



Tribute to Bill Viar –2015 Friend of NEAFCS

Carol Schlitt (IL), NEAFCS Historian

Many NEAFCS members who have attended an Annual Session in the past 25 years will remember interacting with Bill Viar, Director of the Special Risk Division at American Income Life Insurance Company in the Exhibit Hall. Bill was a cheerful and engaging exhibitor who really enjoyed reconnecting with NEAFCS members each year and his passing on April 17, 2020 was shocking and sad news, especially for those who have served on the NEAFCS Board and Exhibit committee.

Because of Bill's dedication and commitment to NEAFCS and the entire Cooperative Extension Service System, NEAFCS bestowed on Bill in 2015 the Friend of Extension Award during the Annual Session at The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, WV. "This award is the highest honor bestowed by the Association in recognition of an individual who has made significant contributions to The Extension Family and Consumer Science education program," said NEAFCS 2015 President Peggy Eihler who presented the award to Bill during the Thursday evening Award Gala in the elegant Greenbrier Colonial Ball Room.

Cheryle Jones Syracuse, NEAFCS President in 2000 remembers fondly of Bill as he shared the stage with her during the afternoon NEAFCS awards ceremony in the Morris A. Mechanic Theatre in Baltimore Maryland. "At that time American Income Life was sponsoring our Communications Awards," said Cheryle. American Income Life, which began sponsoring NEAFCS Communication Awards in 1981, was a major NEAFCS Award Sponsor in 2000, sponsoring 8 categories. "I remember inviting Bill to join me on the stage at the theatre to present these awards," said Cheryle. "He was pleased to be there, had a smile, a handshake (and sometimes a hug) for the award winners. Bill always had a warm smile, remembered people's names and truly seemed to enjoy being part of our annual sessions each year," added Cheryle.

"Bill was such a great supporter of Extension and Family and Consumer Sciences and I'm proud to have known him and thank him for his longtime support and friendship to me and our association," concluded Cheryle.

We will miss you Bill...