

1989 Iowa Master Farm Homemakers Guild Inductees

Mary deBaca - IMFH Class of 1989

Story County

Few people have led as active a life as Mary deBaca. After raising a family and helping on their purebred cattle ranch, Mary went back to teaching full time at Iowa State University. Her family has been supportive and helpful with home responsibilities so Mary could be involved in organizations, career and volunteer work.

Mary's husband, Bob, has worked extensively with custom cattle operators in addition to running their own operation. Until 1986, Mary helped a great deal on the farm. Since Bob traveled managing cattle with his job as publisher of a livestock newspaper, Mary took on many of the day to day responsibilities.

She raked hay, checked test bulls, and monitored their herd at the custom operation. She was also bookkeeper for their farm and consulting business and took an active role in sales management for their auctions and those of others.

Mary was an international farm youth exchange student to Luxembourg and worked in Argentina as a home economics research and extension development advisor. Her interest in international relations was aroused. Over the years, the deBacas have hosted exchange students and professionals from 29 countries, including Luxembourg, the Soviet Union, France, Brazil, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and others.

As a part of her assistant professorship at ISU, Mary is state coordinator of the Farm and Family Management Program in the Co-operative Extension Service. In this capacity, she conducts training workshops, prepares instructional materials and provides leadership for the program. Working with economists, agronomists, marketing experts and home economists, Mary helps farm men and women increase their management skills. The program is a model for similar programs in other states.

Mary has published numerous extension publications on the topic and has spoken at national and international meetings. She has been called on frequently to testify concerning the value of household services and income support provided by men and women in death, disability, and divorce court cases.

As a young mother, Mary became involved in whatever her three children were doing and 4-H became a high priority. She was a 4-H leader for 15 years and has served on many county and state committees.

Mary is involved in school, community, and church activities as well. For several years Mary and Bob have organized an international student social event through their church, St. Thomas Aquinas, to help international members of the parish feel welcome. She is the parish representative for Friendships International and is part of a team preparing couples for marriage.

Family is a high priority with Mary, and even though the children are grown their family ties are close. They still make an effort to take vacations together. Their eldest, Monica, is pursuing a degree in medicine in Argentina. Suzanne is executive director of the Isthmus Institute in Dallas, Texas. Louis is majoring in international agriculture, public service administration and history at ISU.

Susan Hill - IMFH Class of 1989

Cerro Gordo County

Friends and neighbors are amazed at all the accomplishments of Sue Hill, Mason City, Iowa. As a wife, mother, homemaker, community leader and dedicated Christian, she excels.

A 630-acre grain and a prospering seed com distributorship allow Sue Hill to participate as a full partner with her husband, Bryon. And she definitely "learns by doing," since she wasn't raised on a farm. Sue explains, "Living on a farm was totally new to me. I'd never even been on a real farm until I met Byron."

"During my last year at ISU, I took horticulture class and read a book on poultry husbandry, because I knew that's what I'd be doing. We ate a lot of cracked eggs," she quips.

Before moving to their present farm in Cerro Gordo County in 1987, the Hills lived on the home place in Worth county, which has been in the family for four generations. Now their son, Eric, is continuing the family tradition.

Prior to Eric's return, Sue helped with the fieldwork in spring and fall. Even now, she assists at the bin site with com transfer and general errands. She also handles accounting and marketing duties. Sue recently underwent major surgery, but even that won't slow down this energetic, active lady for long.

Farm responsibilities have been a family affair, and the four children shared livestock chores and fieldwork. They acted as sales and delivery people in the Pioneer Seed and Wayne Feed businesses. Still, time was set aside for family vacations, and many trips were taken to see relatives far from home. One summer, they camped across Canada.

Taking trips is second nature to the Hills. When Byron was a student at ISU, he took part in the agriculture travel course offered through the college. Their son, Eric, took the same course and went to China. And last summer, son Andrew took the course, culminating in a trip to Europe. Their Daughter, Kathy, took a church tour to South America and has traveled extensively in the US. Chances are their youngest daughter, Jennifer, will also enjoy seeing the world when she completes high school.

Sue and Byron have been conscientious parents by encouraging their children to pursue goals. The 4-H program played a big part in their younger years, and Sue was a 4-H leader for 10 years. Both boys had cooking projects in 4-H and their mother offered assistance and encouragement to all the club members. In 1981, Andy was 13 and old enough to compete in Des Moines at the Iowa State Fair. He prepared a pork crown roast, and went on to become the youngest Cookout King in the history of the fair.

When microwaves became popular appliances, Sue was in great demand to give lessons. Her practical approach as well as personal experience made her an excellent teacher.

Sue is involved in community and church activities as well. She has been a member of the Worth County Porkettes, Farm Bureau, school clubs, and is active in politics.

The Hill children are interested in music, likely inherited from their parents.

As a member of the Bethel United Methodist Church in Manly, Sue has held many leadership positions. She currently serves as chairman of the education committee and is Sunday school superintendent.

She is currently on the committee to plan the kitchen for the new church facility for which the Hills donated the land. The pastor, Marvin Clear, says, "Sue brings organizational skills, practicality, and knowledge of what will work in a church kitchen. She is also concerned about stewardship-making the best use of money available. Sue is

always ready to accept a challenge that increased commitment brings."

