

THE SOWER ONLINE

**College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR)
Alumni Association**

July 2007

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1. Football Reunion 2007

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Alumni Association will host its 2007 Football Reunion and Silent Auction in conjunction with the Nebraska - Iowa State game on September 29 in Lincoln. Game time has not been set, but the reunion will begin four hours prior to kickoff. You can register for the reunion at <http://casnr.unl.edu/>.

Some tickets remain from our 80-ticket allotment and are available to CASNR Alumni Association members. Annual memberships are \$20 and are open to alumni as well as friends of the College. If you are not a member the reunion is another great reason to join and you can see how easy it is at <http://casnr.unl.edu/>, click “Alumni” on the left menu. Members receive invitations to alumni events, issues of the Sower alumni newsletter and the Class Acts College newsletter. Guests attending with a paid member are not required to hold membership.

There is likely to be something for everyone on the silent auction tables. That event last year generated \$2600 for CASNR student scholarships and provided a wide variety of interesting items for attendees to bid on, from UNL Dairy Store cheese to an Angus beef quarter to a round of golf for four players at the Dismal River Golf Club near Mullen. Two \$1000 scholarships from the last reunion were recently awarded to Rebecca Vetter of Papillion (pre-vet) and Jessica Woods of Omaha (Vet Sci).

2. CASNR Alumni Association Awards to Heuermann, Owens



Keith and Norma Heuermann

The CASNR Alumni Association makes its spring Achievement and Service Awards at the annual CASNR Week Banquet in April. The 2007 Achievement Award was presented to Keith Heuermann of Phillips, Neb., who received a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from this College. Keith was raised on the family farm near Phillips and began working with seed hybrids during his college years. Continuing this work back on the farm, he was soon producing hybrid seed to meet the requests of neighbors. This was the beginning of Prairie Valley Hybrids which is now owned by Novartis. After selling the seed business Keith devoted full-time to his hobby and passion to produce the best popcorn in the world. Today, BKH Popcorn is marketed world-wide, primarily by word of mouth except for presence on the QVC Home Shopping Network and internet.

Keith is a member of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Business Hall of Fame and has been recognized for his leadership and entrepreneurial talents. He has been named Premier Seed Grower by the Nebraska Crop Improvement Association and served as president of the Nebraska Seedsman's Association.



John and Virginia Owens

Dr. John Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Natural Resources, is the recipient of the Association's Service Award which was presented at the banquet. John has been a friend and outstanding supporter of the CASNR Alumni Association and the College.

Under his leadership, the CASNR Alumni Association has grown and resources have been provided to direct continuing development of a viable organization supporting alumni as well as the College. One of many activities John has initiated is the Salute to Graduates, a personalized graduation ceremony held in the East Campus Union and attended by graduates along with their parents, family and friends. To showcase the colorful history of East Campus John had Nebraska Educational Television produce the Ag College Dreams video used in the 'Salute' ceremony.

John has provided support to begin new degree programs in various departments to capture the interest of young people and to prepare them for viable opportunities in many different professions. These developments also serve to enhance the roles and opportunities of the extension and research divisions of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The CASNR Alumni Association is proud to recognize Keith and John in our growing list of honorees.

To see other alumni awards and honorees visit <http://casnr.unl.edu/alumni/alumniawards.htm>.

3. Salute to Graduates Continues Growth

The College's fourth Salute to Graduates ceremony was May 4, 2007 and included both May and August graduates. The new tradition has been well-received by families, graduates and friends including a group of 13 family members who came from California. The first 'Salute' in December of 2005 attracted 41 percent of graduating seniors, the second in May of 2006 attracted 50 percent, the third in December of 2006 attracted 53 percent and the most recent brought out 65 percent.

Each graduate is recognized while they stand with the vice chancellor, the dean, their department head and the CASNR alumni association president. The graduate's written responses to "What are your future plans?" and "What were your greatest achievements in college?" are read aloud by a narrator. Each graduate has had on average five or six family in the audience, which numbered over 420 in May of 2007. Ag College Dreams, a video produced by NET at the request of Vice Chancellor Owens showcasing the rich and colorful history of the College, is shown during the ceremony. A complimentary one year membership in the CASNR Alumni Association is presented.

