

2009

The Leading Object: November/December 2009

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NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

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Perspectives

One of the best parts of coming to the end of a year is looking back and seeing the many, many things accomplished — ongoing programs, projects brought to fruition, lives touched, students graduated, awards won, so very much good work accomplished.



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

While none of us can begin to list the many, many accomplishments of IANR's community in 2009, here is a small sampling of the reasons we in IANR have to be proud — and grateful — for the individual and collective ways everyone in the Institute is at work for Nebraska.

From fall of 2004 through fall of 2008, our College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources saw undergraduate enrollment grow from 1,222 to 1,642 — a whopping 34.4 percent! We've increased our students over fall 2008 by 7.1 percent this semester, bringing enrollment to 1,758.

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture increased its enrollment 49.1 percent. A record 425 students started there in August.

The School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences was formed from the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences. And, we sent the first class to take its first two years at UNL in the Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine, off to Iowa State University for their final two years of clinical study.

The Professional Program in Plant Health launched, making us only the second university in the United States to offer a Doctor of Plant Health degree.

We celebrated CASNR Week, its theme "Future Defined in 2009."

The Vegetation Drought Response Index expanded across the 48 continental United States, a milestone for a seven-year research effort.

In the fiscal year ending June 30, Insti-

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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.*



November/December 2009

EARTH University students gain extension experience in Grand Island

Two agricultural engineering students from EARTH University in Costa Rica are learning about extension education in the United States by working with adults and children in Grand Island.

Willy Ramirez of the Dominican Republic and Sandro Lopes of Brazil are taking part in the first international internship program with University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension, said Marilyn Fox, extension educator based in Grand Island.

Fox got a call from Susan Fritz, interim dean of the Agricultural Research Division, and Extension Dean Elbert Dickey asking if she would work with the interns. Fox pursued the opportunity, and Ramirez and Lopes arrived in early September for a three-month stay.

Fox connected Lopes with some groups in Grand Island that would enable him to teach entrepreneurship to Latino children, she said. Ramirez worked with the parents of these children, teaching them more about money management and parenting skills, Fox said.

Both Lopes and Ramirez also helped translate extension materials into Spanish.

"I love to work with people. The work I am doing here will help me in my career. I am learning a lot," said Ramirez, who



Phyllis Saate

EARTH University students Willy Ramirez, left, and Sandro Lopes are interning with University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Grand Island.

hopes to pursue his master's degree in agricultural leadership, education, and communication at UNL.

Lopes, who has some experience working with extension in Brazil, said the internship experience has helped him improve his communication skills.

The internships stem from a partnership UNL has with EARTH University, Fritz said. UNL was one of three institutions that founded EARTH. Bringing EARTH students to UNL was viewed as a way to give them valuable experience in the United States and serve UNL, as well.

"We thought if we could pair them with extension educators in the community there could be dual benefits," Fritz said. "I think it has gone beautifully."

—Lori McGinnis

Perspectives (continued from page 1)

tute faculty received nearly \$62 million in external grants and contracts to support research, teaching, and extension programs.

Our scientists, some of the most-cited agricultural researchers in the world, ranked 14th nationally in citation impact.

A new tool called the Healthy Farm Index is helping farmers take into account the benefits of nature. An integral part of UNL's organic farming efforts, the tool helps farmers and landowners measure their farm's ecological health and maintain or improve crop productivity.

We were contributing participants for the final Nebraska State Fair held at the Fairgrounds in Lincoln, and we will be contributing participants for the first Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island in 2010.

Dr. Larry Berger joined us as the Marvel L. Baker head of the Department of Animal Science, coming from the University of Illinois.

Ron Yoder, head of biological systems

engineering, was named to the 2009 class of American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers Fellows. Dean Steve Waller received a national Distinguished Educator Award. Terry Klopfenstein received the American Society of Animal Science Morrison Award, and Galen Erickson that group's Early Career Achievement Award.

Michael James, professor of textiles, clothing and design, received the 2008-2009 University's Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Award. Don Weeks, professor of biochemistry, received the 2008-2009 University's Innovation, Development, and Entrepreneurship Award. Don Lee, professor in agronomy and horticulture, received the 2008-2009 University's Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award.

Steve Baenziger was selected a member of the board of trustees of the International Rice Research Institute. And he

was the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement honoree. He also received an Omtvedt Innovation Award.

While this list is barely a drop in the bucket, the tiniest example of the many accomplishments in IANR this past year, it does illustrate some of the significant work IANR has done in 2009. There are so many, many reasons to celebrate the variety of ways IANR is, each day, at work for Nebraska.

Thank you for what you do, and for your continuing dedication to UNL's vital land-grant university mission. I hope you have joyous holidays, and a happy, healthy new year.



NCTA accreditation continues into next decade

Accreditation for Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) at Curtis will continue to 2015-2016, according to a report by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

"Accreditations are assurances to students, parents, and employers that we have a quality educational product," said Dean Weldon Sleight, noting this is NCTA's first full, independent accreditation.

