

July 2007

The Leading Object: July 2007

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Perspectives

"In the 21st century, challenges such as globalization, competitive market pressures, technological advances, and the preeminent importance of innovation and talent are restructuring the economy," notes the independent "At Work for Nebraska" study recently completed for the Institute by Battelle, of Columbus, Ohio.

It continues: *"Against such a backdrop of rapid and dramatic change, can a system such as agricultural research and extension, established in the late 1800s, be relevant? The surprising answer — that agricultural research and extension institutions may well be **more** necessary and relevant than ever before — is a testimony to the foresight of those who ensured the creation of IANR in 1973 through the passage by the Nebraska Legislature of LB149, which recognized the importance of agricultural development and scientific advancement to the State of Nebraska's economy."*

We thank those whose foresight almost 35 years ago created the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. We also thank those who support the Institute today, both for their backing and their partnership.

As always, we remain indebted to those whose vision gave us the Morrill Act of 1862, the Hatch Act of 1887, and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, establishing the land-grant university with its mission of teaching, research, and extension education. That mission, as we certainly know and as reconfirmed in the independent study, is as relevant as — **maybe even more relevant than** — it was when each came into being.

"IANR scientists and researchers are currently pushing Nebraska forward in the biorenewables arena," Battelle found, continued on page 2



John C. Owens
NU Vice President and
Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

The Leading Object

The Morrill Act of 1862 established a Land Grant University in each state where The Leading Object would be instruction in agriculture and related fields.



July 2007

East Union Prepares to Celebrate 30-Year Anniversary with Some Noticeable Changes

The Nebraska East Union serves multiple purposes on East Campus. It is a meeting place, a reception hall, a place for lunch, and a place for socializing.

This year, the union celebrates its 30th anniversary with some noticeable changes to the building. The main change is the renovation of the television lounge area called "The Hollow." Also, booth seating has been added to the bowling alley and more outdoor seating is planned around the clock tower.

"It's an exciting time for the Nebraska East Union, said Reshell Ray, Assistant Director of Student Involvement and Assistant Manager of the union.

The union, a fixture on East Campus for the last 30 years, was itself almost 30 years in the planning, said Union Manager Gerry Van Ackeren. Students started a petition process in the mid-1940s to have a union opened on East Campus, but the idea then centered on refurbishing the Student Activities Building.

The activities building was opened as a temporary union in December 1946, and a grand opening celebration four months later attracted a large crowd. In the late 1950s a proposal was made to build a new union for East Campus, but for 15 years the idea hovered at the discussion stage.

Finally in 1975 plans were made to construct a separate union and the facility opened its doors in January 1977. A three-day celebration is planned this fall to mark the 30th anniversary, Van Ackeren said.

"I'd like to say the union plays a vital



Gerry Van Ackeren and Reshell Ray oversee operations at the Nebraska East Union.

role on East Campus," he said. "It's the central living room of the campus."

The union not only is the chief meeting place on campus for all the departments within IANR but also for numerous off-campus groups.

The Loft Gallery on third floor hosts student and community artwork. The union also has hosted concerts, wedding receptions, a grilling competition, and a chili cookoff.

The renovated Hollow, which will open just before students return for fall classes, has been designed to create two continued on page 3

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“— whereby agricultural crops form the basis of new industries and new forms of bio-based economic development. Biorenewable resources represent a new pathway to realizing economic development and higher-value products from plant and animal biomass ...

“Nebraska’s agbioscience sector is a vibrant, robust, and extremely important component of the state’s economy,” the report says, adding:

“IANR is also focused on cutting edge research within new growth opportunity areas to help increase Nebraska’s economic diversity and wealth. The ability of IANR to transfer its scientific, technical, and research capabilities to the state’s agbioscience industrial base has significant impact on the health and vibrancy of the economy.”

What drives such an economy? The independent study answers that question:

“... as knowledge, intellectual capacity, and

technology become the foremost drivers of modern economies, IANR’s teaching activities within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) likely will continue to grow in their importance to Nebraska’s economic progress. Strengthening the lives and communities of Nebraska through research, teaching and extension activities is key to the long-term competitive sustainability of Nebraska’s high standard of living.”

And, we provide a conservative \$15-to-\$1 return on the tax dollars Nebraska invests with us. (That’s something I like to add at every opportunity!)

The “At Work” study provides us excellent information both for future planning, and for telling the story of how we are at work for Nebraska. It’s a tool, and we’re developing other tools from it — the At Work for Nebraska Web site (atworkfornebraska.unl.edu), handouts,

and slides for your use in presentations, the new “At Work for Nebraska” newsletter.

Other tools are in production, including video and additional examples of how our work benefits Nebraska. As each is completed we’ll let you know it’s available for your use.

