

Dear Fellow Regents,

I have submitted a lengthy application narrative for my 2021 Distinguished Nevadan nominees. You will receive it in addition to this shorter summary version of their eligibility and qualifications for my nomination of each of them as Distinguished Nevadan. Thank you for your consideration of Mr. Lew Eklund and Mrs. JoAnn Eklund as 2021 Distinguished Nevadans.

Cathy

It is a distinct honor to nominate Lew Eklund and JoAnn Eklund for the 2021 Distinguished Nevadan award. I have known both of them and their family for more than 35 years. I am nominating each of them individually, but truthfully, they were a couple in most everything they did and in every way they gave back. Nearly every one of the many honors they have received was for them as a couple. In so many ways, they circumvented the mathematic principle of 1+1 equals 2, because in their case, 1+1 equaled 1 mind and heart that carried the qualities individually and together to epitomize Distinguished Nevadan. Most often referred to as Lew AND JoAnn Eklund or simply The Eklunds, their marriage of 63 years certainly contributed to this mathematical equation.

As young newlyweds in the 1950s, Lew and JoAnn knew what it meant to struggle financially through difficult times. They moved 44 times in 11 years before permanently making Carlin, Nevada the place they chose to call home. In 1960, together with the help of friends, they started Eklund Drilling. Although drilling for microscopic gold is prevalent in mining today, Eklund Drilling Company was the first drilling company to drill for microscopic gold. Many of the techniques used in the 60s discovery of the Newmont Gold Company and the Carlin Trend were developed by Eklund Drilling and those techniques are still used today. I want to make it clear that JoAnn Eklund wasn't just owner of the company with Lew, she also administratively managed the company while Lew would be out in the field drilling and soliciting jobs. No pun intended, but she was the rock-solid foundation for their family, business, and community social responsibility. Excellence in everything they did describes them, as does their commitment to each other and to and for others.

Please find below a few of the local, State and National honors awarded to them. These provide the backdrop for my nomination of these two giving, loving, and serving Nevadans.

- ~ National Mining Hall of Fame
- ~ National Appaloosa Horse Club Hall of Fame Inductee
- ~ Nevada Horsemen's Association Hall of Fame Inductee
- ~ Northwest Mining Association Distinguished Service to the Minerals Industry Award
- ~ Carlin, Nevada Citizens of the Year Award
- ~ Lifetime Achievement Award from the City of Carlin, NV; Elko County Nevada Commission; State of Nevada; United States Congress Special Recognition Award
- ~ National Appaloosa Horse Club Director
- ~ Utah Appaloosa Horse Club Director
- ~ Sagebrush Circuit Horse Show President (Elko, NV)
- ~ Nevada Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse Videographer

- ~ Nominee for the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Hall of Great Westerners. Nomination letters of support from former Governor and now current UNR President Brian Sandoval, US Senator Dean Heller, President Dana Bennett on behalf of the Nevada Mining Association Board of Directors and its 420+ members, and CEO Steve Taylor on behalf of the Appaloosa Horse Club Board of Directors.

Yes, the above describes awards received by Lew and JoAnn Eklund. However, these and other awards in the main document submitted do not adequately define them.

A few quotes about Lew and JoAnn Eklund:

"The recognition he and his wife JoAnn received over the years speaks volumes about their commitment to service and improving the community and state." Governor Brian Sandoval

"He and his wife JoAnn made a lasting impact on the Appaloosa horse industry." US Senator Dean Heller

"Lew and his beloved wife JoAnn became internationally known breeders of champion Appaloosa horses." Dana Bennett

"The sincere appreciation the Eklunds had for each of their employees in both the drilling business and the horse business was far beyond the standards of anyone else I have ever known." Ward Fenton

Lew and JoAnn Eklund established the Sagebrush Circuit Youth Scholarship Fund. JoAnn served on the American Legion Scholarship committee. She and Lew enjoyed watching the students grow and develop through their years in Carlin and beyond. They also established college trusts for each of their grandchildren. All nine of their grandchildren have graduated from institutions of higher education with degrees ranging from technical certifications to an MBA. JoAnn and Lew were committed to giving back in every way they could; volunteering time and resources; organizing and working on committees or helping fund the many projects undertaken by the City of Carlin, the Carlin Senior Center, the Carlin Combined School, Elko County schools and students, youth sports, and any other activity enjoyed by kids. Lew is well known for dedicating his time to preserving history moments of students and all things Nevada by filming events to document community, state and national events. JoAnn and Lew were supporters of the Northeastern Nevada Museum with their time and resources. The Eklunds loved the selfless reward of giving back, most of the time quietly and anonymously.

