

Ag honor society honors alumni, faculty

UNIVERSITY PARK — Gamma Sigma Delta, the honor society of agriculture, cited outstanding alumni, faculty, and students of the College of Agriculture at Penn State during a banquet here recently.

Alumni honored for attainments and taken into membership were Ralph E. Dotterer, St., of R2, Mill Hall, and Obie Snider of R1, Imler.

Ralph Dotterer, Penn State class of 1949 in animal husbandry, is an active farm leader on the state and local level. This includes the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, the Pennsylvania Grange, and Masonic and Kiwanis organizations. He has served as a director, and president, of both the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association and the Pennsylvania Beef Council. Most recently, he was honored as a Master Farmer of Pennsylvania and Cattleman of the Year.

Graduating from Penn State with the class of 1949 in animal husbandry, Ralph Dotterer has become known as an innovator. College of Agriculture faculty members in several departments rely on him for field testing and demonstrations he and his sons have a family partnership. All feeds produced on the farm are utilized in finishing beef cattle.

Obie Snider, a Penn State dairy science graduate in 1950, has held nearly every office, including president, in the Pennsylvania Holstein Association. He has been a national director of the Holstein-Friesian Association of America.

Snider is recognized as an official judge of dairy cattle. He has judged many state and national shows plus shows in Mexico, El

Salvador, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Columbia. He has been president of, and played an important role in forming the Pennsylvania Dairy and Allied Industry Association. The Snider family and their cattle have been familiar sights in dairy shows at county fairs, farm shows, and the Pennsylvania All-American Dairy Show, Harrisburg.

Honored for exceptional research in the College of Agriculture was Roland M. Leach, Jr., professor of poultry science. His research interests emphasize mechanisms of eggshell formation, trace elements and the food chain, and leg weakness (tibial dyschondroplasia). Leach has presented a number of research papers to industry groups. A teacher as well, he is currently chairman of the interdepartmental Graduate Program in Animal Nutrition.

Manfred Kroger, professor of food science, was honored for outstanding teaching. He has developed four new courses in food science and has been active in numerous teaching improvement seminars. Now devoting most of his time to teaching, Dr. Kroger tape records his lectures so that students may use them as review aids. He is faculty advisor to the Coaly Honor Society in the College of Agriculture. He is faculty associate to the Science, Technology, and Society Interest House—part of Penn State's Residential Life Program.

Stephen B. Spencer, professor of dairy science extension, was honored for his work with the Cooperative Extension Service. His major areas of extension in-



Honored recently for achievements in Penn State's College of agriculture were three faculty members, left to right, Roland M. Leach, Manfred Kroger, and Stephen B. Spencer. They were selected for achievements in research, teaching, and extension -- respectively -- by Gamma Sigma Delta honor society of agriculture.

formation include milking management, milking equipment, dairy barn design and renovation, and udder health and mastitis control. Spencer has become a leading authority on milking and is recognized as such by manufacturers of milking equipment. Nearly 5,000 dairymen have enrolled in milker schools which he conducts.

The senior scholarship award of

an engraved watch went to Frederick J. Kelley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Kelley, formerly of R1, Monongahela. The Kelleys now reside in Akron, Ohio. Son Fred graduated May 28 in animal production.

The junior citation in \$100 went to Marie V. Doletski of R2, Humlock Creek. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Doletski. Ms. Doletski is majoring

in animal bioscience.

Sophomore awards of pen and pencil desk sets went to Bradley M. Block of 801 Mathews Road, Malvern, and to Terri L. Cravener of R1, Apollo. Block is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wolpert of Malvern. Ms. Cravener is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Cravener of Apollo and is majoring in animal production.

Donna's dilemma: those troublesome first-calf heifers

Remember seeing former staff writer Donna Tommelleo's name capping so many bovine stories in the pages of Lancaster Farming? Well it seems that while Donna just couldn't stay away from the cows while serving as a full time writer (which is one of the reasons she left us for farming), now she can't seem to shed the writing bug as she carries out her new chores as herdsman!

