

NCTA Prepares to Celebrate Centennial

When the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture celebrates its centennial in 2013, it will do so after a century of challenges and successes.

By Eric Melvin Reed,
Assistant Professor and Division
Chair of General Education

In 1911, the Nebraska Legislature passed a bill establishing a Nebraska School of Agriculture in the western part of the state.

By then, Frontier County, like the rest of southwest Nebraska, was no longer a frontier. In fact, four decades had passed since the first settlers had arrived and officially formed the county in 1872.

In addition, thanks to amendments increasing the size of allotments in

the Homestead Act, as well as improvements in transportation due to the arrival of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad, Frontier County's original sod houses and dug-outs had given way in 1911 to bustling communities, city parks, telephones, and electrical lighting. Between 1880 and 1890 alone, Frontier County's population rose 910 percent.¹ And by 1910, the county had three times the population it has today (8,572 in 1910 versus 2,756 in 2010). Enough residents had survived the

droughts, buffalo herds, grasshopper plagues, national depressions, and myriad other hardships to believe that Curtis was both a city of the future and the best contender for the state's new agricultural school.

Curtis residents campaigned fervently for the new school, highlighting the town's ideal location near the geographic center of the southwest quadrant of the state. They also noted that Curtis was situated along the Burlington Highline route.

To support their case, resi- *Continued on page 2*

A Message from Dean Sleight

It is a time to celebrate with the graduates of UNSA, UNSTA, and NCTA because next year this wonderful institution that has served so many will be 100 years old. 2011 has been a banner year that should never be forgotten because with your help five major projects with a total value over \$15 million were completed.

On November 18, 2011 the new Education Center, Veterinary Technology Teaching Complex, Aggie West and Aggie Central residence halls and a biomass project that will heat our institution were all dedicated. If you were unable to be at the dedication we invite you to return for our alumni reunion on July 21, 2012 to see what has been accom-

plished at your institution since you left. I am sure you will be impressed!

While NCTA is growing in new programs and capacity to educate more students its small institution spirit remains and it will still feel like home. Your reunion will include walks down your independent memory lanes and we assure you that you will have a wonderful time. And if you can't walk with the vigor that you had while going to school here that is fine because we will have a large people mover that will give you an open carriage tour of campus and the City of Curtis.

Please know that we think of you often and want to get better acquainted with you and the wonderful things you

have done since you began your career. For some it will have been a few short years and for many it will have been many years ago. The bottom line we can all enjoy learning about our institution and the changes that have occurred over the years.

Don't worry about housing and food because we will have plenty of both. The new air-conditioned housing units and the new Valley View Inn await your registration and will do all they can to make your stay pleasant. In fact, if you are able please come and spend a few days in Curtis and golf at the Arrowhead Golf Course adjacent to campus or attend the Dancing Leaf Earth Lodge in Wellfleet where you can tour the Earth Lodge, canoe and even hike on the trails. A host of many



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other attractions in the area will bring you back to your youth again.

The University of Nebraska - Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture currently enrolls over 300 students from 16 states and is "On the Move for Agriculture and rural communities". Please come and see!



Centennial cont'd



George C. Gerdes was one of the most influential senators to serve in the Nebraska State Legislature. Born in Alliance in 1898, he grew up on the family ranch. As a student at the Nebraska School of Agriculture, he joined the Stock Judging Team, helping it become the most successful in the state.

Gerdes's teams took first place both his junior and senior years (1916 and 1917) at the annual high school judging contest in Lincoln. Gerdes's senior team also took first place at the Denver Stock Show in 1917. Gerdes received top individual honors at both locations his senior year.