Service to family to community to state to nation to world sums up the contributions of my nominations of Lew Eklund and JoAnn Eklund for 2021 Distinguished Nevadans. I have been honored and blessed to know them, call them friends, and observe their work ethic and service-centric lifestyle for more than thirty-five years. Each of them has significantly contributed to the economic, scientific, and social advancement of Nevada and its people, while also providing exceptional service to their family, community, state, nation and the world which has constructively influenced the well-being of humankind. We are indebted to them for their leadership, integrity and selfless service.

## **Lew Eklund and JoAnn Eklund**

### **Lew Eklund Nomination Narrative**

Lew Eklund was born January 13, 1932 on a farm in North Dakota. He was one of 8 children. All the family members had to work and Lew was no exception with driving a team of horses at age 6 and a tractor at age 8. He attended a two-room country school. However, high school and work were in conflict at that time of family struggle, so Lew left Stanley High School after 2 ½ years to work and help the family. He had various jobs during this period; working in a bowling alley, was an apple picker in Yakima, Washington, dug post holes and cut cord wood in Oregon and any odd jobs he could find. His travels quickly brought him back to North Dakota when he was urgently needed on the family farm.

After the family crisis was averted, in 1950 Lew went to work for a seismograph crew and this marked the beginning of what was to become a prolific life and career change that would alter his life forever. Starting from the ground up, Lew worked his way to driller for a seismograph drilling company. With Evans & Cole Drilling Company, Lew was part of the team that initially worked on the Garrison Dam in North Dakota.

As Lew says, no doubt the best thing he has ever done was to marry JoAnn Huus. They got married on October 25, 1953 after a fast and furious 2 month romance which lasted over 63 years. Together they loved but struggled greatly financially early in their marriage nonetheless were able through hard work and with the help of friends to start Eklund Drilling on June 1, 1960. They had 4 children, Candice Lou, Lance Joel, Sheri Lynn and Valerie Jo. During the early years of the company, the family moved 44 times before permanently calling Carlin, Nevada "home".

After a fortuitous and life changing set of circumstances, Eklund Drilling began working for Newmont Gold Company in 1963. That unique strategic business union lasted over 45 years and because of the pioneering efforts from both companies, microscopic gold recovery techniques were developed which revolutionized the industry and led to the discovery and eventual recovery of gold along the Carlin Trend and other areas globally with this groundbreaking technology. Several of Newmont Gold Company's employees as well as Lew Eklund in 2008 were inducted into the National Mining Association Hall of Fame due to their tremendous contributions to the mining industry. Lew worked night and day to keep Eklund Drilling running smoothly and efficiently until eventually Eklund Drilling became one of the most sought after and successful family owned drilling companies in the nation. A track rig prototype was developed in a partnership with Drill Systems to construct a drill rig which was more environmentally friendly to public lands, hillsides and viewsheds by reducing the amount of disturbance with minimal site and access road preparation. This drill model was a state of the art advancement for the mining and drilling industries and as a contribution to the industries that had been so good to him and his family, Lew, Lance and Eklund Drilling declined to patent the model and instead released their interest to the development for the

betterment of the industries. This track mounted drill rig has allowed drilling companies to operate in previously unavailable sensitive environmental areas and greatly improved relationships with federal land managers. Many other uses and versions of this rig have been developed and the mining industries have benefitted greatly from their existence. Lew also contributed to the design of two other drill rigs, the Gardner Denver 1500W and the rubber tired version of the track drill. In all, Eklund Drilling in its 48 years contributed to the design of ten different drill rigs.

Lew Eklund, with his wife JoAnn owned and managed Eklund Drilling, from 1960-1988. Their son, Lance, bought the company in 1988, after managing since 1986, and continued to build the reputation and legacy of Eklund Drilling with his wife Joanne, until Boart Longyear purchased the company in 2008. Eklund Drilling Company was committed to their clients, their employees and safety of all and well-known for their generosity to their employees, the communities they lived in and the quality of service given to each and every client.

