

# Lowell Stevens

Lowell Stevens, Urbana, Ohio, has been named the recipient of the Award for Meritorious Service presented by the American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA) and National All-Jersey Inc. (NAJ).

This award is given annually to a living individual(s) who, in the joint opinion of the Boards of Directors of the national Jersey organizations, *has made a notable contribution to the advancement of the Jersey breed and the livelihood of Jersey owners in the United States through research, education, development, marketing, or other significant activities of the allied dairy industry.*

For more than six decades Lowell Stevens has served Jersey breeders pursuing a variety of endeavors in a variety of settings. From his work with 4-Hers at the grassroots level to his assistance with the All American, he has advanced the Jersey breed through acts of service, education, and mentorship. Among his laurels are the Ohio Pioneer Award from the Ohio Jersey Breeders Association (OJBA) and a Kentucky Colonel award from the State of Kentucky. He has been inducted into Hall of Fames at the Ohio State Fair and the Dairy Science Hall of Service at Ohio State University.

“Lowell has always made it a priority to support youth, other breeders, and the agriculture industry as a whole,” wrote Jason Nuhfer of Willard, Ohio, who came to know Stevens in childhood when he visited the farm as a breeding technician for NOBA. This encouragement meant the world to Nuhfer, who would later receive the AJCA Young Jersey Breeder award and serve terms as president and vice president of the OJBA. “Even at 31 years-of-age, it felt good to get a smile and thumbs up from Lowell while showing at the Ohio State Fair for the very first time.”

Lowell grew up on a dairy farm and showed his first 4-H project a Registered Jersey in the early 1950s. He graduated from high school in 1957 and then became a tester for the Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA). During his nine years with DHIA, he met and married the late Julia Yoder, a Holstein girl who became his life-long partner in service to the dairy industry. In 1964, following a stint with the Air Force National Guard, he began work-

ing for NOBA (now Genex) of Tiffin, Ohio, breeding cows in Champaign and Logan Counties. He was promoted to area sale representative and retired as area program consultant in 2009 after 45 years.



In 1980, Lowell and Julia purchase his family's share of Club Hill Jerseys, a partnership with Mrs. F.E. Lowry. They raised daughters Molly and Margaret on the farm in Urbana, guiding them and countless others through 4-H and youth projects. In all, Lowell served as a 4-H advisor for two-and-a-half decades.

The Stevenses also developed a solid herd of Registered Jerseys with Mrs. Lowry, earning a reputation for deep-pedigreed cattle that won blue ribbons, purple banners, and genetic awards in the show ring. They exhibited cattle at the Ohio State Fair for 37 years and at the All American Jersey Show for 12 years. They cleaned house at the Ohio State Fair in 1985, showing the Junior Champion and Grand Champion (Club Hill Imperial Taffy) and winning the Premier Breeder and Premier Exhibitor banners. “Taffy” sold to Ismael Daoud of Bogota, Colombia, the following year and was later tapped Reserve Grand Champion of the national show in South America. Club Hill Jerseys also bred the 1989 Reserve National Grand Champion, Club Hill

M.P. Renee.

Club Hill Jerseys was dispersed in August 1992. The high seller, Club Hill Friendly Monica, was also the breed's top selling female for the year. She sold to Billings Farm of Woodstock, Vt., for \$10,500.

Retirement from milking did not mean retirement from cows for Lowell and Julia. Rather, it meant more time could be devoted to projects dear to their hearts. Among the projects that benefitted was the Ohio Spring Classic Sale. Sponsored by the OJBA and traditionally held on Memorial Day, it has become one of the leading state Jersey sales, thanks in part to Lowell's drive to see it thrive. He chaired the sale for 14 years and logged countless hours and miles to secure consignments from breeders across the Midwest and Canada. During his tenure, the sale posted its series high average of \$3,396.47 on the auction of 78 lots in 2007.

Lowell also served the OJBA as director for 30 years and board president for two terms. He was Julia's right-hand man in her role as office manager and board secretary for 18 years. The two did much of the behind-the-scenes work for annual meetings and banquets and faithfully traveled to district shows and the Ohio State Fair for years to calculate points for the All-Ohio awards program.

His service to the Jersey breed extends well beyond the Buckeye State, however. In the 1970s, Lowell worked with a team to defend the American Jersey Cattle Club (AJCC) and the A.I. industry in a lawsuit over a bull identified as a carrier of the undesirable trait, rectovaginal constriction (RVC). He worked with Dr. J. J. Malnati and Gene Barton, superintendent of records for the AJCC, to gather information from the research herd at Kansas State University and was prepared to testify. But Barton turned him back at the airport in Texas when the lawsuit was settled out of court days before the trial. The information was ultimately used to assist the AJCC in establishing protocol for RVC.

Lowell has judged state fairs in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio and served as the official in 60 counties across Ohio. He judged showmanship at The All American Junior Jersey Show four times and was

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## Meritorious Service Award

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associate judge in 1995. He was a member of the All American Junior Committee for four years, serving one year as chair. He and Julia were also instrumental in planning two AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings held in Ohio. He is a former 30-year director and president of the Champaign County Dairy Service. He sat on boards for the county and state 4-H advisory committees and the Ohio Spring Dairy Expo and represented Genex on the board of the Ohio Dairy Producers Association. He is a member of National Dairy Shrine and has served Urbana United Methodist Church as a member of the administrative board and president of the Methodist Men.

Additional awards include the DHIA Superior Achievement Award and the Genex Mission Award.

### AJCA-NAJ Award for Meritorious Service

- 1999 Morris B. Ewing, Tucson, Ariz.\*
  - 2000 Allen D. Meyer, West Fargo, N.D.\*
  - 2001 Calvin Covington, Ocala, Fla.
  - 2002 John Jeter, Hilmar, Calif.
  - 2003 Charlene Nardone, Orient, Ohio\*
  - 2003 Merlin D. Woodruff, Urbana, Ohio\*
  - 2004 Michael L. Brown, Seattle, Wash.
  - 2005 Rodger S. Hoyt, Delaware, Ohio\*
  - 2006 Dr. Clarence S. Olson, Madison, Wis.
  - 2007 Dr. John C. Wilk, Raleigh, N.C.
  - 2008 Henry H. Dowlen, Lewisburg, Tenn.
  - 2009 Dr. Ronald E. Pearson, Blacksburg, Va.
  - 2010 Dr. Joseph A. Lineweaver, Radford, Va.
  - 2011 David Brandau, Wilton, Wis.
  - 2011 David Parkinson, Sahuarita, Ariz.
  - 2012 Dr. H. Duane Norman, Fulton, Md.
  - 2012 Dr. Curtis P. Van Tassell, Beltsville, Md.
  - 2013 Dr. Robert Cropp and Dr. Edward Jesse, Madison, Wis.
  - 2014 Richard "Dick" Smith, Waunakee, Wis.
  - 2015 Paula M. England, Columbus, Ohio
  - 2016 Richard "Dick" Clauss, Hilmar, Calif.
  - 2017 Dr. Kent A. Weigel, Madison, Wis.
  - 2018 Dr. Ole M. Meland, Ocala, Fla.
  - 2019 Ronald L. Horst, Ph.D., Ames, Iowa\*
  - 2020 Dr. Cherie Bayer, Columbus, Ohio
  - 2021 Lowell Stevens, Urbana, Ohio
- \* deceased