Earlier, NCTA was accredited as part of the University of Nebraska, then earned a five-year independent accreditation. Usually accreditations are for seven to 10 years.

"Even though we're independent, we're dependent on the strength of IANR research and UNL student, personnel, and financial systems" that are extremely important to the NCTA educational experience, Sleight added.

The commission's report noted NCTA and its leadership "are passionate about the mission of the college."

"Our future is making production agriculture and the rural communities they serve, stronger," Sleight said, noting NCTA helps students become agriculture and business enterprise owners.

The commission recommended NCTA strengthen its general education program, which Sleight said he intends to do by using UNL assessment tools.

Another improvement is to develop a clearer link between planning and budgeting, especially difficult given a small budget, Sleight said.

NCTA offers two-year degree programs in veterinary technology, horticulture systems, agribusiness management, and agriculture production systems. Enrollment in August increased 49 percent over last year, to a record 425 students.

The veterinary technology program also is accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

New delivery format

Beginning in January, *The Leading Object* newsletter will be delivered online. This is a cost-saving measure that saves paper, printing and postage costs, while continuing to provide information of interest to Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources faculty, staff, supporters, and others.

IANR faculty and staff who are already IANR and extension listserv subscribers will be notified by e-mail when a new newsletter with color photos is posted at: <http://ianrhome.unl.edu/leadingobjectpage>.

Anyone can visit this site to subscribe at no cost to receive notification when a new *Leading Object* newsletter is available.

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

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*Occasionally Dr. Owens will be called away on University business.

Editorial - Cheryl Alberts and Lori McGinnis • Layout - Anne Moore

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103 ACB, 0918; via e-mail (calberts1@unl.edu) or via fax (402-472-0025).

91-year-old alumnus deciding next chapter in life

Harold (Hal) Schudel has lived many interesting chapters in his 91 years.

After earning degrees in agronomy from the University of Nebraska in the 1940s, he flew bomber planes during World War II, showed Quarter Horses, raised Black Angus cattle, and started a successful Christmas tree growing business. Now he's writing a book about his life.

"I decided to make that my project for this year," he said. "I don't know what I'm going to do next year."

The bulk of Schudel's focus has been on his 8,500-acre Christmas tree farms with headquarters near Corvallis, Ore. Holiday Tree Farms Inc., now run by his sons, ships about 1 million trees a year to stores such as The Home Depot, Target, and Walmart.

Schudel grew up in North Loup, Neb., and went to the university on a \$500 scholarship. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in 1940 and 1941, both in agronomy.

After a year with the Soil Conservation Service in Syracuse, Schudel joined the U.S. Air Corps, now called the Air Force, and flew military aircraft.

He was preparing to go overseas when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, two days before departure, and in 1945 he received an honorable discharge in Portland, Ore.

Schudel returned to Nebraska but later moved back to Oregon on a \$2,000 teaching and research fellowship at Oregon State University. He earned his doctorate degree in agronomy from

OSU in 1953.

Schudel started a lawn business but later decided to go into business with a friend.

"We shook hands and decided to form a Christmas tree company," Schudel said.

Holiday Tree Farms was started in 1955. In 1972 Schudel's partner sold his share of the business to Schudel and his three sons, David, Steven, and John, making it a purely family business, Schudel said. More land was purchased and the business continued to grow, selling primarily Douglas and Noble fir.

With a hand still in the business, Schudel began breeding Quarter Horses and raising Black Angus breeding stock, a business he sold in 2008.

Now he is focused on his book, "From the Great Plains to the Great Northwest: My 90-year Journey." Schudel is unsure whether to publish the book as it's primarily for his family.

The book will touch on Schudel's days at NU and his growing up years in Nebraska.

"I've always thought that having a good college education will allow you to do almost anything you want to in life," Schudel said.

— Lori McGinnis



Harold Schudel

Whitman rancher says extension enables profitability

Not all University of Nebraska–Lincoln education occurs on campus.

When it comes to increasing profitability, efficiency, and sustainability, a Whitman rancher looks to the university's research and extension education taught across Nebraska.

"We rely on research and information delivered from the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and through extension," said Sherry Vinton, who ranches near Whitman with her husband Chris. "Extension has helped us stay in business, be competitive, and expand."

The Vintons long have participated in extension programs, ranging from the Ranch Practicum at the university's Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory to the Beef Home Study curriculum to various workshops.

"Each year provides new challenges related to weather, herd health, and markets," Vinton said. "To remain profitable, a person has to constantly adjust. UNL has done a good job of providing us information to help make these decisions.

"Extension has made a difference in our lives."

The Vintons regularly follow IANR research and subsequent extension feeding and grazing recommendations, which apply specifically to Nebraska. For example, based on extension recommendations, 12 years ago the Vintons began mixing their own mineral supplements. Those savings, plus efficiencies and savings from many other extension recommendations, have allowed two of their adult children to come home and join the ranching operation, Vinton said.

