

# Rotary Ag Day is March 30

The New Hampton Rotary Club will host its annual Ag Day dinner on Thursday, March 30 at The Pinicon Restaurant. All area residents are invited to attend. Tickets for the luncheon, which will begin at 11:45 a.m., are \$6 and are available at Security State Bank or the State Bank of Lawler or any local Rotarian.

Dr. Kenneth M. Quinn, former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, who assumed the leadership of the World Food Prize Foundation on Jan. 1 following his retirement from the State Department, will be their speaker.

Ken Quinn grew up in Dubuque. Following graduation from Wahlert High School and Loras College, he attended graduate school and then joined the American Foreign Service where his rather unusual diplomatic career spanned almost 32 years. During this time he rose to become one of the two or three most decorated Foreign Service officers of his generation, recognized both for the important role he played in humanitarian and refugee endeavors, as well as for his actions in dangerous and violent situations.

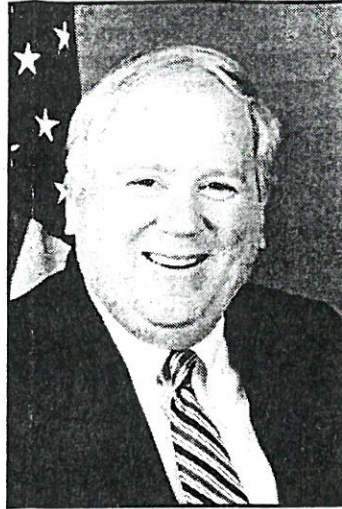
His first assignment was not to an embassy, but as a rural development officer in Vietnam. He eventually spent six years there during the war, logging more than 250 hours of combat helicopter and ground operations as an advisor in the Mekong Delta. He came under hostile fire on a number of occasions and was wounded in a North Vietnamese rocket attack.

Subsequent assignments included: a stint on Henry Kissinger's National Security Council staff at the White House; a position as Special Assistant to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke; an assignment as Narcotics Counselor at the US mission to the United Nations in Vienna; humanitarian efforts on behalf of

refugees; four years as Chairman of the Inter-agency Task Force on POW/MIAs; and membership on the US - Russia POW/MIA Commission. He received a Meritorious Honor Award at the White House for his work in helping hundreds of refugees escape from Vietnam at the end of the war; and a Superior Honor Award and a special Justice Department Commendation for his role in identifying and convicting two men engaged in espionage against the United States.

Dr. Quinn emerged from these experiences as one of the United States government's foremost experts on Indochina. He wrote his doctorate dissertation on the origins of the radical Pol Pot regime and is widely acknowledged as the first person to discover and report on the genocidal policies and practices of the Khmer Rouge in 1974. Twenty-five years later, while serving as Ambassador, he played a pivotal role in the 1999 capture of the last remaining Khmer Rouge general, who is now awaiting trial for causing the deaths of up to two million Cambodians. A fluent speaker of Vietnamese, Dr. Quinn also acted as interpreter for President Ford during high level meetings at the White House and personally negotiated the first ever entry by United States personnel into a Vietnamese prison to search for American POW/MIAs. He was also a member of the first United States team to ever gain entry to a Russian prison for a similar search.

In 1978, Dr. Quinn returned to Iowa to join the staff of Governor Robert Ray under a special exchange program. He was in the forefront of the Governor's Indochinese refugee resettlement program and served as Executive Director of Iowa SHARES, the 1979 program that sent Iowa doctors, nurses, medical supplies and



Dr. Kenneth M. Quinn

food to Cambodia to alleviate starvation. He also acted as the Governor's liaison with the National Guard and disaster coordinator, dealing with such diverse events as the Manson and Algona tornadoes, the Fort Madison Prison riot and the visit of Pope John Paul II. When Governor Ray left office, Dr. Quinn returned to his career with the Foreign Service where he spent the next 18 years.

Subsequent assignments in the Philippines, the Middle East and Cambodia all came at times when terrorism and political violence permeated those areas. He and his family narrowly escaped harm when a rocket struck their residence in Phnom Penh in 1997. They also were forced to travel under the protection of body guards in the Philippines when then Deputy Ambassador Quinn was targeted by the terrorist New People's Army. He also came under attack while doing refugee work in the Gaza Strip, and was the only Foreign Service officer ever able to pass undetected through Syrian and PLO checkpoints in violence racked Lebanon in 1983 and observe secret military operations by forces of Yassir Arafat

and George Habash.

Ambassador Quinn has directed embassy operations during approximately 50 volatile demonstrations, two violent coup attempts and one outbreak of civil war, as well as coordinating the response to several international terrorist incidents. His embassy in Phnom Penh was judged to be the most well prepared United States diplomatic mission in terms of responding to external threats and was singled out for special commendation by Secretary Albright. It was also honored with the State Department Award for Human Rights and Democracy in recognition of Ambassador Quinn and his staff's efforts to assist endangered political activists. His mission also twice won the Director of Central Intelligence's Award for exceptional political reporting, the only embassy world wide to have done so.

At his retirement ceremony, Ambassador Quinn was presented the Secretary of State's Award for Heroism and Valor for his efforts to protect American citizens exposed to danger in Cambodia, as well as the four life saving rescues in which he participated in Vietnam. He is one of only three Foreign Service officers to have twice won the American Foreign Service Association Award for intellectual courage in challenging policy, and the only officer to receive those honors and the Presidential Distinguished Service Award - the highest recognition accorded career State Department officers.

Ambassador Quinn and his wife Le Son reside in Des Moines in the home they purchased 22 years ago and never sold. They have three children. Two sons, Shandon and Davin, are in college and medical school respectively. A daughter, Kelly, attends Dowling High School.