After graduating, Gerdes served in World War I, then became a state senator from 1959 to 1969. Some of his legislative accomplishments include helping to bring public television to the remote regions of the state, co-sponsoring legislation to provide tax relief, and developing long-term plans for building construction at the University of Nebraska. Gerdes also worked to improve Chadron State Park and make Fort Robinson a recreational area. Known as a "great compromiser," he helped achieve consensus on divisive issues.

dents pledged to donate and help purchase almost 470 acres of land for the school. Nearly 200 businesses and individuals pledged contributions ranging from \$5.00 to more than \$1,000 for a total of \$29,733.04.²

On May 31, despite applications from eleven other communities, including Alma, Bartley, Broken Bow, Cambridge, Culbertson, Holdrege, McCook, Mascot, Minden, North Platte, and Oxford, Curtis was announced the winner. The *Curtis Enterprise* recorded the celebration:

"Whistles blew, bells rang, and the people shouted. By the light of a magnificent bonfire which had been constructed in the middle of the square, the Lake City Band played for an hour or more. Giant fire crackers and the shooting of anvils could be heard far and wide. The spectacle took on the appearance of an early Fourth of July celebration. But the jollification was simply the gratitude as shown by the people for being awarded this prize—the Agricultural School. Nearly every man went home to breakfast that morning bare-headed, his hat having gone to feed the flames—one man even contributed his shirt to the cause. Everybody wore a smile which didn't come off for the day and hasn't yet."³

In November, the State Board of Public Lands and Buildings travelled to Curtis to select the site on which to build Agriculture Hall, a three-story structure with stone trimmings and columns that was to be the main building for the school. Historians

Crandall and Ringstmeyer describe the building's "ultra-modern" design:

"In the days preceding air conditioning, it included a forced-air ventilation system. Each room in the building had a ventilating duct to bring in fresh air and expel foul air. The building was also equipped with a system for vacuum cleaning. On each floor outlets connected a vacuum pump and a suction hose could be attached for cleaning purposes. Horace Crandall says the vacuum system was never used."⁴

As construction of Ag Hall neared completion in the spring of 1912, other preparations were also underway, including construction of two other buildings:

a laboratory building and a residence for the school's first superintendent, Professor Cyrus Williams of the University of Nebraska. To recruit students, ads were placed in periodicals throughout the state. Except for some minimal laboratory fees and a summer matriculation fee of \$5.00, tuition was free. Since no dormitories existed, room and board was offered for \$4.00 a week in the "best homes in Curtis." Students had to be at least 14 years of age and have completed the eighth grade to be admitted.

Faculty promised to teach all the essential high school topics. Even though students who finished all four years were offered direct admission to the university in Lincoln "without examination," the college's first catalog published in 1913 made it clear the school was not intended as a preparatory school, but rather a terminal technical school for men and women interested in agriculture or home economics.

Faculty made preparations for the students' well-being as well. They promised to strictly supervise the students'



Construction of Ag Hall, 1912.

social life, reserving Friday and Saturday evenings for social events. Early activities included literary societies, chorus, band, orchestra, and athletics (football, basketball, and baseball). Additional clubs in dramatics, debate, journalism, crop judging, soils, and livestock judging were established in the years following.

Dedication was set for August 15, 1913. The Burlington Highline added special trains in anticipation for the ceremony. Those in attendance enjoyed speeches, a

Centennial cont'd

baseball game, a free barbecue, and boating on Mill Park Lake.

Less than a month later, on September 9, eighty-two students enrolled in the first semester of classes at the Nebraska School of Agriculture (NSA). Meanwhile, Curtis High School closed its doors. Of the eighty-two students in the first class, fifty-five listed Curtis as their hometown. Of those students who came from out-of-town, nearly all hailed from nine nearby communities. Only three came from as far away as Stapleton, Hemmingford, and Wiggins, Colo.

Students that first year helped start the school's purebred Holstein and Shorthorn herds—an important task, since proceeds from the sale of surplus dairy products would be used to help fund the school.

Three students went through the school's first commencement ceremony in 1914. Although none of the students had earned enough credits for a diploma, they did earn certificates of completion.

