of governmental needs on governing the Winter Shows. One of the first official listings of the organizations that were cooperating to plan and guide the Show each year was announced about 1916. This group included the Crookston Commercial Club, the Farm Bureau, the Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association, the Northern Minnesota Poultry Association, the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association, and the Red River Valley Development Association. While the Crookston Commercial Club is now called the Crookston Area Chamber of Commerce, all these organizations, while differing in character, still are among the cooperating organizations today among a total of 21 different groups.

The strength of the volunteerism effort began to wane with the emerging of World War II and the recovery period that followed. Unfortunately, a lot of the planning and directing was done by very few people, most of whom were on the staff and administration of the Northwest School and Experiment Station. This is one of the factors that may have led to the misunderstanding resulting in the lawsuit. The downturn of grass roots volunteerism seemed to reach a low point after the lawsuit was settled and after the Winter Shows board of managers became officially incorporated.

The associate dean of the Institute of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics, T.H. Fenske, requested that a good look be taken at the relationship between the Northwest School and Experiment Station and the Winter Shows. His observation was “The Winter Shows is a very good institution in northwest Minnesota but it is too heavy a drag on the superintendent and staff of the University. This needs adjusting.”

The board took a good look in 1956-57. They found serious parking problems, public safety hazards in the buildings, not enough space for concessioners and University personnel more involved than appropriate for a 14-county regional activity. The board members held meetings out in the counties. They were surprised at the solid encouragement to do something about the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The theme of the new effort, which surfaced in 1957 and grew to a rather loud clamor in 1958, was to “Grow or Die.” After a lot of discussion, the idea surfaced to dispose of the property in downtown Crookston and use the proceeds, along with conducting a regional-wide fund drive, to purchase land and build a facility adjacent to the City of Crookston.

The big stumbling block was that the board of managers really had no title to the buildings. They had no debts but also very modest funds in the bank. They had a responsible credit reputation but little or no physical assets. Other organizations supporting the Show at that time had even less money in the banks. The Red River Valley Livestock Association had title to the buildings.

At a meeting in the fall of 1957 the president of the Red River Valley Winter Shows reported to the Red River Valley Livestock Association directors and advisory members on the findings of the board of managers. He said relocation was essential if the Show was to continue. He pointed out that the Livestock Association owned these buildings and could build the needed facilities if they wished. He reported that the Winter Shows board of managers was now incorporated and could own real estate. On motion by Arlan Stangeland and duly sec-

Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers
Red Lake Falls, MN

The Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers congratulates the Crookston Winter Show and its staff on 75 YEARS OF EXCELLENT Service and Devotion to agriculture.