

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Michelle Landsverk, 218-435-2834, mlandsverk@icloud.com

Steiger Family to be inducted into IDEA Hall of Fame

BEMIDJI MN – April 6, 2015 – The Steiger Family will be inducted into the IDEA Hall of Fame on April 22 at the IDEA Competition Awards Banquet, to be held at the University of Minnesota Crookston. The award will be accepted by Douglass Steiger.

The IDEA Hall of Fame was instituted in 2009 to recognize and honor the accomplishments of the region’s legacy innovators—those within the region who have inspired others with their entrepreneurial vision, leadership and achievement. The Steiger family will be added to a distinguished list of past honorees, including: Andy Wells of Wells Technology; Edgar Hetteen, founder of Polaris and Arctic Cat; Glen and Dennis Brazier, brothers who founded MATTRACKS and Central Boiler, respectively; William S. (Bill) Marvin, Marvin Window and Doors; Mark Larson, COO and President of Digi-Key; Ron Stordahl, Founder and CEO of Digi-Key, and Don Ricke, founder of TEAM Industries.

The Steiger family achieved great renown within the region with the invention of the Steiger tractor. It all began in the mid 1950’s, when John Steiger and his sons, Douglass and Maurice, needed a larger tractor. They decided it would be less expensive to build a tractor rather than to buy one that was large enough for their needs. Douglass Steiger drew up the first plans during the winter of 1957, when he was just 24 years old. What followed was an amazing history of entrepreneurship, creativity, and sheer determination.

They built their first tractor in the barn during the winter of 1957. Made entirely of used parts, the first Steiger tractor was hand built, using nothing more than basic farm shop tools – a cutting torch, arc welder, small turning lathe, and other small miscellaneous tools. The breakthrough innovation was Douglass Steiger’s patented design, which allowed the chassis to articulate, and provided a much tighter turning radius than a standard tractor.

The abilities and features of that first tractor impressed neighboring farmers, who asked the brothers to build them similar tractors. The brothers never intended to develop a tractor manufacturing company. However, the interest and demand evolved into a full-blown manufacturing business between the years of 1961 and 1969. In 1969, the Steigers decided to

sell 52 percent of their interest in the company. With the sale, the company moved to Fargo, North Dakota. Douglass Steiger remained active with the company through 1986.

In addition to their popularity with farmers, Steiger tractor technology and design have been widely acclaimed by many tractor experts and historians. In the *Ultimate Guide to Tractors*, Jim Glastonbury said, "Most modern super-tractors still follow the same pattern." Their impact has been recognized around the world. Peter Simpson, in *Ultimate Tractor Power – Articulated Tractors of the World*, said, "the big lime green tractors became the most popular and well known of all the articulated tractors and the Steiger name is the most recognizable name to be associated with four-wheel-drive articulated tractors worldwide."

Douglass Steiger will be accepting the Hall of Fame award at the seventh annual IDEA Competition Banquet, to be held April 22, 5:00-8:30 p.m. at University of Minnesota Crookston, Bede Ballroom. Early registration is highly recommended, as space is limited. For more information about the banquet, or to register, go to www.ideacompetition.org.

The IDEA Competition turns great ideas into great businesses. IDEA partners include Northwest Minnesota Foundation, 360-Degrees, University of Minnesota Crookston, Bremer Banks of Crookston and Warren, Northwest Regional Small Business Development Center, Security Bank USA, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc., Ultima Bank Minnesota, Border State Bank, Arvig, LaValley Industries, NID Inc., KB RV Center, Spot-Knot, Reel Deal, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, and Red Lake Electric Cooperative.