

California Jersey Breeders Highlight Industry Impact

Hilmar Cheese Company was the site for the annual meeting of the California Jersey Cattle Association (CJCA) on February 8, 2020. More than 50 guests attended a brief business meeting, honored achievements of fellow enthusiasts and listened to presentations from industry guests.

Award Presentations

Mike Wickstrom, Hilmar, was presented the Senior Jersey Breeder Award by his brother and business partner, Scott Wickstrom. Together with his father, Duane, Scott, and son, Brent, he operates Wickstrom Jersey Farm Inc. In 2007, Red Top Jerseys was formed in partnership with Duane and Scott, as well as Delton, Lloyd and Brad Nyman. This partnership later started 140 Cattle Company, a heifer-raising facility in neighboring Livingston, with Chuck and Mark Ahlem in 2012.

Mike has dedicated his life to serving the Jersey cow. He served on the board of directors for National All-Jersey Inc., sat on the All American committees and co-chaired the 2016 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings held in San Diego, Calif. He is also a former president of Jerseyland Sires, has served as the dairy representative on the California Beef council and has been a Hilmar firefighter for more than 20 years. Mike and Scott received the AJCC Young Jersey Breeder Award in 1988.

Wickstrom Jersey Farm Inc. and Red Top Jerseys each rank among the top 10 large herds (750 or more cows) for all measures for production, with 2019 m.e. lactation averages over 21,000 lbs. milk, 1,040 lbs. fat and 790 lbs. protein. Wickstrom Jersey Farm is also a charter member of Project Equity, contributing to the equitable milk pricing movement for more than four decades.

Both herds are enrolled on REAP, utilize JerseyTags for identification, use JerseyMate for their matings and rank among the top 25 herds in the country for genetic



Mike Wickstrom, center, was named California Senior Breeder. He received the award from his brother and CJCA board member, Scott Wickstrom (far left). Also pictured are his son, Brent, and father, Duane.

merit, with herd average JPIs over +86. The Wickstroms frequently consign to Jersey sales, including the All American Jersey Sale, the Pot O'Gold Sale and the National Heifer Sale.

As C.A. Russell presented Tyler Boyd, Hilmar, with the Young Jersey Breeder Award, he stated, "This person has won this award through hard work." He went on to further explain the success and accomplishments Tyler has seen throughout the beginning of his career.

Some would say Tyler was able to turn his passion for Jersey cattle and genetics into a career. He became the general manager of Jerseyland Sires in 2014 which has since evolved. Tyler played a vital role in developing Primus Genetics, the female division of Jerseyland Sires.

Not a California native, Tyler ventured west when he began his role with Jerseyland. He is the sixth generation on his family's Jersey farm, Boyd-Lee Jerseys in Parrottsville, Tenn. As a youth, Tyler showed at local, state and national shows, as well as being involved with a variety of youth dairy programs.

The 2008 National Jersey Youth Achievement Winner, Tyler was also invested in a variety of Jersey youth programs. He was a member of the Tennessee Junior Jersey Cattle Club, competed in *TalkJersey* and was a part of the inaugural



CJCA board member C.A. Russell and California Jersey Queen Hartley Silva present the California Young Jersey Breeder award to Tyler Boyd. Also pictured is Tyler's mother, Deborah Boyd.

class of Jersey Youth Academy.

Tyler began his next level of service to the Jersey breed when elected to the board of directors of the American Jersey Cattle Association in 2019. He currently sits on the Finance and Breed Improvement committees. Tyler has also consigned animals to both the Pot O'Gold Sale and National Heifer Sale.

Bill Hobby of Hughson was honored with the 2020 Distinguished Service Award. With a lifetime of experience in the dairy industry, Bill's latest venture has been as an educator with Modesto Junior College (MJC).

Beginning his tenure in 2004, Bill has impacted nearly every student that has gone through his classroom and dairy judging team.

On the course description for his advanced dairy cattle selection and evaluation class, he wrote, "This class will teach you ways to stay organized when you are evaluating/appraising anything in life, not just cows. Developing a method to maximize your intake, recall what you have seen, and then justify to a supervisor is what you will be doing the rest of your life."

A graduate of MJC himself, as well as Cal Poly, Bill spent 21 years in the A.I. industry, first employed by US Genes and

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James Quist presents the California Distinguished Service Award to Bill Hobby. Also pictured is his wife, Sue.



Youth Achievement Contest award winners are pictured above. Kylie Konyn, senior division, Jax Souza, novice division, and Kiara Konyn, intermediate.



Outgoing California Jersey Queen Kylie Konyn, left, congratulates Hartley Silva for winning this year's queen contest.



CJCA President Brett Barlass gives a \$1000 scholarship award to Aspen Silva. Billy Marchy, not present, also received a scholarship award of \$500 from the organization.

California Meeting

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then as a co-owner of Network Genetics. He went later to Hughson High School as an educator.

Bill will begin his retirement from MJC in June 2020, but will be forever remembered, appreciated and regarded as someone who has had an extreme impact on the dairy industry members of today and tomorrow.

