

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

John Owens: Speeches & Appearances

Agriculture and Natural Resources, Institute of  
(IANR)

---

4-11-2003

## Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement Dinner

John Owens

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, jowens2@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/owenspeech>



Part of the [Agriculture Commons](#)

---

Owens, John, "Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement Dinner" (2003). *John Owens: Speeches & Appearances*. 70.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/owenspeech/70>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Agriculture and Natural Resources, Institute of (IANR) at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in John Owens: Speeches & Appearances by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement Dinner  
April 11, 2003  
Nebraska East Union  
John C. Owens  
NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor

What a joy it is to be here tonight to celebrate the achievements of these wonderful new additions to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. It seems as if all of the ~~speech~~ speaking I've done lately has been on the very difficult subject of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources' budget cuts, so troubling to all of us who care about Nebraska. It's a real treat to have this opportunity to instead focus on the highly-pleasant business of recognizing people so deserving of this high honor. I can think of few experiences more gratifying than those in which we get to say a heartfelt "well-done and thank you" to people who make significant contributions to the world around them by the way they live their lives and by the places they choose to put their talents and energies to work.

It's a great pleasure to congratulate Bill Splinter for being this year's esteemed honoree. Thank you, Bill, for all you do to represent agriculture in ways that matter so very much. Let me also applaud the past honorees with us tonight. I thank each of you for all you continue to do to tell agriculture's story in Nebraska and beyond. I also sincerely thank each of you here tonight who already have been named to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement for your

- JERRY ADAMSON  
- MARTIN LEE BRANDT

ongoing support and championing of Nebraska agriculture.

My job keeps me perpetually aware of the need to preserve and to improve Nebraska agriculture, which just happens to be the goal of the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement, and I continually appreciate those of you who work so hard to keep Nebraska agriculture strong and productive." Your determination, your wisdom, and your vision are absolutely vital to us all.

Now it is my great pleasure to introduce to you the newest members of the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. Time limitations prevent me from detailing their many, many accomplishments; however, I feel privileged to provide you even a brief glimpse of all they do and all they have accomplished. This year's new Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement members are:

DEAN  
STEVIE  
WALTER

ASST. V. C.  
ALAN  
MOELER

NOT

\*Cattle Rancher Jerry Adamson of Cody, who has been active in the cattle business for more than 35 years. In 1992 Jerry was named "Nebraska Cattleman of the Year." He is the only Nebraskan to receive the Commercial Producer-of-the-Year award from the Beef Improvement Federation, and he has been awarded both the Outstanding Young Farmer/Rancher award by the Nebraska Jaycees and the Agricultural Achievement Award from the Knights of AK-SAR-BEN. Jerry has hosted judging teams from several universities and always has been eager to help young people interested in livestock production. He has served as a 4-H

brother and his wife, Dale and Sharon Harlan, are with us tonight as we name Neal to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. Neal was active in a wide range of organizations, including the University of Nebraska Alumni Association, the Nebraska Methodist Hospital Foundation, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Nebraska LEAD board, and his church. In 2002 Neal and Lee were <sup>h</sup>onored<sup>d</sup> with the university's most prestigious honor, the Nebraska Builders Award. The Harlans long have been strong supporters of the university and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. We always will remember Neal's enthusiasm for agriculture and his encouragement of both our students and faculty. I am very proud to be the <sup>h</sup>first-occupant<sup>d</sup> of the Neal and Leone Harlan Vice Chancellorship in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

\*Dr. Rodger K. Johnson, Professor of Animal Science in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. During his career as a <sup>h</sup>swine-geneticist<sup>d</sup>, which spans over 30 years, Rodger has been a central contributor and leader in swine performance testing, swine selection methods, and swine crossbreeding programs for <sup>h</sup>commercial-production<sup>d</sup>. He developed a hyperprolific line of pigs released to industry, determined optimum selection strategies to <sup>h</sup>jointly-improve<sup>d</sup> reproduction, growth, and carcass traits in pigs; and designed and implemented national genetic evaluation of terminal and

president of the Banner County Wheatgrower's Association and past director of Region I, Nebraska Cattlemen's Association. In 1997 he received the Outstanding Service Award to Agriculture from the University of Nebraska Panhandle Research and Extension Center in Scottsbluff; in 2000 he received the Certified Angus Beef Award in "recognition and appreciation" of outstanding performance – top 3 volume feeder/CAB accepted cattle.

\*Dr. Dennis Gengenbach of Smithfield is a farmer who did post-doctoral studies at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, before returning to the family farm. This year he is president of the Nebraska Corn Growers, and in 2002 was a member of the U.S. Meat Export Federation Beef Trade Mission to Japan and South Korea, sponsored by the Nebraska Corn Board. He serves on the Rural Ministry Task Force of the Nebraska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and has said he sees his "current commitment" to Nebraska Corn Growers and the Rural Ministry Task Force as "focusing on the crisis in Nebraska agriculture and the need for immediate response." He was invited to participate in a "church-sponsored forum on wealth and poverty in the United States in Chicago last November.

