

# Beef Club Honors Laird

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— Hold a 4-H beef show in York County and one of the standard pieces of "operating equipment" that will be on hand will be leader Walter Laird. The longtime 4-H beef advisor will be helping move gates, weigh in steers, giving chase to the inevitable escapee and pulling a practical joke every chance he gets.

Laird, who has served as a leader of York County 4-H Beef Club since at least 1970, is the group's Citation winner for 1998. He was honored with the club's highest honor during the annual awards dinner, held January 31 at the Seven Valleys Fire Hall.

"I never filled out those forms so you wouldn't do this," quipped Laird, accepting his award with the characteristic good-humor that has won him the friendship and admiration of two generations of beef exhibitors. His wife, Nellie, noted later that she had first found his name appearing in a beef club program in 1970, though they were uncertain as to the actual year he had first signed on for 4-H leadership.

Laird is a fourth-generation farmer on the Dover area farm of his mother's family. He grew up helping to milk the family's dairy herd. As a young man, he decided he did not want to milk cows every day and made the switch to beef production. At one point, Walter and Nellie Laird's noted Angus beef herd numbered over 100 head. They were longtime exhibitors at area and regional shows. Today, Laird is semi-retired and the herd reduced to about a dozen head, but he continues to work with the 4-H beef club's projects. He continues as an active leader with the Southcentral Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association and the Pennsylvania Angus Association. Laird is also an avid

hunter, and made his second trip to Africa for big game hunting last fall.

Following the awarding of his Citation plaque, Laird was promptly called back to the program's podium to conduct a spontaneous auction of a cake baked for the raising of funds for the beef club. Rising to the occasion, Laird dispatched two professional auctioneers in the audience, Blaine Rentzel and Harry Baughman, to spot bids while he auctioneered. The combined efforts left the audience in laughter and the beef club's treasury \$125 richer.

Buyers of the cake, created and donated by award-winning York County baker Belinda Myers, were Baughman, Gordon Shive and Bob Miller. Their "syndicate" bought the two-tiered Chocolate Chamboard cake which Myers had baked and decorated in a repeat creation of her entry that won top honors at the 1998 Farm Show's Hershey Chocolate cake contest. The cake created by the Dallastown baking champion included a raspberry filling tucked between chocolate layers, and was decorated with delicate, hand-made, chocolate-lattice-work diamonds. The Myers family are longtime beef producers, as well as members and supporters of the 4-H programs.

Several beef club members were honored for outstanding accomplishments during the 1997 4-H project year. Roll call awards went to three veterans and four rookies. Saluted for their first-year roll call participation were siblings Hope Long, Kurt Long and Tim Long and Jessica Harcourt. Among the veterans in the roll call responses, Tammi Grubb placed first, Travis Reid was second and Jen Flinchbaugh was third.

Southcentral Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association recognized three beef club members with Steer of Merit awards. This award

is based on the performance in several criteria for market demand of beef carcasses, including yield and quality grades, average daily gain and live conformation. Win-

ners of the Steer of Merit awards were Beth Baer, Glenville, R. Jay Rishel and Raymond Stough.

Two leaders were honored for service to the youth program, with

recognition given at five-year increments. Ralph Dixon is a 30-year leader with the beef club, while Tim Livingston completed his fifth year of 4-H leadership.



Walter Laird, right, is the York 4-H Beef Club's 1998 Citation award winner. With Laird is his wife, Nellie, and Gordon Shive, who made the presentation.



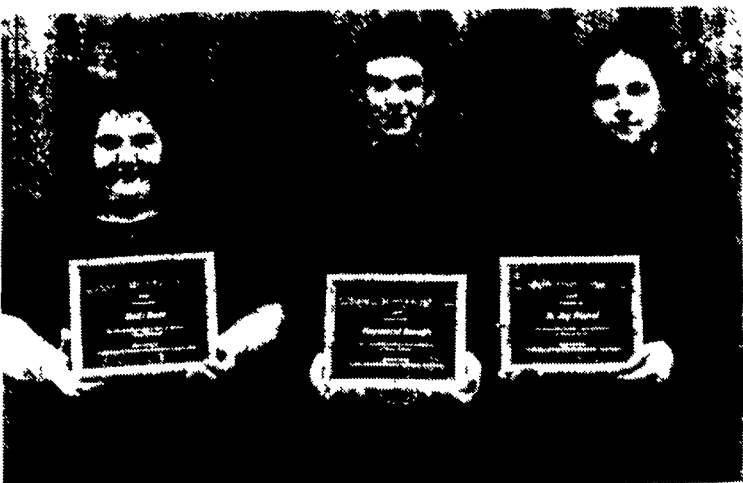
Recognized at the Beef Club awards dinner for their special York Fair accomplishments were, from left, Jamie Welsh, Cory Thompson, Tammi Grubb and Amy Sweltzer.



Beef Club roll call honorees were, from left, front, Kim Long and Kurt Long; and rear, Tammi Grubb, Travis Reid, Jen Flinchbaugh and Hope Long.



Belinda Myers recreated her award winning cake from the PA Farm Show to benefit the York 4-H Beef Club. With Myers are the trio which paid \$125 for the beautiful pastry, from left Gordon Shive, Robert Miller, and Harry Baughman.



Raising steers of Merit to meet the market demand were York Beef Club members, from left, Beth Baer, Raymond Stough, and Jay Rishel. The awards were presented by the Southcentral Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association.