

Howard Snortland
Tree Recipient 1994
Presented by Dr. Lowell Jensen

It is my pleasure to be here today for this dedication ceremony. These two individuals, M. F. (Pete) and Howard, with a man named Ray Bangs are the three people to whom I owe much of what has happened to me in my educational career.

It was Ray Bangs, then the Superintendent at Bottineau who gave me my first teaching job, and it was he who encouraged me to come to Bismarck and work with DPI in 1968. I stayed for 12 years and there are a lot of wonderful things I could say about Pete and Ray and Dick Klein, and Kiaran Dooley, Jim Slocum, Vern Eberly, and Art Nestos to name a few of the “old guard” in DPI at that time.

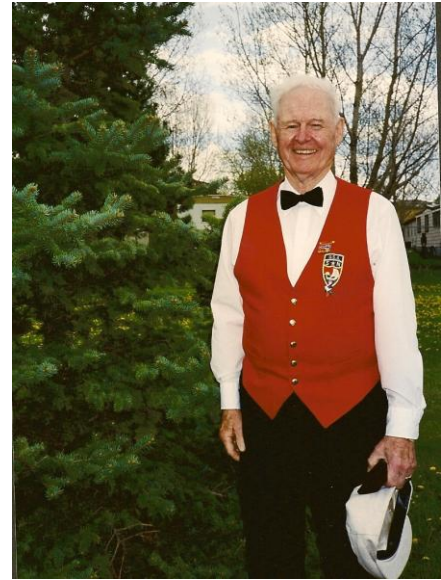
But my mission here today is to talk about my good friend Howard Snortland. When I came to DPI, Howard had already been in state government for 31 years, 20 of them in DPI, and had built an excellent reputation as the state’s leading authority on school finance, not only in North Dakota, but across the country as well. In my opinion, Howard has to be considered the architect of the present system of funding schools, and in all honesty, if the system had been continued the way he envisioned it, we wouldn’t be talking today about inequities.

But, maybe even more important than the knowledge base that Howard brought to the job was a rare ability to work with other people (legislators, school administrators, professionals, organizations) and to earn their trust and their respect. With this winning combination of excellent traits, it is not surprising that he was elected to be state superintendent in 1977.

He came to the job well prepared:

1. Elementary and Secondary – Sharon, North Dakota
2. B.A (1937) UND
3. Masters (1958) UND
4. Long record of service to education and the state.

Lest you think he was completely career oriented, I want to quickly point out that he also found time to be an excellent husband to his wife Adeline of almost 54 years, and a wonderful father to three children, Jan, Signe, Kristi Jo, and Howard Jay; and now more recently a fantastic grandfather to six grandchildren.



He also found the time to be a great friend, a mentor, and a counselor to a great many people. I know, because I have been on the receiving end of his friendship for 26 years and I am richer because of the experience.

I can think of no person deserves this recognition more than my good friend, Howard Snortland.

Howard passed away May 1, 2006; Adeline passed away on May 2, 2006. They had a combined service at the First Presbyterian Church in Bismarck for the two of them.