



## Around THE WORLD

*DeRon Heldermon*

**H**appy New Year's everyone! I hope everyone had a fun-filled holiday season and you are ready for a prosperous 2008.

At the writing of this column, we just completed the 2007 sale season. It ended on a good note with the Etherton Farms' sale in Dawson, Illinois, December 11, averaging an impressive \$7,462 on 34 lots.

Driving back to the airport in St. Louis following the sale, I couldn't keep from thinking about all the good the junior program does for young people. I happen to be one of those who believes wholeheartedly in the junior program, but I know how much good the junior program has done for this breed in other ways.

The first time I met the Ethertons, they were a neat, young family attending sales, and buying good, competitive heifers for their young kids to show. They were having fun and making the most out of their junior show experience. Over time, they developed a love for the people, the cattle and the business. The program blossomed and they had their first production sale that averaged just a shade under \$7,500. The Ethertons are not the only ones to follow this path.

Many of our top breeders have developed from the junior program. As a matter of fact, many of our breed leaders on

the national board of directors got their start in the business by their kids showing Limousin heifers or showing heifers themselves as juniors.

I'm not suggesting any of this overshadows the good a junior kid can get out of the program, but I am saying we all should be aware that many times the good to come out of the junior program is twofold.

Nothing does more to keep people enthused or interested in the business than when kids or grandchildren are actively involved.

I've seen programs go the full cycle—the kids were actively involved and everything is going great guns. Then there is about a 10-year lull and when the grandchildren come along, the family is back to AI'ing, buying good bulls, and attending shows and sales.

This is just a reminder to you all that the next time you are helping some young family get set up with a junior show project, you might be doing more than selling a few heifers. You very well could be laying the groundwork for one of our top breeders and leaders of the future.

I encourage each of you to attend this year's national meeting, sale and shows in Denver! I look forward to seeing you there.

**LW**