

Dr. Lonnquist Follows Son; Named Outstanding Nebraskan



MAN BEHIND THE DESK . . . Dr. Lonnquist has long served as an adviser for many foreign and graduate students.

By Julie Morris
Senior Writer

Like son—like father, this semester's faculty Outstanding Nebraskan, Dr. John Lonnquist, Sr., follows his son John, Jr. as Outstanding Nebraskan.

John, Jr., a 1965 University graduate, received the award two years ago this month. Also like son, father Lonnquist Saturday was named an honorary member of Innocents, a group that tackled John, Jr. and another son, Ladd, into membership two successive years.

Pace Set

The senior Lonnquist has hardly let his sons set the pace in the family, however.

The letter a colleague wrote nominating Lonnquist as Outstanding Nebraskan noted, "As a scientist he is rated as one of the world's most respected geneticists, and as an accomplice he ranks second to none."

and has spent close to 15 years working with the Latin American countries in the area of crop production.

He was named the recipient of the American Society of Agronomy crop science award in 1961, is a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and his reputation as a teacher and research man has been instrumental in attracting top flight graduate students to the University.

Estimating that he has turned over 50 graduate degree candidates in his years at the University, Lonnquist commented that he has frequently ended up handling 10 to 15 students when he feels that four to five is a full load for any professor.

"I hate to get to the point where I don't do an adequate job with these boys because of the number of them," Lonnquist said.

Regents' Professor

"I like working with students because you get to know a person better through working with them than any other way," he said. In 1961 Lonnquist was named a Regents' professor, an honor reserved for outstanding teachers.

In his new position with the Ford Foundation, Lonnquist will still be working with students. "I don't think I would have accepted the position otherwise," he said.

Leaning back in a swivel chair in his third floor office in Keim Hall, Lonn-



Photo by Mike Hayman

ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING GENETICISTS . . . Dr. Lonnquist discusses the pollination of corn and points out a recent experiment in his laboratory.

quist pointed out his collection of corn specimens from Columbia and Peru, a huge display of dozens of ears of corn that covers one wall, and meditatively pulled on a well-worn straight pipe as he discussed corn, the University, the future and Latin America.

"Corn is pretty high in

my thoughts always," he commented. "It's so easy for a person to get wound up in his work and the job takes him over. My wife always kids me about Mazy, my first love." (Maize is the Indian word for corn.)

One of Lonnquist's former grad students recalled the "90 hour weeks" his teacher puts in and Lonnquist, cracking a grin a mile wide, told of the time when John Jr., the oldest of his eight children, as a small child pointed out to a visitor "the Ag College where my daddy lives."

A scientist must spend time in his laboratory, Lonnquist said, so he spends a great deal of time in the field.

Field Work

"These aren't the clothes of my trade," he said, indicating his college-professorish sport coat, white shirt and a tie complete with a miniature gold ear of corn as a tie tac. "More often, I'm in khakis."

Lonnquist has been traveling to Latin America to lecture, visit and do research since "the early 1950's."

The greatest problem facing Latin America "and most of these so-called developing countries is population control and food pro-

duction," Lonnquist commented.

Food Supply

"I don't think we are going to keep pace in food supply unless we can make some changes in food production," he said.

"I wouldn't say that famine or world starvation is right around the corner. I'm not one of these guys who is a prophet of doom. But I would say that it is a possibility unless relevant research is done and done soon."

Lonnquist said that children under 15 make up 50 to 60 per cent of the population of Costa Rica and that this is the case in many of the Latin American countries.

Malnutrition

"You see an awful lot of malnutrition in these countries and it makes me feel pretty bad when you see kids who haven't had the right kind of food and enough food so that they're bodies are crippled for life. Maybe I'm just an old softie," Lonnquist said.

He explained that the work the Ford and Rockefeller people will be doing in Mexico is aimed directly at solving these food shortage problems. "Some of the things (in this field) that I've wanted to do I'm going to be able to do," Lonnquist commented.

Turning to a discussion of the University, Lonnquist said it hardly seems like it has been 24 years since he joined the staff as a professor. He took his doctorate here in 1949.

"Time has a way of slipping by you," he mused.

Lonnquist called the University Agricultural college "fairly strong, one of the strong ones in the country."

The Lonnquist family will undoubtedly return to the state and the University, as visitors, Lonnquist said. "We have to have a home base," he said.

The Lonnquist sons will stay at the University. Ladd will enter the University Law School following his graduation in August; another son, Tom, enters the University as a freshman in September and George, a junior at the University of Tennessee, where he is colonizing a chapter of Beta Theta Pi plans to return to the University in the fall, Lonnquist said.

When Lonnquist was notified that he had been named the Outstanding Nebraskan he said, "It seems like the sky is falling." Last week he was named an honorary member of the University Agronomy Club, an undergraduate club, shortly before he was named an honorary innocent.

19 Midshipmen Will Receive ROTC Awards

The Naval ROTC Unit at the University of Nebraska will present 19 awards to its Midshipmen at 2:30 p.m., on May 16, in the Union Ballroom.

The awards to be presented are given by military-centered groups such as the American Legion and by Captain A. C. Mullen, Captain of Naval Science at the University.

Awards Program

The awards program will feature a former commander of an aircraft carrier, Vice Admiral Robert J. Stroh, as a speaker. During World War II, Stroh commanded a photo reconnaissance squadron that helped implement the island-hopping strategy in the Gilberts, Marshalls and Marianas.

Stroh's speech will honor the recipients of the awards which are given for the demonstration of qualities contributing to military leadership.

Five Examples

Following are five examples of the awards to be given.

The General Dynamics NROTC Plaque will be presented to Midn. 2-c Ellroy B. Pearlman who will be midshipman commander next semester.

The American Legion General Military Excellence Medals will go to Midn 2-c Ernest J. Gerloff and senior Midn. 1-c F. C. Green II.

The American Legion medals are given by the Lincoln American Legion Post No. 3 for high academic achievement as well as military excellence.

The Professor of Naval Science Award will also be presented to Green. The award is presented to the senior with outstanding initiative and motivation.

The Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association Sword will be given to Midn. 1-c James A. Gettman, selected as the top NROTC candidate for a commission in the Marine Corps. Gettman is the present Midshipman commander.

Retired Officers

The Retired Officers Association Medal will go to a sophomore, Midn. 3-c Thomas P. Briggs. The medal is given by the local chapter of the Retired Officers Association and emphasizes aptitude for the life of the Naval Officer.

Other groups giving awards include the National Rifle Association, the Society of American Military Engineers, the Military Order of World Wars, Julius Horowitz Naval Tailors, Inc. the Lincoln Naval Reserve Units, North American Aviation Unit, and the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

A reception will be held in the South Party Room after the awards ceremony.



RELAXING AT HOME . . . Dr. Lonnquist joins his daughter Chris and his wife Betty for a session with the guitar. Chris is one of eight Lonnquist children.

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