

In Memoriam

Dr. David R. Selner

Dr. David R. Selner, Denmark, Wis., 73, passed away October 25, 2025, after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

He was born August 31, 1951, to the late Raymond and Marian (Blaha) Selner and grew up on a Holstein dairy farm in Wisconsin that has been in the family since 1872. He graduated from Denmark High School in 1969. He was active in 4-H and FFA, high individual overall and member of the team that topped the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest held at the Chicago International Show in 1969. He earned his undergraduate, master's and doctorate degrees in dairy science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison). He was one of the founders of the Badger Dairy Club and its first yearbook editor. He also competed with and helped to coach the UW-Madison dairy judging team.

Dr. Selner spent most of his career in the genetics and breeding side of the dairy industry. He held positions in sire analysis, young sire sampling, mating programs and genetics procurement and held roles in marketing and advertising. He was instrumental in establishing the multiple ovulation embryo transfer procedure in the U.S. He presented seminars on genetics for numerous organizations, domestically and in 27 countries around the world, and published articles in several major dairy industry and breed publications.

He was an accomplished dairy cattle judge for all breeds. He was Larry Schirm's associate at the All American Junior Jersey Show in 2003, judged the junior show at the Pennsylvania All-American Dairy Show and served as associate judge one other time at the North American International Livestock Exposition. Abroad, he has been an official for shows in Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany and Honduras.

Selner was superintendent of the National Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Contest for more than 30 years. He was a founder of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, served on its first board of directors and helped to create the operational framework of the contest.

Selner sat on the World Dairy Expo Cattle Exhibitors Committee for more than 30 years, chairing it for four years. He was also the cattle show announcer for more than 25 years. He announced

all seven breed shows for many years, the only individual to achieve this task. For his work, he received the Friend of Expo Award in 1995.

He was heavily involved with the National Dairy Shrine (NDS). He sat on the board for six years, was president in 2002 and served as executive director from 2008 to 2021. He helped to increase the number of scholarships the organization gave and to transform the museum experience from slide projectors to video monitors, and from photo albums to digitized photo files. He also created a video library of historical biographies and conducted more than 100 interviews to add to the history of the National Dairy Hall of Fame. He received the 4-E Award from NDS in 2007.

In retirement, Dr. Selner documented the history of Czech immigrants to northeast Wisconsin, following his ancestors from Europe to farms and villages of today. He was also active with his church, which was founded in 1864 and is now listed on the national historic register.

Dr. Selner is survived by two sisters, Susan and Mary Rose (Gerald Kudick); a brother, Steven (Kari Duescher); five nieces and nephews; and numerous cousins.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Ruth Selner.

Memorials in his memory are suggested to 4-H, FFA or junior dairy breed association scholarship programs or to the Friends of St. Lawrence Inc. Foundation.

Joe Alben Cloaninger

Joe Alben Cloaninger, Statesville, N.C., 96, passed away on October 30, 2024, in Statesville.

He was born on June 4, 1928, in Iredell County to the late Troy Rankin Cloaninger and Jettie Ostwalt Cloaninger. He graduated from Celeste Henkel School in 1947. He served his country in the U.S. Army, stationed in Ulm, Germany, as a peacekeeper. He traveled to Amsterdam, Paris and Normandy during his military service, an activity he continued to enjoy when he returned home. In 1977, he and his wife, Julia, and their three children visited Germany on a family vacation.

Cloaninger followed in the footsteps of his parents as a dairy farmer and operated Cloaninger Jersey Farm with his family. Julia kept the books, and their children were all active with chores. They shipped Grade A milk to Hunter Farms, a processing plant in Charlotte.

Though the cows were sold in 1989, Cloaninger continued to be an active, faithful member of the North Carolina Jersey Cattle Association. He regularly attended events, including the organization's annual meeting in January last year at 95 years of age. He also enjoyed attending cattle and equipment auctions.

He was a member of the American Jersey Cattle Association and Front Baptist Church as well.

Cloaninger is survived by his children, Curtis (Marion) Cloaninger of Vilas, Trent (Marcy) Cloaninger of Statesville, and Janet Cloaninger of Atlanta, Ga.; two step-granddaughters; three step great-great grandchildren; and special caregiver, Karen Morris.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Julia Anne Wilson Cloaninger, brothers Frank Cloaninger and Max Cloaninger, and sisters Hazel McNeely and Margaret Flynt.

Donations in his memory may be made to Gordon Hospice House, 2347 Simonton Rd., Statesville, NC 28625, or Lung Cancer Research Foundation, 501 7th Avenue, Suite 230, New York, NY 10018 or www.lcrf.org.