Lew was a man of many skills, and he ventured into the Appaloosa horse industry wholeheartedly and 100% committed from the start in the late 1960's. As with the drilling company, the early days of horse breeding and showing were constant searches and struggles and the quest to find just the right stallion and mares to breed for that perfect horse was always present in Lew's mind. He found as near perfection as he had ever seen in a young stallion in Colorado, Dial Bright Two. Lew and JoAnn bought the unproven, unknown stallion and developed a strategy with trainer George Minic to campaign the newly named "The Executive" to a National Championship and to become the foundation of their breeding program. When you have the eye, the desire, the commitment and that 100% work ethic, good things happen. The Executive surpassed all hopes and expectations and won the 2 year old Stallion Class in 1975 at the National Appaloosa Horse Show in Roseville, CA. He stood at the Silver State Appaloosa Ranch in Carlin to a closed book and only bred Lew Eklund selected mares. With the great talent of many nationally recognized trainers, those get have achieved over 60 National, World or High-Point Year End Championships and as a result The Executive, several top quality ranch owned mares and Lew and JoAnn Eklund were inducted into the 2003 National Appaloosa Horse Club Hall of Fame and also achieved many prominent National production awards. Lew also served as an Appaloosa Horse Club National Director, Utah Appaloosa Horse Club Director and was the Sagebrush Circuit Appaloosa Horse Club President for most of its 20 year span. Lew was also recognized and honored to receive the Nevada Horseman's Association Hall of Fame induction award.

Giving back to the communities Lew lived in was a constant focus of his for many decades. His love for his family and friends drove his interest in video production and he soon became a familiar fixture on the sidelines for his grandchildren's sports events. He filmed their games from the Jr. Football leagues, to Sr. league to high school as well as filming basketball and softball games as well. Every member of the team received a video and many

still watch and cherish those moments today. This love of video production grew to encompass the Carlin Senior Videos played at graduations; wild horse (mustang) gathering videos for BLM, helicopter herding and various aspects of the wild horse populations on public lands; ranch life; weddings; funerals; Grass March Cowboy Express interviews, videos and books to record the historic march to Washington, D.C. led by the late modern day patriot A. Grant Gerber; to working with the Northeastern Nevada Museum to interview and provide CDs on historic local citizen legends in this region. Lew also produced two family history books and traveled across the United States and Norway to meet relatives and learn about his Norwegian heritage.

Lew was honored as a recipient with his wife JoAnn as the 2002 Carlin Citizens of the Year Award winners and they served on their hard working committee for many years. Carlin has always held a special place in Lew's heart and his contributions have been numerous, often anonymous and without recognition. He received a Life-Time Achievement Award from the City of Carlin; the Elko County Commission; State of Nevada Governor and U.S. Congress special recognition for his life time of service to the Carlin Community. Lew and JoAnn's commitment to the City of Carlin and its citizens has been heartfelt and an example of community service at its highest level while never expecting anything in return. Lew could identify with people from all walks of life, was a mentor to many and a friend to all.

### **JoAnn Eklund Nomination Narrative**

One cannot recognize Lew Eklund without realizing his wife of 63 years, Mrs. JoAnn Eklund was equally a contributor to the quality of life everywhere they lived and most especially to Nevada residents.

In 1953, JoAnn graduated from Plaza High School in North Dakota. She had plans to attend college to obtain a teaching degree. However, the summer after graduation, while working at the Super Value Store in Parshall, ND, she met the man of her dreams and lifelong love, Lew Eklund. They married 2 months later. Although she chose marriage over a teaching degree, she never lost her zeal for teaching life principles to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Not only did she and Lew establish education trusts for them, she also served on the American Legion Scholarship committee. All nine of her grandchildren have graduated from higher education institutions ranging from technical certifications to a masters in business.

The couple first moved to Riverdale, North Dakota where Lew worked on the Garrison Dam as a driller, then moved to Moorcroft, Wyoming to explore for uranium. In total, the family would move 44 times in 11 years before permanently calling Carlin, Nevada "home". They lived in North Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Montana, Nebraska and Colorado following the drill jobs, some states several different times and different towns. They had four children; Candice Lou, Lance Joel, Sheri Lynn and Valerie Jo. Together they loved,

sacrificed and financially struggled early in their marriage but with those Norwegian North Dakota farming roots and work ethics and with the help of friends, they were able to start Eklund Drilling Company on June 1, 1960.

Eklund Drilling Company was the first drilling company to drill for microscopic gold, so prevalent in global mines today. Many of those drilling and sampling techniques used in the 1960's discovery of the Newmont Gold Company goldfield and the Carlin Trend were developed by Eklund Drilling and are still used today. As Eklund Drilling was growing and expanding, JoAnn wasn't just the owner of Eklund Drilling with her husband Lew. She also worked for the company doing all the office work while Lew would be out in the field drilling or soliciting jobs.

