

# The Update

Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association

WINTER 2014

## Meet the speaker array for the 2015 NE LEAD Alumni Conference

### The “Era of Techno-Agriculture”

Register now to attend: <http://leadalumni.unl.edu/events/2015AnnualConfAgenda.html>

The “Era of Techno-Agriculture” is built to challenge us to think outside the box similar to what we learned from going through the LEAD program and to prepare us in agriculture for more effective leadership in both our personal and professional lives. In addition, this conference is about continuing to broaden our network within our LEAD family and to swap old stories from our glorious LEAD experiences nationally and internationally. As we have been working on this upcoming LEAD Alumni conference, LEAD 31 would like to extend a challenge to see which class can get the most members present. We look forward to hearing your stories.

*David Bray, LEAD Class XXXI, Omaha, NE*

As an attendee at the 2014 LEAD Alumni Conference last January, I was impressed by the presenters and program hosted by LEAD Class XXX. I encourage all alumni to attend the upcoming 2015 conference as we will be hosting unique speakers that will be traveling great distances to present at our conference. We look forward to reconnecting with past class members and LEAD Alumni. This conference would also be a great opportunity in expanding the LEAD Alumni family by inviting a potential LEAD member. We shouldn't keep this conference as a secret, please share an invitation to the conference with a potential recruit!

*Suzanna Klaasmeyer, LEAD Class XXXI, Hershey, NE*



**Welcome by Dr. Terry Hejny, Director of Nebraska LEAD Program**

Terry Hejny, Director of the Nebraska LEAD Program since September 2007, has a multitude of responsibilities that include Chief Operating Officer and President of the Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council.

**Dr. Todd Peterson, Winfield Technology Innovation Manager**

Todd is the Technology Innovation Manager at Winfield Solutions. His job is to seek out new technologies, trends, product concepts and research ideas that could help our growers meet the needs of future generations while protecting the environment. He works to connect Winfield scientists with leading universities, USDA, and other public and private sector researchers.





**Moe Russell, Russell Consulting Group President**

Moe Russell is the co-founder and President of Russell Consulting Group of Panora, Iowa. He provides consulting services to clients in 19 states and Canada specializing in risk management services, transition planning and feasibility analysis. He grew up on a diversi-

fied grain and livestock farm near Monticello, Iowa and is still involved in production agriculture.

**Chris Barron, President and Director of Operations of Carson and Barron Farms Inc.**

Chris B. Barron is the Director of Operations and President of Carson and Barron Farms, Inc. which is located in Rowley, Iowa, "Northeast Iowa". Over the last 22 years, Chris has developed many decision tools to help producers improve the profitability of their operation. Most notably, he developed "Profit Manager" which is a tool used by hundreds of corn and soybean producers across the Corn Belt.



**Sean Minihan, Partner, Lamson, Dugan and Murray, and Chris Muehlberger of the Environmental Protection Agency**



Sean Minahan is a partner of Lamson, Dugan and Murray and a member of the Litigation Department. Prior to joining Lamson, Dugan and Murray, Mr. Minahan independently contracted with the Iowa State Public Defender's Office in handling juvenile and adult cases for indigent clients. Since joining the firm, Mr. Minahan has represented a broad range of clients in corporate and personal litigation. Mr. Minahan has argued cases in the state and federal courts of Nebraska and Iowa, and has participated in published decisions from the Nebraska and Iowa Supreme Courts. He has a specific interest in representing agricultural related clients and business and is the author of the firm sponsored blog Agricultural Law Guide. Mr. Minahan is admitted to practice in both state and federal court in Nebraska and Iowa.

Chris Muehlberger is an attorney with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) where he serves as Assistant Regional Counsel. There he works primarily on the enforcement of federal environment laws drafting and filing administrative order and correspondence in conjunction with enforcement actions. Chris also consulted with EPA enforcement personnel and prepares enforcement actions for potential administrative hearings.



