Top Aggies are honored at the 1989 reunion

William Gatheridge
Class of 1939

Bill Gatheridge has devoted much of his time to community and civic affairs. He has been very active, not only as a member but also holding various officer positions. Bill and his wife Irene raised four sons and a foster daughter, have 15 living grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Their first three sons are all graduates of NWSA (The fourth would have, but NWSA was no longer in existence). The eldest grandchild is a graduate of UMC.

Bill was born and raised on a farm near Humbolt and remained on that farm for 67 continuous years.

“I feel that this experience taught me a good deal about life.”

After graduating from the Advanced class, he purchased his first quarter section of land from his father. When Bill retired from active farming one of his sons took over the farming operation.

It was a desire to farm that first prompted Bill to enroll at the NWSA.

“I feel that this experience taught me a good deal about life. To put about 400 of us together in a dormitory setting and mold us into a group who could live, eat, study, and play together was a feat in itself. As I look back, I marvel that it could be done.”

Arthur Brandli
Class of 1959

Art Brandli is proud of the fact that he has three diplomas from the University of Minnesota. One of those is from the Northwest School of Agriculture. He says that the NWSA helped to give him the independence that he needed to succeed.

Art was born in Worland and carried on a Brandli family tradition of attending the NWSA. He has a bachelor of electrical engineering and master of business administration from the University of Minnesota.

While working for Control Data he would watch the groundskeepers from high in his corporate office. He knew he’d rather be outside and his own boss, so he made plans to buy a farm adjoining his father’s south of Worland.

In 1973, he purchased his parents’ farm and settled down to raise Herefords and small grains. Over the years, the farming activities changed a bit by buying another adjoining farm, selling the beef cattle, and changing the crop mixture to include grass seed and sunflowers.

Art was chosen King Agassiz of the Red River Valley Winter Shows and his family was selected Roseau County’s Outstanding Farm Family.

Art says the NWSA helped give him independence

Art and his wife Nancy have four children. Their oldest daughter is continuing the University traditions by attending the Duluth campus. The other three children are still at home.

Orvis Engelstad
Class of 1944

Orvis Engelstad was active professionally, publishing over 45 research papers and book chapters. He was elected Fellow to both the American Society of Agronomy and the Soil Science Society of America. While most of his activities centered in the United States, he made a number of trips to developing countries around the world to provide assistance in fertilizer use and biomass programs.

This Top Aggie was active professionally, publishing over 45 research papers and book chapters. He was elected Fellow to both the American Society of Agronomy and the Soil Science Society of America. While most of his activities centered in the United States, he made a number of trips to developing countries around the world to provide assistance in fertilizer use and biomass programs.

Orvis says his chief benefit from the NWSA was the wisdom imparted by the teachers

Orvis Engelstad was born and raised on a farm near Fertile. He received his bachelor of science and master of science degrees in soil science from the University of Minnesota.

After two years with Minnesota Extension Service at Warren, he continued his education at Iowa State University in Ames where he received his Ph.D. in soil science. He was research agronomist for 18 years at the National Fertilizer Development Center of the Tennessee Valley Authority. He then moved into research administration, retiring in 1988 as director of the division of research.

In 1952 Orvis married Marlys Sargent, a 1949 NWSA graduate, of Crookston. The Engelstads have three children.

While Orvis learned many skills at the Northwest School, he says his chief benefit was the wisdom imparted by the teachers.

Dorothy Billberg
Class of 1939

It was in a small rural school south of Alvarado that Dorothy Larson began her teaching career. She spent two years there and two more years in a rural school north of Alvarado before moving to Roseau where she spent the next 38 years.

“Teaching never seemed like a job, it was just something I really like to do,” Dorothy said.

Dorothy’s room was filled with many colorful art projects. She believed that if a teacher enjoys art work, the pupils will also.

This year’s Top Aggie was born and raised on a farm near Argyle. Her brother was the first family member to attend the NWSA. After that, Dorothy and her youngest sister also attended the NWSA.

Dorothy recalls the good times spent at the A.C. At the time she thought the rules were to hard to conform to, but she now realizes how they have helped to form a special pattern in her life.

