

## In Memoriam

### **Ralph Nathaniel Ahlem**

Ralph Nathaniel Ahlem, Oakdale, Calif., 95, passed away peacefully at his home on May 23, 2020.

He was born in Turlock, Calif., and grew up in the Great Depression on the dairy farm owned by his parents in Hilmar, Calif. He attended Hilmar High School, where he played football and was a sprinter on the track team.

He joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Fresno State College during World War II. The dire needs of the war cut short his schooling and landed him in the invasion fleet heading for the shores of Japan, when the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb that ended the war. After an honorable discharge, he continued his education at the University of Southern California, where he graduated with a degree in liberal arts and met his first wife, Grace.

Growing tired of construction work in Los Angeles and tough economic conditions post-war, he and Grace moved to Hilmar and bought a dairy farm near his parents. The couple had two children, Diana and Clarence, and divorced in 1974.

Ralph married his second wife, Dianne Ferreira, in 1975. They were founding farmers of Hilmar Cheese Company. He retired from active farming in 2000 and moved with Dianne to Oakdale, where they enjoyed a comfortable life. He pursued his passion for reading, stayed fit with water aerobics and enjoyed weekly massages and breakfasting with his cousins and driver and family friend, Rene.

To his close friends, Ralph was known as a kind man with a dry sense of humor.

In addition to his wife Dianne and her children, Michael, Kristina and Timothy (Mary) Ferreira, and his two children, Diana and Clarence, he is survived by seven grandchildren.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a memorial service was not planned but will be announced when gatherings are safe.

### **Jacob Christopher Thomas**

Jacob Christopher Thomas, Cornelius, Ore., 22, passed away on June 15, 2020.

He was born on March 30, 1998, in Tualatin, Ore., to John and Jackie Thomas. Jacob was one of five siblings, the only brother to three elder sisters and one younger sister. Shortly after his birth, the family moved to Stayton, Ore., where he attended Stayton Elementary School through first grade. The family then moved to Cornelius. Jacob attended elementary school at Farmington View and then attended South Meadows Middle

School and Hillboro High School, where he graduated in 2016.

Jacob loved to fix things, especially cars and trucks, so pursued a career in mechanics. He completed a year at Tillamook Bay Community College and then transferred to Portland Community College, where he received a diesel service technology certificate. He worked at Doyle's Truck Repair from 2017 until his passing.

He was a junior member of the American Jersey Cattle Association and active in 4-H and FFA. He showed rabbits, market hogs and goats at county and state fairs along with his Registered Jerseys. His favorite cow was Cascadia Iatola Sizzle, Excellent-90%, and his best four-legged friends were Blue and Jane.

He lived life to the fullest, loved the Lord and liked to make people laugh. Though he could be mischievous, there was always a twinkle in his eye. He spent time out-of-doors as much as possible and enjoyed camping and spending time with family and friends in front of bonfires in his backyard. An accomplished athlete, he played football, basketball, soccer, water polo and baseball.

Family and friends will remember him for having a heart of gold, always available to help a friend in need or care for a stray animal that needed a home.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by sisters Becky Seals, Rachel (Ian) Holden, Elizabeth (Johnathon) Waters and Olivia Thomas; nephew Case Seals; and grandmother Sally Thomas.

He was preceded in death by grandparents, Pete and Irene Janson and John Thomas Sr.

### **Julia L. (Yoder) Stevens**

Julia L. (Yoder) Stevens, Urbana, Ohio, 77, passed away on June 16, 2020, at the James Cancer Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

She was born on April 4, 1943, in Bellefontaine, Ohio, to the late Albert and Alyce Yoder and graduated from Salem High School in 1961.

Though she was born and raised on a Holstein dairy farm, Julia became a Jersey fan in 1963, when she married Lowell W. Stevens in West Liberty, Ohio. She worked for many years as office manager and personal secretary for The V. Patrick Hamilton Group, but was integral in the operation of the family's Registered Jersey farm too.

Julia served as executive board secretary-treasurer for the Ohio Jersey Breeders Association for 18 years and was officially recognized for her contributions at the organization's annual meeting in 2016. She was also a 4-H leader for 10 years and

judge for the National Jersey Queen competition four times. She is a past president of the Champaign County Homemakers and the Champaign County Garden Club. Julia was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, where she served a term as a deacon and volunteered with the hospitality committee.

Julia and her family exhibited cattle at many state and national shows, where she made numerous friends and held her own in wheelbarrow races down the aisles of the dairy barn at the Ohio State Fair.

