

## 1988 Iowa Master Farm Homemakers Guild Inductees

### Anita Freesmeier - IMFH Class of 1988

#### Lee County

Anita and her husband, Walter, have worked side-by-side for the past 35 years as owner-operators of a 500-acre farm near Fort Madison. Now with their son Brad they raise corn, soybeans, and alfalfa, have an 80-head grade A dairy cowherd, and sell about 1500 hogs annually. Anita keeps all the books and records for the farm and dairy operation. She also tests milk for antibiotics in their herd and others in the community.

To stay abreast of the times Anita has been attending Southeastern Community College to update her bookkeeping skills and to become more adept at running the farm and dairy computer programs.

Anita has the ability to cope in adverse situations. When Walter had a heart attack at an early age, she had to lead their family and continue the farming operation while he was convalescing.

To help promote their dairy products Anita and Walter have served on various committees of the American Dairy Association. Walter is a past president of Iowa Dairy Association, past treasurer of Midland Dairy Association, and director of National Milk Producers.

They help with dairy promotion on Ag Day. Walter is also director of Prairie Farms Dairy, the co-op that buys their milk. Anita has organized a booth to display and promote dairy products during Ag Day. She heads the dairy commodity group committee that serves suppers at the county fair.

Anita is an active member of St. Mary's Church in West Point and has served in many areas.

Anita has held executive positions in the American Legion Auxiliary. Politically her involvement includes working on the central committee and being a delegate to state convention.

As a volunteer for Youth for Understanding International Exchange since 1980, Anita has promoted the exchange of cultures between Lee County and a variety of countries throughout the world. The family hosted an exchange student from Brazil.

Anita has been on the Iowa State University county advisory council and planning committee and worked with 4-H programs.

Implementing the Vial-of-Life Programs in Lee County was another of Anita's projects.

Anita does volunteer work for the Red Cross and is on the social welfare board. She gardens and cares for a large lawn. Last year she received Lee County Farm Bureau's homemaker award.

The Freesmeiers have four children: Lois Long of Denver, Brad of Fort Madison, Lori of New York City, and Joe of Omaha, Nebraska.

### Frances Hall - IMFH Class of 1988

#### Poweshiek County

The idea of restoring and preserving a rural school and a log cabin lay for a year in the thoughts of Frances Hall of Grinnell. In June 1987, Frances gathered some like-interested persons and the project was underway.

The Poweshiek County Fair Board accepted her plan to move the Malcom No. 6 rural school building to the fairgrounds. Restoration of the school building proceeds because of her enthusiasm. Her plan for this future Heritage Park is shaping up. Descendants of the community will know how "it used to be".

Frances and her husband, Norman, farm 640 acres. They raise mostly com and soybeans with some oats and hay. They also have hogs and beef cows. Until recently Frances helped with the livestock and had a large laying flock. She gardens and cares for a large lawn.

Not only has Frances been a 4-H club leader for 25 years, but she has also served on the county 4-H youth committee. For 18 years she has been county fair superintendent for 4-H. She has been a 4-H judge at county 4-H club achievement shows and has helped organize three 4-H clubs. Frances was named both an honorary county and state 4-H member.

Each year Frances starts a county fair project and sees it through. Vast improvement has been made throughout the years that she has been involved with the fair board.

For 15 years, Frances served as treasurer of the Poweshiek County Fair Board. She is presently vice president of the board. Frances was instrumental in beginning the landscape work at the fair. She has planted and now cares for the flower beds and trees at the new fairgrounds.

As a member of the Poweshiek County Cattle Women Frances has been the primary force in Ag Day and Farm-City Week activities. She was a creator and organizer of the Country Breakfast served in cooperation with area restaurants for observance of Ag Day for the past 3 years.

As education chairman, Frances has presented programs for 4-H clubs and schools. She has helped with store promotions. In 1985 she was honored with the county CowGal award and later the district award.

Frances has a teaching degree from the University of Northern Iowa. She is a member of the Grinnell Hospital Auxiliary and operates the gift shop twice a month. Frances is also a member of the Church of Christ in Brooklyn. She and Norman have been youth sponsors. Frances has taught Sunday school and Bible school for 30 years. She has held every office in the women's organization and has served in other areas.

As a member of Farm Bureau Frances has twice served as women's chairman, earning gold star recognition. She has chaired such committees as consumer education, political involvement, scholarship programs, legislative, public relations, and state projects.

The Labor Day rest stop is another project Frances helped organize. This activity provides a unique opportunity for Iowa farmers to share their way of life with the state and its rich agricultural heritage. Also, Frances works on a country garden project that recently enhanced the grounds around the new 4-H facility.

Norman has held numerous offices in the church and Farm Bureau. Besides farming he sells real estate and seed com and soybeans. He is a member of the county soybean, cattle, and pork organizations.

