



# NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

June 29, 2021

## **Reflections of Aggie Day at NCTA**

Dean's Message by NCTA Dean Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

As I enjoy this period of below normal temperatures, daily chances of rain, and sunny days, I wonder where the month of June has gone. Here we are sitting at the halfway point through 2021 and it causes me to ponder.

### **Aggie Alumni Day**

Last weekend we had the privilege of hosting over 100 NSA, NSTA, UNSTA and NCTA alumni on campus for our Aggie Alumni Day. What a great turnout, and everything went so well.

We had alumni from as far back as the graduating classes of 1945 (Everett Calkin) and 1946 (Paul Coder). Our special honor classes were the classes of 1970/71 and 1980/81, and did they ever turn out.

Alumni from '71 topped the chart with 24 members of that graduating class in attendance. The Ag Mechanics majors were the trendsetters with 15 alums of various graduating years making the trip to Curtis, including Gary Troester from Santa Maria, California.

Gary was also recognized with the Alumni Distinguished Service/Legacy Award. Other award recipients were Curtis residents Buzz Cole ('44) and Del and Bev Van der Werff (faculty/staff from 1976-2007) for the Alumni Service. These individuals exemplify the service and commitment to NCTA over their lifetime.

We also had alumni traveling in from Pullman, Washington and several from Iowa. It is obvious our alumni love their school. It also proves that NCTA is a great place for forging strong and lasting friendships.

Some of those friendships turned out to be much stronger than others, like David Bruntz and Ann Ramm Bruntz. They were graduates of the class of '71 and have managed to be together ever since, to celebrate 50 wedded years in August.

My favorite part of the day was watching the many smiles, hugs, shouts, and stories being shared among friends of long ago and newly made acquaintances. Of course, anybody that is an alum is an automatic friend with much in common.

Equally enjoyable was getting to know so many of the alumni from across Nebraska and hearing dozens of stories, many of which I should not repeat, of their escapades and activities on campus.

We enjoyed a nice turnout Saturday afternoon at the Dean's Residence for an open house. There, I learned that many of the alumni were summoned to the house as students for a "not so positive" visit. It seems the front room, which was often used as the superintendent's or dean's office, was where much of the discipline was meted out. Stories regaled us during a tour of our home.

During the luncheon program, I was excited to share with our Aggie alumni and friends the many projects we have going on now at NCTA, and several much-needed plans for campus. These include modernization and

functionality for Aggie dining services to the student union. This will get our 93-year-old campus kitchen and cafeteria up, out from the basement of East Traditional residence hall.

Another vital project would then renovate the “girls’ dormitory” and make it a state-of-the-art residence hall for our growing enrollment. Students want more single-room and modern housing options for their college life.

Alumni are an important part of NCTA’s heritage and future success. I am grateful to all who joined in making 2021 Aggie Alumni Day such a rewarding experience for us all.

### **Independence Day**

As we wrap up June and enter the Independence Day holiday, I just want to take a few moments to reflect on the freedoms we do enjoy in Nebraska and this country.

I have always liked watching all the fireworks displays, knowing that while families were primarily enjoying the lights, sounds, and socializing in the back yard, that the real meaning of the holiday and celebration can’t be forgotten.

Take this time in the next week or two to truly enjoy your friends, families, great food, and most importantly, your freedom. Be careful; but have fun!

### **NCTA Events:**

July 5: NCTA Offices closed for Independence Day holiday

July 6: NCTA New Student Enrollment

July 6-8: NCTA Ag Mechanics Instructors Boot Camp

July 7: NCTA Agronomy Youth Field Day

*Part of the University of Nebraska system, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is a two-year institution with a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology and related industries. NCTA is known for its affordable tuition, high job-placement rate for its graduates, and for the success of student teams in competitive activities including crops judging, ranch horse events, livestock judging, shotgun sports, stock dog trials, and intercollegiate rodeo. The college is consistently ranked as one of the best two-year schools in the nation.*

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Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/k0jp>



The "Curtis ag school" and beef cattle were among conversations at Aggie Alumni Day for Paul Coder, Class of '46, with his son Mike Coder, daughter Nancy Schmitz, and NCTA recruiting coordinator Andela Taylor. (M. Crawford photo / NCTA News)