

# The Update

Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association

WINTER 2021

## LEAD Alumni Board Showcase – Kristi Block



*Kristi Block*

I'd heard of the LEAD program but didn't know much about it when I applied. I was encouraged to apply after starting a position with the Nebraska Grain and Feed Association (NEGFA) as their Executive Vice President (aka an executive director). The board of directors had past experience or knowledge of the program and thought it would be a good career development opportunity. I am very thankful they encouraged me to apply and supported me through the program.

My favorite part of LEAD XXXVII was learning about Nebraska's energy sector and how diverse it really is. I enjoyed touring and learning about our nuclear, hydro, coal, and electrical production. Nebraska's energy industry was a sector I didn't know much about and still have a lot to learn.

Our international seminar was Denmark, Belgium, Germany, and Poland. The fact that the embassies were closed while in Europe (due to a government shut-down while federal funding was stalled) worked out to our benefit. We had some last-minute schedule changes which made for several memorable experiences and tours.

The best part of being a LEAD Alumni has been the connections made. In particular, I'd like to thank my classmates. As a class, we've continued to grow and get together every year since our LEAD graduation. It might only be for a few hours or a whole weekend, but it's been a priority of our class to get together, reconnect, learn more about each other, support each other, explore a part of Nebraska, and learn something new.

I'm a Nebraska native. I grew up in a farming family near Gothenburg and Cozad. I've been professionally employed in the agriculture industry for about six years. For a number of those years, I represented Nebraska's grain elevators, animal feed manufacturers, ethanol plants, and supporting businesses as the director of a state trade association. Most recently, I've been learning a lot about data integration and interoperability to move data between and among software and equipment. In my free time, I enjoy visiting wineries and traveling to new places.

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**~ Happy New Year ~**

*The most important step any Nebraska LEAD Fellow graduate can take is to stay connected to this amazing network of agricultural leaders from across Nebraska. Continue the personal and professional growth that you began by staying in touch with your classmates and those of the other 37 classes to enhance your "LEAD Experience" by becoming a life member or renewing your Nebraska LEAD Alumni Membership today.*

It's time to think about your 2022 membership to the NE LEAD Alumni Association. Below is a form for you to use and return. Join the 680+ members now!

**THE NEBRASKA LEAD ALUMNI 2022 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

*Join the LEAD Network with your Membership*

\_\_\_\_ **\$45 Annual Membership**

\_\_\_\_ **\$450 Lifetime Membership**

Some Benefits of Membership:

- . . . . Membership Directory – Printed every 3 years
- . . . . Quarterly Newsletter
- . . . . Regional events
- . . . . Provides Financial Support to LEAD program
- . . . . Educational Travel Seminars - national, international and Ag tour
- . . . . A link with “Leaders” all across the U.S.

And much more!

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**Yes, I'll join the LEAD network -- Enclosed are my dues for 2022**

\_\_\_\_ **Annual Dues \$45** \_\_\_\_ **Lifetime Dues \$450**    **LEAD Class #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Spouse** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone No.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work or Business No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

We have an electronic payment system on the website. If you'd like to send your membership dues electronically, go to: <http://www.neleadalumni.com/> and complete the information there, or snail mail by January 31 to: Nancy Eberle, Executive Secretary, 520 Road 20, Bradshaw, NE 68319

# Treasurer's Report



*Tim Graff*

Hello, fellow Alumni!

As your Executive Treasurer, I have the privilege of being involved with the Strategic Planning committee. The Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association is preparing to meet the needs of members that span the forty years of LEAD Fellows. There are some exciting changes in the works, and my focus is on seeing that we can fund the programs and activities to meet the needs of the membership.

Of course, your membership dues help to keep the organization alive. We have the benefit of a diverse investment portfolio that earns dividends and interest, so that continues to help provide for our program needs. Organizers of the recent Regional Gatherings have found sponsors to contribute to help keep registration costs low.

Frankly, our largest potential source of funding is our Annual Conference. Each year, a recent graduating class is given the opportunity to use their leadership skills learned in the LEAD Program to plan and

execute the Annual Conference. Our constitution requires an annual meeting of the membership and this gathering has traditionally been coupled with educational and recreational activities for those that attend. Each class works hard to provide a worthwhile conference and your attendance shows that you support their efforts.

The bottom line is that your attendance will help your Alumni Association take that next step forward to provide benefits to the membership and continued financial support to the LEAD Program.

Make plans now to attend our next in person conference. I'll see you there!

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## Join us for our next Regional event in Seward on January 29!!!



