



American **BLONDE** Association  
d'Aquitaine

## March 2009 Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 1 - Written and Edited by Amy Althans - 985-796-5779

### President's Message

The end of February finds those of us in the cattle industry dealing with continuing problems from the past few years. While the drought has eased up in some places, we still have spotty rainfall in other places that has inhibited the growth of winter grazing and put a strain on hay supplies. In the southwest, particularly Texas, drought conditions have increased drastically.

However, all isn't necessarily bad. We have recently seen slightly higher prices for our cattle; fuel prices have decreased; and some materials, feeds, and supplies are cheaper. If our nation's economy can begin the turnaround we are hoping for, then we should see a corresponding improvement in our industry. However, I don't see immediate relief coming our way.

I have been fortunate over the past few years to sell a high percentage of my animals as breeding stock. However, I now question whether or not--in light of market prices, demand, and the present economy--it's a good practice to go to the expense and time of keeping them until they reach an appropriate age for breeding. Perhaps some of you can advise me regarding this dilemma.



*Photo courtesy of Pierre Livaudais*

In spite of the gloomy message I've just delivered, I still get very excited when I find a new calf in the pasture and think about what a magnificent animal it will become.

I'm also going to continue believing that things are going to improve for all of us and that producers of quality Blonde cattle are going to come out on top.

**Clayton Bryant, President**

## CANADIAN MEMBER PROMOTES BLONDE D'AQUITAINES AT WORLD FAMOUS VENUE

ABAA member, Myrna Flesch of West Wind Blondes in Stavely, Alberta, Canada reports that they exhibit Blonde cattle at the Calgary Stampede held each July in Calgary.



The Beef Cattle Showcase is just one small part of this huge event that includes rodeos, midway rides, livestock exhibits, competitions, concerts and an extensive agriculture exhibition.

Since West Wind Blondes is located not far from the Stampede, this is an excellent opportunity for West Wind to showcase their Blonde cattle especially since 39% of the Canadian beef herd is located in Alberta. The beef industry plays a prominent role in the Alberta business landscape.

According to Myrna, not long ago, the Stampede offered a cattle competition but the competition is no longer available. Breeds are exhibited in display pens that are designed to accommodate 2 or 3 animals.


As far as Myrna is concerned, this is not the best way to exhibit cattle, but this is the only opportunity to exhibit in their area.

For the last two years, West Wind Blondes and Pine Coulee Blondes (both of Stavely, Alberta,) have participated in the cattle display.

At the exhibit, they get to promote not only their own individual operations but they also the Canadian Blonde Association.

The two Blonde operations get a lot of attention but last year they heard from several American visitors that there are no Blonde cattle in the United States !!

Myrna was quick to correct that perception and provided contact information for the ABAA.

Thanks Myrna for not only covering our back but making the effort to spread the word about the many benefits of Blonde d'Aquitaine cattle. 

### TWO PINES BLONDES

*Young Breeding Stock For Sale*  
*Visitors Always Welcome*



**James and Geraldine Moss**

16129 North Lost City Road  
Hulbert, OK 74441  
918-772-2844

**We Feature Full-blooded  
and  
Purebred Registered Cattle**



## HAS THE ECONOMY AND WEATHER IMPACTED YOUR CATTLE OPERATION ?

According to ABAA President Clayton Bryant of Andalusia, Alabama, breeding stock, especially bulls are not selling as readily. He states that he had planned to build a hay barn, but delayed that plan due to unexpected increases in fencing materials and cost of supplies combined with a lack of bull sales.

At present, he has no major equipment needs and no plans to purchase new equipment. However, he will be purchasing fencing materials and supplies since he is involved in a federally subsidized program which must be completed.

Clayton has no plans to change how his herd is maintained. He added that feed in Alabama is slightly lower than peak prices.

"I have tried protein blocks, but am undecided if it is a savings; consumption is greater than advertised," he said.

"Cattle sales are decreasing and we find that producers are keeping their bulls longer before buying a new bull," he said. "We will cull older cows and will handle breeding stock the same as always."

So far, the rainfall in 2009 has already been well below normal. Winter grazing is later and not as good as in previous years. I have altered hay production practices due to drought and fertilizer costs.

In closing, Clayton states that he is being more selective when deciding which calves will be retained and raised as breeding stock.

