

Donald Sherman

Donald “Donnie” Sherman, Hilmar, Calif., will be honored as the 61st recipient of the Distinguished Service Award presented by the American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA).

The Distinguished Service Award is presented by the Board of Directors to as many living AJCA members and/or members’ families, who, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, have *rendered outstanding and unselfish service for many years and thereby made a notable contribution to the advancement of the Jersey breed in the United States.*

Formal presentation of the award will be made on June 24 at the Jersey Breeders’ Banquet held during the 2011 Annual Meetings of the AJCA and National All Jersey Inc. (NAJ) in the Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

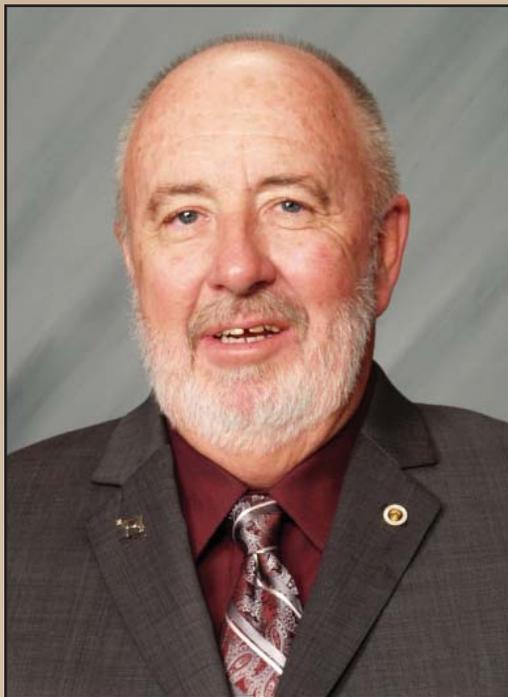
Donnie Sherman is committed to the betterment of the Jersey breed with each decision he makes, whether decked in suit and tie in a boardroom or overalls at his dairy. His enthusiasm for the future of the Jersey breed is contagious and his leadership-by-example has earned Sherman the respect of his peers across the globe.

“In all his dealings with fellow Jersey breeders, he exemplifies the highest standards of business ethics and integrity and is an effective spokesperson for the profitability of the Jersey cow,” wrote Libby P. Bleakney and John and Allaire Palmer, Highland Farms Inc., Cornish, Maine.

Sherman’s service to the agriculture industry began at the local and state levels at an early age and then advanced quickly to the national level. He served Jersey breeders as an AJCA Director for two terms and AJCA President for three terms beginning in 2004. During his second term on the board, his peers elected him to the position of vice president. Sherman’s influence on the Jersey breed also stems from the founding of Jerseyland Sires Inc. and the Hilmar Cheese Company with several like-minded Jersey breeders from Hilmar.

Service aside, his first line of business was to establish a profitable business milking Registered Jersey cows. D&E Jerseys, owned with his wife, Elsa, has become one of the country’s premier production-bred herds and a source for some of the breed’s leading genetic males and females.

“Donnie Sherman’s impact on the breed begins with the respect he earned among



his fellow dairy producers for excellent management of his own operation,” wrote Larry Schirm, Genetics Marketing Manager and North American Jersey Business Development Manager for ABS Global Inc., in a letter of recommendation.

“In this setting, he truly leads by example, showcasing the advantages of the Jersey cow in longevity and reproductive efficiency on the way to profitability.”

Sherman is just one of 11 people in breed history to receive the national Jersey organization’s two highest awards—the Distinguished Service Award and the Master Breeder award—and the first to be presented with them in back-to-back years.

Sherman’s roots in the dairy business run deep. His great-grandfather established Pioneer Dairy and Cheese Plant in 1888. Donnie grew up on Orestimba Dairy, a highly regarded Registered Jersey herd owned by his parents and uncle, and returned to the family farm in 1970 after graduation from Modesto Junior College and a four-year stint in the U.S. Marine Corp.

He and Elsa set out on their own eight years later and established D&E Jerseys with the purchase of 75 cows.