Thing is, tools are only as good as the use we make of them. I hope each of you will take advantage of every tool available every chance you get to tell the story of how what’s accomplished in the Institute fulfills our land-grant university mission for our state.

After all, that’s why we’re at work for Nebraska.



Hayes Named Director of Drought Mitigation Center

IANR Climatologist Mike Hayes has been named Director of the National Drought Mitigation Center.

Hayes, who has worked with the UNL-based center since its inception more than 10 years ago, succeeds founding Director Don Wilhite, who will become Director of UNL’s School of Natural Resources.

Hayes and Wilhite have helped build

the center’s reputation as a national and international leader in drought mitigation planning since Wilhite founded the center in 1995. Hayes began at the center as a Climate Impacts Specialist and was promoted to Associate Director last year.

Hayes said the center would continue focusing on core drought planning elements, such as drought monitoring, reducing vulnerability to its impacts, and drought planning.

“For the future, we want to continue providing better and more relevant information that is useful to the public, policymakers, and the scientific community,” Hayes said.

“We want to identify successful drought planning and monitoring strategies that can be transferred to other locations worldwide and to continue building networks for improving drought impact collection.”

“I am convinced the NDMC will be in

good hands under Mike’s leadership,” Wilhite said.

The center has been involved with drought-planning efforts at state, tribal, and local levels for the past 12 years. As a result, overall

preparedness for dealing with droughts seems to have improved, Wilhite said.

When the center started in 1995, 29 states had drought response plans. Now 39 have them with eight more having drought mitigation plans and two more moving in that direction, Hayes said.

The center also conducts research with sponsors such as the National Aeronautic and Space Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other agencies within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Hayes received doctorate and master’s degrees in atmospheric science from the University of Missouri and a bachelor’s degree in meteorology from the University of Wisconsin. He assumes his new position August 1.



Mike Hayes

**Need to meet with the
Vice President/Vice Chancellor?
Drop-ins each Friday from 3-5 p.m.*
John C. Owens**

NU Vice President for
Agriculture and Natural Resources
and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR

202 Ag Hall • (402) 472-2871
*Occasionally Dr. Owens will be
called away on University business.

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Moser thankful for his decision to attend UNL

Bobby D. Moser credits a former University of Nebraska–Lincoln Animal Science professor with bringing him to Lincoln and says it's one of the best decisions he ever made.

Moser, currently an administrator with The Ohio State University, said he came to Lincoln to do his doctoral studies in swine nutrition because of retired Professor Ernie Peo. Moser earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Oklahoma State University.

"He was well-respected in the area of swine nutrition," Moser said. "I applied, he offered me an assistantship, and I agreed."

Moser arrived at UNL in 1969 and earned his doctoral degree in 1972. He also held an instructor position while working on his degree. Moser was in Lincoln for the

North Central Region Mini-Land Grant meeting in July and went to see Peo.

"I told him one of the best decisions I've made was coming here and working with him," Moser said.

Moser grew up in the small town of Cyril, Oklahoma, and studied at Oklahoma State. After earning his doctorate, he remained on the UNL animal science faculty. He left in 1981 for the University of Missouri, where he served as Chair of the Department of Animal Science for about five years. He later became Associate Dean of Agriculture and Extension Agriculture Program Director.

He went to Ohio State in 1988, where he holds three titles — Vice President for Agricultural Administration; Dean of the College of Food, Agricultural and

Environmental Sciences; and Vice President for University Outreach. In his outreach position, Moser facilitates outreach activities for the entire university.

Asked how he performs all three jobs, Moser says "I have good people working with me."

At UNL, Moser was allowed to do work in teaching, extension, and research and he enjoyed all aspects equally.

"That really prepared me for what I'm doing now," he said.



Bobby Moser

Extension Initiative Transforms Delivery of Information

The national Cooperative Extension system is transforming the way it develops and delivers content and information in response to society's growing use of the Internet and the proliferation of new digital technologies.

eXtension is a national Internet-based educational network that provides wide-ranging, science-based information on a variety of subjects. To date, 21 Communities of Practice (CoPs) have been formed on topics that represent agriculture, natural resources, family, community and economic development, and other issues consistent with the mission of Cooperative Extension. CoPs are multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional teams of content contributors working collaboratively to develop educational programs and activities.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension is providing leadership in two of the

CoPs — Wildlife Damage Management and the Beef Cattle Clearinghouse. UNL Extension also is involved in a number of other key CoPs.

UNL Extension is involved in the overall leadership of eXtension through Dean Elbert Dickey's appointment to the governing committee and eXtension Foundation Board of Directors, and Dan Cotton's appointment as Director of eXtension

"The appointments of Dean Dickey and Mr. Cotton are evidence of the tremendous, positive impact UNL Extension is having on the entire land-grant university system in the United States," said John Owens, NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor

Cotton said 2007 promises to be a very busy year that will culminate in the launch of the nationally integrated eXtension system at www.extension.org. For more information about the initiative and ongoing work see about.extension.org.

