Extended Visions May-June 2002

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Another Award Winner at the ARDC
Hoff Wins University IANR Award

Stuart Hoff was selected as the March 2002 recipient of the Outstanding Employee Award for Office Service Staff. This award is presented by the University of Nebraska’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. This is a very high honor awarded to only two employees from the entire pool of IANR office and service staff each year.

Stuart is an Agricultural Research Technician III, Irrigation Specialist for the ARDC. He is responsible for the maintenance, repair and scheduling of irrigation systems, including center pivot, linear, auto-gated furrow, and solid set. He also serves as the Federal Excess Property Screener for the research center. This job duty includes seeking out excess items that the Federal Government no longer needs or uses, which the ARDC and cooperating Departments can utilize. Once the property is received it must be inventoried, and reported in biannual audits to IANR.

Stuart Hoff is shown accepting the NU IANR Outstanding Employee Award certificate from Dan Duncan, ARDC director at a reception held in his honor.

Your Input is NEEDED!

It's about time to voice your opinion! Your assistance is needed to ensure the right services and programs are available to meet the changing needs of families in Saunders County.

Please complete the comprehensive plan survey that came out in the April 24 Market Weekly section. For those of you who receive the Wahoo or Ashland newspapers, the Market Weekly can be found as a section of the newspaper. It's important that you share your voice and opinions to capture the needs of the county’s youth and what type of services organizations can provide to better meet the needs of the youth.

The Active Community Team of Saunders County wants to ensure the proper services and programs are available to meet the changing needs of your family in Saunders County. Not sure what survey we are referring to? There is a small clock icon (shown here) in the bottom corner in a starburst. You can also complete the survey online. Go to www.saundersunitl.edu and click on the link taking you to the Youth Comprehensive Plan Survey. The youth services comprehensive plan has been required by the state legislature to access grant dollars for youth programming. This is the third youth services comprehensive plan being developed for Saunders County. The first was done in 1992 and was followed up by a second in 1996. The last time the survey was done was in 1998. So we are due for more updated information. What this survey will try to capture are the needs of the county’s youth and what type of services organizations can provide to better meet the needs of the youth.

For more information, please contact Lance Brown at NU Cooperative Extension at 1-800-529-8030 or (402)624-8030.

ARDC Co-Feature
Valley and Versatility

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Facilities Maintenance and Repairs  
With aging buildings and infrastructure, and daily wear-and-tear on the equipment and fixtures, there is a great deal of troubleshooting electrical problems, water leaks, squeaky doors and leaky roofs. And sometimes repair services are related to the weather. After the nearly back-to-back hail and windstorms in early April 2003, the Facilities Operations crew responded to several emergencies. Siding was replaced at the Agronomy research area, shingling was repaired at Biological Systems Engineering and the Dairy research areas, doors and windows were replaced at the Foundation Seed Division, and the poly-sheeting was replaced at the Horticulture greenhouse, to name a few. Snow, rain, heat, hail, freezing temperatures, and wind all provide an added twist to the day-to-day work duties of the Facilities Operations crew.

Facilities Database  
In October 2000, O’Hearn completed a building inventory database that lists more than 250 buildings on the ARDC. Gross square footage of buildings totaled 615,000 sq. ft. at an estimated value of nearly $40 million. Originally, the inventory was developed to equitably apportion the annual building insurance premium amongst the research areas at the ARDC. Previously, inventory lists existed at several campus departments, but were outdated. The Legislature deemed it necessary to compile a complete version.

Project Management  
The Facilities Operations crew sometimes works together to see projects through from start to completion. For example, the entire crew is remodeling the northwest corner of M17-111 for the CALMIT project.

For this project, the carpenters—Rich Anderson, Jon Swanson and Doug Rudeen demolished both restrooms, removed existing paneling, floor tile, and lay-in ceiling. Kirk Bartek extended an improved electrical service. Dave Andersen and Ed Booth are coordinating the plumbing and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Some projects require that the UNL Facilities Planning and Construction (FPC) division be involved in project planning and management. For CALMIT, FPC performed design and drafting services and inspection while ARDC Facilities Operations acts as the contractor.

On an overhead door-widening project at L2-7 (now known as Farm Operations Bldg. M13-026), Dick O’Hearn computer-drafted the plans for FPC’s review. FPC then hired a contractor for masonry demolition and steel erection, while the ARDC crew performed sitework, electrical modifications and finish carpentry.

Another approach to project management was successfully applied a few years ago when the new freestall barn of the Dairy research area was constructed. Dick O’Hearn provided a topographical survey and floor plan. FPC added various details and technical specifications and then publicly advertised and bid the project. Again, the ARDC crew installed site utilities including water, power and storm drainage. After the contractor completed the hoop structure, Kirk Bartek installed the lights and fans while Dave Andersen and Ed Booth situated the cattle waterers and misters.