The Halls have two children: Dennis serves as campus minister at the University of Iowa. Suzanne, is studying nursing at Grandview College and lives in Pleasant Hill.

## Johnson County

Joanne Hemingway's first commitment is to her family. However, she understands the family's well being depends on more than providing the warmth of home. She gives an abundance of time to community leadership as well.

As a dedicated copartner, with her husband, Keith, in the Hemingway agricultural enterprise near Iowa City. Joanne extends the hospitality of the farm to visitors from around the world. They come through the People-to-People program, the International Writers' Workshop of the University of Iowa, and personal contacts made by members of the Hemingway family.

The Hemingways operate 1500 acres. They raise grain and produce pork and beef. They have their own elevator and grain storage. Keith has twice been named state champion Master Corn Grower and has been recognized as a Master Pork Producer.

The Hemingways' home was built in 1876 by Keith's great-grandparents. It has been home for several family generations. To celebrate the 100th birthday of the house in 1976, Joanne organized and hosted a celebration for all of the great-grandparents' descendants. An even greater undertaking was an 80-page booklet describing a complete family history, genealogy, and antiques.

As a member of two Questers groups, Joanne has held several offices. Currently she is state corresponding secretary. She has been influential in fundraising for the Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch.

Joanne has also served on numerous boards for organizations dealing with historic preservation. She is an authority on antique pressed glass and royal Doulton collectables.

The Hemingways have a keen concern for the whole world. The International Writers Workshop brings to Iowa established writers from every continent. Each autumn Joanne and Keith invite the group to their farm for a noon dinner. Some of the guests ride combines and all go to cattle and hog barns and watch harvesting.

Joanne likes to read and is an accomplished pianist. She is a Green Thumb member, a founder of Tri-T Society, and a member of PEO. She serves on the Ambassadors Committee for World Ag Expo.

Joanne has been a member of the extension council and served on the homemakers committee. She works for her political party.

The Hemingways have traveled extensively, having visited five continents. Keith is a past president of the board of education, a member of Pork Producers, the extension council, Farm Bureau, and the Board of Health.

The Hemingways have four children. Steven farms near Iowa City. David lives in St. Louis, Mo. Ann is in Iowa City. Philip lives in Belize, Central America.

## Rita Ann Venner - IMFH Class of 1988

### Carroll County

Education, faith in God, community involvement, and 4-H are high priorities for Rita Ann and Paul Venner, who farm near Breda. The children realized at early ages that their parents' values and goals were becoming their values and goals.

Rita Ann and Paul were always involved in a great number of organizations and activities. They have dedicated limitless energy and time to family, church, and community. But an important part of any activity was the emphasis that it would be a family affair.

The Venner family was the third generation to be involved in 4-H. A good deal of their lives have centered around 4-H activities. Rita Ann and Paul have both served as 4-H leaders. Rita Ann received the 30-year award. She has also served on the 4-H and Youth Advisory Committee and judges achievement shows.

The Venners farm 620 acres. The livestock operation on their Century farm include 300 to 400 head of cattle and 2000 to 2500 head of hogs. They raise corn and soybeans. Numerous agricultural awards including top honors from the county beef and pork associations and the Soil Conservation Award have been presented to them. Paul was named Carroll County's Outstanding Farmer.

Rita Ann and Paul are members of St. Bernard's Church and serve in many areas. Rita Ann has served as director of the Carroll Area Catholic Schools Foundation. She is now serving on the board of directors. Other school activities include past members of the St. Bernard school board member and member of the Kuemper Parents Club.

As Carroll County Farm Bureau president, Rita Ann spends many hours working to increase membership. She is studying and collecting facts to present to the County Board of Supervisors regarding fair and equitable taxes for farms. Rita Ann also serves on a state committee.

Currently, Rita Ann represents west central Iowa on the School Finance Legislative Interim Study Committee to restructure the school financial support system for the state.

Rita Ann has served on the ag committee of the Chamber of Commerce. She is a past officer of American Legion Auxiliary.

Rita Ann attended Ottumwa Heights College. She gardens, sews, does tole painting, and plays piano and organ. She also helps Paul on the farm when needed. The Venners have hosted a student from the South and two international exchange students.

Paul participates in a Beef Feedlot Performance Monitoring Program. He is a past officer in both the county beef and pork associations. He is active in Farm Bureau and other community activities. Paul served as county ASC chairman for 11 years.

Even though marriage and careers have moved family members apart in miles, they set aside special times to get together. One is their annual family day, which is an educational and fun event to visit some of the sights in Iowa.

The Venners have eight children. Christine Smith lives in Missouri Valley. Jim farms with Paul and Rita Ann and lives in Breda. Susan Yarbrough lives in Memphis, Tenn. Liz is in Liberty, Missouri. Tom lives in Boone. Dale is in Norman, Oklahoma. Joan is in Des Moines. Mark is a senior in high school.