*Regional Tailgate, Lincoln, November 6, 2021. A good time was had by all.*



*Enjoying our time together. Dennis Nun (Tailgate coordinator) with guests Leslie and Ken Boswell.*

# President's Message

## Decisions that Define Leadership



*Matt Dolch, LEAD XXXIII.*

Greetings, Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association!

I hope this note finds each of you well as we welcome the 2022 calendar year. Like many of you, it was a busy close to 2021! Our family successfully navigated the holiday season and celebrated the first birthday for our daughter, Carsyn. Santa made his first stop at our house. I am not sure if she liked all her presents but tearing-off the wrapping paper was certainly fun! The simple things in life are often the most rewarding.

As we reflect on the past calendar year, each of us have been faced with numerous decisions that have great impact on our lives. Decisions are challenging because they come with risk and uncertainty which we must be prepared for...but how? What are my priorities for the year ahead? What organizations will I commit my time to? How can I prepare myself to meet my career goals and objectives? Should I spend the evening working or with my family? As leaders we know that each decision we make requires a balance of emotional intelligence, reason, and overall knowledge. Don't forget the emotional

intelligence! This includes self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management. To be at our very best, good judgement and common sense are essential. When emotions dominate our actions, we make mistakes. Emotional intelligence is one of the most important qualities that a leader must possess and one that we had the opportunity to practice during our Nebraska LEAD Program Experience. I don't expect our decision-making opportunities as leaders to shrink or for our decisions to become easier in 2022. Be prepared for your opportunity to lead, you are ready! One of the best decisions that I made was to apply to the Nebraska LEAD Program. I believe in the program whole-heartedly and look forward to the continued work to deliver this program experience to Nebraska agricultural leaders in the generations ahead.

This will be my final message to you as President of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association. I want to sincerely thank each of you for the opportunity to serve our members over the past two years. I appreciate the teamwork of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association Board, including Nancy Eberle (XII), Tim Graff (XX), , Gerald Clausen (I), Nate Blum (XXXVI), Cindy Zimmerman-Jaynes (XXIV), and Nicole Bohuslavsky (XXX-IV). I also want to recognize the hard work of Pat Heyen (XIV) as the Travel Study Coordinator and Mark Suhr (XXXIII) as the Social Media Coordinator. It hasn't been the easiest year to connect and conduct business, but I know that we are a stronger organization for the new opportunities, ideas, and discussions we have experienced together. Again, thank you for contributing your time and talents to the benefit of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association.

The Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association Annual Meeting and Conference will be held on February 4-5, 2022 in Lexington, Nebraska. In addition to the annual meeting, there will be an opportunity for networking and educational workshop experiences hosted by LEAD Class XXXVII. Please register today! Safe travels to each of you.

# Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association

## OUTSTANDING LEAD ALUMNI AWARD

Each of you are aware of someone deserving of this award. We hope you will take a few minutes to write a paragraph or two about the reason the nominee is a great candidate to consider. Previous award winners are listed below.

### **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 Nomination Criteria:**

1. Nominee **MUST BE** a current paid member of the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association.
2. Nominee has demonstrated leadership qualities deserving of the Outstanding LEAD Alumni Award.

**Deadline for nomination documents: January 1, 2022**

Nomination documents must be mailed or e-mailed to:

**Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association  
c/o Nancy Eberle, Executive Secretary  
520 Road 20  
Bradshaw, NE 68319  
neberle@mainstaycomm.net**

**Or E-mailed to:  
matt.dolch@syngenta.com**

3. Nominations (not including past winners) from the previous two years will be included in the current year's selection process.
4. Notification of selection committee results to the nominator will be made two weeks after nomination deadline.

### **Award Recipient Information:**

1. The Outstanding LEAD Alumni Award will be presented during the Annual LEAD Alumni Conference.
2. The Outstanding LEAD Alumni Award recipient will receive public recognition and a plaque sponsored by the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association.