"It is costing more to run cattle in 2009," he said. "The largest increases have been seen in fertilizer and feed costs as well as metal products such as steel T-posts." ❧

## Conrad Comeaux, of Lafayette,

Louisiana is a newcomer to the cattle business and is taking steps to learn the best practices that will work for him. Here is his response to the ABAA Questionnaire.



I have not cut back in any areas of my operation. I am reading a lot about how to raise

cattle with as little input as possible using management intensive grazing techniques. I start the tractor as little as possible and do as much work on foot as I can.

Being new to cattle raising, my biggest challenge is learning what I'm supposed to do next. I'm not sure when to turn the cattle into the rye grass, for how long to leave them in the rye, how much will they consume when in the designated area, how long will it take the designated area to recover, etc. – all things I'm sure most experienced cattlemen take for granted..

### Bryant Farms

Blonde d'Aquitaine

**Bulls and Heifers,  
Fullblood and Purebred  
Available Now**



Clayton and Barbara Bryant  
204 Sanford Road  
Andalusia, Alabama 36420  
334/222-9631  
claybarb@andycable.com

What I did do that is keeping my cattle fat and sassy is to test the hay that I purchased. The first hay that I purchased tested at 9% protein with a TDN of about 58%. Then I came across some hay that tested 14.5% protein with about the same TDN.

This amounts to about a 60% increase in protein with about a 38% increase in cost. Was it worth the additional expense? With 3 cows having calves and two more expecting, I'm convinced that it was the right move to get the better quality hay to keep all animals in top condition. **All of the cows** that calved came back into heat in about 45 days, like clockwork.

Best wishes. Conrad

## How to Call the Police When You're Old

George Phillips, an elderly man, from Meridian, Mississippi, was going up to bed, when his wife told him that he'd left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window.

George opened the back door to go turn off the light, but saw that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phoned the police, who asked 'Is someone in your house?' he said 'No.'

Then they said 'All patrols were busy. You should lock your doors and an officer will be along when one is available.'

George said, 'Okay.' He hung up the phone and counted to 30. Then he phoned the police again.

'Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I just shot them.' and he hung up.

Within five minutes, six Police Cars, a SWAT Team, a Helicopter, two Fire Trucks, a Paramedic, and an Ambulance showed up at the Phillips' residence, and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the Policemen said to George, 'I thought you said that you'd shot them!'

George said, 'I thought you said there was nobody available!'



Blonde d'Aquitaine Cattle

MAC MURDOCK 435-722-2683 gmurdock@ubtanet.com

Ft. Duchesne Utah 84026



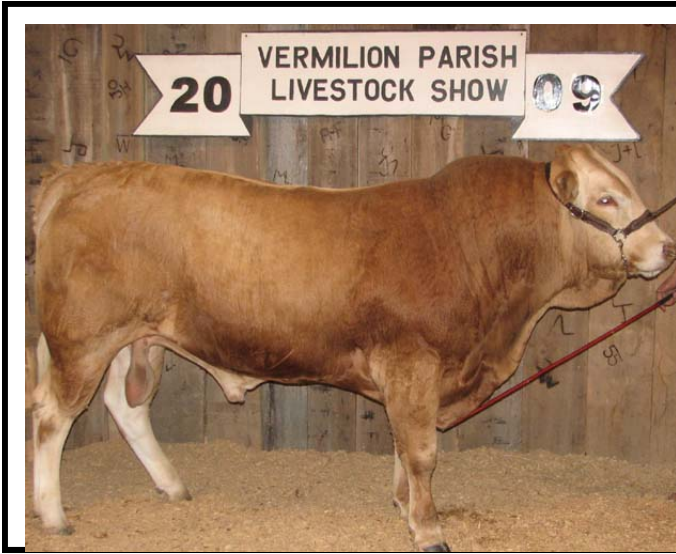
**CHECK THIS OUT !**

**LOUISIANA MEMBER  
CONRAD COMEAUX  
HAS CREATED A LOUISIANA  
BLONDE BREEDERS  
WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.BLONDECATTLE.NET](http://WWW.BLONDECATTLE.NET).**



# Junior Livestock Competitors

## Exhibit Blonde Cattle



Matin, a two-year-old bull, won first place in the AOB class at the 2009 Vermillion Parish Livestock Show in Louisiana.

Matin is exhibited by 12-year-old Colin Lanie of Youngsville, Louisiana.

The bull is sponsored by Pierre and Marian Livaudais.