JoAnn was always the rock solid foundation of support for the family 24/7, always making sure their children were well taken care of, creating unforgettable custom birthday cakes with big parties, running to games or other activities and making each and every holiday magical. She became quite a renowned cook and baker and her kitchen was always full of homemade pies, cookies, cakes, bars and other delicious treats. The values of family and life learned early on in those farm settings carried throughout JoAnn and Lew's lives. The strength, support and unconditional love of family was their conviction and they spread that love and compassion to all that they met.

Lew and JoAnn owned Eklund Drilling Company from 1960-1988, at which time their son, Lance, and his wife Joanne, purchased the company and continued to build the reputation and legacy until selling to Boart Longyear in 2008. Eklund Drilling Company was committed to their clients, their employees and safety of all and well-known for their generosity to their employees, the communities they lived in and the quality of service given to each and every client.

Lew and JoAnn also raised and showed Appaloosa horses for many years. As with the drilling company, that commitment to excellence was always there driving them to become the very best. Their hard work and dedication led to their first National Championship in 1975 with their stallion "The Executive". Their closed book breeding operation led to over 60 National or World Championships and as a result, the Executive, Lew and JoAnn and several of their mares were inducted into the National Appaloosa Horse Club's Hall of Fame in 2003. JoAnn and Lew also started and produced, with the help of many volunteers, the Sagebrush Circuit Appaloosa Horse Show held in Elko, NV, which ran for almost 20 years and was one of the biggest Appaloosa shows in the country. They also funded the National Appaloosa Horse Club Youth Foundation scholarships for many years. Through the many aspects of being successful breeders, the most fulfilling and exciting role to JoAnn was staying up all night with Lew and the pregnant mares, helping them foal or just watching, mesmerized by those newborn beautifully colored Appaloosa foals and dreaming of their futures. The Eklunds' horses were highly prized nationally and also have been sold and shipped to Canada, Mexico, Australia, Brazil, France, The Netherlands and Italy.

If the true test of a person is how they contribute in their community, JoAnn and Lew were a testament to the term of "giving back". Because of their success and appreciation for all that mining and the City of Carlin, NV had done for them, JoAnn and Lew were committed to giving back in every way they could; volunteering time and resources, organizing, working on committees or simply helping fund the many projects undertaken by the City of Carlin, Carlin Combined Schools, kids' sports or club activities and independent projects. JoAnn served on the American Legion Scholarship Committee for many years and enjoyed watching the students grow and develop through their years in Carlin and beyond. She took an active interest in many activities in Carlin and baked pies, cakes, bars or dishes for any event and took cherished Christmas trays to the Police Station, Post Office and anyone else lucky enough to receive one. JoAnn was also active in the annual Museum's fundraiser, the Great Humboldt Duck Race, and because she bought so many duck entries, she was the Lucky Winner several times! Her heart was made of pure gold and she loved the selfless reward of giving back, most of the time quietly and anonymously. For their many acts of kindness and involvement in the community, JoAnn and Lew were named Carlin Citizens of the Year in 2002. They also received the Life Time Achievement Award from the City of Carlin, the Elko County Commission, the State of Nevada as well as the U.S. Congressional Special Recognition Award. For their contributions to the Carlin Senior Center, they were honored with a permanent plaque at its entry.

JoAnn's greatest love was her family and it was central to everything she did. She loved going to her children, grandchildren and eventually great-grandchildren's games or events to support them in whatever they chose to do. Big family get togethers and reunions were her favorite times and friends became common invitees to grow the family even bigger. Church and God were fundamental to her values and she lived her life by the Golden Rule. She always did the right thing, she loved unconditionally and she spread kindness everywhere she went. "Make each day special" and "Always stay humble and kind" were her beliefs and she lived those devotedly until the end.

"Family to community to State to Nation to the World" sums up the contributions of my nominations of Lew Eklund and JoAnn Eklund for Distinguished Nevadans. I have been honored to know them and observe their work ethic and service-centric lifestyle for more than thirty-five years. Each of them individually (and together) have significantly contributed to the economic, scientific, and social advancement of Nevada and its people, while also providing exceptional service to their community, state, nation, and to the world which has constructively influenced the well-being of humankind."