Diana Muchmore - IMFH Class of 1989

Buchanan County

Those feelings were expressed by one of Diana Muchmore's pastors, Larry Lenning. Diana has truly given of her time and energy to help those less fortunate facing difficult situations. As a part-time nurse, she teaches health care, pre-natal care and parenting classes to teenage parents. She also is a volunteer nurse for the Red Cross Donor Days and helps with Cancer Society fund drives.

Diana has been particularly interested in substance abuse and child abuse. As president of the Independence School Board for six years, she brought these important issues into focus. She currently serves on the drug-free school advisory and human growth and development committees.

Although her interest and concern for community development is strong, the first priority is family for Diana and her husband, Robert, of Rowley, Iowa. When the three children were home, much of each day was spent together as a family. Whether it was chores on the 360-acre farm, church or school events, picnics, ball games or family get-togethers, the Muchmores made a point of doing things as a unit. Diana was a leader in 4-H and scouting programs, and also served as a Sunday School and Vacation Bible School teacher so she could be involved in her children's activities.

Their two daughters, Susan and Julie, are away from home, but special events help keep the family in touch. Susan and her husband, Kirk, live in Van Home, Iowa, and Julie is a pre-med student at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. Their son, Mark, will be a high school senior this fall.

Diana and Bob contribute their time to the Buchanan County Volunteer Co-op, an organization which facilitates social service programs in Independence. As a part of the Big Brother/Big Sister program, Diana was matched with a little girl to whom she has become a friend, role model, confidante and sympathizer. They share many activities together and Diana has become a positive influence in this young girl's life. It is not uncommon to see Diana and Bob at community events and church with their 'Little Brother' and 'Little Sister.'

Farm and livestock responsibilities were shared by the entire family, as were household duties. Diana helps with the daily dairy and hog chores, and does many field-related jobs such as hauling fertilizer, field cultivating, baling hay and straw, and hauling in crops

L from harvest. In addition, she does all the yard work and handles the farm and business record-keeping.

Diana and Bob are active members of their county pork producer group and Farm Bureau.

As members of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Diana and Bob have held many leadership positions. Diana was elected to the mutual ministry committee which serves as a liaison between the pastors and the congregation. She also serves on the community development committee through the Buchanan County Ministerial Association. This is an inter-denominational council whose purpose is to encourage individuals and organizations to identify and work on community problems from a Christian viewpoint.

Diana's background as an educator, working knowledge of the community, leadership and diplomatic skills have allowed her to be a dedicated contributor.

Lois Schurr - IMFH Class of 1989

Scott County

Four years ago, Lois Schurr, LeClaire, Iowa, was barely able to walk, let alone participate in the many activities which were a part of her life. Back problems plagued her, and doctors said major surgery was required. With prayer and determination, Lois faced her problem squarely and began a walking regimen to alleviate the pain. Now, four years later, Lois no longer walks-she jogs instead! In addition, she's added new activities and responsibilities to her already hectic schedule.

Lois and her husband, Bill, own and operate a 400-acre grain and livestock farm. Although now grown, the four Schurr children grew up working together and sharing responsibilities. Their son, Daniel, farms with them, continuing the cow-calf enterprise. Debra is a veterinarian in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and Denise is an artist/calligrapher in El Paso, Texas.

Lois works on a "permanent part-time" basis as a nurse. She also does public health screening volunteer work. Last year she and Bill took a farm tour to Russia. One of the other participants became ill and Lois's nursing abilities helped.

Lois has taken an active role with the Mississippi Valley Fair. Over the years she has assisted with 4-H programs, the free activities tent, and the senior citizens program.

Last year, her emphasis was on making a special day for the special people, the physically and mentally handicapped. She helped organize Heritage Days and transformed a building used for storage into a Heritage House of the 1920's.

Because of her endless work and enthusiasm she received the Outstanding Fair Booster Award in 1986. She was a 4-H leader for 9 years and received a state award for implementing the Adopted Grandmothers program.

Lois and Bill have been active in the Iowa Cattleman's Association. They've helped with beef promotions and Ag day promotions. Lois chaired the queen committee and is a past district director. She is now co-chairman of state beef promotion.

Lois puts in a large garden every spring and there are fruit trees and berry patches on the Schurr farm. She freezes and cans for her family and shares the excess with friends and neighbors.

Bill and Lois are members of Flying Farmers and had a frightening experience several years ago while taking part in a trip to Central America. Bill and Lois with two of their children, Denise and Daniel, had flown to Guatemala City in the four-passenger Cessna. During the first night of their stay, the fourth most severe earthquake to occur in this century shook their hotel room and crumbled buildings in the area. Fortunately, no one in the group was injured, but the experience gave Schurr a greater appreciation for how quickly incidents can potentially change lives.

Lois has been an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, and church involvement is one of the most important aspects of her life.

She gets excellent results in recruiting others to serve the church in a variety of ways, and when she plans an event, she always follows through. She is currently the president of ELCA, the women's group of her church.

Friends and neighbors say this character strength of planning and follow-through is Lois's trademark, whether it's a project she's undertaking for her family, farm, church or community.

Nancy Degner, director of consumer information and nutrition with the Iowa Beef Council, says, "Lois is a very busy person, but when she accepts a responsibility, I know the job will get done in a professional manner."

Another friend, Marian Petersen, says, "Working with Lois is a joy as she is full of enthusiasm, ideas, and has boundless energy. Once she takes on a task, she is not satisfied until it is completed to the last detail."