Following is Donna's dilemma as she patiently awaits births from first calf heifers. Donna writes to us from the Green Manor Farm of John and Ginger Myers in Adams County. They milk a 66 cow herd of registered Guernseys and Jerseys.

For what seems like the better part of 1983, we have watched a springing heifer that is trying to set the world's record for the longest gestation period.

In all fairness to Snowfall, who is undertaking the task of "How long can I hold it?" she was pasture bred. Consequently, her due date is really just a "questimate."

"Now really heifer. That bag's been coming on for months," I said to her during the morning ritual of expectant mother checks.

Snowfall just cast her bored, "Oh it's you again," look in my direction and proceeded to clean out her hay rack.

You see, when our heifers and dry cows begin to get serious about bagging up, they are ushered into the preferential treatment quarters, suitable for mothers-to-be. However, Snowfall kind of got used to all the attention and we're beginning to wonder whether or not she'll be a permanent fixture. Each day, I refuse to believe that her bag could get any tighter or larger. And the next day, I find I am wrong again.

Almost a dozen animals have freshened in front of the finicky first-timer since her box stall arrival several weeks ago. I guess learning by example is not one of

her strong points.

Instead, she might be holding back because she's heard too many tell tales from other first-calf heifers on the realities of the working world.

Let's face it. Moving from the life of leisure that most heifers enjoy into a situation where now they're expected to do something can be quite traumatic.

What other animal but a first-calf heifer can suddenly lose all sense of direction and what little sense she has the day she freshens and is introduced into the milking string?

We milk in a 22-stall barn and must run three groups in to accommodate our 66-head herd. But trying to get a heifer to nicely walk up in an empty stall can be about as futile as washing your car with a toothbrush.

Usually our procedure is to run the heifer in with the cows. While the older girls have found their stalls and are patiently waiting for breakfast or supper, the bewildered heifer senses the trap and immediately plots her escape. With a little bit of luck, she'll jump into the same stall with a seasoned veteran, whereas we can quickly tie her and politely ask the old cow to find another space, please.

We don't get lucky very often. Instead, we'll play a few rounds of "chase the heifer around the aisles, chase the heifers out of the feed room, get out of my way, dog and here we go again."

After what seems like too long, we can latch on to her neck chain and go into our, "you pull and I'll (grunt) push" routine.

By this time, some of the cows have wondered why their repast was delayed and begin to roam around. Eventually, every animal is tied in and now we can begin to convince the heifer that daily milkings can be a very rewarding experience.

Ha!

"You're going to put WHAT...WHERE?!" is the reaction of some novices.

"How would you like it if I put this hoof in your ear?!" is usually their second inquiry followed by the pitter patter of cloven feet all over my body. Luckily, that type of heifer has been scarce in our herd. But for those demonstrative individuals, we have a nifty adjustable brace that fits over their hips to prevent them from rearranging our faces.

Cully Ann was that type of heifer who would continue to throw temper tantrums even after the brace was applied. She would jump up and down on all fours like a spoiled child who was told no sweets before dinner. But today, she is in mid-lactation and has settled down into one of the hardest workers in the herd.

In fact, most of our first calf heifers have settled into personable contributors.

Take Polly for instance, this youngster anticipates milking time and maneuvers for position at the head of her group. Once the gate opens, she bolts for the barn and never looks back. It's uncanny — the heifer usually ends up on the same side as the feed cart.

Then there was Foxy and Sunshine, two stylish heifers that walked into the barn their first day on the job and stood there like a couple of pros.

Of course, automatic take-offs are nothing new in our barn after Hortense came to work. The heifer just couldn't abide by a squawking machine. She occasionally still removes the mulker but now mostly tolerates the inconvenience until the milker is re-adjusted. And just as her back end is a force to be reckoned with, her front end bears watching also.

If she's not pulling off my cap, she's running her number 9 sandpaper tongue across my face when I'm not looking. Facial brush

