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3-23-2009

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Owens, John, "Introduction of Lavon Heidemann: The Omaha Agri-Business Club Dinner" (2009). *John Owens: Speeches & Appearances.* Paper 227.
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Introduction of Lavon Heidemann
The Omaha Agri-Business Club Dinner
Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, Gretna, NE
Monday, March 23, 2009
5:45 p.m. - Social Hour/Silent Auction
6:45 p.m. - Dinner/Program

It is a honor to introduce Lavon Heidemann of Elk Creek at this fine event. He has achieved distinction as an agricultural producer, a leader in the Nebraska Legislature, and a strong supporter of education at all levels, particularly young people interested in agriculture.

After graduation from Elk Creek High School, he continued working on the home farm. Two years later he began working for a company that was drilling for gold on the Elk Creek family farm. The company hired him full time in 1983. The next morning Lavon was on a plane to Sand Point, Alaska and subsequently became general foreman for CBC Drilling. After that he split his time between drilling for gold in Alaska and working on the home farm.

Lavon ended his work with the drilling company in 1995 to work full time in the family farming operation. He and his wife, Robin, live on the home farm near Elk Creek. They have a son, Bryan, a senior at Pawnee City High School, a daughter, Mikayla (Mi-kayla), of Ogallala, and a son, Jared (Jar-ed) and his wife, Kassie, of Lincoln, who have a daughter, Alivia.

Over the years, he always has been involved in the Heidemann family farming operation which now includes 1,000 acres, including some bottom ground in the Nemaha Valley. They raise corn, soybeans, wheat, and alfalfa and they feed about 120 beef cattle each year. Heidemann sold his dairy operation in 2004 upon being elected to the Nebraska Legislature representing District I.

Since joining the Legislature, Senator Heidemann has quickly gained recognition for his leadership abilities. He was elected chair of the Appropriations Committee in 2006, just two years after joining the Legislature. He was re-elected chair in 2009. This position is known as one of the most difficult and important positions in the Unicameral. The post requires a good understanding of how state government operates as well as an appreciation for all facets of state government. The chair needs to know state income and expenses as well as the overall needs of state government. There also must be a close working relationship with the chair of the Revenue Committee.

While serving the last two years as chair of the Appropriations Committee, he is credited with providing excellent leadership to balance the need for financial conservatism while providing the funds necessary to meet the basic needs for operation of state government which includes education at all levels. When dealing with various agencies, the Senator has developed a reputation for objectivity, a willingness to listen, as well as fairness in making decisions.

He is known for developing fine working relationships with fellow senators, not taking a partisan position, but doing what he thinks best for Nebraska. A statesman, he does not do what might gain votes in his home district. In addition to Appropriations, he also serves on the Building Maintenance, Executive Board, Legislative Performance Audit, and Nebraska Retirement Systems committees.

Senator Heidemann is credited with being smart and using excellent judgment. He does his homework, sees the big picture and is a great thinker. Not one to let his position go to his head, Lavon is well-grounded and works hard to serve Nebraska.

Lavon has been active in a variety of agricultural and community organizations. He has promoted agriculture in the community through active membership in the Pawnee County Farm Bureau and has taken a special interest in young people who are interested in agriculture. He helps them prepare for careers in agriculture and agribusiness through the local schools and at the state level through the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis. He is a member of the Agriculture Builders of Nebraska, the primary Institute support group.

A former member of the Elk Creek Public Schools Board of Education, he is a member of the local Fire District Board, St. Peters Lutheran Church, Southeast Nebraska Feeders and Breeders, Nebraska Cattlemen, 2006 Midwest Council of

State Governments, Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership, and the Nebraska Boundary Commission.

I am sure you agree that this is the type of person we need in Nebraska and in the Nebraska Legislature. Therefore, it is a real pleasure to present Lavon Heidemann, a dedicated Nebraskan and a fine representative of our state's agricultural industry.

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