**Dr. Allen Featherstone; Kansas State University, Agricultural Economics Department Head**

Allen M. Featherstone was appointed at Kansas State in 1986. His primary responsibilities have been teaching and research. As a leading agriculture finance scholar, he has studied land markets, investment decisions, mergers in the financial services industry, the probability of agricultural loan default and loan loss severity, the influence of taxes on farmland, and alternative federal tax systems. His production economics research has investigated issues such as ground water allocation in irrigated crop production, comparison of returns under alternative tillage systems, the costs of risk, interactions of weather soils, and management on corn yields, analysis of the returns to farm equity and assets, and analysis of the optimizing behavior of Kansas farmers, examining the stability of estimates using duality, and examining the application of a new functional forms for estimating production relationships.



**Dr. Kathleen (Kate) Brooks, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Agricultural Economics**

Kate Brooks joined the faculty in the Department of Agricultural Economics at UNL in January 2013. Brooks' interests and experiences span throughout the livestock industry. Brooks' research in large part has

dealt with meat and livestock economics. In particular, she has done work on pork production issues and several issues related to meat and livestock marketing. She has also done work in consumer preference dealing with issues such as animal cloning and fat injected steaks.



**Banquet with Keynote Speaker: Karen Barrett Ross, LEAD 6, Secretary of California Department of Food and Agriculture**

Karen Ross was appointed Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture on January 12, 2011 by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. Secretary Ross has deep leadership experience in agricultural issues nationally, internationally, and in California. Prior to joining CDFA, Secretary Ross was chief of staff for U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, a position she accepted in 2009. Before her time at the United States Department of Agriculture, Secretary Ross served more than thirteen years as President of the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG), based in Sacramento. During that same period she served as the Executive Director of Winegrape Growers of America, a coalition of state winegrower organizations, and as Executive Director of the California Wine Grape Growers Foundation, which sponsors scholarships for the children of vineyard employees.

## **Mark Your Calendars Now!**

### **NE LEAD Alumni 2015 Ag Adventure Tour July 16-18, 2015**

**Details about this 3-day tour will be coming out soon  
Watch for more information in the Spring newsletter**



# Nebraska Leadership Summit

**April 16, 2015**

Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center  
Lincoln, NE

*The best way to predict your future is to create it.*  
~ Abraham Lincoln

co-sponsored by



This inaugural Leadership Summit is a “must do” for our alumni association. Please DO mark your calendar and plan to attend. The slate of speakers are nationally known for their leadership and motivational talks. Please note that this summit is being developed by the entities listed on the save the date card above for the purpose of further education for the alumni of our various leadership programs. We have limited the number of attendees for this summit and registration will be open to alumni members only of our respective organizations. If you have not sent in your membership dues, be sure to do so to be eligible to attend the summit. You will be glad you did! If you need more information, please don’t hesitate to contact either Nancy at [neberle@mainstaycomm.net](mailto:neberle@mainstaycomm.net) or Mark at [mark.holoubek@gmail.com](mailto:mark.holoubek@gmail.com).



## President's Message

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*Mark Holoubek, LEAD VI*

### THE NEW, NEW THING!

My hope is that this letter arrives after a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family and that you are now preparing for the birthday celebration of God's son soon to be upon us!

The end of the year holidays remind me to remember the past and look forward to the future. As I review the recent past of your association, several exciting events come to mind. The most recent class of LEAD Fellows have again coordinated the revised LEAD Alumni Annual Meeting and Seminar in Kearney, NE to be held on January 16-17, 2015. I am very excited to share that the Secretary of Agriculture of the largest agricultural state in America (LEAD VI) will be the keynote speaker this January. Please plan to schedule your LEAD class reunion to coincide with this event! The second class of LEAD Fellows (LEAD II) will be elevated to "Legacy Status" and that will take place at the annual seminar in Kearney. This special recognition for the early LEAD Fellows who, in many ways, helped pave the way for today's

LEAD participants was developed last year and will be awarded on an annual basis to each succeeding class. Congratulations and best wishes to LEAD Class II as they enter the next phase of the LEAD experience. Your LEAD Alumni board has also met to define staffing job descriptions and will plan for the association's future at the annual meeting.

