

12-2006

## Extended Visions, November/December 2006

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ARDC Director's Comments

**How Far We Have Come!**

by Daniel J Duncan, ARDC Director & IANR Ag Research Division Assistant Dean and Director

It is hard to believe another growing season is coming to an end. It seems like a month ago planting was taking place. While this year seems to be racing by I cannot help but think about how the years have raced by. In November I will start my 16th year at the ARDC.

In this newsletter the featured area on the ARDC is the Administrative and Support Offices. As we were pulling together articles for this edition I was reminded of what things were like 15 years ago. Do any of you remember the old north gatehouse for Load Line #2 that served as the ARDC Headquarters? I remember my first day at the ARDC. I walked into an office with no fax machine, one computer for 5 people, and a phone system that required dialing a seven digit number on a rotary dial to get a digital dial tone that then allowed toll free calling to campus...one user at a time!!! With our new fiber optic lines and our bandwidth increase that will happen in the near future we have moved the ARDC from one of the least technology advanced research facilities in the nation to one of the most advanced in a matter of 15 years.

The Saunders County Extension Offices were in Wahoo with no mention of moving to the ARDC. With the construction of the Christenson Building we were able to relocate the Saunders County Extension Office from Wahoo and the Foundation Seed Division Office from Lincoln to the ARDC. We now have 15 people housed in Christenson Building!!! The construction of the Christenson Building and the addition of these two offices enabled us to expand our programming options on the ARDC to where we now serve the educational needs for 10,000 people per year.

It is really fun to see all of the new and exciting things that have happened these past 15 years due to the hard work and effort of so many people. As we continue these efforts think of where we will be 15 years from now!!! □

ARDC Feature Unit

**ARDC Administration**



**ASSIST Business Center Focuses on Service**

by Ruby Urban, Administrative Team Manager, ASSIST Business Center

Providing professional, high-quality administrative support services to the faculty, staff and administration is the mission of the ASSIST Business Center. ASSIST, which stands for Administrative Support Systems Integrated Services Team, is one of nine business centers within the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR). Four of the ASSIST's business operations staff are located at the ARDC.

As members of the ASSIST team, Marnie Cihal, Lisa Moravec, Cheryl Sheary and Ruby Urban have a major role in the administrative support and financial management services both on and beyond the ARDC. They work together with team members to support the following units within IANR:

Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication (AgLEC), ARDC, Agricultural Research Division (ARD), College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR), Communications and Information Technology (CIT), UNL Extension, E-Extension, Foundation Seed Division, IANR Finance and Personnel, Nebraska 4-H, Nebraska Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP), Nebraska Rural Initiative, NU Vice President/IANR Vice Chancellor, South Central Ag Laboratory (SCAL), and the Southeast Research and Extension Center (SREC).

Team members located in Lincoln include Dora Dill, Mildred Holland, Judy Hostetler, Betty James, Peggy Jeffries, Rosanna Johnson, Margaret Koczan-Ladely, Nancy Lorenz, Karen Randall, Mary Stevens and Carla Werner.

Most of the offices served by the business center are located around East Campus. However, some of the offices, like the ARDC and Foundation Seed Division, are located outside of Lincoln. Other locations supported outside of Lincoln include the SCAL located near Clay Center and the 4-H camps located near Halsey, Gretna and Alma. Modern technology, such as the fax machine, scanners, e-mail, and financial and human resources management software, has provided ways to overcome the challenge of supporting offices at a distance.

The development of business centers on the IANR Campus was a response to several factors including budgetary issues facing the University, limited financial and human resources, and the University of Nebraska wide Administrative Systems Project implementation of the SAP management software. SAP allows the University to operate one business system for financial management, budgeting, human resource and payroll functions. Personnel in the business centers focus on becoming specialized in one of these areas.

**Nebraska Soybean Day and Machinery Expo  
Friday, Dec. 8**

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the *Nebraska Soybean Day and Machinery Expo* at the Saunders County Fairgrounds in Wahoo on Friday, December 8.

