

OASAA's Alum of the Year, Lyle Everingham

The Onaway Area Schools Alumni Association recently chose Lyle Everingham as its first ever Alum of the Year.

Below is the first of three articles on this distinguished Onaway graduate which the Outlook will publish in preparation for Mr. Everingham's official acceptance of the award on July 4th, immediately following the parade.

Lyle Everingham is gracious when asked to an-

swer a few questions about his life.

Having had his share of notice over his eight-plus decades, he is modest about it, expressing gratitude at being chosen.

An Onaway boy who worked his way up the corporate ladder at Kroger Foods, Lyle speaks of being "lucky enough" to have achieved this or that milestone in life.

It's apparent from talking to him that luck



Lyle Everingham

was only a small part of it.

Born in Flint, in the 1920s, Lyle moved soon after with his family to Onaway, the family's home area.

Six more children came along after Lyle, and the Depression was hitting the nation hard.

His grandparents owned a farm on County Hwy 638, which is still in the Everingham family today.

Lyle enjoyed spending time there, helping out with the chores that every farm requires.

Pastimes he recalls are typical of Depression-

era activities where kids made their own fun: ice-skating on the site where Tom's Family Market now stands, roller skating on ancient skates with no ball bearings, rolling a hoop with a stick, and playing baseball with a ball made of tightly wrapped cloth.

"We didn't know we were deprived," he says with a chuckle. "We had a good time."

Lyle's parents both worked outside the home to support the family, and as soon as he was old enough, Lyle began earning money as well.

He mowed lawns and remembers being criticized on one job for never getting it quite the way the owner wanted it.

Later he worked at the five-and-dime on State Street, not knowing at the time that he was gaining sales experience that would prove helpful in his future with one of the largest grocery chains in America.

School engendered pleasant memories. "It

was a good basic education," he reports. "No frills because it was a small school, but it gave us what we needed."

Lyle also gave to the school, serving as class president in his senior year. Ironically, his brother was elected sophomore class president and his sister freshman class president that same year. "I guess they had enough Everinghams to put up with," he jokes.

Teacher names familiar to Onaway's long-time residents came up as Lyle spoke: Floyd Merritt, Carl and Ruth McClutchey, and Bessie Smith, a lady he remembers as strict but "a

great teacher."

Band was inspiring to Lyle, who loves music and is remembered by classmates as a great dancer. "I did love to dance," he assures. "I didn't miss many dances."

He played the Sou-saphone and claims that as a group the band "did all right." At one time he considered following Mr. McClutchey's example and becoming a band teacher but his plans would change, as we'll see in the next installment.