



## NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

Dec. 20, 2021

### **Dean's Holiday Message: Do you hear what I hear?**

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

It's the most wonderful time of the year. I love this time of year, starting the Monday before Thanksgiving until the day or two after the new year begins. It's my favorite holiday season because regardless of one's background, religious beliefs, or family traditions, there are always times to celebrate.



*Dean Larry Gossen shares holiday greetings from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. He captured Ag Hall all aglow in a wintry walk early in 2021. (Photo by Larry Gossen / NCTA)*

If you will indulge my ramblings, I'd like to just share a few of my random thoughts from this time of year.

I am one of "those people" that starts listening to Christmas music before Thanksgiving. It used to be we didn't pull out the CDs until we started decorating the tree on Thanksgiving weekend. The older I get, the earlier the music starts.

Thank goodness there are others that are just like me and early on, the decorations started showing up on houses all around town. It really was beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

While there might be 12 days of Christmas, we celebrate for a lot longer than that. We find ourselves just sitting in front of the Christmas tree, listening to our favorite Christmas music, recalling happy memories of the past, and looking forward to making future memories.

Do you remember what you thought a year ago as we were wrapping up 2020? We were all looking forward to 2021 and hoping it would be a better year. Not sure that really happened for anyone. After another challenging year, I know that we need a little Christmas, now.

When the weather permits, I love to sit out on my front porch or out on the patio on a silent night. I've never had chestnuts roasting on an open fire, but the warmth and aroma of a crackling fire is so relaxing. We love the peace and quiet of a Curtis evening. This is one of our favorite things about living here.

During the summer, you can hear the coyotes cry, the squirrels chirping and the birds singing. I love to hear the doves coo and the owls hoot. Sometimes we hear something different, and I'll ask Fay, do you hear what I hear?

Fay and I enjoy calling Curtis home, but we won't be at this home for Christmas. Home is also where the heart is, and we always like to take advantage of being near our family during the Christmas holiday. And there's no place like home for the holidays.

I'm afraid that while I am always dreaming of a white Christmas, it doesn't look like we will be getting that again this year. I'll just have to settle for the movie version. Although our facilities and custodial teams may not be in favor, I say, let it snow because I love living in a winter wonderland. One of our favorite things to do during the holidays is drive around and look at all the Christmas lights. There are always so many beautiful displays that relieve so many of the stresses of the season and remind us for the reason for the season.

I love corny Christmas jokes too. What was the name of the angel that sang? Hark, or was it Harold? What happened to the man who stole the Advent calendar? He got 25 days. And of course, the old classic, what is the Christmas alphabet? It has no "L".

As I said, I love Christmas songs and hope you were able to find a few references scattered throughout this column. They always bring joy to my heart, and I am always listening for new ones as well as the old traditional ones.

So, in case you weren't counting, there are at least 17 song titles or lyrics dotting my writing. Look for them or not, it's up to you. Regardless, I hope you and I can bring a little joy to the world.

On behalf of Fay and myself, and the entire faculty and staff of NCTA, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Happy holidays to all.

**NCTA Campus Events:**

Dec. 22-Jan. 2: NCTA Offices Closed

Jan. 3: NCTA Offices Open

Jan. 10: NCTA Second Semester begins

*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.*

# # #

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/7vzh>