Dennis Bauer, extension educator based in Ainsworth, said mineral changes alone could save a producer with a 500-cow herd between \$3,500 and \$5,000 annually, with herd pregnancy rates and weaning weights remaining the same.

Modern production agriculture is rapidly changing to feed a growing global population, Vinton said, adding, "We need applied research and need a format to deliver it. We — both the general public and agriculture — need extension now more than ever."

Commission approves school name

With final approval from the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education in October, the School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences now is established.

The school consists of the teaching, research, and extension education programs of the former Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, as well as the Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine offered by Iowa State University and University of Nebraska–Lincoln; the Nebraska Veterinary Diagnostic Center on East Campus; and the Great Plains Veterinary Education Center in Clay Center.

"The aim of the school is to enhance the coordination and collaboration across disciplines, departments, colleges, and universities to develop a veterinary medical education system that will serve Nebraska and the region," said David Hardin, school director.

Glewen receives Omtvedt Innovation Award

Keith Glewen, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educator based at Mead, received a 2009 Omtvedt Innovation Award Nov. 18.

The Wisconsin native earned his UNL master's degree in agronomy in 1980, and that same year became an extension educator.

Glewen annually coordinates programs relating to soybeans, crop and diagnostic clinics, machinery updates, irrigation and energy, no-till, chemigation, and nitrogen management.

In their 11th year, the crop and diagnostic clinics continue to be an educational resource for farm operators and agribusiness professionals across the region. Since 1996, clinic participants annually represent 25 to 35 percent of Nebraska's row crop acres. Each year between 400 and 500 participants estimate the collective value of their knowledge from the clinics to be

approximately \$25 million annually.

Glewen's numerous awards include the university's Distinguished Service Award, the Holling Family Award for exemplary education, and induction into the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement. He also is a past president of Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society.

The Omtvedt Innovation Awards are provided by Leone and the late Neal Harlan, who honored Irv Omtvedt on his retirement with funding to provide the awards. The awards recognize areas of strength and promise within the Institute, as well as innovative research and programming by IANR faculty, staff, and students.



Keith Glewen

Awards

OEA

Outstanding Employee Awards for managerial/professional staff have been given to two IANR employees.

Jan Hygnstrom, project manager in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering, received the OEA for September and October.

Barry Shull, IANR facilities director, received the award for November and December.

Comments in support of Hygnstrom's nomination stated that BSE "is stronger, widely recognized, and a better place to work because of her contributions," and "Workshops for which she manages logistics are always well planned, with every possible detail accounted and provided for."

Letters supporting Shull state he "has shown good vision in planning for future building and resource needs," and "A project that appeared doomed was resurrected and made successful primarily because of (his) dedication, hard work, skill, and competency."

Hygnstrom and Shull each received cash awards of \$350, a certificate, and a lapel pin.



Jan Hygnstrom



Barry Shull

Kamble receives honorary ESA membership

Shripat Kamble has received an honorary membership from the Entomological Society of America.

Kamble, whose teaching and extension appointments at UNL have spanned 31 years, has been an active member of the ESA's North Central branch since 1970. He has served two terms on the ESA governing board, and will receive the honor in December.



Shripat Kamble

Lou receives international award

Marjorie F. Lou, Willa Cather Professor of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, is this year's recipient of the Jin H. Kinoshita Lectureship, a prestigious international award.

The award is given biennially to a senior scientist for outstanding contributions to lens and cataract research.

The award is named after Kinoshita, a forefather in lens and cataract research and the first scientific director for the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health. Lou will give the Kinoshita lecture at the U.S.-Japan Cataract Cooperative Research Group Congress in Kona, Hawaii, in December.

Lou is the 10th recipient of the award, which includes a \$15,000 honorarium. She is the first woman to receive it.



Marjorie Lou

Deaths

Eric Kerr, professor emeritus of plant pathology, died Oct. 16 after a long battle with lung disease. He was 79.

Kerr earned a doctoral degree in plant pathology at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln with a focus on nematodes. For most of his career he was an extension plant pathologist at the Panhandle Research and Extension Center.

In the late 1980s, Kerr contributed to the development of the Cercospora Alert Forecasting System in response to Cercospora

leaf spot, the most serious and destructive leaf disease in sugarbeets in western Nebraska, northeastern Colorado, and southeastern Wyoming. The forecasting system still is used today.

Ernest "Ernie" Peo, a retired professor of swine nutrition, died Nov. 10 at age 84.

Peo was a member of UNL's animal science faculty from 1956 to 1988. He taught

undergraduates and graduates and served as a major adviser for 15 Ph.D. and 27 master's degree candidates.

Peo received numerous teaching awards throughout his career, including the L.K. Crowe Outstanding Undergraduate Student Advising Award in 1987.

In 1986 Peo was selected as the Graduate of Distinction in Animal Science from Oklahoma State University. He was awarded the title of Fellow in the American Society of Animal Science in 1984.