This is the second year that 12-year-old Colin Lanie of Youngsville, Louisiana exhibited "Matin" at 4-H and Future Farmers of America shows.



High school senior Foster Lanie of Youngsville, Louisiana exhibited "Jean Luc," a calf also sponsored by Pierre and Marian Livaudais.

Rachel Schrank, 10, granddaughter of Martin Schrank of Waco, Texas, exhibited this young calf at the Hamilton County 4-H livestock show in January and won her class.

According to Martin, the calf was born on July 4, 2008 and had to be bottle fed due to malformed nipples on the mama cow.

Martin gave the calf to his granddaughter who proceeded to give the calf lots of TLC.

She provided good feed and the attention a show calf needs to succeed.

"She tended to it and led it around," Martin Shrank said. "Now the calf comes to her when called."

Although Rachel did not have much competition in her class, the judge spoke highly of the calf and Rachel's presentation. She is looking forward to showing the calf again next year. ☺



If you or a family member is exhibiting Blonde d'Aquitaine cattle at open, 4-H or FFA livestock shows, or if you are sponsoring a 4-H/FFA competitor, we want to hear from you. Please send photos and details to:

[perdido5@bellsouth.net](mailto:perdido5@bellsouth.net)

## HAS THE ECONOMY AND WEATHER IMPACTED YOUR CATTLE OPERATION ?

**W**ith an unexpected snow storm in December, south Louisiana resident Pierre Livaudais indicates that the costs incurred for cleanup combined with the tight economy has brought an unexpected turn in his Blonde business.

Feed costs have been a challenge. It has been a challenge to find quality feed at a cost one can afford. The sale price of cattle has dropped while the cost of feed has increased. Also, the cost of fuel has increased.

We are presently buying feed from Missouri. We have found a good quality protein feed at a lower cost.

We have no present need for new equipment. We will use that money elsewhere, repair the existing equipment and "make do."

Because of the economy, we have hired fewer workers and will not give raises this year for remaining worker.

We are selling off many cows, bulls and calves. It is important to reduce the size of the herd. We cannot afford to feed the same number of cattle as we have in the past. At the present, our herd is reduced by one half in number.

Sales are not increasing for the quality animals. We are "forcing" the sale of animals due to financial constraints. We are selling at "fire sale" prices, but this is necessary. Because of the economy, we are forced to sell many good animals at fire sale prices in order to stay solvent.

*We are getting less for the sale of our cattle. Prices are depressed at this time.*

*(See **ECONOMY** on page 11)*

## ECONOMY (from page 10)

We do not see any improvement in the cattle market in the immediate future and thus will keep the size of the herd reduced.



The weather has had a negative impact as well. We had an unexpected snow storm in December 2008.

*We are even contemplating going out of business if things do not improve soon.* Because of the low price which one receives and much higher costs for feed, fuel and labor, the family farmer/rancher cannot continue to survive the economy.

It is definitely, costing more to farm in 2009.

The largest increase is in labor. Remember this, that in addition to the salary paid, the farmer must also pay workman's compensation insurance costs, FICA costs.

*Workman's compensation costs increase each year. Most small farmers/ranchers supplement their operations by having an "outside" job. The family farm may be a thing of the past.*

The ice and snow build-up caused a large amount of debris (limbs, downed trees.)

- We have had to trim expenses and shift funds to accommodate the clean up costs.
- We have had to modify our operation because of the weather.
- We have deferred AI breeding this year to save money.
- We have stopped fixing fences and replacing gates until we can afford to do so.
- We have eliminated workers.
- We are selling animals to lessen winter feeding costs.



## Make Beef Part of Your Healthy Diet

*Did you know:*

- Beef is packed with 12 essential nutrients, including high quality protein, a variety of B vitamins, and minerals such as iron and zinc.
- Lean beef fits well in a lower fat diet. Today's beef is 50% leaner than it was 20 years ago.
- All cuts of beef, with the exception of short ribs, qualify as "lean" (i.e. no more than 10% fat) when trimmed of visible fat.



You can also make beef healthier by reducing cancer-causing compounds brought out by the cooking process when you marinate steak or other cuts for six hours in red wine or beer before frying or grilling.



**We're looking  
for your cattle.**

Laura's Lean Beef Utilizes lean, heavy-muscled, Blonde d'Acquitaine cattle that have been raised without antibiotics or growth hormones. We offer a bonus grid and forward-contracting options.

