



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Megan Kilgore, 402-463-4704, nvmaorg@gmail.com

Lyndon, KS – February 4, 2025 – The Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA) proudly honored the late Dr. Gary Sears of Hyannis, Nebraska, with its most prestigious recognition, the Veterinarian of the Year Award. Presented posthumously, the award was accepted by his brother, Dr. Jim Sears, on January 31 during the NVMA Celebration of Veterinary Medicine Awards Luncheon in Kearney, Nebraska. This distinguished award is reserved for NVMA members who have demonstrated outstanding contributions to the veterinary profession, the NVMA, and their community. Candidates are nominated by colleagues, association members, or clients.

“Dr. Sears devoted his career to veterinary medicine and bringing modern medical care to producers in the Sandhills,” said Megan Kilgore, NVMA executive director. “He served as a model of professionalism for veterinarians throughout Nebraska.”

A graduate of Colorado State University with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree, Dr. Sears returned to the Sandhills in 1967 to establish Hyannis Veterinary Service. Known affectionately as “Doc” by the local community, he dedicated his life to providing exceptional veterinary care to ranchers in Western Nebraska until his untimely passing in October 2023.

Dr. Sears primarily served the region’s expansive cow-calf ranching industry, while also providing veterinary care for equine, small animals, and other species. At times, he even used an airplane to reach remote ranches, reflecting his deep commitment to his clients. His unique and highly respected practice made a lasting impact on the profession.

“He was an astute clinician and a leader,” said Dr. Dale Grotelueschen. “I was privileged to work closely with Dr. Sears for many years, particularly during my tenure at the Panhandle Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Scottsbluff. His clinic was among the first to diagnose trichomoniasis in Nebraska herds during the late 1980s. In response, he led highly attended client education programs and implemented preventive strategies for the disease, which was entirely new to the state at that time. His commitment to innovative clinical services provided immense value to his clients throughout his career.”

Beyond his contributions to veterinary medicine, Dr. Sears was a dedicated servant leader within his community. A generous supporter of local organizations, events, and charities, he also served on the local school board and the Grant County Fair Board. It was often said that whatever the community needed, Dr. Sears and Hyannis Veterinary Service were always willing to help.

Dr. Sears, his wife Joan, and their daughter Julie tragically passed away in a car accident in October 2023. He is survived by his son, Greg (Jamie) of Rocklin, CA; his son-in-law, Darrell Lasky of Santa Rosa, CA; his brother, Jim (Kathy Ewert); his two sisters, Jean (Blaine) Merritt and Becky Hummer (Alex Lewis); as well as six grandchildren, several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Founded in 1960, the Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association is a professional organization representing approximately 800 veterinarians and veterinary technicians nationwide. The NVMA is committed to advancing and advocating for the veterinary profession in animal health, welfare, and public protection.

###