In the next five years, many long-term foundations were put into place. Con-

struction was completed on a gymnasium, two barns, and a woodworking shop.⁵ High scholastic standards were set by C. K. Morse, who served as the school's third superintendent from 1919 to 1933.⁶

In 1928, while the twenties were still "roaring," the school broke ground on a girls' dormitory that was completed the next year. During the Great Depression, the school added a motors laboratory (1930), a heating plant (1938), a grain elevator (1939), and a butcher laboratory (1939). A second dormitory for boys, costing \$85,000, was completed in 1942, and a new wing was added to the girls' dormitory for \$135,000 in 1950. The school also built and remodeled several homes for faculty between 1940 and 1950. In the 1940s, an electrical system was installed, the laundry room was modernized, and an acoustic ceiling was placed in the gym. A Quonset building was erected for storage.⁷

After World War II, the school reached its peak enrollment of 415 during the 1946-1947 school year. Also in 1946, the school's name was changed to the University

of Nebraska School of Agriculture (UNSA) from the original Nebraska School of Agriculture (NSA).⁸

From 1949 to 1951, the campus served as a grueling pre-season training ground for the University of Nebraska football team in Lincoln under Coach Bill Glassford.

According to Nebraska sports writer Brian Christopherson of the *Lincoln Journal Star*: "Some credit Nebraska's improvement in 1949 and 1950 to the physical and mental toughness established at Camp Curtis. The Huskers went 4-5 in '49 and 6-2-1 in '50, which was considered a great success, since Nebraska had won just four games in the previous two seasons combined."⁹

Enrollment fell during the 1950s and 1960s, dropping as low as 200 during the 1959 – 1960 academic year. In 1952, the school ended its normal training program for teachers. In time, opposition to the school mounted. Those who opposed the school said the state was essentially financing a live-in high school for one town.¹⁰

Fortunately for UNSA, Horace C. Crandall, a former Nebraska School of Agriculture staff member and superintendent from 1961 to 1963, was now a senator in the Nebraska Legislature for the 46th district. Crandall consulted with Elvin Frolik, Dean of the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture, among others, and



Richard Shinn graduated from UNSTA in 1947 and UNL in 1951. He served two years in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, stationed in Alaska. After leaving the military in 1954 he joined his father as a partner in Shinn Turkeys. For decades, Shinn Turkeys Inc., Shinn Turkeys S.E., Nebraska Turkey Ranch, Inc. and Aurora Turkey Project, produced a combined total of over one million turkeys annually. The Shinn operations were the largest turkey producers in the State of Nebraska. In addition to his turkey operations, Mr. Shinn and his family run 550 cow/calf pairs on over 12,000 acres of owned land.

Shinn has served as board president of the Nebraska Turkey Growers Cooperative for much of the past 30 years. He also serves on the board of directors of the National Turkey Federation and is an active in many other organizations.

Shinn and his wife Marilyn responded when they heard the lowest bid for the new NCTA Education Center and Veterinary Hospital came in at \$1 million over the architect's estimate. They made a substantial donation, helping rescue the project from cuts to the Education Center, delays in construction, or even a possible loss of legislative funding.



NSA Cornshow, 1926.



R.P. Smith is a fourth generation Custer County, Nebraska, rancher and a nationally known cowboy poet. He graduated from the University of Nebraska School of Technical Agriculture in 1980. In 1987, he realized he could write poetry. He wrote his first poem, "Ballad of 148," about a bad deal in a cow sale at the age of 27. He has since performed in more than a dozen states from Texas to the Canadian border and Florida to Montana as well as almost every county in Nebraska. In addition to his radio program, Smith is the author of a book (*Ride Through Rhyme*, 1995) and three CDs (*Early Riser*, 1998; *Stage of Life*, 2001; *It's Only Fair*, 2009). His first DVD, *Caught in the Act*, was released after a live performance at the Star Theatre in Curtis. Occasionally, he performs at NCTA and speaks with students about writing and performing poetry.

Centennial cont'd

developed a plan to convert the school at Curtis to a technical post-secondary school of agriculture.

On April 6, 1965, Crandall and three other senators, including former NSA graduate Senator George C. Gerdes, introduced Resolution 33 "to set up courses of study related to agriculture on a post high school level but not to be considered as college grade at the UNSA at Curtis and that high school courses at such school be discontinued after June 30, 1968."¹¹

Between 1965 and 1968, the last UNSA high school students finished their programs while the first post-secondary students were admitted to the new University of Nebraska School of Technical Agriculture (UNSTA).

