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By Kylee Miller, NCTA student writer

Behind the Microphone at NCTA

Curtis, Neb. - It's not just performers in cowboy boots and cowboy hats who share a microphone on the college stage in Curtis these days.

New to the campus activities at Nebraska's only all-agriculture college, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, is a monthly "Open Mic Night," a platform where students and locals gather to showcase their talents.

A casual conversation about talents, hobbies and hidden entertainers around campus started the event.

Jessica Rosati of Curtis performs at open mic nights in North Platte and McCook. Her love of music and sharing her talents brought together this unique activity.

"Anyone is welcomed to come sing, recite poetry, perform a comedy act, or just listen and enjoy the snacks," explains Catherine Hauptman, country music fan and NCTA administrative associate.

Since classes began in late August, NCTA has hosted two open mic nights and I have performed in both, playing my guitar and singing. Jessica Rosati served as musician and emcee, instructor Dan Stehlik recited cowboy poetry, and five others joined in with music acts.

At the second Open Mic night on Oct. 18, performers included Matt Davis, Dan Stewart, Daniel Cox, Jessica Rosati and me.

Jessica plays cover songs of older R&B songs along with a couple country songs and original songs. Her husband is our college dean, Dr. Ron Rosati.

Matt Davis and Dan Stewart are custodians at NCTA who share their hidden talents with listeners. Each has his own unique style that is intriguing to hear.

Daniel Cox, of Valentine, is a student at NCTA studying Animal Production Systems. He shared his old country, cowboy roots with friends and faculty at the second Open Mic night for the first time.

As for myself, I was excited to hear that there was going to be an open mic night here in Curtis. Music has always been a part of my life and I recently have enjoyed sharing my talents with anyone willing to listen. I play covers of '80s and '90s country along with some newer country songs.

The open mic night gives people an opportunity to break out of their shell and perform in front of an encouraging group of faculty, NCTA students, and members of the community.

There is a karaoke machine for those wanting to participate, but who don't play an instrument.

Aside from singing, the microphone is open to comedians, poets, or anyone wanting to share a story. The next Open Mic Night is Nov. 16 at 6:30 p.m. at The Barn on campus.

Editor's Note: Kylee Miller is a first-year student from Broken Bow, Nebraska, who is studying agribusiness management. She rides and trains barrel horses, loves country music and is a communications assistant with NCTA News.

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Jessica Rosati singing a song in her set list.

Kylee Miller sharing her old country roots with listeners.

