

In Memoriam

Kenneth Paul Cast

Kenneth “Kenny” Paul Cast, Beaver Crossing, Neb., 78, passed away at home on March 15, 2023, after a courageous fight with a glioblastoma brain tumor.

He was born to the late Herbert Grant Cast and Velma Elizabeth (Geis) Cast on November 29, 1944, in Seward, Neb. He graduated from high school in Beaver Crossing, Neb., in 1963 and married Dolores Zegers in 1968. He served in the Nebraska Air National Guard for six years and was honorably discharged in 1971.

Kenny was a crop and dairy farmer for 45 years. He established the dairy herd with 14 Holsteins in 1969. The first Jerseys were added in 1985 and the herd has been primarily Jersey since 2009. His son, Jason, purchased the dairy farm October 2013 and today operates the farm as JJC Jerseys with his wife, Jodi, and their children. Jason has served as District 1 Director of National All-Jersey Inc. since 2015.

Kenny was a 4-H member and leader for several years and member of the American Jersey Cattle Association as well. Over the years, he served on boards of Dairy Farmers of America, Mid-America Dairymen, Midwest Dairy Association, Dairy Council of Central States, and Blue Valley Cooperative. He also was on the state’s veterinary and dairy boards and was honored with the state dairyman award.

He served as a trustee and member of the local Knights of Columbus chapter and held several offices with the Beaver Crossing American Legion Post #178.

Kenny was a member of and attended Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Beaver Crossing, where he was baptized, received his first Holy Communion, and was confirmed. He was also very proud to have served the church as a Mass server for many years. Most recently, he was a member of St. Vincent DePaul Catholic Church in Seward.

In addition to his wife of 54 years, Dolores, and son and daughter-in-law, Jason and Jodi, he is survived by seven other children, Jeffrey (Kathy) Cast, Beaver Crossing, Jeanine (Spencer) Anderson, Virginia, Neb., James (Julie) Cast, York, Neb., Justin (Lisa) Cast, Syracuse, Neb., Jeremy (Brooke) Cast, Ansley, Neb., Jennifer (Roger) Benes, Weston, Neb., and Joel (Amanda) Cast, Hebron, Neb.; sister Lois Jean Zimmer, Sulphur, La.; sister-in-law Becky Cast, Lincoln, Neb.; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law Margaret (Leroy) Topil, Rising City, Neb., Alice Policky, Seward, Thomas (Judy) Zegers, David City, Neb., Louise (Roger) Warnsholz, Seward,

and William (Bev) Zegers, Schuyler, Neb.; 35 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren and three soon-to-be great-grandchildren; and nieces, nephews and a host of other relative and friends.

He was preceded in death by his in-laws, brother and sister-in-law, Herbert Jerome and Frances; brother, Harold Thomas; sister and brother-in-law Dolores and Robert Kunert, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Fran Cast, Darrell Zimmer, Vernon Policky, and Joseph and Virginia Zegers.

Memorials may be made in care of the Cast family.

Michael Patrick Heath

Michael Patrick Heath, Westminster, Md., 58, passed away on March 23, 2023, a day shy of his 59th birthday, at the University of Maryland Medical Center after a farm accident.

The cherished son of Billy Joe and Betty Ann (Stiles) Heath of Westminster was born on March 24, 1964, in Gettysburg, Pa. He graduated from Westminster High School in 1982 and then from Hawkeye Tech in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Michael lived a life that shouted his passion: being involved in all aspects of the cattle industry, from showing and judging to breeding and selling. In industry circles he was known as a “walking encyclopedia of cows and pedigrees” and rarely forgot any cow he saw. He had an innate ability to find a “diamond in the rough” and develop her into a standout.

Michael grew up in dairy circles and often accompanied his father, a long-time cattle photographer and 4-H dairy judging coach, in his travels. A child prodigy, he had an eye for the good ones and knew how to bring out their best. He was a member of at least three Carroll County teams that topped the highly competitive state 4-H judging contest and on the team that represented Maryland at World Dairy Expo in 1980. He got his feet wet as a cattle fitter helping Billy get the ladies ready for their pictures and became a professional fitter after college.

With his uncles, Wayne and Allen Stiles, he helped to operate Spring Valley Jerseys in Westminster, where they bred and developed many prominent Registered Jerseys. His family has long supported the All American Jersey Show, racking up more than a dozen All American or Reserve All American winners. In 1993, they exhibited their first National Grand Champion, Pensmith TJ Mindy, Excellent-94%. From 2004-2007, three daughters of one of Michael’s favorite foundation cows, Hollylane Jewels Jasmine, Excellent-94%, were named Junior Champion or Reserve Junior Champion of the national Jersey

show. In 2020, Heath was a breeder of both the National Grand Champion and the Reserve National Grand Champion, Triple-T-Heath Getaway to Cancun-ET, Excellent-94%, and SV Velocity Rosie, Excellent-93%, respectively.

Two bulls bred by Heath and his partners making an impact on the breed today are SV Jade Hired Gun-ET and Chilli Action Colton-ET.

Heath had his hand in countless cattle sales over the years, from small sales targeted to young people just getting a start to crème de la crème sales that commanded premium prices. He managed a series of sales for Spring Valley in the 2000s and then partnered with Nathan and Jenny Thomas of North Lewisburg, Ohio, to manage several high visibility sales in recent years. Among the most anticipated were Rendezvous at River Valley in 2016, with an average over \$10,000, and Amplify in 2022, the Jersey breed’s third highest averaging sale at \$18,474.23 and its highest grosser with more than \$1.7 million gross. Heath co-consigned the breed’s highest selling female, Payneside Mac N Cheese, who sold for \$267,000 to Arethusa Farm, Litchfield, Conn., in the Best of Heath and Triple T in 2015.

A popular judge, Heath was known for his enthusiasm and colorful vocabulary in giving reasons. The style set him apart before it was popular to stray from tradition. He has officiated the All American Jersey Show, World Dairy Expo, the Pennsylvania All-American Dairy Show and numerous state fairs. Internationally he has judged at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Canada, International Dairy Week in Australia, the Royal Ulster Show in Ireland, the Mexican National Holstein Show, and shows in Argentina, Brazil, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Above all, Michael was a promoter of everything related to cows and a mentor, especially to youth. He received the Max Gordon Recognition Award in 2022 for sportsmanship in the ring. He worked with fellow Jersey breeders to establish The Jersey Event in the wake of the COVID pandemic as a means of bringing a sense of normalcy back to show circles. The show and sale will be in its fourth year this summer.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by a sister, Susanne “Susie” V. (Richard) Poole of Waynesboro, Pa.; uncles and aunts, Wayne R. Stiles, Allen and Kay Stiles, Howard and Patricia Stiles, Charlotte Meunier, Clifford Stiles, June Costa, Robert and Cindy Heath, Linda and John Tudor, David and Kathy Heath, and

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Ronald Heath, and their families; a niece and nephew; and two great-nephews.

He was preceded in death by Ruby, Jerry and Betty Heath.

Memorials may be made in his name to the Michael P. Heath Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Maryland State Grange, Richard Stonebraker, 14108 Cearfoss Pike, Hagerstown, MD 21740.