### **Award Winners:**

1991 – Don Hutchens	2000 – Tom Baker	2009 – Jerry Stahr	2021 – Ken Herz
1992 – Larry Hudkins	2001 – Gerald Schmidt	2010 – Steve Kruger	<b>2022 – Your Nominee</b>
1993 – Dennis Baack	2002 – Craig Buescher	2011 – Todd Schroeder	
1994 – Larry Sitzman	2003 – Doug Boisen	2012 - Deb Fischer	
1995 – Gary Bergman	2004 – John Miller	2013 – Dan Duncan	
1996 – Ceclia Grevson	2005 – Fred Meyer	2014 – Lisa Lunz	
1997 – Mike Bauerle	2006 – Nancy Eberle	2015 – Dennis Kahl	
1998 – Kate Sullivan	2007 – Robert Rikli	2016 – Willow Holoubek	
1999 – Mary Pat-Finn Hoag	2008 – Mark Jagels	2017 - Tom Schwarz	
2018 – J.D. Alexander	2019 – Fred Bruning	2020 – Gerald Clausen	



## If you need a New Year's resolution, how about "TRAVEL MORE"! *"Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer"*

Hello Alum!

With harvest complete, and the holidays winding down, would you have some time to browse through the itinerary for our Summer National Travel Seminar to Idaho?

We would love to have you join us for this unique trip through Idaho. We will see and experience so much during our 10 days. We would love to have you join the Alumni for this Travel Study Seminar, August 12-21, 2022.

You can find the full itinerary on the LEAD Alumni Website or contact me directly.

2023 will bring our next International Travel Study Seminar, and we will be traveling March 2023. We plan to announce the international destination soon.

This quote by Steve Glenn of Executive Travel is so very true.

"The biggest mistake people make is putting off traveling until they retire. In my thirty plus years in the travel business, I can't tell you how many times I have heard people tell me that they delayed traveling until they were retired, but when retirement came around their health had failed to the point they could not travel. How sad. That is why I always tell people to travel right now as you never know when your health issues (or those of your spouse) will keep you from traveling. No one's work is so important that you can't take one to two weeks a year to dream big dreams and visit new parts of this great big world."

– Steve Glenn, President, Executive Travel



We would love to have you travel the world with the LEAD Alumni. Come and join us for one of our National or International Travel Study Seminars, you won't be disappointed, and you will be traveling with some of the best, like-minded people around.



Join the Alumni Association by paying annual or lifetime dues so you can travel with the LEAD Alumni. Pat Heyen, Alumni National/International Travel Coordinator. (402) 314-3430

*Pat Heyen, National and International Travel Study Coordinator*

## Nancy's Notes



*Nancy Eberle, Executive Secretary*

Happy New Year!!

I hope that some of you have been able to attend the regional functions being offered last year and now into 2022. These included a dinner in St. Paul, reception at the NE State Fair, a tailgate in Lincoln in November and the next social event being planned for the Seward area. These are fun networking opportunities for not only the area alums, but for any of you who want to attend. We hope to continue and expand these in the future. If anyone is interested in hosting an event, contact me and I'll be happy to help you accomplish that.

We are hoping that many of you plan to join us at our annual meeting. The Board developed a strategic planning committee that has been hard at work this past year coming up with some options for changes within our organization as we move forward. These will be shared with you prior to the February 5, 2022 meeting and discussed and voted on during the annual meeting. Your input and suggestions are very welcome, don't hesitate to contact Matt Dolch, our chair, Gerald Clausen, who chaired the planning committee or myself. We hope to send out a mailing soon to alumni members and follow up with a Zoom meeting to review the plan and the process that went into the final proposal.

I had hoped by now we would have the COVID issues far behind us, but for some reason, it has already followed us into the new year. My wish for all of you is to stay healthy and safe!!

Until next time, LEAD on . . . . .

### **Mark your Calendars!!**

**What: NE LEAD Alumni Association Annual Meeting**

**When: February 5, 2022 in the afternoon following the tours being offered**

**Where: Annual Conference meeting area in Lexington**

**More information regarding the conference will be sent out by  
LEAD Class XXXVII Representatives**

**Please join us!!**

# The Update

Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association  
Nancy Eberle  
520 Road 20  
Bradshaw, NE 68319  
neberle@mainstaycomm.net

Address Service Requested

Non Profit  
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Bradshaw, NE  
Permit No. 6

*You are invited to the*

## Seward Area LEAD Alumni Gathering

*Saturday, January 29, 2022*

*7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.*

### Rue 6

123 South 6th Street  
Seward, Nebraska 68434  
(West of Seward County Courthouse and upstairs)  
Appetizers, Music, Cash Bar  
\$10 per person  
Spouses Welcome

Please RSVP by email or phone before Tuesday, January 25, 2022 to

Stan Mitchell

(LEAD CLASS IX)

sgm\_guitarman@yahoo.com

402-641-3384

Join the LEAD Alumni Facebook page

Connect with us through our website at <http://www.neleadalumni.com>  
our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Leadalumni>  
or on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a164IDsg07Q>

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

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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!