



Lillian Gremel

UDIM Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Serving and promoting the dairy industry in Michigan has been an important part of MMPA member Lillian Gremel's life for over 40 years. For her numerous efforts, Lillian was recently awarded with The United Dairy Industry of Michigan's (UDIM) Excellence in Dairy Promotion Award.

"Her dedication is just amazing," says Debbie Kubacki, MMPA West Huron Local Dairy Communicator. "She has met so many challenges in her lifetime, earning her much respect and admiration; that I feel she truly symbolizes what this award represents."

Lillian and her husband, Harold, farm in Sebewaing with their son, Walter, daughter, Kathy, and son-in-law, Darwin Sneller. The family farms over 1,000 acres in addition to dairying.

Since 1953, when the Gremels first combined their dairy herds and lives, the pair has worked

together on their farm. Both had four cows each and the couple bought four more when they purchased their dairy. The original herd of 12 contained Holsteins, Brown Swiss and a Milking

Short-horn. Today, their herd has been nationally recognized and consists of over 70 registered Holsteins.

"We have always done our own milking," Lillian says. "We have hired people to help in the fields or to feed but we always milk."

Even with her active role in the daily farm work and her duties as a mother, Lillian recognized early on the importance of promoting the product she and her

family worked so hard to produce. She is a charter member of the Huron County Dairy Diplomats and Huron County Dairy Promotions, serving in leadership positions of those organizations for more than 20 years.

"We have a commitment to serve for the betterment of our industry and our community," says Lillian.

During her time as a Dairy Diplomat, Lillian participated in numerous promotions in the Sebewaing area and throughout Michigan. She has participated and helped run several mall promotions and area demonstrations as well as volunteering for many years at the UDIM dairy booth at the Michigan State Fair.

For over 25 years, Lillian and Harold have taken a lead role

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in requesting and storing dairy products for the Michigan Sugar Festival and the Huron County Fair. The couple also volunteers their time to sell those products in the Huron County Dairy Promotions Trailer.

Money raised by the sale of the milk, cheese and ice cream treats from the trailer are used to fund Project Red programs and scholarships for students pursuing an education in agriculture in the area. Lillian has participated in a number of those educational programs for youth, including Adopt-A-Cow, Ag in the Classroom farm visits and Project RED.

Lillian's commitment to the youth in her community extends to her service as a 4-H leader for 40 years. She also spent 20 years as a member of the State 4-H Programming Committees on Dairy as well as Foods and Nutrition.

As a member of the 4-H Programming Committee, Lillian was one of the people instrumental in establishing the 4-H Communications Contests, which includes the Dairy Food Poster Contest. As a 4-H leader, she coached the Huron County Dairy Quiz Bowl team that won the Michigan competition and went on to place second at the national level.

"Much of what the youth learn in 4-H and FFA – whatever skills they can gain – will follow them for the rest of their lives," Lillian says. "Even if many of them don't come back to the farm, they have learned so much."

Lillian honed her leadership skills through a three-year commitment in the Kellogg New Horizons Program. Together, Lillian and Harold have been past recipients of the West Huron MMPA Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award, MMPA Outstanding Young Dairy Couple Award, MSU Dairy Farmer of the Year and were charter members of

Quite-A-Bunch, a Huron County Farm Bureau community action group.

The United Dairy Industry of Michigan's (UDIM) Excellence in Dairy Promotion Award recognizes one outstanding Michigan dairy farm family member for dedication to promoting dairy products. The award is sponsored by the Dairy Diplomats of Michigan.



Lillian received the UDIM Lifetime Achievement Award by fellow Dairy Diplomat and MSU Project GREEN Communications Manager Sara Long at the Dairy Diplomat's annual Seminar in February.

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