Steve Johnson, Ph.D. headlines this year's event speaking on "Biofuels: The Road Ahead". Johnson serves as the Farm & Ag Business Management Specialist in Central Iowa for Iowa State University Extension. He specializes in topics related to grain marketing, government farm programs, crop insurance and other risk management strategies including grain production contracts and grain storage. You may be familiar with Johnson as a presenter at past Soybean Management Field Days in Nebraska.

Steve presents annually at more than 80 meetings, workshops and conferences across the Midwest with over 5,000 in attendance. This past year Steve is referenced in articles that appear in *Successful Farming*, *Farm Journal*, *Farm Futures*, *Top Producer* and *Grain Journal* magazines.

Johnson will discuss driving forces for the bio-economy, changing your crop rotation, adapting to volatile crop prices, emerging new biorefineries, determining future feedstocks, and positioning your farm operation.

Watch for information on other topics and presenters. The expo is brought to you by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, the Nebraska Soybean Board, Saunders County Soybean Growers Organization and private industry. For more information, call (800) 529 -8030. □

FEATURE UNIT - ARDC - Cont. on P. 2



FEATURE UNIT - ARDC - from P. 1

The ARDC's specialization is in the area of financial management. Cheryl Sheary is responsible for all phases of accounts payable, accounts receivable, and purchasing along with data entry into SAP. Because of the large volume of transactions generated by the ASSIST Business Center, she focuses on handling ARDC, Ag Hall offices, SCAL, and Southeast Research and Extension Center transactions. Approximately 120 cost objects (or accounts) consisting of state, revolving, auxiliary, and grant funds are currently handled through the ARDC office.

Marnie Cihal is responsible for ledger reconciliation and vendor and ledger account file maintenance. She is Cheryl's backup for financial transactions and also provides clerical support for the Crop Management and Diagnostic Clinics and the Agronomy Farm located on the ARDC.

Lisa Moravec provides financial and secretarial support to the Foundation Seed Division. She also shares with Cheryl the workload of purchasing card reconciliation. Lisa, along with Cheryl and Marnie, may be found handling the receptionist and switchboard duties in the Research and Education Building. They share this responsibility on a rotating basis with Sharron Ankersen and Cheryl Dunbar from the Saunders County Extension Office.

Ruby Urban serves as the ASSIST Business Center's Administrative Team Manager. In this role, she provides leadership and is responsible for implementation and coordination of business functions within the offices served. Ruby also oversees the budget, financial and human resource functions as they relate to the ARDC, SCAL and SREC business operations.

As the ASSIST Business Center continues to evolve, the team members look forward to the challenge of identifying more efficient and cost effective ways to do business to better serve the needs of University staff, vendors and clientele. For more information about the ASSIST Business Center's staff and services, visit their web site at <http://ianr.busctr.unl.edu/assist/>.

## Technology Capabilities at the ARDC

by Luke Herdzina Technology Support Specialist

There have been vast technological improvements at the ARDC in the past 3 years. While the wireless system was a tremendous advantage over the old dial-up modem system, it quickly became outdated. To remedy this situation it was decided to install a fiber optic network at the ARDC. This consisted of installing over 16 miles of fiber optic cables to 18 locations, including the residences at the Dairy and Swine Units.

To add failover and redundancy, each location received 6 "home run" fibers, even though it is likely that only 2 will be used in the near future. The UNL Information Services Department has agreed to provide all of the equipment that is needed to make the fiber work. This means that the research units will only be responsible for providing the power, mounting structure, and any rewiring needed for the equipment. This is a tremendous cost savings to the ARDC. The goal is to have all locations hooked up near the end of the year 2006.

While the fiber has been a very positive change at the ARDC, the current phone system change has been challenging. We are still in the midst of a phone system change that has added a great deal of problems for everyone at the ARDC. From voicemail that is too quiet, to fax machines not working, to dropped calls, the change has been a struggle for everyone involved. It has not been the seamless transition as promised.

Work continues on the system in an effort to eliminate the problems. Ideally the phone system will allow us to abandon all of the copper wire and run the phone system over the newly installed fiber optics. While this change may seem distant at this time, it is still our goal to make this change happen.

