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Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement Dinner

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Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement Dinner
May 1, 2009
Nebraska East Union
John C. Owens
NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor

It is my pleasure to be with you tonight celebrating the accomplishments of the new^{'s} additions for 2009 to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. I'm delighted to have this opportunity to help recognize these individuals so deserving of their honors. It's a privilege to say, "well done and thank you" to people who make such significant contributions to the world, who live their lives meaningfully in the way they have chosen to put their talents and energies to work.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate this year's esteemed honorees, Dr. Stephen Baenziger and Dr. Dale Flowerday. ~~Dr. Baenziger is E.W. Price Distinguished Professor of Biotechnology, IANR small grains breeder, geneticist, molecular biologist, and mentor to scores of graduate students in the past 20 years. The reputation and knowledge of Dr. Flowerday, professor emeritus and Nebraska agronomist, are known by countless students and adult learners who have benefited from his lifelong expertise and ability to teach.~~

Let me also applaud the past honorees and those already named to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement who are present here tonight. Thank you for your ongoing work and for your strong support of Nebraska agriculture.

The people I am in contact with through my own work keep me perpetually aware of the need to preserve, to support, and to improve Nebraska agriculture, and ^{to} tell

agriculture's story. Like you, I appreciate each person who is at work for Nebraska to keep agriculture strong and productive. Your determination, your wisdom, and your vision are vital to us all.

Now it is my great pleasure to introduce you to the newest members of the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. I am privileged to provide you with some very brief glimpses that reflect just a small part of what all these people do and have accomplished. This year's new Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement members are:

-- Dr. Susan M. Fritz of Crete. Dr. Fritz is the Associate Vice Chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska. Her bachelors, masters, and Ph.D degrees were earned here and she is a "graduate" of the Management Development Program at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. Her university responsibilities have included director of the Nebraska Human Resources Institute, professor and academic department head for the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication, and Associate Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. She also “serves” as the director of International Agricultural Programs for UNL and she is a highly-valued academic program reviewer for the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the largest accrediting body in the United States. Susan has had a tremendous and positive impact on developing Nebraska's human capital, especially in the Study of Leadership through the “positive impacts” of her scholarly and teaching accomplishments. She and her husband

Russell have three children and one grandchild and they operate the family farm near Crete.

-- Tom Hansen of North Platte. State Senator Hansen is involved with the 131-year-old family ranch known as HANSEN 77 which is widely-known as one of the most progressive ranches in Nebraska. In 2006 he was elected to serve District 42 in the Nebraska Legislature and he serves on the Appropriations Committee and the Committee on Committees among other Legislative duties. This College of Agriculture "alumnus" is past president of Nebraska Cattlemen and Tom has held many other state and beef leadership positions. Sen. Hansen and his wife Linda have provided highly-valued input into the university's academic and Extension programs. They are parents to two sons and are grandparents to five grandchildren.

-- Dr. Gary Hergert of Scottsbluff. Dr. Hergert's research and extension education programs in plant and soil nutrition and management, and in limited irrigation techniques during the past 34 years have helped make him a leading authority on these key topics. Dr. Hergert is active in a grant-funded project in the Pumpkin Creek Watershed, where "agronomic concepts" involving no-till and timely water applications are working well in that especially dry part of Nebraska. This past director of the West Central Research and Extension Center also led in the development of the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory. Dr. Hergert and ^{his} wife Doyleene have one son.

-- Dr. Z B Mayo of Lincoln. Since 1972, Dr. Mayo has served as professor of entomology at UNL and he has served as head of the Department of Entomology as well as interim dean and interim associate dean of the Agricultural Research Division. His many accomplishments "include" serving as the major professor for many graduate students and researching corn rootworms and aphids as well as the influence of tillage practices. All of this research was a key part of an integrated pest management program for Nebraska cropping systems. Dr. Mayo's collection of titles include president of the Entomological Society of America, the National Educational Administrator of the Year, and "Distinguished Alumnus" of Texas Tech University. In addition to recently retiring and spending more time with ^{his} wife Lois, Dr. Mayo currently helps coordinate our Institute's international agricultural programs on a part-time basis.

-- Owen Palm of Gering. Mr. Palm formerly had CEO responsibilities for The Western Sugar Company's six sugarbeet processing plants in four states. He now is CEO of 21st Century Holdings, LLC, which includes six John Deere dealerships and 175 employees. He also started The Mercantile farm and ranch stores now in 11 locations with 160 employees. Other accomplishments include rebuilding the Scottsbluff Sugar Factory in time for fall harvest after an explosion caused \$60 million in damage; and the "start-up" of Palm Farming Partnership, a diversified crop, cow-calf, backgrounding "operation" in Sioux County. He and ^{his} wife Karen have two sons.

-- Kennard "Ken" Pohlman of Omaha. Mr. Pohlman and wife Beverley established Midwest Laboratories in Omaha in 1975. ^{THIS} comprehensive laboratory conducts

analytical testing for agriculture, food, and industry services. Mr. Pohlman also owns and operates his Stanton County farm, is active in our LEAD program, and is a former board member of the Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council. This College of Agriculture graduate is a veteran supporter of 4-H and FFA, of exhibitors at the Nebraska State Fair, and the Aksarben 4-H Livestock Exposition. He also is active in the Omaha Agribusiness Club, the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, and the Nebraska State Historical Society. He and Beverley have two children and seven grandchildren.

-- Byron "Bud" Stolzenburg of Crookston. Mr. Stolzenburg has long envisioned opportunities that exist in and around Nebraska's Sandhills. For 20 years this retired extension educator and Extension unit leader for Cherry County helped increase 4-H enrollment and lead development of innovative education programs. These include IANR's highly-successful Nebraska Ranch Practicum and the Beef Home Study Courses, as well as Extension programming related to estate planning, beef nutrition, cattle leasing, computer record-keeping, and more. Bud and wife Jean have two children. Mr. Stolzenburg cites a six-year term on the Commission on Theology and Church Relations as one of his main accomplishments.

Our honorees this evening are involved in many more worthwhile national, state, and local activities and interests than can be described in the brief time we have here tonight. They truly make Nebraska a better place in which to live and work.

Please join me once again in congratulating the 2009 additions to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement.

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