from the sales account immediately plus $1,000 a year to help on the payments to the bank.

The Winter Shows built a temporary alley between the west barn and the arena. Two years later, the board of managers built an additional barn replacing the alley and providing more housing for the livestock. Again, Mr. Holmquist of the Valley Bank loaned the money to build the connecting pole barn. The debt on the arena and on the barns was refinanced in 1967. Payments on the mortgage were then assumed entirely by the Winter Shows board of managers. Again, in 1976 the Livestock Association agreed to assume limited responsibility to help the board of managers make the payments on the new north arena and the added Livestock Association show space. The board of managers refinanced in the late 1970's and relieved the Livestock Association of any added fiscal responsibility. I feel that the livestock industry in the region has been strengthened because the Livestock Association has been a strong cooperator in the Winter Shows and really a major supporting organization for the board of managers through a 70 year period.

I believe the board of managers is stronger today than ever as a management team and it involves more volunteers out in the entire 14 county area than any time in history and if this can be continued the strength of the Winter Shows is ensured for the future.

Terry Courneya, long-time top extension director of Pennington County, a prime grassroots leader so essential to the volunteer committee operations out in each county.

It is a pleasure for me to share some thoughts about the Red River Valley Winter Shows from the perspective of a County Agent in a neighboring county. The first thing that comes to mind is the tremendous effort on the part of local leaders from the host city of Crookston. To initiate, promote and follow through with an agricultural exposition of this size requires an uncommon commitment and vision on the part of countless volunteers on the local scene. While this is in many ways a year round effort, the bulk of the work takes place during the peak of some of the most adverse weather in the nation. Just another example of the kind of people that settled in the Red River Valley and continue to make it a dynamic and productive place to live.

The pride and dedication of local citizens which drives them to stand up and be noticed by putting their agricultural enterprise on parade radiates throughout the far reaches of this fertile valley. This fact is manifested by the long-term support that has been generated among agricultural and local government leaders in surrounding counties. As I reflect on who it is over the years that "talks up" the Winter Shows, attends it regularly and exhibits their finest products, I soon recognize that they are the same people that make this county of Pennington and the cities of Thief River Falls, Goodridge and St. Hilaire function effectively as a quality place to live. One only has to scan the list of Valley Farmer Homemaker award recipients from Pennington County over the years and without exception they are pillars on which this rural community has been built and to a great extent still rests. They stand shoulder to shoulder with their nonfarm peers who develop and lead our rural towns to weave a fabric which engulfs this productive land, overcomes its adversity and brings it to flower and fruition. Yes indeed, to the extent that it stands out in a global sense as a food basket region of the world. These are the people who see fit to join their neighbors from the host city of Crookston and county of Polk in an exposition that says to all citizens of the Valley "look at what we have done, and it is good."

A special dimension of this great show is the youth activity which it fosters. As county agent, I can see the impact it has on our youth. In particular, the 4-H and FFA members who participate in the numerous contests and learning exercises the show provides are the benefactors of a learning and growing experience. The bits of knowledge and experience they gain as they prepare for and participate in the Winter Show are evident to me as I work with these young people over time. The pride of team membership on a winning judging team or exhibition of a champion animal is a growth experience which parallels that of winning a hockey tournament or a 100 yard dash. In addition, it builds support for the Winter Shows in the years ahead.

The esteem in which this show is held and the important role it plays as part of the Valley subculture in the Upper Midwest is evident by the fact that scarcely anyone I talk to during the month of February fails to comment on involvement in the Winter Shows. It is taken for granted that county extension agents, involved in the lives of people as an extender of the knowledge of the Land Grant College and Agricultural Experiment Station, will be an integral part of this sizeable learning, doing and showing effort we call the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

Harry Nelson, Kittson County, retired dairy farmer and once had the top dairy herd in northwestern Minnesota.