Design-Build Method  
The “design-build” project delivery method was employed to renovate a former swine barn into a prawn production research facility. The structure was formerly used in an energy farm research project. Before all the many intricacies of raising freshwater prawns were fully understood, O’Hearn drafted some tank details for the researcher’s approval.

At the same time, demolition of the existing pens and equipment was underway. Kirk Bartek and Brian Leenman visited the Biological Sciences’ tank in Lincoln at Manter Hall to design a prototypical heating unit. Jon Swanson and Doug Rudeen constructed the four wooden tanks and Ed Booth and Dave Andersen prepared turbo-blowers. Since this was such a new, innovative project, adjustments were made after initial construction as needed.

Determining the correct tank construction became part of the research project itself. “Styro-form” concrete blocks were used to build two larger tanks in the adjacent room. The design-build method proved to be the most efficient way to complete the project on time and under budget.
One-Man Crew

Oftentimes a crewmember works alone to complete projects, upgrades, and improvements. Besides the myriad equipment repairs regularly performed by each, at the Swine research area, for instant Ed Booth has been wiring dozens of control boxes, extending conduit between the boxes and around all their barns. He’s helping install a new dicam® computerized environmental control system. Some barns are already functioning, allowing the Swine research area to precisely control their various fans, misters, vents, etc. which in turn conserves energy.

Since 1995, Kirk Bartek has almost single-handedly upgraded or installed more than ten center-pivot pump panels for Farm Operations. And he will install two more this spring. Similarly, he modified the conduit and wiring to all eighteen bins south of the Foundation Seed Division so each bin’s drying fan can be individually controlled.

Roads and Utilities

The ARDC has over twenty miles of roads both paved and graveled, which Facilities Operations is responsible for maintaining. This includes maintaining traffic control signs, as well as producing and installing the numerous white-on-red directional and identifier signs you see throughout the ARDC. In conjunction with Farm Operations, Facilities Operations maintains the graveled roads.

About two years ago, Saunders County allowed the ARDC to haul rotomill chips from their stockpile near Ithaca and fill in numerous settlements in the north and east concrete perimeter road. Ongoing asphalt pavement maintenance consists of routing and sealing cracks and joints and an occasional overlay.

Variety is Constant

When a Facilities Operations crewmember is asked, “What do you like most about your job?” the most common response is, “The wide variety of projects.” Work variety is inherent when one considers the sheer vastness of the ARDC, the diversity of academic units present, and their respective researchers, supervisors and onsite managers, and the numerous building types, systems and utilities. This variety breeds versatility. Serving their customers’ needs on a daily basis—sometimes even hourly—is challenging yet rewarding.

Meet the Employees

Now that you’ve learned a little bit about what the versatile and competent Facilities Operations crew does at the ARDC, here’s some information about the employees.

- **Dave Andersen** is the only plumber at the ARDC and lives in Mead. Dave has seen many changes in the infrastructure in his 35 years at the ARDC.
- **Rich Anderson** is the head carpenter. He and his wife, Shelley have three children—Richard, Carley, and Whitney and reside on an acreage near Colon. Rich enjoys hunting and fishing.
- **Kirk Bartek** is a Licensed Electrical Contractor and one of two electricians. He and his wife Theresa have four children—Jeffrey, Christian, Michael, and Bryant. As a licensed electrical contractor, Kirk is responsible for all new wiring installations and permits at the ARDC. He’s seen some very challenging projects during his 25 years at the ARDC.
- **Ed Booth** also works as an electrician, and assists Dave with various plumbing projects. He and his wife Donna live on a farm north of Malmo with their daughter, Acalea. Ed has been with the ARDC for over 30 years.
- **Larry Dailey** is the ARDC Security guard, patrolling after-hours all facilities and research areas. He and his wife Mary live in Wahoo. They have two children, Kyle and Kendra. Larry has been with the ARDC for 22 years. Larry’s job duties range from checking locks and security systems to checking that livestock are penned to assisting the sheriff department and game wardens as needed.
- **Brian Lemann** is the landscape assistant and the groundskeeper at the Research and Education Building. Brian is responsible for some of the behind-the-scenes building and grounds duties that provide an amenable environment for meetings and workshops. He lives in Lincoln.

Variety and Versatility - Continued on Page 4
Integrated Crop Management Winter Programs Results

The 2002 Integrated Crop Management Winter Programs provided a dynamic learning opportunity to 330 agribusiness professionals and private operators. Participants represented 58 Nebraska counties and 6 states (CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, SD).

The workshops ran from December through March. Participants gained continuing education credits and helpful knowledge.

