

# PennAg Industries

(Continued from Page A1)

tries Council, said that PennAg began as the Pennsylvania State Millers Association on Jan. 8, 1878, at the Central Hotel in Sunbury.

What did the association do 125 years ago? According to Sherk, during the first decade of the association, fire insurance for mills was the primary focus. At the 1886 convention, 11 members pledged to buy \$5,000 worth of fire insurance and helped start the Pennsylvania Millers' Mutual Insurance Company.

Membership on Jan. 7, 1895 stood at 250 at the time the Pennsylvania Millers State association was incorporated.

Sherk detailed the changes over the years:

- From 1888-1920s, local



**Darvin Boyd, retired director of agrifinance for First Union/Wachovia Bank, right, is congratulated for his Distinguished Service Award honor from Robert Gueldner, PennAg Industries president.**

gristmills began to close down.

- In 1931, the association became the Pennsylvania Millers and Feed Dealers Association (PAMAFDA), as feed dealers became a focus.

- The association hired the first paid executive in 1937 — George A. Stuart.

- In 1950, the association's first full-time employee, Richard Ammon, executive secretary, began work. The same year, PAMAFDA located in Ephrata.

- In 1953, the PAMAFDA Insurance Trust was created.

- From 1959-1969, the title of executive secretary changed to executive vice president. In 1963, members turned down the idea of having to pay, by assessment, for research and promotion of wheat and wheat products.

- In 1968, to include other agribusiness in the association, the name PAMAFDA was changed to PennAg Industries Association.

- From 1982 to 1997, PennAg purchased a headquarters building in Ephrata, bylaws were upgraded, and Walt Peechatka was hired as executive vice president to attract other agribusiness groups to the association.

- From 1998 onward, the association continued to evolve, improving itself by adding the PennAg Poultry Council (when the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation dissolved) and the hiring of an assistant vice president of the council. In 1999, the Pennsylvania Seedmans Association dissolved and became the PennAg Seed Council.

- In 2000, PennAg purchased

a new headquarters office in Harrisburg and sold the Ephrata property.

- In 2001, the PennAg Swine Council was created.

- This year, celebrating its 125th anniversary, Sherk noted that PennAg continues to evolve into a "recognized leader in Pennsylvania agriculture." This year, new staff member Chris Herr, former deputy secretary of agriculture, became assistant vice president of the PennAg Poultry Council.

PennAg President is Robert Gueldner, Best Feed and Farm Supplies, Inc., Oakdale.

From 250 members in 1895, the association numbers 650 today.

Walt Peechatka, association executive vice president, presented two Distinguished Service awards to outstanding leaders in Pennsylvania agribusiness at the banquet Monday evening.

The first award went to a man known, according to Peechatka, as "lieutenant, rep, whip, majority leader, and secretary." Peechatka was referring to the former state ag secretary, Sam Hayes Jr.

"Pennsylvania never had a stronger advocate than Sam Hayes," said Peechatka.

In accepting the award, Hayes noted, "Our republic depends upon agriculture every day and into the future. Anytime you sound the bugle, I will be proud to stand with you, your enterprise, and your community."

The second Distinguished Service Award was presented to, Peechatka said (quoting a headline from a newspaper): "A man farmers could bank on."

Peechatka presented the award to Darvin Boyd, retired senior vice president and director of the Agriculture Finance Team at First Union Bank (now Wachovia).

Peechatka noted Boyd built the department from a one-person unit with \$13 million in loans outstanding to a 20-person staff with more than half a billion dollars in loans outstanding.

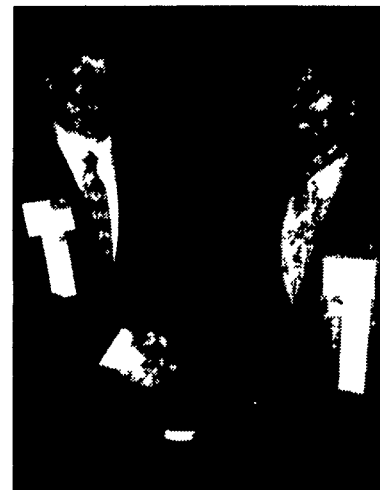
Boyd noted that those in



**A special framed presentation of a print, "A Few Feeding Many," was provided to Dennis Wolff, state secretary of agriculture, center, by PennAg Industries President Robert Gueldner, left. At right is artist Bruce Johnson.**



**Robert Gueldner, president of PennAg Industries, left, congratulates Sam Hayes Jr., former state secretary of agriculture, on his Distinguished Service Award.**



**Two presidents: current president Robert Gueldner, left, congratulates former PennAg Industries president Jim Adams.**

**All photos by Andy Andrews, editor**

agriculture should be mindful of the "forces confronting the progress of agriculture." He spoke about his passions for agrifinance and for customers.

Boyd said, "Anybody can take care of you when you are doing well, but who is there when the times are tough?"

Boyd thanked those he worked with, the "relationship managers and credit officers," the board members, and customers. He also thanked his wife Linda, daughter

Cindy, and son Brian, and spoke, holding back the tears, about his son Kevin, who passed away a few years ago.

Boyd said, "Kevin is with his heavenly father, but he's with me, too, so I want to thank him."

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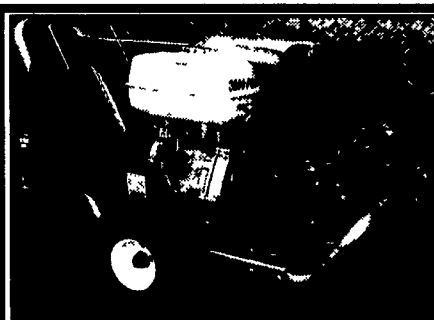
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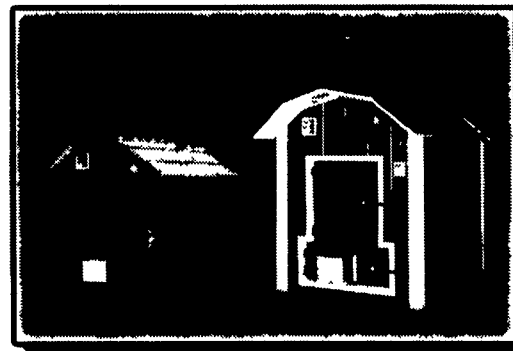
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