The school set out to be an excellent post-secondary institution. In 1967, UNSTA became one of only two other programs in the United States to offer a degree in veterinary technology. The program was developed by Dr. Walter Long D.V.M. In 1973, the program became the first ever to be accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. Two years later, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved "... equivalent ranks for the staff of the UNSTA at Curtis. ...". The college also chartered a chapter of Phi Theta Kappa honor society for two-year colleges on May 9, 1984.¹² In 1986, the campus became a member of the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.

As the United States dealt with a farm economic crisis in the 1980s, UNSTA also faced

a crisis. In 1985, University of Nebraska President Ronald Roskens suggested closing the campus to help meet a 3 percent budget cut being considered by the State Legislature.¹³ The school's funding was indeed cut two years later when Governor Kay Orr vetoed over \$2 million in funding as part of a \$20.5 million spending cut. The veto eliminated all but \$500,000 of the school's 1.3 million funding each year for 1987 – 1988 and 1988 – 1989, leaving the school with just enough money to graduate the students currently working on two-year degrees.¹⁴ The Uni-

versity of Nebraska Board of Regents subsequently approved a resolution offering to sell the campus to Mid-Plains Community College.¹⁵

Then, responding to public pressure and a task force study, Governor Orr ap-

peared to change her mind. On a trip to Curtis in 1987, she promised to "explore and examine every possibility" to keep the school open.¹⁶ In November, just months after vetoing the school's funding, she announced plans to seek a \$350,000 deficit appropriation for the rest of the 1987 – 1988 fiscal year and \$1.4 million to fund the following fiscal year (1988 – 1989). She also promised to recommend program and curriculum changes for the school.¹⁷

Support for UNSTA mounted throughout the state. A 1987 *Omaha World-Herald* poll of 700 registered voters showed two-thirds of Nebraskans approving of the decision to keep the school open. Among farmers and ranchers, three-fourths approved.¹⁸ A survey of farmers and agriculture employers authorized by the Nebraska State Department of Agriculture found that 38 percent of those surveyed had hired at least one graduate from the school in Curtis.¹⁹

In April 1988, the Nebraska Legislature approved LB 1042, which, in addition



Gov. Kay Orr signed the law to restore state funding to UNSTA April 12, 1988 at the agronomy greenhouse on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus.

to providing the requested funding, also appropriated \$80,000 (the amount collected from the state's sales taxes on tickets to the 1987 Farm Aid III concert in Lincoln) to create a scholarship fund for future UNSTA students.²⁰

Superintendent Bill J. Siminoo led the school's "resurrection." The new beginning was especially difficult because no students were allowed to enroll during the 1987 – 1988 academic year. Among the suggested curricu-

Centennial cont'd

lum changes was a proposal to create a new business and management technology program. In February 1994, the University of Nebraska formally adopted UNSTA as the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis. Siminoe (now Associate Dean) retired the next year after 27 years of service to the school.²¹

In 2000, the college completed a nearly 50,000-square-foot Everett Stencil Livestock Teaching Center named after a veterinarian who helped lead the fight to keep the college open in the 1980s. The new building included classrooms and offices as well as a livestock handling facility and large indoor arena.

In 2006, the Board of Regents hired Weldon Sleight of Utah State University to lead the college going forward. Sleight brought an entrepreneurial emphasis to the school and set out to help solve the crisis of Nebraska's dying rural towns by preparing young people to be leaders and entrepreneurs in agriculture. Under Sleight, the college developed its unique 100 Beef Cow Ownership and 100 Acre Programs—and now the Combat Boots to Cowboy Boots Program—to help young graduates gain low interest loans and partner with an established producer so they can return to their home towns as partners rather than hired hands.

Sleight's second mission was to increase the student population through new programs and facilities. A generous donation from UNSA alumnus George Garlick to build a Curtis Community

Center allowed the old gymnasium on campus to be converted into a new Student Union.

Sleight also led the college through a \$1 million fundraising campaign to receive an \$8.7 million dollar construction grant from the State Legislature.

On November 18, 2011, industry, community, and university leaders met to dedicate multiple new buildings, including a state-of-the art Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center with large teaching classrooms, laboratories, computer room, and auditorium. They also dedicated the new Aggie Central Residence Hall, the George and Carol Garlick Aggie West Residence hall, a large addition to the Veterinary Technology Teaching Complex that includes the Dr. Walter Long Veterinary Technology Teaching Clinic and a new biomass project to heat the campus while burning chips from non-native red cedar trees obtained from the area.