The ceremony is held Friday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. to allow travel time for families, time that evening to get together for dinner if they want and then be on hand for the Senior Send Off and general commencement exercises the following morning. Academic departments host receptions preceding the ceremony to allow faculty to meet parents.

To date some 1300 family members have visited campus to attend receptions and the 'Salute'. The intent is for 'Salute' to cap a very positive educational experience provided by faculty and staff with a goodbye that cements great memories and a lasting relationship. See 'Salute' individual photos at <http://casnr.unl.edu/alumni/072stgpics.htm>.

4. UNL Rodeo Chapter of Alumni

Planning is underway to explore a Rodeo Chapter of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Alumni Association. Rodeo alumni will find plenty of activity in supporting and being part of both the alumni association and the rodeo.

The UNL Rodeo Association recently hosted a regional college rodeo in Lincoln at the Lancaster Event Center April 20 – 22, with 12 schools from six states competing. Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin join Nebraska in the Great Plains Region. UNL's Tim Baum and Ira Spanel hold the number one and two positions in team roping. The University of Nebraska Rodeo Association has 30 members and competes against colleges in the region on a regular basis. The Association is a member of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association which includes over 3,500 students in 137 schools and universities.

The 50th anniversary rodeo of the UNL Rodeo Association will be April 18 and 19, 2008 in Lincoln. See regional standings at http://www.collegerodeo.com/Rodeos/Regional_Standings.asp?Region=GP.

5. New Degree Programs

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources has three new degree programs providing students with experience and knowledge in growing career fields. Plant Biology, Forensic Science and Food Technology for Companion Animals are the three new degrees being offered this fall.

Plant Biology is an effort between the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, the Plant Science Initiative, the School of Biological Sciences and the School of Natural Resources. It allows students to pursue careers in medicine and health fields, wildlife and natural resources conservation, crop protection and seed industries.

The Forensic Science degree program combines coursework in biochemistry, entomology, soil science and ecology to make up the study of forensic biology and crime scene investigations. This program will prepare graduates to work in forensic laboratory science, state and federal government agencies and insurance.

A new degree program in Food Technology for Companion Animals will be offered this fall and is a joint program between the Departments of Food Science and Technology and Animal Science. This is the first such program in the country to focus on the food component of animal health. Producing food for animals is a large, world-wide business and there is a shortage of trained workers for this industry. It will prepare students for work in research, product development, marketing and quality control of companion animal food products. For more information about this program, visit <http://ianrnews.unl.edu/static/0706290.shtml>.

6. Department News – Biological Systems Engineering

Faculty Awards

Dr. Suat Irmak was the recipient of a Junior Faculty Holling Award for Teaching Excellence for the year 2007. The award and a stipend were presented at a March 6, 2007 recognition ceremony in the East Campus Union.

Dr. Dennis Schulte received the Student Foundation/Builder's Award for Outstanding Academic Advising at the UNL Honors Convocation on April 22, 2007. This campus-wide award recognizes faculty members who have demonstrated outstanding academic advising and who, by their service to UNL, have made a considerable contribution to the educational enrichment of UNL students. Earlier in the year, Dr. Schulte was recognized for the ninth time by the Parents Association and the UNL Teaching Council for his significant "contribution to students" as an advisor.

Dr. Greg Bashford received the 2007 Holling Family Distinguished Teaching/Advising/Mentoring award, which was presented at the Nebraska Engineering Recognition Reception in Othmer Hall on May 4, 2007.

Alumni

Leslie W. Jochens, P.E. was inducted into the Biological Systems Engineering Department's Hall of Fame on April 20, 2007. Les graduated from UNL with a degree in agricultural engineering in 1949. Les began his career in the irrigation industry as a pump expert for a Colorado company. In 1975 he established Western Irrigation Supply House (WISH), a premier irrigation supply center which specializes exclusively in wholesale distribution of quality irrigation equipment, with locations in Nebraska, Florida, Texas, Colorado, and Idaho.

Web site: <http://casnr.unl.edu>

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