**LAURA'S LEAN BEEF  
CATTLE RAISED WITHOUT  
ANTIBIOTICS. NO GROWTH  
HORMONES ADDED.  
1-800-ITS-LEAN**

[www.laurasleanbeef.com](http://www.laurasleanbeef.com)

Frying or grilling meat causes higher levels of cancer-causing compounds heterocyclic amines (HAs) because fiery temperatures convert the sugars and amino acids in muscle tissue into HAs.

However, scientists are gathering evidence that levels of HAs in cooked meat can be lowered by treating the food before cooking.

Researchers found that steeping the meat in alcohol for several hours cut the high levels of carcinogenic compounds triggered by frying it.

(see **Beef** next page)

## **Beef** (from page 12)

The marinating process reduces the levels of two types of heterocyclic amines (HCA) by up to 90% compared with untreated meat.

It was also determined that *beer is more effective than wine* in reducing a third type of HCA, cutting levels significantly in just four hours.

Since it is the cooking process that transports water-soluble molecules to the meat's surface where they are turned into HAs, the beer and wine reduce the amount of these molecules from reaching the surface.

In addition, they discovered that beer was more effective than wine at lowering the cancer-forming chemicals since beer contains more water-retaining sugars than wine and that may hinder the transport of water-soluble molecules to the steak's surface, where high heat converts them into HAs.

Some marinades such as an olive oil, lemon juice and garlic marinade cut HAs in grilled chicken by 90%, while red wine reduced HAs in fried chicken.

However, when it came to steak, tasters preferred the smell, taste and appearance of beer-marinated steak.

Cooking meat on lower heat and for a shorter period of time also prevents the formation of dangerous levels of HAs .



## ***Yearling Fullblood Bulls For Sale by Private Treaty EPD's, Ultrasound and Semen Tested***

*West Wind Blondes*

*Phone: (403) 549-2371 or*

*Email: westwind@telusplanet.net*

## **Provencal Marinated Flank Steak with Portobello Mushrooms**

Prep: 20 minutes

Marinating: 2-3 hours

Grill: 12-14 minutes

1 flank steak (about 1 ½ lbs. ¾" thick)

2 large Portobello mushrooms – trim off stems

### Rub:

2 T. Herbes de Provence

1 T. minced garlic

2 t. kosher salt

1/4 t. black pepper

### Marinade:

2 T virgin olive oil

¼ cup chopped shallots

1 ½ cups red wine

1 T. tomato paste

1 T. orange zest

1 bay leaf

**(RECIPE on back page)**

## Planning a Fall Trip?

### Consider Attending the ABAA Annual Meeting

A trip to Ohio this fall could be the perfect time to see fall color and have the opportunity to meet other Blonde cattle producers at the Annual meeting of the American Blonde d'Aquitaine Association. ABAA members Charlene and Aaron Miller will host the meeting along with their son and daughter-in-law Brad and Jane Miller.



At present, the meeting is planned for October 10. Although the meeting will be held in Clarington, Ohio which is located about seven miles from the Miller farm, the best lodging options are in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Marty Clark from the Washington County Career Center will be the featured speaker at the Annual Meeting. He will present information on the Farm Analysis Program which the Miller's have used the last few years.

### SHOW BULL FOR SALE



**TWO YEARS OLD**

**FULLBLOOD, EXCELLENT GENETICS**

**GRANDSON OF *FALLOU***

**Contact: Pierre Livaudais**

**Telephone: 985- 626-1144**

**Fax: 985-626-1184**

**Home: 985-796-5516**

**Email: [plivaudais@bellsouth.net](mailto:plivaudais@bellsouth.net)**

“We have found his analysis program to be very helpful and thorough,” Aaron Miller said. “We know the value of every item in our operation and think members will find his talk very useful.”

After the morning session, members will be invited to tour the Miller operation in the beautiful southern Ohio region known as Switzerland of Ohio.

This area is filled with farms, rolling hills and a heritage of Swiss, German and Amish cultures.

“Fall foliage should be at its peak in the early part of October and the Monroe County Farm Bureau has planned a refreshment stop at the farm,” Charlene Miller said. “We are looking forward to seeing everyone.”

(See **ANNUAL** bottom of page 18)

# SHARING THE BENEFITS OF THE BLONDE

Utilizing the eight foot American Blonde d'Aquitaine Association's exhibition board, ABAA members Ed and Geri Moss spent four days at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Tulsa Trade Show in December.



