

# Golden Book Award Recipients Named

Three ardent advocates of Simmental genetics earn prestigious honors.

The American Simmental Association (ASA) Board of Trustees has announced the names of three worthy recipients of the coveted World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF) Golden Book Award. The honor is the organization's equivalent of Hall-of-Fame induction and the highest honor bestowed by ASA. Since the Award was first established in 1982, 57 individuals or ranch operations have been so honored.

Golden Book members of the Class of 2012, who will be recognized January 15, during ASA's 44th Annual Meeting in Denver, are Frank Bell, Burlington, North Carolina; John Christensen, Wessington, South Dakota; and Bob Finch, Ames, Iowa.

## Frank Bell

Frank Bell of Bell Farms, is described as "a leader, a person who makes things happen. He has given great amounts of time to the North Carolina Simmental Association (NCSA), his local cattlemen's group, his church and many other civic groups." Bell and his wife, Julia, who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, are the parents of a daughter and a son, who have presented them with four grandchildren.



Frank and Julia Bell.

Born and raised near Dozier, Alabama, he moved to North Carolina in 1960, and bred Angus cattle for the famous Wye Plantation. Bell bought his first Simmental in the 1980s and has been producing SimAngus ever since. He is a past president and board member of the NCSA, a time when he was a strong fund-raiser and led the Association to become more proactive in the promotion of Simmental genetics. He joined the Optimal Beef Genetics marketing group in the early 1990s and continued as a member of that group until dispersing his entire cow herd to Gibbs Farms of Ranburne, AL. He now serves as coordinator for a group of commercial breeders who cooperatively sell several loads of SimAngus feeder calves straight off the farm.

"Having been nominated for this award surpasses any dream that I could ever have imagined," he says. "Many individuals come to mind who have made greater contributions than I and I am extremely honored. I would like to thank the ASA Trustees for their vote of confidence and for the work that you do to promote one of the best breeds in the world. I would like to leave you with my life's philosophy, by Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

## John Christensen

John Christensen's South Dakota roots trace back to the 1920s, when his father, Jens, helped drive the family's 3C Ranch fed steers from Wessington to the nearest railroad on horseback, to be loaded and shipped to the Sioux



John Christensen

City Stockyards. To this day, the Christensen family has managed to maintain age-old concepts of practicality and integrity as the basis of their ranching operation. From the 1920s until 2003, the family fed out their own calves in the ranch feedlot.

Simmental genetics were integrated into the 3C herd in 1971, and they started registering crossbred calves

in 1973. Jens and John had begun to AI their commercial Herefords back in 1964. Currently, the Christensen cowherd numbers 900 purebred Simmental and SimAngus pairs, with 200 of that total owned by John's daughter, NaLani and her husband, Rick Dunsmore, of their NLC Simmental Ranch. Their breeding program has focused first on maternal traits and herd longevity. Christensen genetics are marketed through an annual production sale each March, offering more than 200 yearling bulls plus 50 open heifers. Typically, the family sells approximately 100 bred heifers each fall. Although cattle are sold throughout the nation, the 3C customer base remains largely local in nature.

John and Peggy, his wife of 29 years, are parents of three daughters: NaLani, Cam, and Carly, plus three grandchildren: NaLea, Chase and Swayzee Dunsmore. "The lifelong process of building our cowherd and developing quality genetics is our passion," John states. "Even better, the seedstock business allows us to share our passion with fellow cattlemen and friends, and that's a true enjoyment."



## Golden Book Award Recipients, Since It Was Established:

### Bob Finch

A former chairman of the ASA Board during the 2002-03 term, Bob Finch served a total of nine years of service as a Trustee. During his tenure on the Board, he served as chairman of the Policies and Procedures and Activities and Events Committees and was a member of the ad hoc committee that established new policies for Association investments. Since retiring from the Board, he continues as an active member of the International Committee, involving promotion and communication of Simmental genetics, primarily in Brazil.



*Bob Finch pictured with his late wife, Barbara, and their three children, from left to right: Matthew, Erin and Heath.*

Finch began breeding Simmental in the mid-1970s in partnership with his parents, Bud and Mary, on their farm located a few miles south of Ames, Iowa. More recently, he has welcomed his oldest son, Heath, back to the farm as his partner. In addition to their Simmental cowherd of 100 females, Finch Farms includes an extensive 2,000-acre row crop farming operation, with heavy emphasis on corn and soybeans along with hay production. With his late wife, Barbara, a former member of the Iowa State Legislature, he is the father of two sons, Heath and Matthew, and one daughter, Erin.