“Living at the A.C. gave us such a well-rounded curriculum. Our classes were constructive and all the extra-curricular activities helped to prepare me for my teaching career,” said Dorothy.

The A.C. gave Dorothy a well-rounded curriculum.

In 1941, Dorothy married Ellwood Billberg whom she met at the A.C. three years before. Dorothy’s granddaughter Dea Marie attended college at UMC this past year and was one of the first students to receive the Northwest School Heritage Scholarship.
2 alumni get Torch-Shield Award

Two Northwest School of Agriculture alumni of the class of 1945 were recipients of the Torch and Shield Award. Pauline Purath of Red Lake Falls and Gerhard Ross of Fisher were recognized recently at the annual recognition banquet.

Besides the six Torch and Shield recipients, new members of the University of Minnesota Presidents Club, the Corporate Presidents Club, Associates 1000, and Corporate Associates Club were also recognized.

Allan Dragseth, graduate of the Northwest School of Agriculture and Presidents Club member was master of ceremonies for the evening. Bringing greetings from the University of Minnesota was Leonard Kuhl, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. Robert Hanle, director of development, University of Minnesota Foundation, made the presentations for Presidents Club and Associates Club.

Alumni office becomes part of external relations

Allan Larson, former president, chief executive officer, and board chairman for Northstar Holding Incorporated of Grand Forks, is the new director of external relations at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. The new office of external relations merges together development, alumni, grant writing, and university relations.

Along with Allan and some internal restructuring came Barbara Weiler, director of university relations. One of her new duties is to edit the AGGIE.

Blake Crosby will continue with alumni responsibilities, but he has also been named the chief development officer for the Crookston campus.

Sam Bigger joined the Northwest Experiment Station on a part-time basis as assistant director of development. Sam is well known in northwest Minnesota having been the West Polk County Extension Director for 23 years. He has also been involved in the Red River Valley Winter Shows, Greenbush Sheep Days, Beef Cattlemen's Institute, Sugarbeet Growers Institute, as well as many other local, state, and national organizations.

Also new to the staff is Julie Hamre who replaces Maureen Emerson as secretary and receptionist.

With all of these changes, our commitment to serve the alumni and friends of the NWSA remains as strong as ever.

The external relations staff is here to work with you and for you. Stop in the White House Alumni Center for a cup of coffee.

A quarterly publication by the Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni Association. Published and printed in Crookston, Minnesota.

Barbara Weiler, Aggie Editor
Allan Larson, Director of External Relations
R. Blake Crosby, Chief Development Officer
Ardis Thompson, Julie Hamre, support staff

1989-90 Alumni Association Officers:
Paul Proulx, '46, President
Darwin Ferrier, '42, Vice President
Pauline Finkenzibler Purath, '45, Secretary
Donald Mosbeck, '50
James O. Olson, '55
Allen St. Germain, '56
Ardis Overgaard Sears, '51
Glen Torkelson '48
Marilyn Vesledahl Stromstad, '49
Tillie Gebhardt retires after 47 years as staff secretary

"There once was a girl named Mathilda, who thought that her name was quite silly. I'm sure that you all must have met her, but you know her only as Tillie."

And so began the NWSA reunion tribute to Tillie (Paulson) Gebhardt. After 47 years as secretary to the Northwest Experiment Station, and the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC), she retired this year.

It was 47 years ago that Tillie, who had just returned from the Minnesota State Fair to her home in Thief River Falls, saw an ad in the local paper for a secretary at the Northwest School. She wrote out her application, hopped on her bike, and mailed her envelope to the station.

A few days later an official looking car drove into Tillie's yard. It was Tom McCall, then superintendent of the station. He wanted her to come to Crookston to try out the new job for two weeks.

The next day she rode the bus to Crookston's Wayne Hotel where she was met and driven to the campus. She worked that afternoon, but felt like she was in a foreign world with names such as Danham, Pitkey, Kiser, Piske, Pilghoetl, and others. She was homesick. Instead of staying two weeks, she took the bus home that evening. But her father had other ideas. He drove her back to the campus the next Monday, and "Tillie" has been a staff secretary since that time.