In an effort to provide information conveniently statewide - sessions were held at the ARDC, Grand Island, Norfolk, Scottsbluff, and North Platte. Here are a few more interesting facts about the workshops:

- Conservatively, the clinics influenced crop management on 4,622,500 acres of cropland.
- Conservatively, the clinics impacted 28% of Nebraska’s corn, soybean and hay acres.
- The average estimated value of knowledge gained and/or anticipated practice changes on a per acre basis by participants totaled $3.71 per acre.
- Total dollar impact on 4,622,500 acres was $17,149,475.

- 93% of the participants said they probably or definitely would attend future UNL ICMWP based on their experience at these programs.
- 90% of the participants would probably or definitely recommend the programs to others.
- 78% of the participants indicated that the ICMWP were above average or one of the best programs they have attended.

The workshops attracted a wide range of agribusinesses - small and large. A sampling of businesses represented includes: Agriliance, American Cyanamid, Archer Grain, Arrow Seed, BASF Corporation, DuPont, Fontenelle Hybrids, Golden Harvest, Hormogedgen Hybrids, JCB Robinson Seed Co., Lindsay Manufacturing, MDS Harris Laboratories, Mycogen Seeds, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Syngenta, and Zineca.

Government & school entities participants represented Cooperative Extension in Antelope, Hamilton & Washington Counties, Bureau of Reclamation, Cass County Weed Control, Central Community College, Dept. of Interior, Nebraska Dept. of Ag, NRCS, NU ARDC, NU Foundation Seed, UNL, and MARC.

And heres a sampling of what participants said about the workshops:

- Be more confident and direct in making customers aware of long range planning.
- I will be more thorough in field diagnosis and trouble shooting crop pests.
- More information to draw from when solving problems.
- Helping me to be aware of the surroundings I work with, thus helping prevent environmental damage.
- Being able to detect problems early and implement control measures.
- I will use it for consulting decisions personally and pass it along in dealer and customer education sessions.
- Will help me better manage my farms.
- This experience has strengthened my programs. They are headed in the right direction for my clients to achieve economic success.
- To help the grower in seeing benefits.
- To help the grower in seeing benefits.
- They have six children - Keat, Josef, Cameron, Veronica, Sarah, and Samuel. Dick has been with the University since March 1994 and at the ARDC since June 1998.

- D. Doug Ruden works with the carpenter crew. He lives in Cereso with his wife Shawn and they have two daughters, Halley and Kinna. Before joining the facilities crew he worked at the ARDC Beef Feedlot for 15 years. He has been with the facilities operation since August of 1996.

- Jon Swanston also works as a carpenter. He and his wife Patty live on a farm near Malmo. They have two children, Samantha and Mitchell. Jon originally worked with the Energy Integrated Farm and moved over to the carpenter shop in 1991. He and his family enjoy sports, outdoor activities, and working with livestock on the farm.

Introductory Field Scout Training - May 13

A field scout training course will be held at the ARDC on Monday, May 13 from 8:30 am – 5 pm. The workshop is designed for entry level scouts who will be working for crop consultants, industry agronomists and farm service centers across Nebraska and neighboring states.

The introductory course will help build confidence, enhance scouting techniques and provide continuing education credits. Topics include: corn and soybean growth and development - how to stage the growth of corn and soybeans and the importance it has on the management of pest control; corn and soybean insect pests – identification, damage, and life-cycles; natural enemies – predators, parasites and pathogens; weed identification; crop diseases; nutrient deficiencies; and sampling methods - scouting dos and don’ts.

Past participants have given the training high marks. Ninety-one percent of 2001 attendees ranked the course as above average or one of the best programs available. A few of the benefits registrants stated the training provided included more confidence on service calls, a good overview of scouting techniques needed to do a good job, and the ability to be more specific and scientific in scouting.

Early registration is $65 until May 7. After that, registration is $75. A total of 5.5 CCA credits is anticipated (Integrated Pest Management 4.0, Crop Production 1.0, and Soil Fertility 5).

This training is part of the NU Cooperative Extension Crop Management Diagnostic Clinics. Three other clinics are planned. A mid-summer diagnostic clinic on July 18 will include making important crop production management decisions, soybean pest, sprayer management, fertilizer application equipment, hand-on crop nutrition management plan decisions, herbicide mode of action, accessing UNL recommendations, insects, diseases, and weeds. A late season clinic on August 20 will include field crop diseases, late season insects, fall nutrient management, and fall tillage implications. A precision farming clinic will also be held on September 4.

Trainers are from the NU faculty and the agricultural industry. The clinics provide an unbiased approach by highly skilled trainers.

To register, call (402)624-8030.

About Ag

The Ag Awareness Coalition provides a fall awareness festival at the ARDC and now also provides an aging festival in Lincoln for Lancaster County youth. Almost 400 students attended this years’ spring festival. University of Nebraska commodity groups, businesses, and producers led the sessions.

Local producer, Bruce Wolf, served as a presenter in the wine session and is shown below.

This issue of Extended Visions was produced and edited by Deloris Pittman, Marketing & Promotions Manager.