Agriculture. Consequently, business leaders from banks, farm machinery companies, abstracting companies, the medical and law professions and farmers were the first cooperating volunteers to assist Superintendent Selvig and the staff in those early years. The story of such cooperation is well told in C.G. Selvig's book entitled, "The Tale of Two Valleys" and will not be detailed in this historical writing. Citizen leaders were generous with their time and with their money to get this learning experience operating each year; particularly they supported the Crops Show, the Livestock Show, and a later Farm Service Show.

The first big change in planning was to move those dates to early February. About 400 people came the second year, more than the campus could handle with school classes of ag students also on the scene. The railroad furnished sleeping cars on the sidings in Crookston and on the campus so people could stay there during the Crops Show. The City of Crookston came through in grand style. They offered to help organize meeting space and places to stay in downtown Crookston. The new armory was completed as were the Livestock Association buildings next door.

The City of Crookston and its surrounding area, though, has always been ready to support the Winter Shows. For instance, when the fund drive was held for the buildings that were dedicated north of Crookston in 1962, nearly half of the $320,000 that was pledged to support this building effort was raised in the West Polk County area. The rest was raised in counties beyond and in the Twin Cities. The area Chamber of Commerce in Crookston has one person on the board of managers today. The city also welcomes visitors with special sales of merchandise, put out their "welcome" flags, have a special booth at the Show with give away packets and coupons good at shopping establishments. In addition, they provide bus service throughout the Show from downtown to the Show and back.

The State of Minnesota expressed an early interest in the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Already mentioned is the fact that the State legislature passed enabling legislation so the counties could appropriate tax dollars for selected activities at the Show. Since the early 1920's, the State Department of Agriculture has always had educational booths at the Show and the State Highway Department has had a booth at the Show for the last two decades. The State Department of Education has always encouraged youth activities there by recognizing that the FFA attendance was part of their youth training. During his tenure in office, the governor always attends a Show.

While the University of Minnesota Experiment Station and School of Agriculture and each County Extension Office were really the key people who organized the idea of the annual Short Course and Farm Crops Show (today known as the Red River Valley Winter Shows), it didn't take very long - even back in 1910 and 1911 - for existing commodity organizations to give strong support and leadership to for Winter Shows activities. The Dairymen's Association, founded in 1902, was in the forefront when the Livestock Show activities began. The Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association, founded in 1914, was especially active in finding space so a Livestock Show could begin. They incorporated themselves in 1919 with a legal constitution and bylaws under Minnesota incorporation laws.

Consequently, the first of the Winter Show organization to take title to property utilized by the Winter Shows was the Red River Valley Livestock Association.

Another early organization was the Northern Minnesota Poultry Association. This actually was a small association of active farmers growing poultry for eggs and meat and of poultry fanciers showing exotic breeds. These other poultry farmers and fanciers held a modest show each year. Later they joined the Winter Shows ranks with their show and became part of the scene by 1915.

The Crops and Soils Association organized about 1916 for the purpose of getting behind the Crops Show as well as for other matters of interest relating to growing crops in northwestern Minnesota. This group was influential in matters of new crop variety development until the 1960s. The Red River Valley Development Association, not a commodity organization, organized as a group of citizens representing each of the 14 counties. Their responsibility at the outset and still today is to expend a certain amount of money appropriated by each of the counties for specified activities at each Winter Show. The two large counties have two representatives each. All other counties have one representative.

There were a number of women's clubs in the Crookston vicinity which provided leadership for those early women's activities.

These organizations just named and briefly described joined hands in the second decade (1910-1920) and really cooperated through the decades up to the 1940s and 1950s. Ideas about a new location and facilities surfaced in the late 1950s and the board of managers recognized there were several agricultural and related organizations in the region who might wish to be part of the Winter Shows activity. Several of these petitioned to have a representative on the board of managers, and the number of organizations grew from a half dozen to 18 quickly. Another chapter identifies the current organizations in the Red River Basin who have membership on the Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers Incorporated, as well as a description of their functions and organization.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers has been very sensitive of the interest and thinking of the public before they have embarked on major fundraising campaigns. Three campaigns for building funds have been conducted in the 75-year history, and each one had enough success to accomplish the building mission for which the campaign was designed. An unusual feature of these volunteer capital investments by individuals and organizations of the 14-county area is the near one hundred percent payment of pledges made to each campaign.

There isn't any question but that raising funds has become a mighty effort on the part of many varied organizations throughout society. Any future fundraising by the board of managers is going to have to be done carefully. Before proceeding, the wishes and support of the public must be sounded out very carefully, not only by the board of managers themselves, but by consultation with those who have expertise. Unless there is support for an idea before the campaign, a major fund-raiser for Winter Shows will not succeed.

Publicity for the Show activities and the early years was entirely handled by the superintendent and staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station. Limited publicity was done by some of the commodity organizations. The women's activity committee usually handled their own publicity. This loosely planned situation existed right up through the 1960s. In fact, preshow publicity was handled by the