"Tillie recalls the first days on campus with one mimeograph, one dito machine, and the switchboard all in her office. She used a manual typewriter, remembers many splinters from the wooden desk and chairs, and strained to see with the light-bulb lighting."

Not only did Tillie's work include all the secretarial work for the Northwest School instructors and for the research staff at the Northwest Experiment Station, but she was also in charge of the campus post office, sorting the mail and placing it in the 400 mailboxes assigned to staff and students.

When UMC began in 1966 she became secretary to the registrar, Richard Christenson. Although she has worked for several other people, she began her UMC work with Christenson, and for the past year has worked for him again. Her other responsibilities included secretarial work for the vice chancellor of student affairs. She was also Veterans' coordinator.

Tillie wasn't content to just do her secretarial work. She was instrumental in organizing the UMC Veterans Club and in forming the UMC Secretaries Club.

She takes her work seriously, and wonders who will take over her veterans' work now that she is retired.

Her activities were not limited to the campus. She was treasurer of the women's division of the Red River Valley Winter Shows and is presently chairperson of its Senior Citizens Committee. She is publicity director for the Crookston Women's Bowling Association and adjutant-treasurer of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. She has been president of the Crookston Pioneer Days Association and chairperson of the refreshments committee which served meals to the participating bands. She worked with Camp Fire Girls and Bluebirds, served on the Euclid School Board and was the first president of Euclid's PTA. She has been state commander for the Minnesota Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, and is a member of the advisory board of the "Better Living Club," at First American National Bank of Crookston.

In 1983 she received the distinguished Torch and Shield Award for Outstanding Service to UMC, in 1976 the "Top Aggie" Award from the Northwest School Alumni Association; and she has been recognized several times for her service to the UMC Veterans Club.

She met Henry (Butch) Gebhardt when he was on furlough during World War II, and six months later they were married. They adopted a daughter, Ardis, a few years later. Henry is retired, but works part-time at Salem Motors.

Her second love is bowling. "We bought our home on Hoven Lane because it was right behind the bowling alley," she said.

A letter from Tillie:

I would like to thank the Northwest School of Alumni for the recognition given to me during the NWSA Reunion Banquet at the time of my retirement. Thanks, too, for the beautiful Northwest School china cup and luncheon plate.

Tillie Gebhardt enjoyed her retirement cake presented by Blake Crosby.

Also, thank you for the beautiful corsage. The decorated cake was most delicious and was enjoyed by the alumni at the dance. Butch, Ardis, and I also thank the alumni for the delicious dinner we enjoyed and for a most memorable evening.

Tillie Gebhardt

FORMER NWSA TEACHERS — Several former NWSA teachers attending the reunion including, left to right, Herschel H. Lysaker of Crookston, instructor and athletic director 1944-68; Mrs. Herschel (Jeanette Peterson) Lysaker of Crookston, instructor 1945-48; Mrs. Marion (Parbst) Serar of Ada, home economics instructor 1954-68; Mrs. Evelyn (Bierbaum) Peterson of McAllen, Texas, Home Economics Instructor 1953-58 and 1929 NWSA graduate; Mrs. E.N. (Bertha) Reiersgard of Crookston, registrar from 1944-68; E.C. (Gene) Miller of Crookston, ag engineering instructor 1954-68.
1924 — Members of the NWSA class of 1924 include, left to right: Andrew Wardsberg and Albert Kopecky.


1939 — Members of the NWSA class of 1939 include, sitting, left to right: Edith Ramberg Nabben, Dorothy Hanson Bender, Edith Peterson Cornelius, Eleanor Johnston Wittman, Doris Peterson, Glendora Kostue Knutson, Dorothy Larson Billberg, Dorothy Kiner Moland. Middle row, William Gatheridge, Donald LaPlante, Elwood Gustafson, Dean Younggren, Harlen Ellinger, Leonard Hildebrand, Donald Forfang, Gerhard Gandrud, Ralph Hvidsten, Leona Shimak Anderson.