As presenter CJCA President Jim Quist, Fresno, said in his presentation, "In his heart, mind and core, Bill's gift and call is as a mentor and educator, inspiring others to flourish, to create and to grow, and I believe, will continue to be at the forefront of his thoughts and actions.

Other Awards

Hartley Silva, Modesto, was crowned as the 2020 California Jersey Queen. Her sister, Aspen, was presented the organization's \$1,000 scholarship. Bill Marchy, Turlock, received a \$500 scholarship.

Kylie Konyon, Escondido, won the senior division of the youth achievement contest, while her sister, Kiara, took the intermediate division. Jax Souza, Hilmar, won the award for the novice division.

Kylie's topped the youth production contest with her entry JX Yosemite Sully Perform 34863 {5}. The Excellent-91%



Juniors on hand to receive awards in the youth achievement and production contests included Kennedy Souza, Kiara Konyon, Kylie Konyon, Jax Souza, Leah Sanders and Hannah Sanders.

daughter of JX Wilsonview Marvel Sully {4}-ET, GJPI +112, produced a 2-10 record with a dollar value of \$4,642.11. Actual production was 17,800 lbs. milk, 906 lbs. fat and 692 lbs. protein.

Other juniors to earn certificates were Hannah Sanders, Leah Sanders, Justin Souza, Kennedy Souza and Jax Souza, all of Hilmar, Haleigh Farris, Stevinson, and Kiara Konyon.

Speakers

J.P. Cativiela presented to the group about the Central Valley Dairy Representative Monitoring Program (CVDRMP) and the Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-term Sustainability (CV-SALTS).

Providing insight on happenings at the national Jersey organization level were American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA) and National All-Jersey Inc. (NAJ) Executive Secretary Neal Smith and AJCA-NAJ Area Representatives Seth Israelsen and Emma Sills.

Israelsen and Sills presented on the overall performance of 2019. One of the year's highlights included registering 132,318 animals which is the second best in breed history. These animals came from 4,708 different owners.

While reflecting on the progress the Jersey cow has made throughout the years, Israelsen stated, "We have changed the cow—the Jersey is now a business cow more than ever."

Executive Secretary Smith took the opportunity at the beginning of his segment to thank the California Jersey breeders for supporting the Jersey organization. He briefly discussed events and changes coming to the USJersey organization in 2020.

In April 2020, the CDCB will be releasing the first official suite of health traits for the Jersey breed. Smith thanked those in attendance for sharing their data, as it made it possible for the traits to be available. The number of records increased 112% in just 2019.

In addition, there will be a base change which will cause Jersey breeders to see a numerical change in a host of traits. "Across a five-year span, we have made outstanding progress," said Smith about the base change.

Finally, a revised Jersey Performance Index (JPI) formula will be released with the April 2020 genomic evaluations. The AJCA has been working with Dr. Kent Weigel from UW-Madison to develop the updated formula.

AJCA President Jonathan Merriam, Hickman, also spoke to the group. He also referenced the progress the breed has made but wanted to discuss the potential

to improve in the area of reproduction.

Merriam emphasized the fact the board has encouraged Dr. Weigel to place more emphasis on reproduction in the updated JPI formula.

Merriam went on to encourage members to continue reaching out to board members and let them know how things USJersey could add or change. He noted there's a lot of room for growth and the association needs to be aware of what services it can provide or improve.

AJCA Board Members Tyler Boyd and Kelly Moss and NAJ Board Member Roger Herrera also spoke.

Boyd pointed out how the challenges USJersey is facing are not as different to the ones dairymen face. He encouraged members to take leadership roles, as the association and dairy industry is always looking for fresh ideas and open minds to continue making progress.

Moss encouraged members to think about running for the AJCA board of directors, as his term representing the eleventh district of Arizona, California—all counties except Merced-Hawaii, Nevada and Utah, is ending in June.

Herrera updated members of happenings within NAJ. He touched on the work lobbyist Charlie Garrison is doing with the H2A Immigration Reform, as well as the A2 research which is being conducted by Purdue University.

Jim Ahlem presented the recently accepted projects funded through the AJCC Research Foundation. Upon hearing the projects presented, California members suggested in the future staff and board members should suggest some research project ideas that could directly benefit breeders on their day-to-day operations.

Cathy Sanders, Hilmar, provided information on the upcoming California Spring Jersey Show on April 24, 2020. Grant Ahlem, Hilmar, presented information regarding the California State Fair which will take place July 25-29.

For new business, Jim Quist briefly discussed the 2020 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings to be held in Portland, Ore.

The slate of officers selected to serve in 2020 included Brett Barlass, Hilmar, president; Grant Ahlem, Hilmar, vice president; Cathy Sanders, secretary and Kate Garcia, Turlock, treasurer. Jersey breeders elected to serve as directors were Mike Wickstrom, Hilmar, Grant Ahlem, Hilmar, and Brad Barham, Hughson.

Junior club officers are Kylie Konyon, president; Aspen Silva, vice president; Hartley Silva, secretary; Billy Marchy, treasurer; and Kiara Konyon, Hannah Sanders and Madisen Petersen, Hilmar, reporters .