I had the opportunity to be working in the agricultural technology at the turn of the last century including satellite delivery of market data to the farm, satellite NDVI imaging, an agricultural internet portal and a rural wireless broadband company. Interestingly, the new thing, the internet, caused one business to falter and the lack of rural broadband capacity and the expense of data storage at that time stopped the other ventures. My favorite "boss" would often tell me, "Always look for the New, New thing." What he meant was to always look for things that could happen in agriculture that were not yet being talked about. Thus the saying, look for the **"New, New Thing,"** Many times the "new thing" is created from the ability to network with individuals in your field and sometimes from the interaction with those in completely different fields of endeavor. The **"New, New Thing"** for the LEAD Alumni is an exciting opportunity named the **"Nebraska Leadership Summit"**! Your alumni board has approved your association's participation in the Nebraska Leadership Summit next April 16, 2015 to be held at Innovation Campus in Lincoln. The alumni of the five state-wide leadership programs will come together to network with each other for the first time. The registration will be limited to just 300 and will be open to the alumni of the following leadership programs: Nebraska LEAD program, Nebraska Bankers Association Leadership, Nebraska State Chamber Leadership, Nebraska Hospital Leadership and the Nebraska Farm Bureau Leadership program. I am reminded of the saying that organizations are either growing or dying. You can't stay in the same place over time. Consider joining other Nebraska leaders for a day of opportunity that could change your life!

I want to say that it has been a privilege and an honor to have served as your president this past year. Interacting with the quality of LEAD Fellows that span 34 years of our program has been the most impressive and rewarding activity of this past year. Thank you for that opportunity!

## Nancy's Notes



*Nancy Eberle*

Happy Holidays everyone!! With the snow and cold weather of November, it seemed like mid-January already. As I'm writing this article, it's 70 degrees outside – amazing shift, but then we know that will happen on a whim in Nebraska! I'm sure it will shift again soon, but I'm enjoying this weather now.

This is a busy time for our Alumni organization. The annual meeting is just around the corner as you can see from the information included in this newsletter. We are preparing our annual budget, sending out membership requests, deciding who should be chosen from the “many” who fit the criteria for our Outstanding LEAD Alumni recipient this year, working on next year's Ag Adventure Tour and finalizing our itinerary for the China/Hong Kong International Travel Study. We are also working on a “first ever” Leadership Summit to be held next April.

When we were approached by the entities working with the idea of a Leadership Summit, it was a great “fit” for our organization which is based on support of the LEAD program and continuing education and opportunities for our Alumni members. This one day summit will be well worth your time – please note it on your calendar today – April 16, 2015 – Innovation Campus Park in Lincoln.

LEAD Class 31 has been working diligently on creating a great conference for us next month! You should have received a registration form and some information about the conference in the mail recently. Please

join us in Kearney for the fun, fellowship, networking and education they are offering to us with this opportunity.

I sincerely hope that your harvest was bountiful and your holiday season is joyful. See you in January!  
Until next time . . . . . LEAD on . . . . .

### **Opportunity to “Give Back” to NE LEAD Alumni Association**

**As many of you already know, I have asked the Board to start “looking” for someone to take my place as Executive Secretary to the board.**

**At the same time, our newsletter editor indicated she wanted to step down in that position.**

**This is your chance to step up and contribute back to our alumni and to the LEAD program.**

**I have served the board for 20 years and can sincerely say I have loved doing so. Please consider these positions and let me know if you need more information.**

**Don't think that “someone else” will volunteer, we need YOU!**

**. . . . . Nancy Eberle**



## LEAD Alumni Q and A with Leland Poppe



*Leland Poppe, LEAD XIII*

I had kept the LEAD Program on my “to do” list for five years before I felt it was the right time for work and my family. I was primarily interested in the international travel but I found out later that the state seminars were the most beneficial of the LEAD experience.