Newly completed Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center, 2011.

Speaker Ronnie Green, Vice Chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, called the event, a “momentous day for agriculture in Nebraska.”

Today, NCTA serves approximately 230 on-campus and 100 off-campus students. The college employs two administrators, 13 full-time faculty, 13 part-time faculty, 9 managerial/professional staff, 7 clerical/secretarial staff, 4 food services. 10 facilities and 12 part time staff. Students receive degrees in Agribusiness Management Systems, Agriculture Production Systems, Horticulture Systems, and Veterinary Technology.



Students in front of Ag Hall, 2011 - 2012.

Endnotes

- ¹ John Kay, David Anthonie, Robert Kay, and Kathleen Fimple. Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey final Report of Frontier County, Nebraska. (Nebraska State Historical Society State Preservation Office, 1991): 13.
- ² Horace C. Crandall and Donald E. Ringstmeyer, “Establishment of the Nebraska School of Agriculture in Curtis, 1911 – 1913,” *Nebraska History* 61, no. 3 (1980), 336 – 354.
- ³ Qtd. in Crandall and Ringstmeyer, 340.
- ⁴ Crandall and Ringstmeyer, 347.
- ⁵ Edith Douthit, “History of the Nebraska School of Agriculture,” File “History of School,” NCTA Alumni Room, Curtis, Nebraska, 5.
- ⁶ Elvin F. Frolik and Ralston J. Graham, *The University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture: The First Century*, Part VII: Schools, University of Nebraska Board of Regents, 1987. p. 366.
- ⁷ Douthit, 6.
- ⁸ Frolik and Graham, 364.
- ⁹ Brian Christopherson, “Deep Red: ‘Camp Curtis’ built team up with harsh conditions,” *Lincoln Journal Star*, August 2, 2009.
- ¹⁰ Frolik and Graham, 366.
- ¹¹ Frolik and Graham, 367
- ¹² Kim Wooten, Key Services, Phi Theta Kappa, Jackson, Mississippi, e-mail to author, March 26, 2012.
- ¹³ Tom Allan, “Town of Curtis Scrambles to Save Ag School,” *Omaha World-Herald*, October 31, 1985.
- ¹⁴ Henry J. Cordes, “\$20 Million in Spending Vetoed,” *Omaha World-Herald*, May 29, 1987.
- ¹⁵ “Deadline Set on Curtis Deal,” *Omaha World-Herald*, June 21, 1987.
- ¹⁶ Henry Cordes, “Gov. Orr Travels to Curtis, Says Answers Hard to Find,” June 27, 1987.
- ¹⁷ Henry J. Cordes, “Gov. Orr Proposes ‘New, Revised’ Curtis Ag School,” *Omaha World-Herald*, November 3, 1987.
- ¹⁸ “Fund Plan for Curtis School Endorsed by Most in Survey,” *Omaha World-Herald*,¹⁹ December 21, 1987.
- Clint Highfill, “Senators Urged to Offer Lifeline for Curtis School,” *Omaha World-Herald*, February 12, 1988.
- ²⁰ Henry J. Cordes, “Senators Keep Doors Open at Curtis School,” *Omaha World-Herald*, April 8, 1988.
- ²¹ Tom Allan, “‘Satisfied’ Savior of Agriculture College Retiring,” *Omaha World-Herald*, January 23, 1995.



George Garlick was instrumental in NCTA's recent growth. A native of Quick, Nebraska, he graduated from NSA in 1954. He then attended the South Dakota School of Mines and took his PhD from Iowa State University.

He invented a high-tech, holographic ultrasound scanner used to diagnose breast cancer. His \$1 million donation to the town of Curtis went to build the Curtis Community Center, which also became the new home of NCTA Aggie athletics. As a result, the old gymnasium on campus was converted into a modern student union.

Garlick donated more than \$800,000 to the construction of a new residence hall and the purchase of an assisted living center, which was converted into another residence hall, "Aggie West."

