

Nov 6, 2017

Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

November is the month for gratitude

November is best known for ending with Thanksgiving – a celebration of gratitude for harvest and a successful year. However, we are so fortunate and have so much to be thankful for I would like to start the month with an expression of gratitude and continue to recognize our blessings throughout the season. Our perspective on the day ahead of us can be greatly improved when we take a few minutes to recognize and appreciate the many positive aspects of our lives.

On October 30, NCTA had a visiting Fulbright Scholar on campus from Croatia. Dr. Zlatko Svecnjak gave a lecture to the campus community comparing agriculture in Nebraska to that in Croatia. Later that evening he had dinner in the college dining hall with a small group of employees. Seeing our life through the eyes of an international visitor helped us to gain appreciation for the many things we take for granted. Dr. Svecnjak's reflections on life in Croatia helped us to recognize how fortunate we are to be living in Nebraska.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge a few of the reasons for celebrating the month of Thanksgiving.

When we live in Nebraska we live with a community of people who are known for their demonstration of Nebraska Nice - an attitude of support, kindness and politeness towards others. This wonderful part of our local culture is cause for celebration. Nebraskans are friendly, supportive, honest, hard-working and frugal. Nebraskans demonstrate character and integrity as a matter of regular practice. When a member of the local community experiences hardship, other members of the community pitch in to help without pause.

We are fortunate to be living in a state and country with a stable and prosperous economy. The agricultural economy which means so much to the state of Nebraska has its cycles of ups and downs. We can't control the fluctuations of commodity prices but we can control our reaction to those instabilities. We can be proud of the fact that when we hit the tough times of a down cycle, we meet those problems head-on and deal with them with transparency and inclusiveness. We tighten our belts, adjust our budgets and continue to do our jobs. We are not paralyzed by political infighting and we do not postpone making hard decisions.

We benefit from living in the time when new technology brings us capabilities unheard of just a few decades ago. We have at our fingertips the ability for communication, education, banking, healthcare, shopping, entertainment, social interaction and mapping. Our tractors and combines can steer themselves. Soon, our cars will have that ability. New biological technology allows us to improve crop characteristics so that we can continue to provide the world with a healthy, abundant and low cost food supply.

At NCTA, we feel gratitude for having the honor of working on a college campus. Our job is to help others improve their lives. It's a noble profession that allows us to feel good about our daily accomplishments. We have the privilege of working with a group of young people, generally 18 to 21

years old, who are brimming with infectious optimism, enthusiasm, energy and passion for their studies. We work with a group of colleagues who appreciate their work and are dedicated to their students and their profession.

Living in Curtis provides us with the opportunities to benefit from a rural lifestyle. We appreciate the friendly neighbors, the lack of traffic, the sense of community and the ability to pursue rural recreational activities such as hunting. We value the low crime rate. I regularly hear from a Chicago transplant to Curtis who chuckles over the weekly Sheriff's report which is often dominated by the relatively benign issues of "cows on the road" or "barking dogs".

When you put it all together, we have good reason to spend all of November feeling gratitude and expressing thanks. Thank you for being a part of our college community.

Campus events:

- 1 – Cup of Joe on the Go, 7:30-10:30 a.m. Ed Center
- 2 – NCTA Career and Job Fair, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Ed Center
- 7 – District 9 FFA Livestock Evaluation Contest, NCTA
- 7 – E.N Thompson Forum, 7 p.m., Ed Center
- 8 – District 11 FFA Livestock Evaluation Contest, NCTA
- 8 – Gender Issues/Cyber Bullying Forum, 6 p.m. Ed Center

NCTA Mission:

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials.



In September, community residents and NCTA friends loaded Hurricane relief for Texas which included bales of hay collected at the NCTA Livestock Teaching Center. (Catherine Hauptman/NCTA photo)