



Virgil Holtgrewe, left, congratulated by Lakewood Rotary president, Lou Hassoun.

## Lakewood Rotarian Honored by National Western Stock Show

Virgil Holtgrewe, a member of the Lakewood Rotary Club for over fifty years, will receive this year's Friend of the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) Award. Rotarians, whose motto is "Service Above Self," devote much volunteer time and energy on behalf of their community. Holtgrewe's volunteerism has been directed toward the NWSS.

Holtgrewe, who has been a familiar face at NWSS for more than forty years, has actively volunteered his time for twenty of those years, helping guests, exhibitors and management put on the granddaddy of all livestock shows. He is always there, he's always reliable, and is truly a friend of NWSS, according to Pete Crow, *Western Livestock Journal* Publisher.

Holtgrewe will be honored at the Red Meat Club's annual dinner meeting on January 15. Traditionally, the honor is reserved for producers who have shown livestock at the show. However, the Red Meat Club Committee felt that Holtgrewe was well deserving of the award after his endless hours of personal time spent to help improve the NWSS.

Born on the family farm in southeast Nebraska, Holtgrewe grew up working with his father. After two years in the military, he attended Wentworth Military Academy, and went on to graduate from the University of Nebraska, majoring in soils and minoring in soil conservation and general agriculture.

His first job was at Farmers National in Omaha, Nebraska, where he was a member of the farm management team, which conducted annual evaluations of their managed property, including appraisals of land values. Sent to the Fort Morgan, Colorado, office, Holtgrewe attended his first stock show in 1970. He represented the Farm Management Company which had an office in the Livestock Exchange Building, where they hosted an open house during the show and provided folks a place to rest their feet.

In the early days, volunteering at the NWSS meant doing whatever odd jobs management could find, such as hosting the International Center. Following the reconstruction of the show grounds to include the Hall of Education, there was a need to escort visitors through the show to explain what was going on. The result was the establishment of the Volunteer Corps, which now includes over 500 people who have a passion for livestock.

Holtgrewe says that the volunteer program keeps the show running smooth and plays a significant role in keeping the show's operating costs down. "Each year, the volunteers are asked to do a little bit more, and each year they are happy to oblige," he said. Lakewood Rotary congratulates Virgil Holtgrewe for his outstanding volunteerism.