

NMCGA ON THE TRAIL...

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Tompkins Recognized for Years of Service as Large Animal Veterinarian

Jim Tompkins, DVM was recognized during the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association Quay County Regional Meeting last Saturday, May 8th. Dr. Tompkins has served as the large animal veterinarian to the Quay and surrounding counties for over 40 years.

Jerri Rush and Daniel Zamora of the Quay County Commissioners presented Dr. Tompkins with an engraved plaque to appreciate his years of dedication and service. Mentioning his involvement throughout the community including numerous ranch calls, the Quay County Fair, the Tucumcari Bull Test and too many others to count.

Rush affectionately commended the country vet in a statement, "You are a tremendous part of our community and we look forward to having you serve for as long as you feel like you want to."

Dr. Tompkins was also gifted two western artist prints. One was a pencil drawing titled 'Lost and Found' illustrated by Robert 'Shoofly' Shufelt. The second, a giclée print titled 'The Promise' illustrated by Gary Morton.

"I first met Jim at the Bell Ranch in the early 70's. I believe it was the first time the ranch had ever pregtested," said Morton. "He is a character to be around and a pleasure to work with. He really is brilliant with animals. 'The Promise' is a special piece to honor my friend with as it captures a promising raincloud hovering over Bell Mountain. That's the first place we met all those years ago and seemed fitting."

Dr. John Wenzel, New Mexico State University Extension Veterinarian, also presented a synopsis of the "Life of the Country Vet" as written by Dr. Tompkins wife Pam.

Born and raised in Bueyeros, New Mexico Dr. Tompkins attended Tucumcari High where his mother also taught. He spent his summers and weekends on the family ranch where he learned the intricacies of tending cattle and raising horses. Having grown up on the ranch, he felt his heart for animals and experiences would serve well in the large animal field. After high school he attended New Mexico State University, soon after he enrolled at Colorado State University where he earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. The new Dr. Tompkins returned home (New Mexico) after graduating from CSU in 1972.

From day one he had labeled himself a large animal vet, specializing in equine and bovine. Yet, being a veterinarian in a sparse area of the state has left Dr. Tompkins with a long list of unlikely patients and clients. He has had the pleasure of being an ostrich and emu vet, has untangled barbed wire from an owl's wing and has even made a call to a local truck stop to declare that a trucker's dog was deceased.

It is well known that Dr. Tompkins will take any case and travel any distance for a client. In fact, his surprise presentation to honor his service during the NMCGA Regional Meeting was pushed further into the evening because he received an unexpected from a neighboring ranch to help pull a calf!

"Dr. Tompkins is a person who truly enjoys what he does for a living," said Randell Major, NMCGA President, "we can't thank him enough for his service and friendship to our livestock family."

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