

Thursday Evening, December 4, 1975

The twenty-fifth annual banquet-reception was held in the Big Bend North Room of the Tallahassee Hilton, Tallahassee, Florida. Mr. Al Fordham made the following Award of Merit presentation:

AWARD OF MERIT PRESENTATION

AL FORDHAM

Prior to the establishment of his own business firm in 1945, the recipient of this year's Award of Merit worked for the U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service as nursery manager and as director of the Agricultural Bureau of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to many years of service on various committees, including a number of years as chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the American Nurserymen's Association, he has been active in a variety of nursery associations. He is past president of the Greater St. Louis Landscape and Nurserymen's Association, Missouri Association of Nurserymen, Western Association of Nurserymen, Mail Order Association of Nurserymen and the International Plant Propagator's Society. More recently he was elected to serve on the American Association of Nurserymen's Board of Directors.

One of his most progressive achievements was to institute a training program that would acquaint high school students with vocational opportunities that were to be found in the nursery industry. This course termed the "Vo-Ag Program," proved highly successful. Though the training was directed toward those who did not plan further education, about half the participants were motivated to an extent where they did, in fact, proceed to state universities where they enrolled as horticultural majors. The project has received wide recognition, has been televised in the midwest and now serves as a model for other such programs. It is also a fact that a number of young men who passed through the personnel training program in his business have gone on to become figures of national prominence in the nursery industry.

It is an honor to represent the International Plant Propagator's Society in presenting the 1975 Award of Merit to Mr. Hugh Steavenson, Forrest Keeling Nurseries, Elsberry, Missouri.

Friday Morning, December 5, 1975

The moderator for the morning's program was Mr. Bill Studebaker.