A natural leader, he headed the Iowa Simmental Association (ISA) Board of Directors for four terms as ISA president, served a term as President of the Iowa Beef Breeds Council, eight years on his county Extension Council, and currently sits as chairman of a \$350 million 16-location Iowa farm cooperative. An enthusiastic supporter of junior programs on both the national and state levels, Finch and his family were recipients of the prestigious Christensen Elite Award, named for the late Bob Christensen, Malvern, Iowa, himself a Golden Book Award recipient in 2000. ♦

Jerry Moore, '82, Canton, OH  
 Dr. Horst Leipold, '82, Manhattan, KS  
 Dr. Harry Ferguson, '82, Anaconda, MT  
 Don Vaniman, '85, Bozeman, MT  
 Dr. Ray Woodward, '86, Miles City, MT  
 Lou Chesnut, '86, Spokane, WA  
 Jess Kilgore, '87, Three Forks, MT  
 Arnold Brothers, '87, McIntosh, SD  
 Rob Brown, '88, Throckmorton, TX  
 Bob Dickinson, '88, Gorham, KS  
 Tom Abell, '89, Wharton, TX  
 Ron Baker, '89, Hermiston, OR  
 Albert West, III, '90, San Antonio, TX  
 Miles Davies, '92, Deer Trail, CO  
 Henry Fields, '92, Claude, TX  
 Dr. Earl Peterson, '92, Littleton, CO  
 Colville Jackson, '92, Gloster, MS  
 Ancel Armstrong, '93, Manhattan, KS  
 Javier Villarreal, '94, Acuna Coah, Mexico  
 Dr. Harlan Ritchie, '94, East Lansing, MI  
 Bud Wentz, '94, Olmito, TX  
 Kay Thayer, '95, Bozeman, MT  
 Walt Browarny, '95, Calgary, AB  
 Steve McGuire, '96, Bozeman, MT  
 H.W. Fausset, '96, Worland, WY  
 Hugh Karsteter, '97, Cushing, OK  
 Nina Lundgren, '97, Eltopia, WA  
 Don Burnham, '99, Helena, MT  
 Dr. Bob Schalles, '99, Manhattan, KS  
 Tom Risinger, '99, Crockett, TX  
 Bill Spiry, '00, Britton, SD  
 Bob Christensen, '00, Malvern, IA  
 Kay Klompien, '01, Bozeman, MT  
 Robert Haralson, '01, Adkins, AR  
 Dr. John Pollak, '02, Ithaca, NY  
 Dr. Dick Quaas, '02, Ithaca, NY  
 Dr. Jerry Lipsey, '03, Bozeman, MT  
 Marty Ropp, '03, Bozeman, MT  
 Jim Taylor, '03, Wallace, KS  
 Dr. Joe & Mary Prud'homme, '04, Tyler, TX  
 Dr. Bob Walton, '05, DeForest, WI  
 Sam Smith, '05, Prague, OK  
 Emmons Ranch '05, Olive, MT  
 Hudson Pines Farms, '06, Sleepy Hollow, NY  
 Dan Rieder, '06, Bozeman, MT  
 Silver Towne Farms, '07, Winchester, IN  
 Gateway Simmentals, '07, Lewistown, MT  
 Dr. Larry Cundiff, '07 Clay Center, NE  
 Reese Richman, '08, Tooele, UT  
 Clifford "Bud" Sloan, '08, Hamilton, MO  
 Sally Buxkemper, '09, Ballinger, TX  
 Nichols Farms, '09, Bridgewater, IA  
 Triple C Farms, '09, Maple Plain, MN  
 Linda Kesler, '10, Bozeman, MT  
 Stuart Land & Cattle, '10, Rosedale, VA  
 Hilley Farms, '10, Molena, GA  
 Tom Clark, '11, Wytheville, VA  
 Harrell Watts, '11, Sardis, AL  
 Frank Bell, '12, Burlington, NC  
 John Christensen, '12, Wessington, SD  
 Bob Finch, '12, Ames, IA