

Dr. Robert C. and Helene Z. Dreisbach

Dr. Robert C. and Helene Z. Dreisbach, Mercer, Pa., will be honored as the 59th recipients of the Distinguished Service Award presented by 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 have made a notable contribution to the advancements of the Jersey breed in the United States.*

Formal presentation of the award will be made on July 2, 2009, during the Jersey Breeders' Banquet held at the 2009 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings in Syracuse, N.Y.

Robert (Doc) and Helene have been prominent faces in the Jersey community since they first started in the Jersey breed. In 1970, Doc and Helene began their herd of Registered Jerseys™ in Hamburg, Pa., and for 34 years, Wilderness Jerseys resided at the Long Meadows Farm in southeastern Pennsylvania. As strong supporters of the Jersey cow and the AJCA, they were determined to help make the Jersey a more profitable and efficient cow.

The herd grew from nearly 50 cows averaging 8,800 lbs. milk in 1970, to 108 cows with a rolling herd average of over 18,500 lbs. milk in 2003, when the herd dispersed.

Nearly 40 years ago, as Doc and Helene purchased their first cattle and started the farm, they immediately became involved in the Pennsylvania Jersey Cattle Association (PJCA). The Dreisbachs have both served on the board of directors for the organization and have helped in all facets by serving on committees and volunteering their time.

The couple was influential in planning two AJCA-NAJ annual meetings hosted by their home state. In 1985, they co-chaired the meeting in Lancaster, Pa., and in 2005, Doc served as chairman of the financial committee, while Helene lent a hand as needed for the meetings in Pittsburgh, Pa.

On a national level, Helene has served



as AJCA director for the Third District and as National All-Jersey Inc. (NAJ) director at-large appointed by the AJCA board of directors. Throughout her involvement as an AJCA director, she served as vice president in 1998 and was appointed chair of the Biosecurity Task Force when it was first formed.

As members of the World Jersey Cattle Bureau (WJCB), Doc and Helene have attended numerous international events and have always enjoyed visiting Jersey herds across the world. Friend and patron to the WJCB, Anne Perchard, talks candidly in a letter of support of the couple's ability to fit into any situation.

"They were popular delegates as we traveled through many countries... especially in developing countries. Helene's wonderfully bubbly personality and ability to express her opinions fluently and always in the best interest of the breed stands out." She concluded, "I am privileged to support their nomination."

Back on the home front, Doc and Helene are strong supporters of consumer awareness and have been featured on CBS

This Morning to support dairy pricing and the dairy industry. As early Equity investors, Doc began as the state chair and assisted in gaining Pennsylvania herds to support the program founded by NAJ.

The couple sponsored the Premier Performance Award for the All American Junior Show for many years. Equally they have each assisted in youth development programs such as 4-H and FFA in their home state. The farm has hosted numerous dairy judging teams over the years and has been the host of many school tours educating the youth about dairy farms.

Helene has served as a chair of Liberty Jersey Sires Inc., Sire Power's Jersey sire selection committee, Pennsylvania DHIA technician training and certification advisory committee, director of Berks County Farmers Association, Berks County DHIA and a leader of the Northern Berks County 4-H Dairy Club.

Doc was a practicing veterinarian for nearly 50 years and served as president of the Bucks-Montgomery Veterinarian Association. Additionally, he was a member of the local planning commission and agriculture security area, director of their milk cooperative, and member of the FFA advisory board. He was a 4-H leader for veterinary science projects and served as a visiting instructor for the University of Pennsylvania veterinary students at the Graterford Prison Ag Complex.

Their numerous years of service were recognized by the PJCA in 1997, when Doc and Helene were awarded the Pennsylvania Distinguished Service Award. The following year, Helene was named the Pennsylvania Dairy Women of the Year. The couple was also awarded the Berks County Public Relations in Agriculture Award in 2002.

Throughout their years farming, Doc and Helene became large supporters of the management-intensive grazing program. At the 120-acre Long Meadows Farm, their grazing experience began in the 1990s following a desire for some changes on the farm. The Dreisbachs began experimenting with pasturing

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and rotated the heifers through summer pastures on a weekly basis. The farm soon noted improved health and lower feed costs. Prior to grazing, the farm was cropped with corn for silage and alfalfa for hay and haylage.

As the grazing process became more familiar, the herd began management-intensive grazing with the milking herd in 1999. Gradually more land was diverted to pasture and improved grass varieties were planted. From April through November, 50 acres provided most of the forage for the milking herd.

Under the new system, the rolling herd average continued to increase and profitability dramatically increased as cull rates declined. The improved herd health allowed for cows to remain in the herd longer, which increased the number of replacement heifers sold each year.

The couple has expressed their fondness of the program to other dairy producers. They hosted many pasture walks to non-Jersey breeders and demonstrated the ability of the Jersey cow to adapt to the grazing system, achieve high levels of production, and improve herd health.

During the Improving the Bottom Line management discussion sponsored by the AJCA on April 30, 2004, held at Long Meadows Farm, Helene challenged the attendee's mindset of conventional profitability.

"You have to be willing to try different things and go at things differently," Helene stated. "We weren't looking for the highest production. We were looking

to make money. Doc always grouched that half of the milk check was going to feed. To us, management-intensive grazing has made sense."

During the Australian WJCB convention, Helene was invited to represent the United States on a grazing panel. She also made presentations to the American Forage and Grassland Convention on her experiences with management-intensive grazing.

The Wilderness Jersey herd dispersed on May 1, 2004. The herd of 178-head was sold to 68 buyers from 14 states and the West Indies. Just prior to the sale of the cattle, the herd ranked 43rd in the nation for JPI herd average with PTA averages of +757M, +27F, +27P, and CM\$246. The 2003 AJCA lactation average was 20,444 lbs. milk, 916 lbs. fat and 729 lbs. protein.

While the herd no longer resides at Long Meadows Farm, it is still impacting the the Jersey breed. Currently three cows with the Wilderness prefix are ranked on the top 1½% list for JPI. The Wilderness name continues in the spotlight as Wilderness Blueprint ranks within the top 100 Active A.I. bulls with a JPI of +165.

Following the sale of the cows, the Dreisbachs also relocated and moved to northeast Pennsylvania. Not able to leave the Jersey breed for good, the couple still owns a few cows that are housed in other herds.

The Dreisbachs' have two daughters, Patty Stroup and Carol Greathouse, who have contributed to the success of Long Meadows Farm. The daughters both continue their involvement in the dairy industry and have children that have participated as well. The couple has three

additional children, Doug, Karl (deceased) and Dyan who were raised before the Dreisbachs moved to the farm.

"Doc and Helene have rendered outstanding service to the Jersey breed at the local, state and national level in a variety of ways," states John C. Wilk in a letter of support for the couple.

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. Ernststrom, 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.

* deceased