



The VIEW FROM HERE

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At the risk of sounding like a broken record—Wow! What an event the Limousin breed had July 21-27 at the National Junior Show & Congress and All-American Limousin Futurity in West Monroe, Louisiana.

Every year I leave Junior Nationals with a whole new appreciation for our Limousin juniors and all the adults who provide untold amounts of support to our youth.

From cooler than expected temperatures, to an outstanding facility, to even better hospitality (including some tremendous food), to outstanding displays of cattle, it was hard not to leave West Monroe recharged about the future of the Limousin breed.

The one thing that stuck out to me this year, was all the new faces in the junior program. I'll admit, I spend my fair share of time stuck behind this desk, but I do get out and about a fair amount and it is safe to say more than once I had to ask someone, "Who is that?"

That is great news. Fresh faces can only be viewed as a positive for the breed. When you match the eager enthusiasm of "first-timers" with the steadfast commitment of those of you who have "been there and done that," the combination for success can't be denied. It was exciting to watch our seasoned veterans take the time to show the new kids on the block the ropes.

The other thing Junior Nationals reminded me of was that old adage about what you get out of something is directly proportional to what you put into it.

You could just tell by the looks on their faces—the host state and all its volunteers were beaming with pride all week long. I asked several of the folks if the long hours leading up to Junior Nationals was worth it, and every one of them answered quickly with a resounding, Yes.

Then of course there are the juniors and their parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends. After each class or each satellite event, the smiles, the pats on the backs and the hugs were everywhere. We all know what kind of dedication and commitment it takes at home to be able to compete and excel on the national level. Success, whether it is in sales talk or showmanship, doesn't just happen. It takes lots of hard work and practice that happens long before the suitcases and tack are loaded. And throughout the process it takes the encouragement of adults to keep our junior members focused on the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Ribbons, trophies and plaques serve as nice reminders, but the spoils of victory in situations like these go far beyond the hardware you carry home.

All the way around, Junior Nationals is truly a group effort.

If you are like me, sometimes you may fall into the trap of thinking events like Junior Nationals are the culmination of a year's worth of hard work. In reality, Junior Nationals is just another step in the process of training young people to be the leaders of tomorrow and that training process never really ends.

Congratulations once again to all the organizers, volunteers, donors, juniors and their families who made Junior Nationals an event the entire breed can be proud of.