004, Lee's daddy got out of the dairy business, Lee would go on milking for three more years, before eventually getting out himself. In 2007 Lee had sold out completely, and all the land was just thriving with grass, since there was no cow herd, any longer grazing the land. Well right about that same time, the devastating drought hit, and it hit all of us hard, as you may well remember. But for North Carolina folks, it seemed to hit even harder. Some of Lee's relatives, in North Carolina, C-Rock-R Farms, ran up against a situation of having cows but no grass, so they called Lee up and told him their situation. Go figure, Lee had lots of grass and no cows, this was a win-win for everybody involved! Lee's love of black cows began when the first group of 12 bred mothers from North Carolina arrived, at the farm! Lee bought four of those bred mothers to start his herd with.

Lee runs, at any given time, right at 20 mama cows, 8 bred heifers, yearlings and calves. He very rarely has to us a veterinarian, he learned almost everything there was to know running the dairy, he had to do it all on his own back then, and pretty much to this day still does. Lee is amazing when it comes to his cows, he breeds all of them, he grooms all of them, he does it all, he does all the vet work – and he has an amazing track record for A.I. breeding with a 60-90 calving window always. Lee said, "We breed for good mamas." I just love this, cause to tell you the truth, isn't that what we're all looking for? He's been raising Black Angus for 8 years now and has no plans of stopping. He and Robin joined SCAA back four years ago, and each year have supported the SCAA Futurity sales with an awesome offering. This past year he even had a bull in the Clemson Bull test program – pretty amazing!

Lee rotates his cows every two weeks, he drills in and over-seeds winter grazer and rye every year, he bales over 1800 round-bales of hay a year, and 5000 square bales a year. Lee is very gracious and as he said this, was oh so humble, "I couldn't do any of this without my daddy and a neighbor that helps me with the hay."

Lee is a great man! Not only is he an amazing cow man, but he does a lot of volunteer work with the Little League World Series, and he works one on one with his nephew Drew, who to say the least, is an up and coming Angus man. Drew not only shows 4H dairy cows, but now is showing Angus. Lee is a very big part of that, it's just a real buddy system.

My time with Robin and Lee was drawing to a close. They were so gracious, walking me all over the farm, and as we walked, we just talked, and enjoyed the company of each other. I have to tell you, Robin and Lee and their cows, are at the top of my list, but more importantly Robin and Lee are at the top of my 'unbelievably, amazing, gentle, loving, really fun people to be with'.

They are the kind of people you want to be around, and as I got ready to leave them that evening, I told them this one thing; It's pretty amazing when you go to someone's home, and you feel at home! They make you feel so at home around them, this is such a wonderful feeling!

Thank you so much Robin and Lee for allowing me to come into your lives, I just loved every minute of it!

I've not only been visiting with producers lately, but I've also been on the road at a few sales. My first sale of the year was at the beautiful ranch of Gwenn and Neil McPhail's and Tokeena Angus. Tokeena Angus hosted its 23rd Annual Performance Tested Bull and Female Sale at 12 Noon, at the Ranch, in Seneca S.C. and man what an amazing offering of bulls and heifers did they bring. They also did things just a little different this year, every bull and every heifer being auctioned off, was pen'd in their paddocks or lots for viewing prior to the sale, but as the sale got underway, only three big screens were in front of you. It was all done via video, no skiddish bulls, no jittery heifers, no charging, just beautiful calm video running, of each and every lot. Pictures from the day below:



The second sale of the year for me was on February 4, where I found myself at the 2017 Clemson Bull and Heifer Sale at Garrison Arena, Clemson S.C. The place was packed with buyers. The bulls and heifers offered up, were pretty amazing, and a new sale ring has been installed by Stan Graham, Graham livestock Equipment which is, second to none!

Pictures from the day below:

Upcoming Sales and Calendar of Events:

February 11, 2017

Black Crest Farms - Spring Production Sale
At the farm, Noon

Sumter, SC.

February 18, 2017

Yon Family Farms - Spring Bull & Female Sale

Ridge Spring, SC.

Saluda County Replacement Heifer Sale – Saluda Livestock Market
Saluda, SC

South Carolina Cattlemen Association –
Clemson, S.C.

March 17 and 18, 2017

46th Annual SCAA Banquet and Futurity Sale

Clemson S.C. – Garrison Arena

April 8, 2017

Spring Lake Angus/Black Grove Sale in Lynch, NE

Mark your calendars for the 46th Annual Carolina Futurity Sale - March 18th, 2016 @ T. Ed. Garrison Livestock Arena, Clemson University – Clemson, S.C. If you need more information, please contact Ken Brubaker @ 540.908.5799 or ken@brubakersales.com – or Steve McPhail @ 864.978.6358 or stevemcphail@windstream.net

Also, once again this year for our 46th SCAA Futurity, we will be celebrating our banquet on March 17th, at the Clemson Outdoor Lab, 415 Charlie White Trail - Pendleton, SC 29670 – Social time starts at 6:00 pm!



Accommodations are below:

Hampton Inn Clemson

1 855-271-3622 - 851 Tiger Boulevard, Clemson, SC 29631 – **Mark Welch, Manager** - (864) 653-7744

SCAA Banquet RSVP's have been mailed out, so please if you don't mind, fill out the card and mail back to my attention by March 13th!

The 46th Carolina Angus Futurity is Dedicated to Dr. Larry Olson

By Kevin & Lydia Yon

The South Carolina Angus Association Officers and Board of Directors is very proud and pleased to dedicate the 46th Carolina Angus Futurity to Dr. Larry Olson, in recognition of his accomplishments, service, leadership and contributions to the Angus breed, SCAA and beef industry locally, state wide, and nationally.

Also, don't forget Yon Family Farms is now in the pecan business and offering delicious nuts and pecan candies through The Nut House and Country Market. Visit them online at: www.nuthouseandcountrymarket.com or if you need more information just contact Sally Yon at [803-312-4837](tel:803-312-4837).

If you need to reach me, or if you have something cool to share with me, or if you have any great pictures from any event you have been to, please don't hesitate to call me, or text me, or email me – I'd love to hook up with you.

SCAA, c/o Sharon Furr - Secretary, 2049 Boyd Road, Blackstock, SC 29014, or to my email address below.

Contact information: 704.577.3639 – spanishoaks@truvista.net

I can't wait to see you on the road, but until then.....



PEACE



LOVE



COW

Sharon