

Association Outlook



Montie D. Soules | asa executive secretary/CEO

Concerns, Activities & Information

Life in 2020 is something most of us could have never imagined. The Covid-19 Pandemic is a first for all of us. My sympathies go out to anyone who has been affected or lost a family member or friend to this virus. Covid-19 could be around for a long time and we all will learn to live with it. This will change our lifestyle some and change our habits even more. As cattle producers who deal with herd health daily, we of all people should understand the precautions needed to deal with a pandemic. Vaccinations are important and the general practices we use when bringing a new animal into the herd are all part of the process. Putting these common sense practices to use in our everyday lives will make a major difference. It is easier to get the right facts on any virus or health issue for our livestock than for ourselves. We are overloaded with technology and data avenues and the information may not always be correct. We must all challenge ourselves to ensure we have accurate information sources before drawing conclusions on any issue.

I want to remind everyone that the ASA Board moved the 2020 Annual Meeting Forum and Awards Banquet back to Kansas City from the North American due to unknown scheduling issues and possible schedule conflicts. The 2020 Annual Meeting Forum and Award Banquet will be held at the Hilton Airport in Kansas City on Dec. 5, 2020. This year's theme for the one day forum on Saturday morning is "Building Your Brand". There will be industry specialists to share how you can "Build Your Brand" and help market your operation and cattle. We will be having an open house social at the Association office on Friday evening, Dec. 4th. The hotel shuttle will provide transportation to and from the office. Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be provided at the office. This will be a great time to see the office and share some good old fashion Shorthorn friendship and hospitality.

This event has become a must-attend

Shorthorn activity over the years. The time and freedom to share ideas and comments with fellow Shorthorn enthusiast is special. Please check pages 8 and 22 for a complete schedule of the activities for this year's Annual Meeting Forum and Awards Banquet.

The 2020 Junior National will be finished when this issue hits your mailbox. As I write this article in late May, entries just closed. The pandemic caused uncertainties about the National Junior Shorthorn Show & Youth Conference. The Shorthorn breed was one of the first Junior National's to announce going forward with the event in Abilene, TX, directly after the venue gave us the green light. We have over 600 head entered with close to 400 exhibitors. Nearly all of them are expected to attend due to the later entry date compared to normal years. I want to thank the good folks in Texas for helping in sponsoring this event. A big thank you to all breeders who have contributed to this junior activity; it is the largest gathering of breeders and people in our organization. The National Junior Shorthorn Show and Youth Conference could not take place without the support of the Shorthorn breed!

There will be some new fundraising activities this year for next year's Junior National event. The auction of the Foundation Heifer (normally held at Leading a Legacy) will be held at the North American Livestock Show in Louisville on Saturday afternoon during the famous Deck the Stalls Auction. There will be some renamed fundraising activities and new options for everyone to participate. The ASA Board appointed a new Resource Development Committee to help orchestrate this process to add sustainability to funding the National Junior Shorthorn Show and Youth Conference along with possible other activities for the breed. You will hear more about this in the next few issues of Shorthorn Country.

The pandemic is affecting many activities, including, most notable for those that show cattle, the cancellation of several

State Fairs this summer. At the end of May, three major State Fairs have already been canceled and we feel more will follow. Some of these State Fairs are designated Regional or Super Regional shows. You can find more details on this subject in Emily Velisek's article on page 22. Sometimes we don't realize the role State Fairs play until they are not there. I visualize many changes in this area over the next year or two; just one more thing to expect to deal with in these unprecedented times.

I want to thank the ASA staff for their continued dedication the past 2 months. Considering the stay-at-home rulings from different states, on March 19th we all left the office with our computers and the tools to service you from home. The ASA staff stayed on point and worked as a team to continue their jobs during this period. We had zoom staff meetings and shared information to keep everything on track. One person was assigned to go into the office weekly to check the mail, do the registration run so we could mail out work. May 18th we all returned to the office to resume normal operations. I'm very proud of the staff and appreciative of their dedication and desire to make sure we could serve you just as if the office was open.

I need to also comment on a joint article in this issue on page 26 that Matt and I worked on together. His idea was to use a draft process to show how we would each select a herd bull. I hope you enjoy it. It took a lot more time and planning than both Matt & I initially thought it would, but we enjoyed the exercise and hope it helps you with your selection process.

The Shorthorn breed will survive this Pandemic. It has survived the Great Depression and many other obstacles over the past almost 150 years. One thing I see when looking at the history of this breed is Shorthorns have always come out of any adverse circumstances stronger than before, because of the good people breeding them!