The last major technology update that the ARDC will experience is an upgrade in the bandwidth back to Lincoln via a 10 MB line. Currently, the ARDC is on a T1 line at 1.5 Mbps, for both of voice and data transfer. This 7X increase should allow the ARDC to use technologies that currently aren't supported...such as the ability to polycom, use the new "Breeze" system, and interact more effectively with campus.

In general, as the Technology Support Specialist, I provide support for most of the units at the ARDC. This entails everything from networking to climbing on roofs to fix antennas. I also provide support to the Communications and Information Technologies (CIT) Department in Lincoln. This involves improving old technologies, finding and deploying new technologies, as well as writing some computer code. I am also the information technologies support person for Dodge, Saunders, and Washington counties. I provide the same types of services for these extension offices that I do at the ARDC. □

## Embracing Holiday Nutrition!

by Casey Campbell, RD

Casey Campbell is a Registered Dietitian with the Nutrition Education Program in Dodge, Saunders and Washington Counties. The Nutrition Education Program (NEP) is sponsored by the University of Nebraska, Extension and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. NEP is a program designed to teach nutrition education to those on food stamps or those who qualify. If you think you or your family may qualify for NEP and are interested in free nutrition education, please call Casey at (402) 624-8022.

As you flip through your favorite magazines this Holiday season, I would bet my Grandma's famous pumpkin pie that all you will find is articles about how to avoid the Holiday bulge. You will read endless columns that try and teach you how to eat healthy by avoiding your favorite treats, and, oh yes, don't forget to work out every-day! However, why not embrace this time of year and focus on some Holiday nutrition. I know it sounds like an oxymoron, but it's true! For example, how many other times during the year do you eat yummy, nutrient packed pumpkins? Pumpkins are an amazing addition to any diet and this is the perfect time of year to experiment with this treat.

When *MyPyramid* was released in April of 2005 one of the goals was to have American's eat a variety of colors, especially when it comes to fruits and vegetables. One of the colors emphasized was orange. Research has shown that orange fruits and vegetables like the pumpkin are packed with vitamin A and fiber. In addition to providing a variety of vitamins and minerals, they are also shown to help protect against heart disease, cancer, as well as, contribute to better vision and a healthier immune system. The best part is a full cup of pumpkin has only a mere 80 calories and is fat and cholesterol free!



You may be thinking to yourself, so what, how much pumpkin pie can one person eat! However, there is so much one can do with this versatile food! Whether you choose fresh or canned, warm or cold, there are so many options! For example, pumpkin is delicious in soups or ice cold in a smoothie. You can also try stir frying strips of fresh pumpkin in addition to other vegetables. Finally, try combining pumpkin with other foods for maximum nutritional value:

- \* Try adding pumpkin to your mashed potatoes
- \* Add small amounts to your hot cereal and sprinkle with brown sugar
- \* Use in soups to thicken the base
- \* Try this pumpkin smoothie recipe - Combine ½ cup canned pumpkin, ¾ cup milk or yogurt, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg, 3 teaspoons brown sugar, and 6 ice cubes. Blend until smooth. Pour into small glasses. Serves 2 or 3. (Source: FamilyFun.com)

Finally, don't forget about the pumpkin seeds. If you decide to purchase a fresh pumpkin, why not roast the seeds as well. Begin by removing the seeds from the pumpkin and rinse them off in a colander. Blot them dry on a paper towel and coat them lightly with olive oil. Finally, spread the seeds on a cookie sheet and sprinkle with salt. Roast your seeds for about 45 minutes at 375 degrees. After the seeds cool, store them in an airtight container. □

### WANTED: Master Gardeners

Do you love working in the garden? Would you like to learn more about plant culture, insect and disease problems? Then why not consider becoming a Master Gardener? Anyone with an interest in plants or gardening is welcome. Master Gardener volunteers pass along their horticulture knowledge to beginning gardeners and help them learn more about all aspects of horticulture, including growing flowers, vegetables, managing a lawn, water gardening or choosing the right landscaping tree or shrub. They also have the opportunity to meet and learn from other Master Gardeners in the community, who share their love of gardening. Training begins March 2007. For more information, contact Sarah Browning at (800) 830-4855. □