I was looking for a homecoming date my junior year of high school. I found one two blocks away -- Cathy and I have been married for 30 years. We have two children, Rick and Natalie, that have both taken advantage of the Rural Health Opportunity Program “RHOP” and “KHOP.” It is a program through the Medical Center that encourages medical professionals to return to rural areas. Rick attended UNK, participated in cross country and track and was in the first KHOP class for medical school at UNK. Rick is an M-1 student at UNMC. Natalie is in the RHOP Dental program at Wayne State College. She is a junior, studying biology, and plays soccer for WSC. She will attend UNMC Dental School in Lincoln beginning in 2016. My wife, Cathy and I have farming interests in Grant, Nebraska and Paxton, Nebraska and work mostly with marketing of the commodities. I am Market President

AGRI for Great Western Bank. I manage the North Platte bank and also coordinate specialized agribusiness lending for Great Western Bank throughout Nebraska.

The LEAD experience has motivated me to be involved in various organizations. I am currently Elder at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Treasurer of the Nebraska Water Resources Association, Board Member of Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council (NALC) and LEAD Alumni Representative for LEAD XIII, Sunrise Rotary, Treasurer of the Great Plains Hospital Foundation, and North Platte Ambassador.

There are many items that stand out from my LEAD experience. If I were to mention a few they would be the friendships and stories --- Dr. Paul Foy – his constant jokes and when he was “detained” in Seoul, South Korea for trying to bring a sword into South Korea that he had acquired in Thailand. A few “AHA moments” were (1) The State Water Seminar outlining the pending litigation and compact agreements with Kansas and Colorado. (2) The National Wildlife Federation speaker stating that agriculture is in the minority so get used to it. (3) The Chicago high school principal stating that they save 3-4 lives each summer from drive by shootings by just placing students in summer abroad programs. (4) The Thailand women planting soybeans one seed at a time and enjoying the day. (5) The special pineapple plantation tour in Chiang Mai Thailand hosted by the Rotary club. (6) The South Korean ag representatives refusing to shake hands with the women in our group prior to a long, long meeting.

The Alumni of the LEAD program are a special group. The Alumni are progressive and all want to make their community and state a better place. Being involved with the LEAD Alumni Association provides the opportunity to connect with other LEAD Alumni and reconnect with your LEAD class. I would encourage you to be a part of the organization.

# Nebraska LEAD Class II to be Honored as Our Newest Legacy Class at the NE LEAD Alumni Annual Conference in January



*Pictured at right are the LEAD Class II fellows on their National Travel Study Seminar to Washington D.C. Pictured above are the LEAD II members who attended the LEAD Graduation and dinner event in Lincoln this past March.*

*Class II LEAD Alumni Members will be honored as our newest "Legacy Class" at the annual LEAD Alumni Conference at the YOUNES Center in Kearney in January. A special recognition will be given to the class at the dinner on Friday evening, January 16, 2015.*





## CLASS NOTES



### Lead IV Enjoys a 30-Year Reunion

On Saturday, September 27th, the Lead IV Class met for a tailgate prior to the Huskers vs Illinois game at the home of Dennis and Patty Nun in Lincoln. Of the 29 members of Lead IV there were 12 able to attend this 30-year reunion of the group that held it's first weekend seminar back in 1984. Also in attendance were Allen and Kay Blezek our "fearless leader" during our trip to India, Taiwan and Hong Kong and Terry and Pam Hejny the current program director and spouse.

Class IV fellows had a great time visiting with their classmates and spouses and the quote of the day came from the elder statesman of the class, Dale Wahlgren who said, "We probably shouldn't wait another 30 years to do this again."

