

William G. Mason

Memorial services for William "Bill" G. Mason, 68, past President of National All-Jersey Inc., were held December 8, 2007 at the First Christian Church, in Buhl, Idaho. He died November 30, 2007 in a single-vehicle automobile accident due to a heart attack, according to his son, David.

Bill's acute business sensibility, understanding of the power of cooperative action and alliances harnessed towards one goal, and canny ability to hold his thoughts for the right time, with the right words made him a force in milk marketing circles.

Bill served on the Board of National All-Jersey Inc. for 16 years (1987-2003), the last six as its President, and thus participated in the achievement of Federal Order multiple component pricing in seven of 11 orders on January 1, 2000. For Bill Mason, "National All-Jersey Inc. is a fluid, dynamic and very responsive organization, wholly made up of fluid, dynamic individuals who possess strong feelings of purpose and relevance. We must remember that positively applied thought is the most productive form of labor. Profit is both honorable and vital to the success of any business. The only reason for NAJ to exist is to help them accomplish their financial objectives."

Bill was president of the Magic Valley Quality Milk Producers from 1993 until his death. Under his leadership, the organization of 35 members grew to the 28th largest cooperative in the U.S. marketing one billion pounds annually.

He lived by the belief, "Never be afraid, because then you never try. Anything in this world is possible. Always try!"

The idea for Mason Farm began with a Jersey cow purchased in 1972 by Bill's wife Barbara so that she could make butter at home. Four years later, with no other experience, the family moved to the Buhl area to develop a herd of 250 Registered JerseysTM and market milk in the dynamic Great Basin Federal Order.

For many years, Bill's studiousness and judgments as a dairy cattle breeder were known only to the few who ventured to the southern Idaho farm and sat down with him at the kitchen table. That changed during the 1990 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings when hundreds got a firsthand look at OSB E Settler Shadow Maggie, purchased by David in an Idaho state sale and just fresh with her fourth calf. Her third calf was later purchased by Select Sires Inc. and became its most successful Jersey sire to date. Mason Boomer Sooner Berretta is the only Jersey bull to be buried at the stud's headquarters facilities. Many other bulls with the Barbs and Mason prefixes have followed "Berretta" into A.I. service, with

Mason Lemvig Jacinto-ET ranked fifth among Active A.I. sires for JPITM.

Bill, Barbara and David Mason were selected as the 2003 Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeders by National Dairy Shrine, and honored by the American Jersey Cattle Association as Master Breeder in 2005. Earlier this year, Bill and Barbara were inducted into the Southern Idaho Livestock Hall of Fame.

Bill served on the Joint Operations Committee of the US Jersey organizations. At the time of his death, he was the General Chair of The All American Jersey Show & Sale and serving on the AJCA Investment Advisory Committee.

William G. Mason was born June 21, 1939, in Trail, British Columbia, Canada. He served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Korea and the Dominican Republic. He was employed by GTE, retiring in 1976 as a district supervisor.

He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Barbara, at home; brother, Ron (Joan) Mason, and sister, Marilyn (Brian) Webster, of British Columbia; daughters, Cindy (Doug) Kennison and Sandy Stonebreaker; sons David Mason and Steven (Dixie) Stonebreaker; and seven grandchildren.

The family suggests memorials to the AJCC Research Foundation, or the Shriners Hospitals for Children.