"We get a lot of people who stop by and ask about our Blondes," she said. "Most have never heard about the breed but they ask about birth weight, calving, muscling and whether or not they are gentle."

"This is our eighth year at the show," said Geri Moss, who helps set up and man the booth with her husband.

The trade show is a large farm show with displays promoting everything from farm equipment to livestock, kitschy farm décor to feed products and more.

Since the show is about an hour's drive from their home, the couple returns to the comfort of their home every evening.

"This is a big exposition with people coming from all over the country," Geri Moss said, adding that there is always a good cross section of breeds exhibited at the show.

Over the years, the exhibit has produced enough interest in the Moss' herd to result in sales.

"Most who buy just want a bull to use with their commercial cows, but a few have bought the Blondes to breed," she said.

As far as the Moss's are concerned, the effort to set up the display and pay the considerable participation fee is worth it. The association's display board complete with photos is a big help in drawing attention to their booth.



**Our two final respondents on the ABAA Questionnaire are Myrna Flesch and James Nolen.**



**Nolen is located in Sinton, Texas while Flesch is located in Stavely, Alberta, Canada.**

Nolen indicates that his biggest challenge has been in dealing with the drought in his area which is located about two hours south of San Antonio, Texas.

“I’m attempting to rig a water pump so I can to pump water out of my pond and onto my pasture,” Nolen said. “So far, I’ve not had to make any changes to the way I operate.”

Long story short, not yet. For a quick solution to just get some water moving, I purchased a "like new" Multiquip 3" pump.

This is a low pressure-high volume pump that does a good job of sucking water out of my pond and pushing it about 1/4 mile through 2" aluminum irrigation pipe and just sort of flooding the ground in diff locations.

I am still looking for some type of 3-4 cylinder diesel engine to run a Berkley Hi pressure pump to utilize some sprinklers. I am also looking for some 3-4" irrigation pipe.

It is really dry here in south Texas. Some farmers/ranchers say that it is the worst they have seen it in many years.

On the other end of the spectrum, Myrna Flesch has been dealing with heavy snow.

We recently sold a number of registered females as calves into herds where they will be used as replacement females. This lowered our winter feed costs and perhaps reduced equipment hours in a minor way.

- We are not in the market to purchase new equipment at this time.
- Have not found any lower priced feed substitutes.
- We don't use hired help so we will have no changes there

**(See ECONOMY page 13)**

## **ECONOMY** (from page 12)

As to how we will handle the herd, we will use our normal procedure to retire older or non-productive animals. So far, our sales have not changed that much and have been about the same as in previous years. However, we are considering having a herd reduction sale.

Since we developed homozygous polled fullblood animals, genetically tested to ensure their homozygous status our net return has increased.

As to the economy, Flesch indicates:

- We are maintaining a solid footing.
- We maintain a farm website which is updated regularly.
- We advertise in Canada, the United States and Australia.
- Our website which promotes the semen and embryos we market has resulted in sales to Sweden, Australia, Brazil, the United States and across Canada.
- We anticipate some increase in costs due to rising fuel, feed and fertilizer prices.
- We also fertilize our pastures and find the increased forage level far outweighs the expense

### **Cremeans Farm** Blonde d'Aquitaine Cattle

**Fullbloods, Purebreds**  
**Horned & Polled**

**John C. Cremeans**  
**16349 State Route 141**  
**Willow Wood, Ohio 45696**

**(740)643-0505**  
**E-mail: [jccf1@hughes.net](mailto:jccf1@hughes.net)**

“Due to higher levels of snowfall, moving feed on the premises has presented more problems due to drifting snow and increased difficulty getting to feed storage areas,” said Myrna Flesch.

“Because of that, we start calving January 1<sup>st</sup> each year and the extreme cold this year has required more vigilance,” she said.

“The weather has ensured that every cow at time of giving birth must be in the calving barn.”



**Offering Polled Fullbloods      Blonde d'Aquitaine Seedstock**

*Semen available on request from polled fullblood bulls*

**Yearlings  
to 2 years.  
All ready to  
work for you!**

**BULLS ❖❖❖ HEIFERS**

Fullblood and Purebred  
Horned or Polled  
**L.E.C. FARMS**

*Larry and Ellen Mae Slaubaugh*

**THE Upper  
Midwest Source  
for Blonde Cattle**

4652 78<sup>TH</sup> STREET NE  
WOLFORD, North Dakota 58385

701/583/2341  
eml@stellarnet.com



**ANNUAL** (continued from page 14)

If you plan to spend a few days in the area, there are many attractions in Wheeling which sits on the Ohio River.