Through effective management, cow numbers at D&E Jerseys grew quickly. Today the herd numbers 575 milking cows and 550 replacement heifers. Over the

years, surplus cattle were channeled into a second dairy, Avi-Lanche Jerseys, which is now owned by their son-in-law and daughter, Richard and Jennifer Avila, and their daughters, Sidney and Caitlin, in Dalhart, Texas. This business is 2,200 milking cows and as many replacement heifers.

Sherman has been a strong proponent of AJCA programs. D&E Jerseys is a pioneer member of the REAP program and has contributed to Equity for many decades. Most recently, he has been an advocate for genotyping.

Sherman served the California Jersey community as board member and president of the Central Valley Jersey Breeders Association and the California Jersey Cattle Association. He was a 4-H leader and member of the Merced County 4-H Advisory Council.

He was elected to his first term as AJCA Director in 1996 and his second term three years later. While a director, he chaired the Breed Improvement Committee and co-chaired the Type Advisory Committee. Later, he served on the organization’s Investment Advisory Committee, where his business experience and service on a local bank advisory committee made him a particularly effective member.

During his tenure as director and breed leader, the Jersey business flourished. He was in key leadership positions during early parts of the “Golden Decade of Jersey Breed Expansion” and helped pave the road for the record-breaking performance the national Jersey organizations experienced.

Sherman is one of the founding fathers of Jerseyland Sires and helped the organization become a successful sire-proving venue for Registered Jersey bulls. He has been a member of its sire selection committee from the onset.

“In that role, he provides real leadership for a well-defined focus on bulls genetically capable of siring cows that will be the most profitable in a commercial environment,” noted Schirm. “He has pioneered the use of emerging genomic information in the bull selection criteria at Jerseyland Sires and is making effective use of genomics in the breeding program in his own herd.”

“Sherman has been involved in the evolution of Jerseyland’s business arrangements with Alta Genetics, which provides an ex-

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clusive worldwide outlet for the bulls that are siring profitable cows among the herds in Hilmar,” said Eric Lyon, Lyon Jerseys, Toledo, Iowa, who served with Sherman and Bleakney as AJCA Directors.

Sherman has also waved the Jersey banner through his involvement with the Hilmar Cheese Company. When they knew they weren't being paid fairly for their high-component milk, Sherman and 10 other Jersey producers from the area established the Hilmar Cheese Company and began making and marketing their own line cheeses in 1984. Today, Hilmar Cheese is the largest, single-site cheese and whey product manufacturing facility in the world. With business booming, the company expanded its operation to include a second facility in Dalhart.

Sherman has frequently been asked to speak about the success of Hilmar Cheese, domestically and abroad. He stresses the importance of Jersey milk for a profitable cheese business and production-bred genetics for a profitable dairy business.

James Godfrey, World Jersey Cattle Bureau Secretary, recalls Sherman's presentation on the Island of Jersey in 2008 in a letter supporting Sherman's nomination.

“His explanation of how committed dairy owners milking Registered Jerseys have grown the company from a dream to a success, while also developing outstanding herds with use of AJCA programs, was an inspiration to the international delegates.”

Sherman is a long-time advocate for

Jersey youth programs. Every year, D&E Jerseys can be counted on to consign to or buy at the National Heifer Sale. The Shermans syndicated D&E Rebel Scholar-ET, to The 2005 All American Jersey Sale and donated \$12,650 in proceeds to the AJCA Scholarship Fund.

The Shermans also routinely send a consignment to the Pot O'Gold Sale (open to juniors alone) or bring one home for their grandchildren.

Donnie and Elsa also sponsor the Nanette Sherman-Taylor Memorial Scholarship for California juniors.

Sherman's staunch support of the Jersey breed and its programs is evidenced from his words in accepting the Master Breeder award last year.

“It is imperative that we continue to grow. It is possible because we have more opportunities than ever and momentum is still building. I challenge each and every one of you to cultivate opportunity and help every dairy producer who is thinking about Jerseys to become an owner of Registered Jerseys and a client of USJersey.”

