



**WSWS Officer and Committee Report  
March 2026**

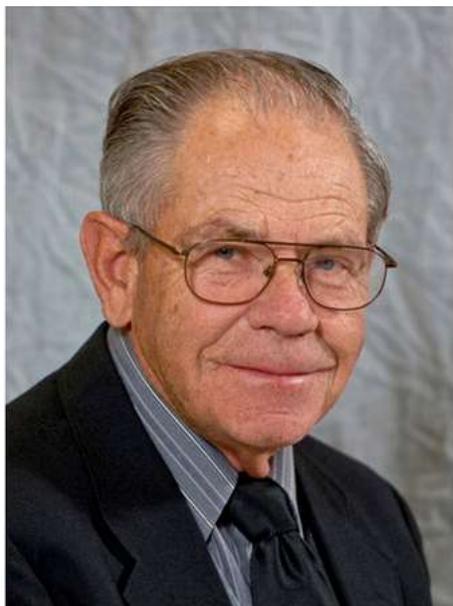
**Office or Committee Name:** Necrology

**Officer or Chairperson Name:** Earl Creech

**Committee Members:** Aaron Becerra-Alvarez and Erik Lehnhoff

**Date of Preparation:** March 4, 2026

**Activities during the year:** Information was collected for WSWS past and present members who passed away this last year. This year, our society lost one member. The write-up is provided below.



**Robert Nicholas Klein (Feb. 8, 1938-Mar. 22, 2025)**

Robert Nicholas Klein, 87, professor emeritus and Nebraska Extension cropping systems specialist, died March 22, 2025.

Klein dedicated more than 55 years of service to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and was widely recognized for his research and outreach work in pesticide application, nozzle selection and weed management in no-till and reduced-till cropping systems. During his career, he watched farming transition from some producers using horse-drawn threshing machines to today's massive diesel-powered tractors.

Klein was born on Feb. 8, 1938, in Bellwood, Nebraska. Growing up on a farm near David City, he became interested in the details of growing crops and raising animals because of his daily farm chores. He attended grade school at Saint Mary's Catholic Church and high school at David City High. He was an active member of 4-H and showed livestock at local events, including Aksarben and the Nebraska State Fair.

He attended the University of Nebraska, where he earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture extension. Between his junior and senior years in 1959, Klein participated in training to become

an extension agent at the Dodge County Extension Service in Fremont. He graduated in 1960 and accepted a position as an extension agent in Douglas County in Omaha, where he worked for two years before enrolling in graduate school. He earned a master's degree in agricultural economics in 1964. On June 5, 1963, he married Janet Elizabeth Knust of Omaha.

In August 1963, he became the extension agent chair in Red Willow County, Nebraska, where he worked for 20 years. During his tenure he received several awards, including the United States Department of Agriculture Superior Service Award, Distinguished Service Awards from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents and the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, the Agriculture Builder Award from the Greater McCook Area Chamber of Commerce, and a month-long trip to Southeast Asia, from Red Willow County businesses, farm organizations and service clubs.

He was also a member of the Nebraska Air Guard in Lincoln and rose to the rank of sergeant.

He moved to North Platte in 1983 to join the University of Nebraska West Central Research, Extension and Education Center as a cropping systems specialist. His work included, both as an extension agent and specialist, the development and implementation of ecofarming. He defined this as a system of controlling weeds and managing crop residues throughout a crop rotation with minimal use of tillage, in order to reduce soil erosion and production costs, while increasing weed control, water infiltration, moisture conservation and crop yield.

A large part of Klein's career was teaching producers about conservation tillage and maintaining crop residue to reduce erosion and increase water retention in soil. He was a key contributor to an annual Nebraska Extension publication, "Guide for Weed, Disease, and Insect Management in Nebraska." Klein was a frequent and valued speaker at extension programs across Nebraska and beyond, leaving a lasting impact on producers, educators and colleagues alike.

Klein's awards as an extension specialist included the National Award for Agricultural Excellence, the Cooperative Extension Service Distinguished Extension Specialist Award, inclusion in Who's Who in Agricultural Education, election to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement and being named a Fellow of the North Central Society of Weed Science.

Klein enjoyed his work and loved his family. His hobbies included gardening, fishing, hunting, water skiing, jet skiing, camping, golfing and traveling. Klein is survived by his wife, Janet; daughter Kimberly (Dan) Petsch of Grand Island; son Kendall (Madonna) Klein of Omaha; grandchildren Nicholas Petsch of Grand Island, and Kaylee Petsch of Omaha; Noah, Hope, and Evan Klein of Omaha; one sister, Sr. Rose Klein of Wichita, Kansas; and two brothers, George (Emily) Klein of Chadron, and Ronald Klein of Norfolk.

**Recommendations for Board Action:** None

**Budget Needs:** None

**Name of Person Preparing This Report:** Earl Creech