

## Founders of the Agricultural Relations Council to be Inducted into Agricultural Public Relations Hall of Fame for 2017

*By Den Gardner, Executive Director*

The original founders of the Agricultural Relations Council (ARC) in 1953 will be posthumously inducted into the 2017 Agricultural Public Relations Hall of Fame, which was instituted six years ago and is sponsored by ARC and *Agri Marketing* magazine. The hall of fame recognizes individuals for lifetime achievement in agricultural public relations.



*The first two members of the newly established Agricultural Public Relations Hall of Fame were inducted June 2012. Lyle Orwig, Charleston Orwig, (left) and Don Lerch, retired.*

There were 26 original founders of ARC and one, Don Lerch, is the only one currently in the hall of fame, having been inducted in 2012. He also is the lone remaining member still alive at 95 and thriving in Juno Beach, FL. The remaining 25 will be honored in June at the ARC annual meeting in Sacramento, CA, .

Paul Weller, Jr., inducted in 2013, and former executive director of ARC, noted that the ARC was founded at the Knickerbocker Hotel in Chicago in the spring of 1953. "A group of 26 professionals serving in agricultural communications decided that continuing adverse publicity about American agriculture, especially about agricultural chemicals, merited an organization of professionals with experience and talents in public relations to tell agriculture's positive story," Weller said.

Weller also noted that ARC placed a plaque in the lobby of the Knickerbocker Hotel in Chicago noting ARC's founding upstairs. He added that Cap Mast and Roy Battles stepped in some years after the founding and provided a home and staff for the association.

Those original founders are:

Ladd Haystead, (First President), American Petroleum Institute

Ed Lipscomb, (First VP), National Cotton Council

Lowell A. Kern, American Petroleum Institute

Donald G. Lerch, Jr., Lerch & Company, Inc.

Frank B. Atchley, Grocery Manufacturers Association

Lyle Liggett, National Cattlemen's Association

Roy Battles, National Grange

Carl Bender, Sperry Corporation

Charles Dana Bennett, Farm Film Foundation

Max Chambers, Vegetable Growers Association

C.L. "Cap" Mast, Jr., Ag Consultant

John C. Davis, Nat'l Council of Farmer Cooperatives

William Foreman, National Cotton Council

Walter B. Garver, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Herbert A. Graff, Ralston-Purina Company

Val E. Weyle, Nat'l Ag Chemicals Association

Floyd Keepers, Barn Equipment Association

John J. Lacey, American Farm Bureau Federation

George Krieger, Ethyl Corporation

William S. Moreland, Rutgers University

H.P. Quadland, H.P. Quadland Company

Jack Sampier, National Livestock Producers Association

Glenn Sample, Indiana Farm Bureau

Ernest Steward, National Cotton Council

Dave O. Thompson, Sr., Ag Consultant

Louis H. Wilson, American Plant Food Council

Weller added that ARC was formed, and the group agreed to meet at least annually in conjunction with other existing agricultural organizations.

"We are thrilled to recognize these winners," said Lynn Henderson, [Agri Marketing magazine](#) publisher and award sponsor. "As the founding partner with ARC in this program, we believe recognizing these distinguished founders is appropriate and continues the tradition of honoring those who broke ground in establishing this much-needed organization of ag PR professionals."

ARC annually recognizes ag PR professionals at its annual meeting. ARC is the only association dedicated to public relations professionals working in agriculture, food, fiber and other related industries. More



*L to R: Lynn Henderson, Carol Bodensteine(2016 Recipient), Daren Williams*

than 60 years since its inception, the ARC provides premier professional development for agricultural public relations professionals in North America.

Current inductees in the hall of fame are: Lyle Orwig, Don Lerch, 2012; John Harvey and Paul S. Weller, Jr., 2013; Richard Howell and Gary Myers, 2014; Steve Drake, 2015; and Carol Bodensteiner, 2016.

For more information about the hall of fame, contact Den Gardner, executive director, at the ARC office at [arc@gandgcomm.com](mailto:arc@gandgcomm.com). More details about the founders will be provided in upcoming issues of ARC Light.

---