

NCTA Aggies recognize alumni honorees

July 6, 2016

By NCTA News Service

Curtis, Neb. – Aggies from Alaska to Illinois returned to their high school and college alma mater in Nebraska to celebrate more than eight decades of history.

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture alumni reunion drew more than 140 registrants. The largest contingent was the Class of '71 from the University of Nebraska School of Technical Agriculture (UNSTA), with 21 graduates.

High school alumni from the first institution, the Nebraska School of Agriculture, included two graduates of '42 and more than a dozen from the Class of '49 with the University of Nebraska School of Agriculture.

Despite experiencing four name changes and missions of secondary, then post-secondary education, the agricultural campus has always been home for the Curtis Aggies. A time capsule which had been compiled at the college's 50th anniversary in November was officially placed in the brick patio east of Ag Hall during reunion events.

Dave Thorell, KRVN Radio personality and humorous speaker, served as emcee and entertainment for the Saturday banquet. Kim Bowers Mortensen, '83 Vet Tech, is serving her second year as alumni president.

Stan Matzke and his wife, Dorothy, of Lincoln were recognized as the college's "first couple" presiding from 1965-1968 and received Alumni Honorary Lifetime Memberships. Matzke launched UNSTA in 1965 and served as the first superintendent.

Gene Heller, Class of 1973 in Ag, Land and Water, was awarded the Alumni Service Award. The David City alumnus serves on the association's board of directors and is an alumni past president.

Former students and friends of Jo Bek of Curtis surprised the animal science professor with a customized plaque for the NCTA Legacy Wall located in the Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center. Justin Jarecke of Kearney, Class of '95, made the presentation.

Ann Bruntz of Friend, UNSTA Class of '71 Vet Tech, had retired this spring as a development officer with the University of Nebraska Foundation. She was presented a customized NCTA belt buckle for her years of service to NCTA and Nebraska agriculture. Catherine Potter Hauptman, alumni secretary and fellow vet tech alumnae ('2003) thanked Bruntz on behalf of NCTA and the alumni.

Reunion festivities concluded with a Sunday brunch at Aggie Dining on campus. Kim Mortensen, Curtis, said next Aggie Alumni Reunion will be June 24, 2017 in Broken Bow.

#

Writer: Mary Crawford, NCTA News, 308-367-5231, Mcrawford@unl.edu
NCTA.Alumni.weekend.07.06.16 - (photos and cutlines on next pages)



Kim Mortensen presents a plaque to Stan Matzke, Lincoln, joined by Dorothy, at left



Gene Heller, David City, receives the Alumni Service Award from Dan Stehlik



UNSTA Class of 1971

Top row: L-R, Ron Schropfer, Fairmont; Dwayne Novak, Crete; Tom Lashley, McCook; Larry Duden, Ainsworth; Clifford Fuchtman, Creighton; Ron Stevens, Gothenburg; Loyal McFarland, Bloomfield; and Doug Werkmeister, McCook.

Middle row: Rex Hoffman, Henderson; Dick Brader, Glenville; David Bruntz, Friend; Daveta Brader, Glenville; Rod Lockhorn, Sidney; and Ann Ramm Bruntz, Friend.

Front row: Chuck Wrede, O'Neill; Doug Sutor, Pratt, Kansas; Harlow Hill, Wauneta; Roberta Grafel, Culbertson; Jean Heider Orth, Burlington, Colo.; Janet Hafling Krogh, Anchorage, Alaska; and Connie Stevens, Gothenburg.



Justin Jarecke congratulates Jo Bek



Ann Bruntz has a new belt buckle presented by Catherine Hauptman

Photos Credits: (Photos by Crawford/NCTA News)