

North Carolina Angus Association Hall of Fame Inductee – Mr. Joe Hampton

By: Cortney Holshouser

To receive the North Carolina Angus Hall of Fame Award, is the ultimate testament to one's dedication and commitment to the Angus breed in North Carolina. This past February during the Association's Annual Meeting, that honor was deservedly awarded to Joe Hampton of Back Creek Angus in Mt Ulla.

Joe's Angus journey began when he and his wife, Robin, purchased Angus cattle shortly after they got married in 1981 from Dr. James Moore. Dr. Moore was an absentee owner, and they were hired to look after the cattle long before they knew much about Angus cattle. They tagged calves, recorded weights, worked with the vet for pregnancy checks, breeding dates and overall farm management.

In 1984, Joe and Robin purchased their own farm. Not long after, around 1985, they joined the American Angus Association and purchased cows from Dave Nichols in Iowa. Joe did a lot of research about different breeds of cattle and made the decision to stay with Angus cattle. It was the amount of data and number of animals that were registered with the American Angus Association that helped make the decision to stay with Angus and start a registered Angus herd.

Joe and Robin joined the North Carolina Angus Association in 1988. It did not take Joe and Robin long to become fully immersed in the Association, serving on numerous committees and in leadership roles. They consistently gave of their time and resources to ensure the success of the Association. Of Joe's induction into the North Carolina Angus Association's Hall of Fame, Bette Laursen says, "From that very first day that Joe and Robin Hampton became members of the N.C. Angus Association, they became actively and enthusiastically involved in multiple ways. Joe was invaluable to the association and to me, as he worked behind the scenes to help make our cattle sales, regional meetings, and field days unique and successful. Joe's special interest in the new N.C. Angus Regional Meetings helped to make them a huge success. He was a very calm and thoughtful President. When big decisions, some unpopular, had to be made, Joe made them. His knowledge of cattle in general and Angus cattle in particular benefitted not only Back Creek, but the entire N.C. Angus Association. Joe could and did work behind the scenes at our events to do any job that needed doing, sorting cattle, throwing hay or anything else; and he had an asset that few have: his wonderful ready "gift of gab" and his humor added much color and interest and fun when he acted as emcee or sale box host. You deserve this honor, Joe Hampton. Congratulations."

Bruce Shankle says, "Joe Hampton is like a Pathfinder Cow, not much to look at, never will win a beauty contest, but is dependable, always will deliver on time, quality of work is exceptional, and will be with you for the long haul."

Mike Jones considers Joe both a mentor and a friend. He says, "Joe Hampton is a very unique individual. He is humorous in an unorthodox southern drawl way. He is very intelligent. Joe is innovative. Joe thinks outside the box. Always an avid Angus breeder and promoter, Joe has served in a leadership position on the local, state, and regional level and served as President of the American Angus Association. Joe is always a good listener and always willing to give sound advice to those smart enough to listen."

Suzanne Brewer remembers Joe as always being supportive and willing to take on any task for the Association. She says, "Joe is always the same "Joe," always ready to talk Angus cows; but you can always count on him to be a "friend!"

In 1998, they joined forces with Ike & Catherine Jackson and Wolfgang & Ingeborg Lotz to form the Angus Advantage to market performance Angus bulls to commercial cattlemen. While Joe was marketing bulls, multiple folks asked him to run for the Board of Directors of the American Angus Association, and he did so successfully in 2002. Joe's time on the board was some of the most enjoyable times ever, but it also demanded a lot of energy, time, and effort to make sure the decisions made on the Board were for the betterment of the breed and American Angus Association members. Joe stated at the end of his Presidency in 2011, "I didn't leave anything on the table," meaning he gave it all he had and did the best he could to make sure the Association was in a better place than when he went on the Board. He made lifelong friends at the American Angus Association and on the Board. He enjoys talking about "remember when" from 2002 through 2011 where he visited twenty-eight different states. He loved meeting new people all over the nation involved in raising Angus cattle that made the breed what it is today. His favorite highlight of his Angus involvement has been the friends he and Robin have made along the way. He says they were blessed to be able to travel and see spectacular places, all because there were Angus cattle there. But as Joe states, "As great as the Angus cow is, the people are better."

When asked why it is important to him to stay involved in the North Carolina Angus Association and continue to give back, Joe says "I think we are stronger as a group than we are individually. I had people give me advice when Robin and I were starting out and I feel it is important to be that for someone now. The Angus community became an extension of our family. We saw young people grow up in this Association and now we are seeing them give back as well. I still feel there is value in this Association's membership."

Picture captions

Hampton 1 Joe addressing the members after receiving the Hall of Fame Plaque at the 2022 NCAA Annual Meeting

Hampton 2 Joe and Robin received the CAB Angus Ambassador Award in 2019

Hampton 3 Joe and Robin graciously donated this print to be auction at the 2017 Annual Meeting to benefit the DeEtta Wood Memorial Scholarship

Hampton 4 Joe is always eager to help at NCAA events

Hampton 5 It is always a wise move for young Angus breeders to learn from Joe's knowledge of the industry