NCTA Notables

If you or someone you know should be featured as a 'Notable Alumni,' please email Traci Bradney at tbradney2@unl.edu

Aim and Purpose of the Nebraska School of Agriculture, 1913

This school is different from any other school in Nebraska. Its problem is that of the farm and home in this semi-arid section of our state. Dry land farming methods are emphasized in all farm crop studies. The problem of Dairy and Animal Husbandry is very different from that of eastern Nebraska.

All instruction offered along industrial lines as given the boy or girl or school teacher, is adapted to the immediate needs peculiar to this region. This is not a high school in any sense, although all the required high school subjects are offered, in addition to the industrial work. Our position is not that of the agricultural high school. Our field is greater and our equipment more elaborate than that possible to any single local district, and as such we seek to adapt ourselves to our problems as the Agricultural School of Western Nebraska. To this end the school has been dedicated, and into this sphere we have entered as an organized institution.

To meet the needs of the people to the fullest extent, the school must offer training to the farmer's son and the farmer's daughter. This is done in a nine months' term opening in September. It must offer a "short course" for the farmer himself and his busy sons, and this is met in the three months' term opening in December. In addition, we try to carry our instruction to the rural schools of western Nebraska by offering a Summer Term for teachers in which instruction in both Agriculture and Home Economics is so adapted as to give the rural teachers the help needed in putting the teaching of Agriculture in our rural schools on its proper basis and give them something that is both proper and pertinent to teach the growing and future farmers and farmers' daughters of this section of the state.

Mission of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, 2012

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) is a two year public college of the University of Nebraska system first serving the students and people of Nebraska, but also the nation and the world. Since its founding in 1988, NCTA has evolved into a quality institution of higher education, committed to excellence in program offerings, responsive to a dynamically changing agricultural industry and aspirations of a diverse student population.

NCTA Burns Pasture Nuisance for Heat

By Sara Alber, NCTA student

There are cedar trees everywhere, and Nebraska farmers and ranchers can't seem to get rid of them. For years, eastern red cedar trees were planted as windbreaks throughout Nebraska, but now they're a nuisance spreading across the state, crowding out native plants and covering thousands of acres of pastures.

While there are many ways to get rid of these red cedars—bulldozers, chainsaws—a problem still remains. What then? The next step used to be to burn the

trees in the pastures, but that might also mean burning hundreds of acres of land.

However, some farmers and ranchers have a new option. The solution is to sell the trees to NCTA. The campus will take all the cedar trees it can get, due to the new 19,000 pound biomass boiler now heating almost all the buildings on campus. NCTA is paying \$35 per ton for the cedar trees to be brought to campus.

Biomass is organic matter burned for fuel. The new NCTA Biomass Boiler, has been added to the traditional Natural Gas boilers but runs

on red cedar trees and helps reduce heating costs as well as cut the college's use of natural gas and foreign sources of oil. The college hopes to save around \$50,000 per year with the biomass project.

Many farmers and ranchers will be glad to get rid of some of the trees because they take up too much pasture space for their cattle to graze on.

The biomass project at NCTA was finished in October 2011 and was put to use not long after. The college received a grant to replace all the steam lines on campus.

NCTA Burns Pasture Nuisance for Heat cont'd



Workers install a new boiler for the biomass project.

Construction was done to get the heat to the men's dormitory, Aggie Central, and the

new Agriculture Industry Education Center.

According to Dr. David

Smith, but they progressed rapidly due to birds eating the berries off the trees and leaving their

Smith, Division Chair of Agriculture Production Systems, the idea for the project came from Chadron State College.

The trees have not always been a problem in Frontier County,

droppings elsewhere. Starting in 1999, Smith, marked a 20 foot by 20 foot piece of land on the campus pastures, and took pictures of the land each year. Today it is clear, from the pictures the trees have become more of a problem than expected. He says the biomass project will help with pasture improvement and the potential of land owners to get back some income.

In the end, this project could be a win, win situation. The farmers get paid for their pasture problem and the college gets heat in return. It's expected that the project could help some of the students at NCTA learn about conserving natural resources and how to use what land was given you. Visitors are encouraged to stop by and see how the project works. It's a great source of energy and heat for the campus.