She celebrated Christmas with a 50-piece display of Dickens Village figurines, kept a meticulous, colorful bed of flowers, traveled on yearly vacations with friends, cooked and baked for others, read and put together jigsaw puzzles. The love of her life, though, were her grandchildren. She was always front and center watching them show their cattle, play sports and participate in school programs and a witness at church confirmations.

In addition to her husband of 59 years, Lowell, she is survived by daughters Molly (Brian) Frey of Wapakoneta, Ohio, and Margaret (Lance) Sennett of Waynetown, Ind.; six grandchildren and four step-grandchildren; sister Janet Brown; sister-in-law Peggy (Randy) Damewood; and a niece and three nephews.

Julia was preceded in death by her in-laws, Russell and Marie Stevens, and brothers-in-law, Gary Stevens and Michael Brown.

Memorials may be made to the Cancer Association of Champaign County and the First Presbyterian Church in Urbana.

### **Michael Herbert "Mike" Hellenbrand**

Michael Herbert "Mike" Hellenbrand, Cross Plains, Wis., 67, passed away peacefully on July 1, 2020, after a long illness.

He was born on August 1, 1952, in Verona, Wis., to Charles and Shirley (Paradise) Hellenbrand. He grew up in Cross Plains and graduated from Middleton High School. Here, he cultivated passions for baseball, business and bovines. Time spent on his grandparents' dairy farm sparked a desire that would later become his second career. Coached by his father, he became an accomplished pitcher, with newspapers headlines touting his no-hitter games played at Milwaukee Area Technical College with the local Home Talent Leagues.

Mike earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and began his career in banking in Madison, Wis. His career ambitions took him to Boston and then New York City, where he led the Mortgage Securitization Group at Bear Stearns, a major Wall Street invest-

ment bank, for 10 years. Here too, he married Linda Brown.

Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Hellenbrands moved to Cross Plains to leave behind the rat race of Wall Street and pursue the cattle race and a unique business in embryo transfer. They named their farm City Slickers and registered Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey, Milking Shorthorn and Red and White cattle with the Hillpoint prefix.

The Hellenbrands specialized in raising calves from implanted embryos and selling them before they calved. Many were auctioned through their Fall for Colors sales. Several earned laurels in the show ring or were genetic standouts. Among the purple banner winners are a pair owned in partnership with Peter Vail: Eichlers MD Blanche-ET, two-time Grand Champion Milking Shorthorn at World Dairy Expo, and Marilie Gentleman Karmina, two-time Grand Champion Ayrshire at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Another standout in the Brown Swiss breed is V B Hillpoint Pronto Zip-ET, the National Total Performance Winner for 2013, owned in partnership with Voegeli.

Mike was a member of the American Jersey Cattle Association and had an infectious love of cows. The health, well-being and promotion of dairy cattle were priorities on the farm, with his cattle partnerships, veterinarians, and position on the executive board of World Dairy Expo. His true joy, though, was helping youth get into the dairy industry through competitive showing of their animals and serving as a mentor.

In addition to his wife, Linda, and mother, Shirley, Mike is survived by brothers Tom (Patti Woodman) Hellenbrand, Paul (Sandy) Hellenbrand, Ken (Beth) Hellenbrand, Greg (Sherri) Hellenbrand and Scott Hellenbrand; seven nieces and nephews; a great-niece and nephew; and many friends, partners and colleagues.

He was preceded in death by his father.

Memorials in Mike's name may be made to Agrace HospiceCare or an organization that supports and inspires youth in agriculture.

### **Joseph Edward "Joe" Mallery**

Joseph Edward "Joe" Mallery, Shafer, Minn., 68, passed away on July 10, 2020, after a year-long battle with cancer.

He was born on February 2, 1952, to the late William and Agnes Mallery in Anoka, Minn. When he was seven, the family moved to Shafer, a place he had called home ever since. He married Nancy Biggins on April 8, 1972.

Joseph owned and operated Mallery

Jerseys Inc. with his family in Shafer. On the rare occasion he stepped away from the farm, it was for an auction or to watch his grandchildren. He was a member of the American Jersey Cattle Association.

No one who met Joe would forget his quick wit and love for his Jerseys. He had a way of instilling a work ethic with his grandchildren at an early age as they fondly recall his favorite line, "Get to the barn."

In addition to his wife of 48 years, Nancy, he is survived by daughters Bobbie Jo (Jason) Peterson, Tina (Brad) Midtling; son Jeff (Karla) Mallery; brother Bill (Barb) Mallery; sisters Rose Anderson, Mary (Wayne) Johnson, Bonnie (Larry) Houger; seven grandchildren; and many family and friends.

Joe was preceded in death by a son, Jimmy.

In memory of Joe, go buy a gallon of milk, and drink it.