The board of managers engaged an architect in 1975 to study these needs. The board studied the architectural report at some length and began to talk to contractors who could build a Behlen-type addition. Another financial fund campaign was needed. The board decided this time to run the campaign themselves. First, a limited number of board members went out into the area and came back with a mixed bag of support. Some citizens wondered if the operations of the Winter Shows couldn’t carry this building project. Generally, however, people supported the need for space and encouraged the board to move ahead. A campaign was organized and conducted. The board of managers again pledged monetary support as individuals. The campaign did not go out and contact individuals but instead spread the cost over the entire region by requesting funds from regional farm cooperatives and other area agri-business firms. A $230,000 goal was set for the fund. One-hundred ninety-two thousand dollars was pledged and paid in cash during the drive. The balance was to be met from earnings of the show. The Horse Breeders Association asked for $15,000 additional dollars to buy horse stalls, which they agreed to pay for over time by renting the stalls. The architect prepared final prints and specifications. A contract was let in 1976 for a 120’ wide, 275’ long Behlen-type addition on the north side. It was built and ready for the 1977 show.

No fund campaigns have been run since. Considerable capital improvement has been made in food service facilities, better lighting, and revamping the public address system. In addition, several hundred feet of balcony space for concessioners were provided after an MIDA bond refinancing was arranged to take care of remodeling costs and refinancing the balance due on the north area. The MIDA bond again was actually accomplished through the support and cooperation of the city of Crookston and arranged by the First National Bank, Crookston, and the legal counsel to the RRV Winter Shows. The money again came from the various banks in the Red River Valley loaned under a floating interest rate for a 20-year period.

INCOME SOURCES AND EXPENDITURE POLICIES

The income to support the operations of the Red River Valley Winter Shows comes entirely from concessioners’ fees, gate receipts, profits on food sales, and gifts from individuals. And that really has been the story of its income sources since the Industrial Show was part of the scene beginning about 1921. A current financial report is available at the Winter Shows office. The board is conservative on spending. At the present time the board of managers is saddled with what is a reasonably heavy debt service with the industrial bond as well as with a short-term note which has been assumed for some needed facility improvement. The amount of money available for good, strong program development is short. The expenses of the show are watched carefully. The managers serve without pay. Meeting costs of mileage and lunches are reimbursable. Hundreds of volunteers who work out in the counties give their time and effort without pay and largely without expenses. A manager now has been hired, along with office personnel, to provide caretaking and leg work and to manage a good crew of part-time labor to launch and conduct the show each year. The major part of the building is now over 20 years old and maintenance costs are increasing. Money for program development is too short.

LAND ACQUISITION

Through gifts and very helpful volunteers, the four lots downtown in Block 20 of the original townsite of Crookston where the old armory is located didn’t cost the Winter Shows committee much cash. When the second set of buildings was built in 1961, 20 acres of land was purchased from the University of Minnesota for the going rate of top farm land. A few years later an additional ten acres were bought for the same purpose. By special agreement with the city and state, the board of managers did sell five acres of that land for use by the Minnesota National Guard on which to build a new armory, with the proviso that the Winter Shows board of managers would have access to that armory for the Winter Shows each year.

SUSTAINING FUND

This is a special debt service fund which was instituted in the middle 1960’s. To meet some necessary refinancing of the mortgage on the main arena, it was necessary to demonstrate to the financial institutions that citizens were willing to contribute personal funds over and beyond what could be earned from Winter Shows operations. A campaign to set up the fund was in two parts. Carl Ash and Harold Thomforde headed the campaign in the city of Crookston and the immediate surrounding area for establishing an annual sustaining fund membership in the Red River Valley Winter Shows. William Strickler was chairman of the campaign for the region outside of Crookston. This idea has proved to be a good one because by merely sending out a letter in late November each year, the sustaining fund members send in their $10 to

RED RIVER VALLEY SUGARBEET GROWERS

CONGRATULATES

THE RED RIVER VALLEY
WINTER SHOWS
ON
75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO AGRICULTURE