

“Duffy” Lyon Elected Honorary Member of AJCA

Norma Duffield Stong Lyon, known worldwide for her butter sculptures of dairy cows, has been elected an Honorary Member of the American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA) by the organization’s Board of Directors.

The announcement was made at the Breeders’ Banquet on June 29, 2007, in Sioux Falls, S.D., to “Duffy’s” evident astonishment and the enthusiastic applause of more than 400 Jersey breeders, including many members of her family, and dairy industry representatives.

“I have to thank not only the American Jersey Cattle Association and all my friends, but all of you people and other people who have seen my work,” said the overwhelmed honoree.

Added husband Joe Lyon, a past President of the AJCA and National All-Jersey Inc., “She is surprised. All of us are. We appreciate it. The Jersey cow has done a lot for the Lyon family and we hope to return that in some small way.”

A native of Nashville, Tenn., who grew up in Iowa, Norma Stong became known as “Duffy” (a shortening of her middle name) during her college years at Iowa State University. She wanted to become a veterinarian, but the program did not accept women. She majored in animal science instead, graduating in 1951.

While attending Iowa State, her work on two snow sculptures during a winter festival resulted in an invitation from resident campus sculptor Christian Peterson to work with him.

And she met her future husband, G. Joe Lyon. They married after graduating from Iowa State in 1951. The couple returned to Lyon Jersey Farm, a family partnership. Today, the operation includes 1,600 acres of farmland and a top producing herd of 320 Registered Jersey™ cows.

They have nine children, 23 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Duffy sculpted her first butter cow at the Iowa State Fair in 1960, working in a 40-degree cooler. Her annual displays of a life-size cow and other unique, life-sized figures created the number one attraction at the Iowa State Fair. In 2006, “I turned it over to a young lady who had been working with me for 13 years, since her seventh grade,” Duffy recently said. “I’ve got grandchildren who helped her and may eventually have the job. I don’t doubt for a minute they’ll do a good job.”

Most recently, Duffy created “Jersey Jewel,” a life-size bronze cow for the new Iowa State University Dairy Farm. The sculpture was unveiled in a ceremony last



Norma “Duffy” Lyon was elected as an Honorary Member of the American Jersey Cattle Association in June. She is only the second female to receive this elite honor.

December in Kildee Hall.

She has earned many awards including World Dairy Expo Woman of the Year (1990) and the National Dairy Shrine Pioneer (2002), and has appeared on national television shows such as NBC’s “*Today Show*”, “*Late Night with David Letterman*” and “*The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*.” Her sculptures have been featured in LIFE, Time, Newsweek and People Magazine.

“There is no one who has promoted dairy like Duffy,” says Kevin Stiles, vice president of marketing for the Midwest Dairy Association, Ankeny, Iowa. “She represents the values, traditions and very heart of the people and products behind dairy production.”

Honorary Membership in the American Jersey Cattle Association is bestowed upon persons, who in the judgment of the Board of Directors, will enhance the efficiency, fortify the standing, or extend the usefulness of the Association.

Lyon joins a distinguished list of individuals recognized by the American Jersey Cattle Association with Honorary Membership: Hilton Boynton, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts; Clyde Chappell, Ph.D., University of Tennessee; Blair Maxwell “Max” Drake, NOBA, Ohio; Professor W. H. Eaton, Auburn University; Morris B. Ewing, American Breeders Service; Peter Kayano, Kiyosato Educational Experiment Project, Japan; Richard H. Kellogg, COBA, Ohio; W. D. Knox, *Hoard’s Dairyman*; Eugene C. Meyer, *Hoard’s Dairyman*; Anne E. Perchard, M.B.E., La Ferme Ltd., St. Martin, Jersey; Ronald E. Pearson, Ph.D., Virginia Tech; D. W. Peterson, Ph.D., University of Minnesota; R. Dean Plowman, Ph.D., Agricultural Research Service, USDA; Carlos E. Robert, Barva Heredia, Costa Rica; Harry A. Strohmeyer, White Plains, N.Y.; Antonio C. Urquiza, Queretaro, Mexico; Danny Weaver, Cary, Ill.; John C. Wilk, Ph.D., North Carolina State University; and Merlin Woodruff, Urbana, Ohio.