Ken Anderson (LEAD 1) was named Farm Broadcaster of the Year by the National Association of Farm Broadcasting. Ken is an ag reporter/news anchor with Brownfield Radio Network. He lives in Lincoln. Presenting Ken with the award was Ann Bryan of Syngenta. Congratulations Ken on a well-deserved award.

Troy McCain (LEAD 20) has accepted the position as the Director of Operations Manager for MARC at Clay Center. Congrats Troy and best wishes in your new position!!

Congratulations also go out to Don Hutchens (LEAD 1). In November, Don received the Service to Agriculture award from the Rural Radio Association. Don was recognized for his outstanding contributions over a long career in serving Agriculture.



*Ann Bryan and Ken Anderson*

## LEAD Alumni Annual Meeting

**When: January 16, 2015 - 5:00 pm**  
**Where: YOUNes Center – Kearney NE**

**Join us for an update of your organization  
and a chance to network with other LEAD Alumni  
Social and dinner following**

# Treasurer's Report

## When Dues Are Due



*Tim Gaff, Executive Treasurer*

If you're like me, this is the time of year we get bombarded with requests for donations or to renew memberships in a variety of organizations. I'm not here to pitch membership in the Nebraska LEAD Alumni – rather, I'm here to let you know that it's time to renew your membership.

Fellow LEAD Alumni have discussed their confusion of when memberships are actually due. This confusion – unfortunately – probably began the day of your graduation from the LEAD Program.

Our fellowships ended with a whirlwind seminar in March capped off with a wonderful banquet. Of course, as we were thinking about family members coming into Lincoln to join us, thinking about having enough time to change our clothes for the banquet, the last few seminar presenters were seeking our membership in their organizations. It can be very confusing!

If you decided to pay your annual dues for the Nebraska LEAD Alumni on that day in March, it might have been natural to think your membership would be good until the following March. Actually, dues for our Association are due at the first of the year for membership for that year. So when a statement is sent to you at this time of the year, you might

think it's early.

To add to the confusion, if we haven't received your dues by March, your class representative on the Alumni Board will send a reminder letter asking for your membership.

If you decided to join the Alumni as a Lifetime Member, you're already covered, and you don't need to worry about any of this.

If you are an Annual Member, you might want to consider Lifetime Membership. Either way, as a member of the NE LEAD Alumni, you will receive a copy of the membership directory – updated every three years. You will also receive our quarterly newsletter and will be able to participate in LEAD Alumni events, such as the Ag Adventure Tour, the Annual LEAD Alumni Conference, various LEAD Alumni social events, and National and International Study Travel Seminars designed by Alumni for Alumni. Your membership is key to the continued support of the Nebraska LEAD Program – financially and in showing its worth through our success.

Okay; maybe I did have to pitch membership a little! Bottom line: annual dues for your NE LEAD Alumni 2015 membership are due at the first of the year. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your time.

Tim Gaff  
Executive Treasurer

# Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association

## 2015 OUTSTANDING LEAD ALUMNI AWARD

### **Award Purpose:**

To provide public recognition of a Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association member who has achieved notable success in using the skills learned through the Nebraska LEAD Program and through other means to become a leader in their chosen field of agriculture.

### **Award Application Criteria:**

1. Applicant MUST BE a current paid member of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association.
2. Applicant must have demonstrated leadership qualities deserving of the award.
3. Nomination documents must be mailed or e-mailed to Nancy Eberle, 520 Road 20, Bradshaw NE 68319 or to [neberle@mainstaycomm.net](mailto:neberle@mainstaycomm.net) by December 20, 2014 and may include the following:
  - a. Resume or listing of applicant's accomplishments based in the judging criteria listed below.
  - b. Letters of support - one from nominator and others associated with the applicant will help solidify the nomination.
  - c. Additional supporting documents and letters may be included.