\*The late Neal Harlan, retired CEO of Scoular Grain Company in Omaha. Lee Harlan, their daughter Stephanie, and son-in-law, Frank Skrupa, and Neal's

leader; and in 1994 he was the University of Nebraska Block and Bridle Club's "honoree of the year." He is nationally known as a leading cattle judge, and is a leader in the National Branded Beef Program.

\*Fred D. Bruning of Bruning is a farmer, rancher, businessman, and banker. A LEAD IV class member, he has served on the board of directors for that "key" leadership development organization. Fred helped start the Farmers and Ranchers College that provides "educational opportunities" for farmers and ranchers in South Central Nebraska. He founded and is the current president of the Bruning Community Foundation; on the board of directors of the Nebraska Community Foundation, a member of Agriculture Builders of Nebraska, Nebraska Cattlemen, and many other organizations, "plus" he serves as a Luther League sponsor at Trinity Lutheran Church. He is a past member of the Governor's Ag Advisory Council, and was a Legislative Task Force Member for Structure of Agriculture.

\*Gary Darnall of Harrisburg has lived on the family homestead in Banner County all his life, except for the six years he was away earning a bachelor's and master's degree at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. Farmer, rancher, and feedlot "owner and manager," he currently serves as a Director of the University of Nebraska High Plains Advisory Council, Excel Packing Corporation Advisory Board, and the North Platte Natural Resource District, subdistrict 3. He's past

maternal lines of pigs. In 2002 he received the Gamma Sigma Delta Award of Merit; in 1999 he received the Oklahoma State University Outstanding Animal Science Graduate Alumni Award; and in 1998 he received the National Swine Improvement Association Distinguished Service Award.

*Lee BRANDT*

NOT →

\*Martin L. Leibbrandt of Imperial served as general manager of the Frenchman Valley Farmers Cooperative, Inc., at Imperial from January 1967 until he retired in 1991. Since retirement, the board of directors of the cooperative "twice" has asked him to assume "interim-management" responsibilities. He served on the Nebraska Cooperative Council's Board of Directors for more than 14 years, and was chairman of the board for 12 years. He continues to be active in the "cooperative-community" since his retirement, and he provides consulting services to a number of cooperatives, in addition to interim management. In 2002 Martin was an "inductee" into the Nebraska Cooperative Council's Hall of Fame.

\*Charles "Chuck" Pohlman is dean of the Agriculture and Technology Division at Northeast Community College where he began as an instructor in the agriculture department in 1972. In 1983 he became "dean" of the Agriculture and Technology Division. At Northeast Community College, he has developed and implemented "numerous programs," including the "agriculture farm-and-ranch program, the agribusiness program, the crop production, farm mechanics,

livestock, and veterinary care programs, and an associate of applied science in horticulture degree program. In 1996 he implemented a veterinary tech program, the only community college veterinary technician program in Nebraska. He also has developed and implemented several transfer programs with other colleges in our state. With the help of his family, they established Pohlman Angus, a purebred Angus cow/calf operation. In 2000 he was named the Nebraska Community College System Administrator of the Year.

\*Senator Ed Schrock of Elm Creek is a farmer who also represents the 38<sup>th</sup> legislative district, which includes Clay, Franklin, Gosper, Harlan, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster counties. He is chair of the Natural Resources Committee and serves on the Education Committee and the Committee on Committees. Ed assisted in the formation of the Nebraska Corn Growers Association, and served as president of the association from 1980-82. Among his memberships are the Nebraska Cattlemen's Association, Nebraska Soybean Grower's Association, and the Nebraska Farm Bureau. He has received numerous awards for his service to agriculture; in 2001 he received the American Coalition of Ethanol award, and in 2002 the Agriculture Achievement award and from the Nebraska Corn Board.

\*Ted Wehrbein of Plattsmouth is a farmer known for applying progressive conservation practices. He is a director of the Lower Platte South Natural



Resources District and has served as chair. A graduate of the "first class" of the Nebraska LEAD Program, he received the Public Service to Agriculture Award from the Nebraska Agribusiness Club in 1997. Over the years he has been a director for Farmland Insurance Company, Farmland Industries, a director, and secretary of the Nehawka Farmers Cooperative, as well as director and secretary of Cass County Rural Water District No. 1. He has served as a 4-H leader and "president" of the Cass County 4-H council, and is "charter-president" of the Plattsmouth Optimist Club.

Please join me in applauding this years' additions to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. Thank you.

###

JERRY ADAMSOL —

MARTIN LEE BRANDT —