Updates in Entrepreneurship

I started school at NCTA in the fall of 2007. My goal was to take a couple of classes that would help me in managing a greenhouse I worked at; instead, I signed up for a full semester of classes. Under great tutelage I completed my first year and, that summer, my internship. I chose Turnbull's Landscaping out of North Platte, where I learned the hands-on skills that was needed to start my own business, SunValley Landscaping, Inc.

By the end of my second year at NCTA, I received my Certificate in Horticulture Systems but needed only a few more credits to receive

my degree in Landscape Design and Greenhouse Management—so, I stayed one more year. I graduated Magna cum Laude in 2010, and my business is going on its 5th year.

The professors at NCTA helped me to obtain my goals of starting my own business. They offered me support and encouragement to meet the challenges and gave me the skills to be successful. My favorite part of going to school at NCTA was the PLANET competitions. We got to travel to Georgia and California and compete against 60 other colleges and universities. I am very competitive and it was awesome

to be able to compare my skills against others that were interested in the same. There are only a handful of two year schools that even participate and our school held the middle for rankings, but individually we each excelled in our own areas. Even though I graduated two years ago, they are still there to answer my questions and help me with problems. My success at NCTA is also NCTA's success. —Chas Berke



"My success at NCTA is also NCTA's success."

—Chas Berke

Not Just a Barn



By Catherine Hauptman,
 VT Office Associate for NCTA and 2003
 NCTA Veterinary Technology Graduate

The Dairy Barn at NCTA is not just a barn, and it never really was. The barn on campus served most recently as a student lounge, clinical pathology lab and exotic animal housing, but was even part of high school at one time. On November 18, 2011, the newly remodeled Dr. Walter Long Veterinary Technology Teaching Clinic was dedicated to Dr. Walter Long. Dr. Long created the college's Veterinary Technology pro-

gram in 1968 and taught the program for many years in the dairy barn. His program was one of the first of its kind in the nation. In 1976 the current Veterinary Teaching Complex was constructed and replaced the dairy barn.

When plans for expansion of new animal facilities in the Veterinary Teaching Complex began in late 2010, the Dairy Barn was to be torn down. Curtis community and Alumni members heard about the possible destruction of the barn, and they pleaded for the building to remain intact.

There was so much history in the dairy barn that they didn't want to see it destroyed. With the history of the barns and the strong emotional feelings taken into consideration, the plans for the new facilities were redrawn to include the dairy barn as the teaching clinic.

Now the teaching clinic is utilized by our second year Veterinary Technology students as a pathway to utilize the procedures and techniques they are being taught in class and apply them to a real veterinary clinic setting. They work as office managers and veterinary technicians who assist Dr. Barnes and Dr. Heath, two of our instructors in the NCTA Vet Tech program. A waiting room, reception area, two exam rooms, grooming area, animal holding area, and a clinical pathology lab are all part of the clinic.

The Clinic's clientele include NCTA animals along with student animals. Some services include; routine vaccina-

tions, deworming, laboratory work, grooming services, and Science Diet pet food sales. The Dr. Walter Long Veterinary Technology Teaching Clinic has added another dimension to the already outstanding and "hands on" Veterinary Technology Program at NCTA. The dedication of our Teaching Clinic to Dr. Long is NCTA's appreciation for him and the program he started so many years ago in a barn!

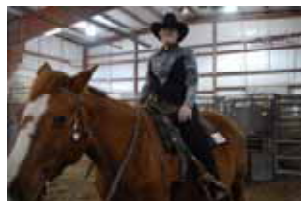


Ashley Wiegand and Tawny Nekunda, assist Dr. Barnes with a cat spay

2011-2012 Snapshots



Horticulture class



2012 NCTA Intercollegiate Horse Show Association Schooling Horse Show



Fall 2011 APS Range Management Class



2011 Commencement

Annual Banquet and Reunion Information

Schedule

Friday July 20, 2012

- 6:00 PM-8:00 PM** Alumni Board Meeting at the Curtis Cattle Company (CCC)
- 6:00 PM-11:00 PM**-Check-in at the Residence Hall/Valley View Inn/Hi Line Motel
- 8:00 PM**- Social Mixer at the CCC