### Send me information about becoming a Master Gardener!

Return to: University of Nebraska- Lincoln Extension  
1206 West 23rd Street, Fremont, NE 68025 or call (800) 830-4855

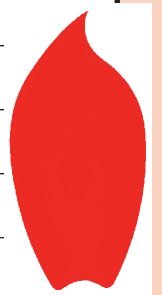
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_





## ARDC Feature Unit

**ARDC  
Administration****About the People**

**D**aniel Duncan is an Assistant Director of the IANR Ag Research Division and Director of the ARDC. He is responsible for providing leadership and directing operations involving facilities, roads, infrastructure, non research

related cropping activities, long range planning, and educational and outreach activities on the ARDC. He represents IANR as the ex-officio member on the Corn, Soybean, Sorghum and Wheat Boards, provides leadership for the development and operations of the Barta Brothers Ranch, and the Foundation Seed Division.

Dan began his University career as Research Operations Manager at the Panhandle Research and Extension Center in Scottsbluff 1987 and has been with the ARDC since 1991. Dan has a Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Economics (Agri Business) and Bachelors degrees in Animal Science and Agronomy all from UNL. He is a LEAD VII Fellow, the current President of the LEAD Alumni Association, received the UNL's Carl Donaldson Award for Excellence in Management in 1997 and has served as President of the University Association for Administrative Development.

He and his wife, Paula, live in Lincoln. Dan enjoys golf and he and his wife enjoy traveling in their spare time.

**Mark Schroeder** is Associate Director of the ARDC and also serves as the General Farm Manager. He is responsible for overall management of farm operations on 3,500-acres at the ARDC, a job that requires much coordination, planning and timing amongst a variety of individuals and departments. Mark has a Masters Degree in Mechanized Systems Management (MSM) and Adult Education. He has Bachelor's degrees in MSM and Ag Economics, all from UNL. Mark was the 2002 recipient of UNL's Carl A. Donaldson Award for Excellence in Management. As associate director for the ARDC, Mark assists the director with daily administration of the ARDC including safety programs, land management, research project coordination, data and GIS information systems. Mark has been with UNL since 1980 managing various research farms and providing expertise with irrigation systems.

Mark and his wife, Barb live in Lincoln with their school aged daughter and son. Enjoyable relaxation includes camping and tinkering with all things mechanical and electrical.

**Ruby Urban** is the Administrative Team Manager for the ASSIST Business Center and has worked 14 years at the ARDC. Ruby and her husband, Ray Urban Jr., live on a farm near Malmo. She received her B.S. degree with highest distinction in Business Administration from UNL. She is a past recipient of the IANR Outstanding Employee Award and the ARDC Employee of the Year Award. Ruby enjoys helping her husband with their farming operation. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, flower gardening and being with family and friends.

**Cheryl Sheary** is a Clerk Assistant III at the ARDC. She started at the ARDC in 1995. Cheryl received the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) Outstanding Employee Award for October 2000. Cheryl's daughter and son-in-law live in Lincoln and she has one granddaughter. Cheryl and Dave Lanik make their home on an acreage near Wahoo.

**Marnie Cihal** is a Clerical Assistant II at the ARDC. In addition to the duties described in the previous ASSIST article, Marnie plays an integral role in the many details that ensure field days run smoothly. This ranges from ensuring materials are ready for presenters to providing water for participants on 100 degree days to preparing paperwork so that attendees can get educational credits and entering data from their hand-written evaluations. Marnie started with the ARDC in 1998. In January of 2006, she received the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources' (IANR) Outstanding Employee Award. She and her husband, Dan, live near Valparaiso. They have two daughters and a son whose activities keep Marnie busy when she is not at work.