“While he is properly spoken of as a ‘past’ president of the AJCA, Donnie's enthusiasm for and dedication to the advancement of the Jersey, her owners and her breed association continues to be forward-looking and vigorous,” summed Lyon.

Because of this, Donnie Sherman will continue to add chapters to his book on service to the Jersey community.

Distinguished Service Awards

1954 W. W. Trout, Springfield, Ohio*

1955 Harold J. Turner, Bethel, Vt.*

1956 Judge Peter J. Shields, Sacramento, Calif.*

1957 R. C. Calloway, Baton Rouge, La.*

1958 Lynn Copeland, Nashville, Tenn.*

1959 Chester Folck, Springfield, Ohio*

1960 Ernest Greenough, Merced, Calif.*

1961 Paul Jackson, Wilmington, Ohio*

1962 Harriet J. Groos, Vancouver, Wash.*

1963 R. K. Stout, Lansing, Mich.*

1964 Herbert G. Myers, Boise, Idaho*

1965 Charles S. Kelly, Hudson, Wis.*

1966 Joseph F. Sawyer, Galt, Calif.*

1967 Henry P. Knolle, Sandia, Texas*

1968 H. I. Sawyer, Hughson, Calif.*

1969 M. L. Baird, Springfield, Ohio*

1970 E. Lea Marsh, Jr., Old Lyme, Conn.*

1971 Stanley N. Chittenden, New Lebanon, N.Y.*

1972 Arthur Dieterich, Sherman, Texas*

1973 Amzi Rankin, Jr., Faunsdale, Ala.*

1974 Capt. T. J. and Elizabeth Bay, Lynden, Wash.*

1975 Mrs. Thomas H. Carruthers, III, Glendale, Ohio*

1975 Paul Sparrow, Athens, Tenn.*

1976 Wyatt A. Williams, Orange, Va.*

1977 Dr. J. H. Arnold, Newnan, Ga.*

1977 Reuben R. Cowles, Statesville, N.C.*

1978 Jean E. Lemmermen, Tiffin, Ohio*

1979 John Weir Jr., Geuda Springs, Kan.

1980 Clyde K. Chappell, Knoxville, Tenn.*

1980 Newell Mills, Fallon, Nev.

1981 Harold Wright, White River Junction, Vt.

1982 C. L. Collins, Jr., Sylacauga, Ala.*

1983 Ray Chamberlain, Wyoming, N.Y.*

1984 Dr. C. A. Ernstrom, Logan, Utah*

1985 J. F. Cavanaugh, Columbus, Ohio*

1986 W. Charles McGinnis, Mountville, S.C.

1987 G. Joe Lyon, Toledo, Iowa

1988 Dr. John Wilk, Raleigh, N.C.

1989 Robert Lord, Woodstock, Vt.*

1990 Dr. H. Duane Norman, Fulton, Md.

1991 Edwin L. Crotty, Trenton, N.J.

1992 Richard A. Riggs, Evansville, Ind.

1993 Maurice E. Core, Columbus, Ohio

1994 John Giacomini, Eureka, Calif.*

1995 W. R. Lutz, Newton, N.C.

1996 Max Gordon, Winchester, Ind.*

1997 Harold Owens, Frederic, Wis.*

1998 Richard Clauss, Hilmar, Calif.

1999 Elmer D. Larson, Burlington, Wash.*

2000 Dr. J. J. Malnati, Newberry, S.C.

2001 Harold W. Roller, Weyers Cave, Va.

2002 Ray R. Schooley, Marshfield, Mo.

2003 D.L. Strandberg, D.V.M., Alma Center, Wis.

2004 Neal F. Schirm, Canal Winchester, Ohio

2005 J. Lawrence Benson, New Lebanon, N.Y.

2006 Ted Luther, Mount Ulla, N.C.

2007 Alvin Moss, Litchfield Park, Ariz.

2008 David W. Spahr, Findlay, Ohio

2009 Dr. Robert C. and Helene C. Dreisbach, Mercer, Pa.

2010 Paul Chittenden, Schodack Landing, N.Y.

2011 Donald Sherman, Hilmar, Calif.

* deceased