

FFA Hall of Fame adds 8 members

THE Minnesota FFA Association and the Minnesota FFA Alumni Association have announced the Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame Class of 2009. Eight inductees joined 117 members who were inducted into the Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame in the past five years, including the 75 inaugural members in 2004.

“The Hall of Fame is an excellent opportunity to honor the men and women who, over the years, have demonstrated leadership and commitment, not only to the FFA but also to Minnesota’s agricultural industry,” says Derek Mulhern, president of the Minnesota FFA Association.

A committee consisting of FFA mem-

bers, alumni and agricultural educators selected the final inductees.

“We were looking for individuals who have been influential and supportive of Minnesota FFA, and who have demonstrated a high level of service and long-standing commitment to agriculture, agribusiness, and/or education in agriculture,” says Steve Olson, co-

chairman of the Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame Committee.

Inducted during the 80th State FFA Convention last month were:

- Mike Cullen, Minnetonka; director of the Willmar Vocational School (now known as Ridgewater Community College); president of the Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Instructors Association, 1958-59; Willmar High School agriculture instructor and FFA adviser, 1948-61; director of Willmar Vocational Technical Institute (Ridgewater College) 1965-85; People-to-People Tour, led first Minnesota FFA tour to Europe, 1962; Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, key in developing system as switch was made from community colleges to vo-tech institutes to combined colleges.

- Curt Eischens, Minnetonka; board of director for CHS, Cooperative Development Services, Ralph Morris Foundation; chairman, Minnesota Association of Cooperatives; instrumental in CHS sponsorship of FFA Leadership Center and Miracle of Birth Center at the Minnesota State Fair; FFA Foundation donor.

- Ray Erwin, Stillwater; ag educator 1946-1984; editor, *The Ag Man* magazine, 1979-1983; earned 61 teaching aid first-place awards; advised Stillwater FFA to 20 national chapter awards 1962-1981; trained 489 FFA judging teams.

- Jim Hobbs, Dover; ag educator 1969-2004, Dover-Eyota High School; Farm Bureau’s Outstanding Educator 1997; chairman, Eyota Days; member of the Dover-Eyota Schools “Dollars for Scholars” scholarship board.

- Swede Johnson, Willmar; department head at Ridgewater Community College for 20 years; founded West Central Ag Sales organization and sponsored Winter Show, with proceeds going to scholarships; Outstanding Teacher Award, Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators; builds baptism boxes for newly baptized children at his church.

- Kevin Paap, Garden City; president, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation; assists state FFA officers with leadership and professional development; past board member on the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids national board of directors; past state president of the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association; graduate of the first Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership Program; and a policy fellow through Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs, 2002.

- Layton Peters, New Ulm; agricultural educator, National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association Region III; president, Minnesota Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association.

- Lyle Westrom, Crookston; professor, University of Minnesota-Crookston; wrote five college animal-science textbooks; creator of the Sparsely Populated Agricultural Education Project to bring agricultural education to sparsely populated areas without an agricultural education department; taught Egyptian teachers how to put active learning into lesson plans in Cairo, Egypt; Minnesota FFA Alumni Council member.



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