1944 — Members of the NWSA class of 1944 include: Nesland Broiland, Florence Urbaniak Kuznia, Eleace Przekwas Swenson, Clara Stromstad Johnson, Lou Engelstad, Larry Breen, Emmanuel Dahlsad, Gerald Krueger, Calmer Johnson, Glen Holquist and Ke modson, Donald Filipi.

1954 — Members of the NWSA class of 1954 include, Bruce Kramer, J. David Viker, Lorraine Zipoy Love, Mary Benson Wagar, Irene Anderson, Wayne Mosher, Wendell Owens and Grant Satre.

1959 — Members of the NWSA class of 1959 include: David Schreiner, Vicki Kosmatka Schreiner, Marily Sheldon and Terry Dahl. Back row, Loren Knutson, Phillip Grage, Lynn Larson and Anton Kraft.
1934 — Members of the NWSA class of 1934 include, front row, left to right: Lois Sargent Smith, Helen Krogstad Clementson, Helen Carlson Lee, Margret Lerud Garr, Fern Field Christopherson. Back row, Ralph Sheldon, Gail Rowley, Frederick Engeland, Jerome Molacek, Ralph Risbrudt and Paul Billberg.


Ella Strand retires after two decades

After 20 years of setting the fashion trend for Crookston, Ella Strand is retiring from her work as assistant professor of fashion merchandising in the business division.

Ella began UMC's fashion merchandising program 20 years ago and since then there have been about 230 graduates from the program. For Ella the highlight of her career was working with all of the students and building a strong and successful program.

James McBee appointed chairman

James McBee, Jr., has been appointed chairperson of UMC's agriculture division. He replaces Gary McVey, who was chairperson of the division since 1974, and David Hoff, who was acting chairperson during the past academic year. McVey is heading a commercial vegetable production grant and teaching part-time in the agriculture division. Hoff has returned to his teaching position in the division.

McBee has held several key administrative positions including executive dean (president) of Potomac State College of West Virginia University and vice chancellor for administration and finance at the University of Massachusetts. Most recently the new division chairperson was professor of food/animal science of West Virginia University.

He received his doctor of philosophy degree in 1959 in food science from the University of Missouri. His master of science (1956) and bachelor of science (1952) degrees are in animal science from West Virginia University.

Allan Larson named director of external relations at UMC

A Grand Forks man has been hired for the new position of director of external relations at UMC. Allan Larson, former president, chief executive officer and board chairman for Northstar Holding Inc., has assumed the new position.

Larson received his doctorate from the University of North Dakota in 1970 in business education. His master of science degree in 1963 is also in business education from UND, and his bachelor of science degree in 1955 from Mayville State College in physical education with a minor in business education.

The new office of external relations merges together development, alumni, grant writing, and university relations. Larson brings to the campus a background in education and business. He taught high school in North Dakota and California. He taught at Oregon State University and then went to Southwest State University in Marshall as chairperson of the business education department. His last two years at Southwest State were as director (dean) of the College of Science and Mathematics, Business and Public Affairs and Technology and Communications.

Larson most recently was involved with Northstar Enterprises, Inc. and Northstar Holding, Inc., where he was president, CEO and board chairman of both.

He was a member of North Dakota Governor George Sinner's Trade Missions to Taiwan and Korea in 1986, and most recently was a member of the U.S. Department of Commerce for the North Dakota District Export Council. He was selected for "Who's Who in American Executives" in 1989.

RECOGNITION FOR PAST SERVICE — Outgoing NWSC president Richard Widseth, class of 1949 from Crookston, left, and longtime board member George Schultz, class of 1931 from Fergus Falls, were recently recognized for their past service.

Ella Strand
The Heritage Fund is growing

The NSWA Board of Directors created a permanent endowment fund called the NSWA HERITAGE FUND. This endowment fund, which is under the direction of the NSWA Alumni Board of Directors, uses only the interest income to support such activities as: scholarships for the AGGIE descendants; maintaining the White House Alumni Center and NSWA archives; and funding alumni activities (like class reunions and the AGGIE newsletter). The Board has set an ambitious goal of $80,000 by the summer of 1989 which marks the 80th anniversary of the NSWA Alumni Association.

Special thanks to the following NSWA friends who contributed $13,524.57 to the NSWA Heritage Fund during 1988-89.