East Union Prepares to Celebrate 30-Year Anniversary

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functioning spaces — one a study area with high-back booths and the other a mini-amphitheater with a 50-inch plasma television purchased with money donated by the UNL Parents Association.

Van Ackeren said he hopes to secure funding in the next year to give the building an updated look. However, since student fees pay the bulk of union expenses, the plan will need the approval of administrators and students, he said.

Juan Franco, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, said his office, in collaboration with the union staff, is always looking for ways to make the east and city unions more attractive. Feedback from students is important and future surveys or focus groups of students are a possibility, he said.

Charlie Francis, Director of the Nebraska Unions, said the Hollow renovation is a big plus for the union and will result in a nice gathering spot. Smaller renovations are likely as well.

"We hope to find little areas here and there to make the facility better," he said.

– Lori McGinnis

IANR-Fine Arts Partnership Spreads the Arts Around the State

A partnership between IANR and the Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts is bringing the arts to those who may not otherwise have them.

During the past several years, upper-class students from the college have led educational programs at the three Nebraska 4-H Camps statewide, said Kathleen Lodl, Extension Specialist with 4-H Youth Development.

“In each of these experiences, campers have the opportunity to develop their acting skills or learn more about art as part of their experience,” Lodl said. “In turn, the UNL students were able to hone their teaching skills and bring their artistic talents to young people.”

Students from the college also have led community-based art camps for the past several summers. These camps, located across the state, are an opportunity for

elementary and middle school students to learn about art and future careers in art from current college students, Lodl said.

During the weeklong camps, youth have experienced a variety of art forms such as print-making, drawing, photography, theater, and dance. In addition, young people learn about the potential of choosing fine and performing arts as a career, Lodl said.

In May, IANR’s partnership with the college led to a tour by the college’s Chiara string quartet that was sponsored by IANR and UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman. The quartet gave concerts to audiences at the Minden Opera House, the Star Theater in Curtis, the Panhandle Research and Extension Center in Scottsbluff, and the 4-H Camp at Halsey, said Jack Oliva, College Dean. The quartet also provided music instruction at various public schools

along the route.

Oliva attributes UNL Extension for extending fine arts outreach to rural Nebraska. The concert series followed discussions between Oliva and John Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR.

“We wanted to do an outreach to venues that would not normally hear this,” Oliva said. “We felt it was extremely successful.”

Owens said he knew of “no other university where the relationship between the fine and performing arts, and the agricultural and related programs are as close as they are at UNL.”

“The vision and commitment of academic leaders such as Dean Oliva, Dean Elbert Dickey, and Dean Steve Waller have made this highly successful relationship possible,” Owens said.

Extension Personnel Gather at UNL for Tech Conference

More than 120 4-H and Extension representatives from 40 states gathered at UNL to learn how to promote education in science and technology.

UNL hosted the 4-H Science, Engineering & Technology (4-H SET) Liaisons Conference in June. UNL was selected because of the willingness of UNL faculty to help support the 4-H SET mission, and its central location. In addition, UNL hosted the National 4-H Science and Technology conference for youth last year, said Kathleen Lodl, Extension Specialist with 4-H Youth Development.

National 4-H has identified 4-H SET as one of its three mission mandates, Lodl said. The conference helped extension staff, volunteers, and youth increase their knowledge and skills to help them promote and deliver high-quality science and technology programs for their state

4-H programs. As part of their work, conference participants developed 4-H SET plans for their individual states. These plans included methods for staff and volunteer development, evaluation plans, strategies for using high quality curricula, marketing and resource development strategies, and partnership development.

Conference participants were provided materials they can use to share 4-H SET in their communities. National 4-H has set a goal to reach 1 million new youth through 4-H SET by 2013. To reach that goal, 4-H recently partnered with the National Association of Rocketry Plans to help start new 4-H clubs in the next five years that are focused on aerospace and rocketry.

Plans also are under way for a National 4-H Set Launch event to be held in October as part of National 4-H Week.

North Central Region Meets in Lincoln

Representatives of land grant universities from 12 area states met in Lincoln to learn more about a variety of issues ranging from the farm bill to the bioeconomy.

UNL’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources hosted the North Central Region Mini-Land Grant Meeting at the Embassy Suites July 8-10. The meeting rotates each year and was last held in Lincoln 12 years ago.

“It’s generally an update on pressing topics in the region,” said Susan Fritz, Associate Vice Chancellor of IANR.

About 90 leaders from land-grant universities in the region heard panel discussions on the farm bill, as well as ones titled “The Bioeconomy and Biomass Crops” and “Opportunities and Threats to Sustainability of the Bioeconomy in the North Central Region.”