### **Award Recipient Information:**

1. The Outstanding LEAD Alumni Award will be presented during the Annual LEAD Conference Banquet to be held January 16, 2015 in Kearney.
2. The Outstanding LEAD Alumni Award recipient will receive public recognition and a plaque sponsored by the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association.

### **SUBMISSION DATE – Prior to December 20, 2014**

Nominations may be sent by e-mail to :

Nancy Eberle, Executive Secretary  
[neberle@mainstaycomm.net](mailto:neberle@mainstaycomm.net)

or by snail mail to: Nancy Eberle, 520 Road 20, Bradshaw, NE 68319

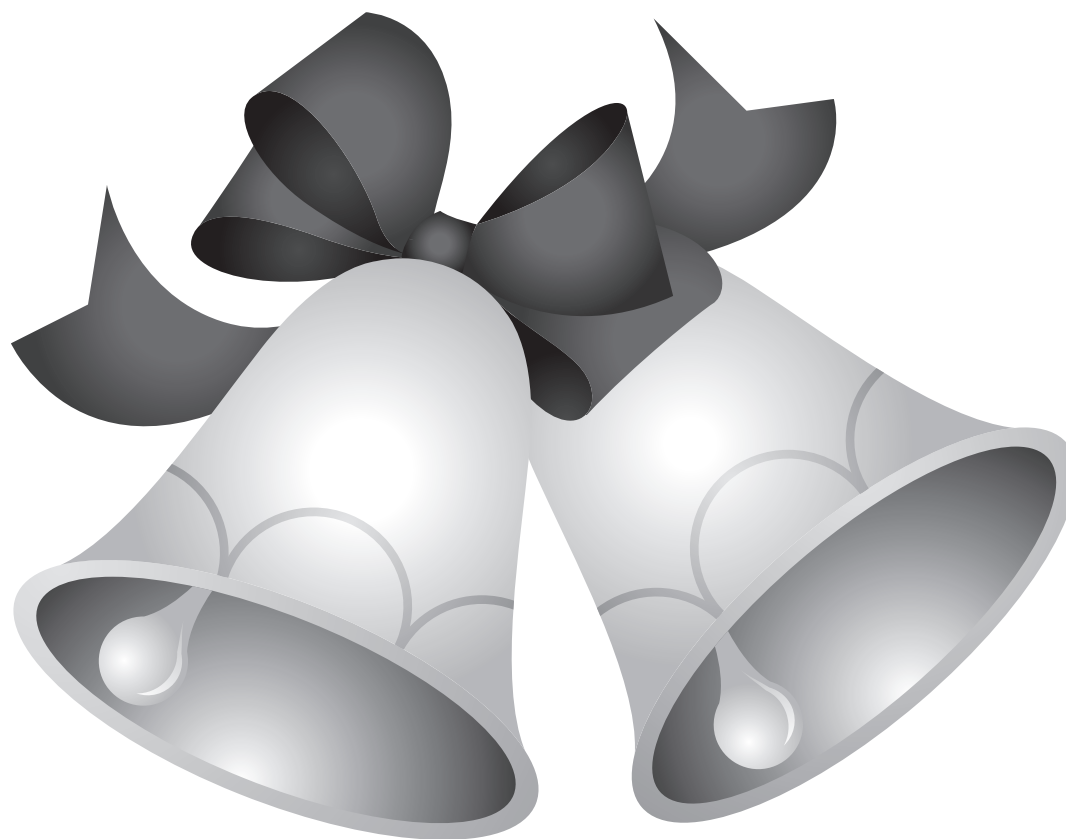


# *The Update*

Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association  
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*Please remember to submit important  
Nebraska LEAD Alumni news to:*

Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association  
Nancy Eberle  
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Bradshaw, NE 68319  
neberle@mainstaycomm.net

## **NETWORK!**

Keep the spirit of the  
Nebraska LEAD  
Program ALIVE!

## ***Update***

Update is the official newsletter of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association. The purpose of the publication is to keep you, a vital part of the LEAD network, linked with fellow alumni!