

## ORVAL KOHLS - 2012 MGFA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT



Orval Kohls - Orval began his career in the grain business in October 1969 at Danube Farmers Elevator Co. They had just built a 300,000 bushel corn elevator with a 2000 bushel per hour dryer, which was top of the line for 1969. The expansion at the elevator was a great move for the elevator, its patrons and the community as a whole, in terms of increased economic activity. Orval managed the Danube co-op until the spring of 1983. The elevator was very successful at handling grain, feed, seed and fertilizer. While working in Danube, Orval served on the volunteer fire department in a variety of capacities for 12 years. He was also on the Danube City Council for 5 years and served on the St. Mathews Lutheran board of directors for 4 years.

Orval moved to Wheaton in April 1983 to manage Wheaton Dumont Co-op Elevator, which he managed until his retirement in December 2006. During the 23 years at Wheaton, there were many changes. The feed mill operation was closed, livestock was on decline and additional efforts were made to expand their role in the grain business. They purchased 2 fertilizer plants in Dumont and built a new fertilizer plant in Wheaton with bulk storage capacity. The seed business was growing so they expanded and added bulk seed bins. Tenney was located on the Canadian Pacific rail line and offered the best opportunity for the co-op to expand its rail capacity. Their first expansion allowed them to load 10 cars at a time. Over time, demand grew for additional storage and larger rail loading capacity. They added rail siding to allow loading 25 cars, then 50 at a time and finally to the 100 car unit train, which offered the best freight rates offered by the railroad. There was a new elevator built at Tenney, to accommodate the faster loading that the railroad required for corn and soybean shuttles. They built a new elevator at Dumont for storage, to hold grain until it was needed to help fill a shuttle in Tenney. In his tenure, he was also instrumental in purchasing the elevator in Campbell and one in Lamars ND, to be a part of Wheaton-Dumont Co-op elev. While at Wheaton, Orval was a very active member of the Chamber of Commerce and served on the board of directors of St. John's Lutheran Church for 6 years.



Orval served as a director on Board of the Northwest Agri-Dealers Association and served as its president from 2002-2004. Orval was very actively involved in the merger between Northwest Agri-Dealers and the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association in 2004. Orval then served on the MGFA board from 2004-2006. Since retiring from the grain elevator business, Orval has been a crop adjuster for RCIS out of Anoka MN. for the past 3 years.

Orval and his wife Gayle were married in 1968. They had 3 sons - Barry, Brad and Brent. They lost Barry in 2002 as a result of a beet truck accident. They have 8 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild. His son Brad is the grain department manager at South Central Grain and Energy while Brent and his wife Jen are in a family farming operation near Clifford, ND.

The Minnesota Grain and Feed Association congratulates Orval Kohls for his many achievements in the communities in which he resided, as well as leadership and achievements over a 37 year career in the grain business.