Saturday July 21, 2012

- 8:00 AM-9:30 AM** Breakfast at the Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center
- 9:00 AM-1:00 PM** Explore campus on your own
 - Golfing at Arrowhead Meadows-Contact Larry Cooper for more information-402-340-5173 or ljcooper26@hotmail.com
- 12:00 PM-1:00 PM** Lunch available on campus at the cafeteria, deli or downtown Curtis
- 1:00 PM-3:00 PM** 1st round of campus tours-Meet at Education Center
- 3:00 PM-5:00 PM** 2nd round of campus tours-Meet at Education Center
- If only attending Saturday, July 21, 2012
- 2:00 PM-6:00 PM** Check in to dorm rooms/Valley View Inn/Hi Line Motel
- 6:00 PM-7:30 PM** Welcome home reception at the Curtis Community Center
- 7:30 PM-9:30 PM** Alumni Banquet
- 9:30 PM-1:00 AM** Dance at Curtis Cattle Company

Sunday July 22, 2012

- 9:00 AM-10:30 AM** Farewell brunch at NCTA Cafeteria
- Highlighted Classes this year will be: 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2012
- The Frontier County Fair is also this weekend. Please visit the Frontier County Fair Facebook page for more information.
- For additional information please visit: ncta.unl.edu/alumni

Registration Form
NSA/UNSA/UNSTA/NCTA
Alumni Banquet and Reunion

Please return this form and check(s) payable to /
UNSTA/NCTA Alumni Association by
June 22, 2012 to:

UNSTA/NCTA Alumni Association
C/O Traci Bradney
404 E 7th St
Curtis, NE 69025
308-367-5200 tbradney2@unl.edu

Please reserve _____ dinners at **\$30.00** per person
Dorm room fee per night **\$30.00** (sleeps 2 people,
please bring your own bedding)
Annual Alumni Membership fee **\$15.00**
All other meals/activities will be purchased
separately.

Total Payment \$

Name(s) _____

Department _____

Grad Year _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Email address _____

Please bring one item to be
auctioned off at the Banquet.
We also have two motels in town if you would rather
stay there. Valley View Inn-308-367-4580
Hi Line Motel-308-367-4340

404 E 7th Phone 308-367-4124
Curtis, NE 69025 1-800-3CURTIS

UNSTA/NCTA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

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AGGIE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Time has rolled around to mark your calendars for the NCTA (UNSTA-NSA) Alumni Banquet this summer. Last year was the first time the Alumni held the Banquet on the NCTA campus in many years and what a fun and exciting time it was. The new construction was well under way at last year's event and this year it is completed and in use.

The planning committee has met and will be sending out registration forms to the Alumni. The Banquet is set for the evening of July 21st of 2012 at Curtis. There will be campus tours and dorms will be available for your housing. More information will be with the registration forms, so make it a point to come and see all the new facilities and become the best recruiters for the College at Curtis. I would like to share a few of the Alumni event plans that are under way. If you arrive on Friday evening housing will be available not only on campus at the new dorms, but there is also a new motel in Curtis that will be available and included with the registration information. You are welcome and asked to gather at the Curtis Cattle Company that evening for a social mixer to renew old friendships. The planning committee is looking at having a Golf tournament at the Curtis Golf Course starting sometime Saturday morning, so bring your clubs. There will be tours of the campus and new buildings that have been added in the last year. The Frontier County Fair will be under way in Stockville that weekend, so there will be activities and entertainment available both in Curtis and in the neighboring towns for your enjoyment.

One of the activities we have at our banquet to raise money for the Alumni Association to continue its activities along with providing scholarship money for students at NCTA is a silent auction and a small live auction at the banquet. So I'm asking you to either make, purchase or contact a business for a donated item that you could bring to the banquet to be included in our auction items. We will have a person in charge of the auction that will receive your items and display the items for the banquet auction.

This is a brief look at what will be happening at the College the weekend of July 21st, so mark your calendars and plan to attend your Alumni Banquet. We look forward to seeing you and the honor classes there that weekend and have a good time.

Sincerely,
David D Bruntz
Production Ag. 1971
NCTA-UNSTA-NSA Alumni President