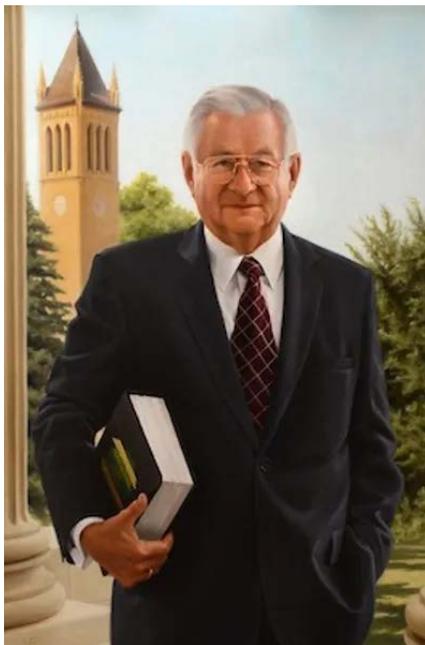


## DR. NEIL E. HARL



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### Obituary

Dr. Neil E. Harl

Ames, Iowa - Neil E. Harl, age 88, of Ames passed away Thursday, November 4, 2021, at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames.

Visitation will be from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. on Friday, November 12, 2021, at Adams Funeral Home, 502 Douglas Ave., Ames. A Funeral Service will be held at 12:00 P.M. Saturday, November 13, 2021, at the First United Methodist Church, 516 Kellogg Ave., Ames. Burial will be in the Iowa State University Cemetery in Ames.

Neil Harl was born on October 9, 1933, in a farm home in Appanoose County, Iowa, built astride the Mormon Trail. He attended a one-room country school through eighth grade, where he was the only child in his class. When first starting school, he accepted a wager from his father, a tenant farmer, to give him a ewe lamb if he could pass both "primary" and first grade in one year. He did,

and he always credited his father for giving him a strong push just at the right time; he eventually graduated valedictorian of a class of 108 rural eighth graders across his county in 1947.

Dr. Harl attended high school in Seymour, Iowa, where he was senior class president and valedictorian of his class of 45; the class salutatorian was a young woman who would later become his wife. Under prodding from one of his high school teachers, Harl applied for one of the three Iowa Centennial Memorial Scholarships, offered for the first time in 1951, which he would later admit was largely responsible for enrolling at then-named Iowa State College.

Harl and Darlene Harris were married in 1952. They became parents of two sons -- James Brent of Denver, Colorado, and Rodney Scott of Bedford, New Hampshire, born in 1957 and 1971, respectively.

Dr. Harl graduated from Iowa State in 1955, having served as cadet colonel of the Army ROTC unit his senior year. After a brief stint with Iowa State College Extension, he entered active duty as an artillery officer in August, 1955, at Ft. Bliss, Texas. Harl ranked second in his Officer Basic Class, which was comprised of equal numbers of West Point graduates and ROTC alumni. He was assigned to the Chicago-Gary Missile Defense from 1956 to 1957 for which he received the commendation ribbon with metal pendant and was promoted to first lieutenant.

From 1957 through September 1958, Harl was a field editor for Wallaces' Farmer magazine, until his acceptance at the University of Iowa College of Law in 1958. Dr. Harl graduated in the top three of his law school class of 1961. He continued his education at Iowa State University, graduating in 1965, with a Ph.D. in Economics. Dr. Harl joined the faculty at Iowa State as an associate professor in Economics, advancing to full professor in 1967. In 1976, he was named a Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor, one of the youngest to have been so recognized.

As a faculty member, Dr. Harl published 29 books, gave more than 3400 presentations across 43 states and 17 foreign countries, served as founding president of the American Agricultural Law Association and president of the American Agricultural Economics Association. Dr. Harl was also appointed to seven federal commissions, including service on the Advisory Board of the Office of Technology Assessment, where he served as chairman in 1993-94. He was deeply involved in efforts to deal with the farm debt crisis of the 1980s, publishing a book about that period in 1990. He headed the group resisting the sale of the Iowa State University-owned television station WOI-TV from 1992 through 1994, also and publishing a book about that effort.

From 1990 through 2004, Dr. Harl served as founder and head of the Center for International Agricultural Finance, which has been credited with providing needed economic and legal guidance to 33 countries formerly under control of the Soviet Union, conducting 79 programs at home and abroad for the countries' business and governmental leaders to guide their transition to a market economy.

Dr. Harl formally shifted to professor emeritus status beginning in 2005, but continued his publishing, seminar, and consulting activities until 2016.

In appreciation for the profound impact Iowa State University had on Dr. Harl's life as a student, he and Darlene wanted to create a gathering place for undergraduates. In 2013, the Neil and Darlene Harl Commons was dedicated as part of Curtiss Hall on the ISU Campus, thanks in large part to the Harls' financial support.

Next to his family, his next love was farming: he and his wife acquired 1,000 acres of land in Appanoose County, including the family tract purchased in 1863 on which he was born, and additional land his family farmed as share-croppers throughout his youth. As he often said, after family and church, the important parts of his life centered on agriculture, law, and Iowa State University.

He is predeceased by his wife, Darlene, and brother, Richard, and is survived by his two sons, five grandchildren and two sisters – Marjorie Sutter of Ames, Iowa, and Merna M. Donald of Waterloo, Iowa.

He and his wife, Darlene, were long time members of First United Methodist Church in Ames.

In celebrating Dr. Harl's contributions to both Iowa State University and Iowa's broad agricultural community, his family requests donations in lieu of gifts be made to a scholarship fund that Dr. Harl created just before his death, the Dr. Neil Harl Opportunity Award #270620. Contributions can be made at [www.isuf.info/harl](http://www.isuf.info/harl), or sent to Iowa State University Foundation, 310 Curtiss Hall, 513 Farm House Lane, Ames, Iowa, 50011, noting fund #270620.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Adams Funeral Home and online condolences may be left to Neil's family at [www.adamssoderstrum.com](http://www.adamssoderstrum.com).

Posted online on November 06, 2021

Published in Des Moines Register

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