As Marketing and Promotions Manager, **Deloris Pittman** prepares marketing efforts for UNL Extension, the ARDC and the Foundation Seed Division. This involves developing promotional materials, web sites, news releases, evaluation reports, displays and other marketing items and seeing them through from initial inception to arriving in your hands.

Deloris also coordinates, conducts or assists with tours - depending on the request. She is a member of the Ag Awareness Coalition that provides an ag education festival for hundreds of fourth graders each year. She also spearheads or assists with special event planning and coordinates building use plans with groups throughout the year.

Deloris has been with the ARDC since 1996 and works primarily from an office in Lincoln, but is often at the ARDC for events, tours, and meetings. She received the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) Outstanding Employee Award for May/June 2002. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in journalism with an Advertising Degree from UNL. She and her husband, Daren, live near Lincoln. They have one son and another baby due in December.

**Luke Herdzina** is the Technology Support Specialist at the ARDC. You can learn more details about his job in the *Technology Capabilities* article. Luke graduated from UNL in 2003 with a degree in computer engineering. He and his wife live in Omaha and have a son and a daughter. His responsibilities include coordinating all phases of technology at the ARDC, including phones, data, networking, desktop, servers, etc. He also supports the Dodge and Washington county extension offices.

While most employees jobs change somewhat throughout the year, one ARDC employee's job changes significantly with the seasons. **Bryon Chvatal** is an Ag Research Technician III at the ARDC. Bryon's job takes on a very different feel depending on the time of the year. In the spring and summer, he plays an integral role in plot preparation and various details pertaining to the Crop Management Diagnostic Clinics at the ARDC, as well as Soybean Management Field Day and Solution Days which are held at various sites across Nebraska.

Other projects that Bryon is involved with include bringing the soil home study course online. He works with the Nebraska Soybean and Feed Grains Profitability Project (NSFGPP) compiling data from cooperators for it to be evaluated. And Bryon also assists with harvest operations at the ARDC when needed.

Bryon started with the ARDC in the spring of 2004. He has a Diversified Ag Associate Degree from Northeast Community College - Norfolk and received his bachelors degree in Diversified Ag from UNL last spring. Bryon lives near Prague where he farms with his dad and brother. In his spare time, he likes to weld, snowmobile, and spend time with friends and family. □

**Calendar  
of Events****NOVEMBER**

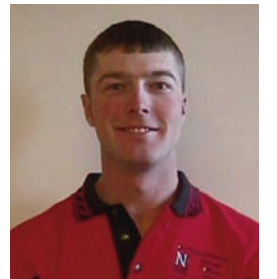
- 9 ABC's Reunion
- 13 Livestock Production & Career Opportunities
- 20 Livestock Production & Career Opportunities
- 21 Saunders County Extension Board Meeting
- 30 Wortman Meeting

**DECEMBER**

- 5 Livestock Production & Career Opportunities
- 8 NE Soybean Day & Machinery Expo in Wahoo
- 13 Unit Managers Meeting



ARDC Administrative staff includes: (front) Deloris Pittman, Marnie Cihal, Cheryl Sheary, and Ruby Urban. Back: Luke Herdzina, Dan Duncan and Mark Schroeder. Bryon Chvatal is pictured on the right.

**Upcoming Workshops  
For Acreage Owners****Nebraska Friendly Landscapes**

**T**he University of Nebraska- Lincoln Extension presents a series of programs, entitled *Acreage Insights-Rural Living Clinics*, targeting acreage owners and specifically designed to provide them with the knowledge and skills to better manage their rural living environment.

In November, **Nebraska Friendly Landscapes** will focus on enhancing living areas by conserving and protecting water resources, providing biodiversity in plantings, conserving energy and more. Learn design principles, plant placement, maintenance, and plants for a Nebraska-friendly landscape. Dates and locations include: November 13-Omaha, November 16-Lincoln and November 18-Fremont.