If you like excitement, there is a casino and greyhound race track. If you like to shop, you can spend a lot of time and money in Cabela's sporting goods store.

There is everything from camping sites to a new spa at the Oglebay Resort just north of Wheeling. The beautiful resort includes a lodge, cabins, golf course and plenty of nearby restaurants.

Specific details including lodging options will be available in the next newsletter. Hope you start making plans to visit Ohio this October for the Annual Meeting.



**Stipends Available for Young  
Blonde Competitors**

Students who show Blonde d'Aquitaine or Blonde influence calves at 4-H and Future Farmers of America livestock shows as well as county, state and regional fairs are eligible for an a \$100 stipend to support their efforts to exhibit Blonde d'Aquitaine cattle.

Children must be members of either 4-H or FFA and join the association for a one time \$5 fee. These students are eligible once they have completed a show cycle that usually concludes with a state show.

For details and an application form, contact Janella Garrett at [jgarrett@blondcattle.org](mailto:jgarrett@blondcattle.org).

## Texas A&M University Beef Cattle Short Course

August 3-5, 2009

Each August, more than 1,300 beef cattle producers from across the U.S. and other countries converge on the campus of Texas A&M University to attend the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course.

This will be the 54<sup>th</sup> year for the event that has evolved into the largest beef producer educational event of its kind in the U.S.



The 2 ½ day educational event is considered one of the most comprehensive beef cattle adult educational programs available. More than 50 different university faculty and industry leaders from across Texas and the United States help form a very diverse and cutting edge educational program.

The most popular part of the short course is the Cattleman's College, a group of 30 different workshops devoted to specific topics. Some of the topics covered are:

**Reproduction**

**Cattle health**

**Cattle handling**

**Soil fertility**

**Forage quality**

**Nutrition**

**Genetics**

The **Beef Cattle Short Course Trade Show** is also a popular part of the conference with more than 100 different exhibitors on hand to discuss their products and services. For more information, contact, **Beef Cattle Extension Service** via email at [extansc@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:extansc@ag.tamu.edu) or on the web at [www.beef.tamu.edu](http://www.beef.tamu.edu).

**Information for this articles was provided by:**

**Texas A&M Extension Beef Cattle Specialist**

**Dr. Jason Cleere, Assistant Professor**

**Texas A&M, Kleber Center - College Station**

*info@blondecattle.org*

*d'Aquitaine Association at*

*the American Blonde*

*Find more information on*



American Blonde d'Aquitaine Assn.  
7407 VZ County Road 1507  
Grand Saline, TX 75140

### **Recipe for Provençal Marinated Flank Steak (Ingredients on page 13)**

1. Combine the rub ingredients. Trim the steak of any surface fat and season evenly with the rub. Place the steak in a shallow, rectangular baking dish, cover, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. In a medium saucepan over low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the shallots and cook until softened but not browned, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes. Add the rest of the marinade ingredients, stir to blend and then heat to boiling. Reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.
4. Remove the baking dish from the refrigerator and place the mushrooms in the dish with the steak. Pour in the cooled marinade, and turn the steak and mushrooms several times to distribute the marinade. Refrigerate 1 to 2 hours, turning the steak and mushrooms occasionally.
5. Allow the steak and mushrooms to stand at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes before grilling. Remove the steak and mushrooms from the dish and reserve the marinade. Pour the marinade through a sieve into a medium saucepan. Heat to boiling. Boil, over medium-high heat, until reduced by half. Keep warm over very low heat.
6. Grill the steak and mushrooms over DIRECT MEDIUM HEAT (350°F to 450°F), with the lid closed as much as possible, until the steak is cooked to your desired doneness and the mushrooms are tender, turning once.

The mushrooms will take 12 to 14 minutes and the steak will take 10 to 12 minutes for medium rare. Transfer to a cutting board and let the steak and mushrooms rest for a few minutes before cutting them into 1/4-inch diagonal slices. Serve with the warm marinade drizzled over the top along with sliced grilled tomatoes and grilled French bread, if desired. Makes 4 servings.