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Class of '28

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Terry Stadum '60
Robert Stanislawski '58
Doris (Clow) Stahl '42
* John Stanko '36
Isabel (Grefembovski) Sten '47
Roy Stolar, Jr. '47
* Don W. Strickler '52
* William H. Strickler '30
Allan J. Stromstrom '63
John Stromstrom '33
Raymond Stromstrom '47
Walter & Charlene (Walters) Stromstrom
Donna (Miller) Swan '35
Heinri Wissmann '41
Beatie G. Swenson '59
Richard Swenson '53
Hugh Swift Jr. '62
Rev. Gordon Syversen '54
* Alan Szczeniowski '58
Harry Tangen '35
Phyllis (Saxman) Thayne '39
Frank Thompson '58
Vilma (Zak) Thompson '52
Wallace Thompson '50
Nelma Thorsdottir '44
Dennis V. Thorson '53
Gordon Thoren '46
Gene Tiedemann '67
Eugene Timmer '61
Lillie Tonning '39
Glen Torkelson '48
Bert Tolleson '43
Vera Ummes '30
L. L. Col. Arian F. Van Dellen '68
Charles Vind '48
Yvonne vonasek '58
Selma Waldal '30
Daniel Wallace '65
Vincent Wallenberg '44
Edson Washburn '34
Harold Walters '26 (in memory)
by Caroline Walters
Morris Webster '45
Rodney '49 & Jean '51 (Anderson)
Webster
Lillian (Jensen) Weadell '42
Laurieane (Winkler) Welle '49
James Wells '33
Charles T. Whalen '46
Daniel Whalen '45
Gladys (Quailey) White '34
Clarence Widner '34
* Richard D. Widseth '49

Heritage Fund Roll Call

Class of 1949 $797.00
Class of 1946 845.00
Class of 1939 845.00
Class of 1945 583.00
Class of 1937 565.00
Class of 1928 427.00
Class of 1948 378.00
Class of 1937 375.00
Class of 1942 357.00
Class of 1936 355.00
Class of 1956 350.00
Class of 1930 330.00
Class of 1947 330.00
Class of 1935 320.00
Class of 1950 315.00
Class of 1940 310.00
Class of 1938 305.00
Class of 1944 289.00
Class of 1933 286.50
Class of 1961 285.00
Class of 1941 275.00
Class of 1954 270.00
Class of 1929 269.00
Class of 1932 265.00
Class of 1931 253.00
Class of 1933 255.00
Class of 1934 245.00
Class of 1932 235.00
Class of 1935 227.00

In Memorium

DECEASED
1947 - DONALD KROULIK (Advanced Year), White Bear Lake (formerly of Stephen, MN), July 10, 1989
1927 - JAMES A. BROWN, Warroad, May 18, 1989
1929 - GORDON ELLINGER, Crookston, May 2, 1989
1914 - ROBERT THORSSON, Fosston, September 15, 1989
1925 - ESTHER (SAMBON) DEWAR, Fosston, September 2, 1989
1914 - RICHARD SAMUELSON, Crookston, June 7, 1989
1913 - ALFRED HVIDSTEN, Stephen, September 7, 1989
1925 - ALICIA (HOPPE) JURENCH, Crookston, September 3, 1989
1942 - EARL HVIDSTEN, Stephen, September 16, 1989 - Strong and loyal supporter who was a member of the UMC President's Club and President of the Northwest Educational Improvement Association.
1955 - SPENCER LARSON, SR., Euclid, March 20, 1989
1955 - CLARA ANDERSON (Mrs. Andy Anderson and mother of Wayne Anderson), Crookston, July 12, 1989
1955 - RUBEN J. HALVORSON (Registar from 1941 to 1944), Roseau, May 22, 1989

Henry Woitzeil '61
Paul Woitzeil '63
Arnold Wolden '31
Dean L. Younggren '39
Harley Younggren '45
Larry Younggren '49
Bennie Youngquist, Administration
Robert D. Yuergens '63
Sophia (Hooper) Zimbrick '29
* Century Council Members ($100 gift or above)