For more information, visit the website at <http://acreage.unl.edu> or contact Don Janssen (402) 441-7180, [djanssen2@unl.edu](mailto:djanssen2@unl.edu) or Sarah Browning (800) 830-4855, [sbrowning2@unl.edu](mailto:sbrowning2@unl.edu). □



## How We Spent Our Summer at the ARDC!

Activities, programs and tours abound at the ARDC - especially during the summer and early fall season. The following is a pictorial tour of a few of the activities that were held at the ARDC or that staff were involved with at other locations.

**\* Crop Management Diagnostic Clinics** - Nine 1-day clinics and one instructor/educator inservice were developed and held at the ARDC for the public and for private industries attracting 488 registrants. Total acres managed or influenced by this group was 6,352,431 - that's 47% of Nebraska's row crop acres!



**\* Prawn Harvest and Open House** - Prawns were raised in ponds this summer at the ARDC. The first harvest and open house was held this fall. The ponds were drained into a ditch making it possible to harvest the shrimp as shown below.



**\* Soybean Management Field Days** were held at West Point, Hazard, Dorchester, and Wahoo. Extension Educators Keith Glewen and Dave Varner are shown discussing the topic of "Finding Answers to Soybean Production Questions" where they highlighted on-farm research.



## FFA "Families"

by Tracy Ballard, Mead FFA President

A family meeting is not something that most teenagers look forward to. However, the Mead FFA students look forward to this meeting every month. This year the Mead FFA has brought a new idea in for trial: FFA families.

"The families are a way for smaller groups within the organization where the officer can serve as a role model or person to come to when a member has a question," FFA advisor Jenny Kocian said. "It's a way to get information out on a personal basis."

During the summer, at the three-day FFA camp COLT, the advisors and officers came up with the idea of FFA families while planning activities for the future. Seward FFA officers told the Mead students and advisors about the idea of FFA families. The officers liked the idea and decided to split up the FFA members into groups of four to seven students for families.

The officers meet every Monday morning for a review of what they need to do to plan for the upcoming week. The advisors inform the seven officers about what will be conducted at the meetings and what they must share with their families. Once the officers know all of the information, they relay it to their family members individually during the school day. The officers also prepare for upcoming events that involve the FFA and plan activities for the monthly meetings.

The FFA families seem to be working well. Every member gets informed about what the upcoming events are and what they need to do to stay involved in FFA.

"They help everyone stay up to date on things and bring the whole chapter together," said sophomore FFA member Brittany Sterup.

Many students can't wait to participate in family activities and competitions. The advisors and officers decided that these competitions will take place against other families. These games will help bring energy to the FFA and be entertaining activities after a meeting.

The first competition that the families competed in was creating FFA banners. The banners were made to describe each family by including every family member's name, a family picture, and a goal for that family. The winning family of the first competition was the Mumfords: Brittany Sterup, Cassie Parsons, Carol Miller, Tracy Ballard, Nate Raver, Kelly Cooper, and Keyra Springbett.

"I think the competitions are a good idea that will get more members involved in our extra activities," said senior FFA secretary Jessica Guyle.

FFA families benefit everyone in the FFA, including the officer team. They have to learn to organize and work well with other students. The officers also have to learn time management to attend morning and after school meetings.

The program will also teach students leadership. The officer team will have to lead and assign projects to the members. It will teach them how to be leaders and show other students leadership qualities that will be useful in FFA competitions.

"It has made serving as a leader become easier for me," said junior FFA Sentinel Adam Taylor. "It teaches you responsibilities because you have to take care of other people, not just yourself."

Students will benefit from the families by always being informed about the upcoming events and meetings. The students also have to attend several morning and after school meetings which they need to be present in to stay active.

Most importantly the FFA advisors oversee all of these activities and still teach in school. Hopefully, the new program will help everyone stay up to date and make it easier for the advisors to keep the FFA running smoothly. □

**\* Summer is a busy time for tours and meetings.** The Legislature's Natural Resources Committee held public hearings at the ARDC after touring the research center and the E3 Biofuels site.



Also pictured is the Nebraska Chapter of the National Agri-Marketing Association learning about feeding distillers byproducts at the feedlot from Matt Greenquist, Feedlot Unit Manager. □