WOMEN'S DIVISION

The Women's Division at this time is better organized than ever. Funding for their activities has always been very short, and this sector will need greater attention in the years ahead.

SEMINAR PROGRAMMING

The Minnesota Land Grant University, through the Northwest Experiment Station at this time, coordinates this section of the Winter Shows. The Technical College and the Agricultural Extension Service will also continue to provide organizational leadership. At present there is an abundance of adult education for production agriculture and for those who service the industry. The Winter Shows seminars will need to seek out and select those educational topics which are on the cutting edge of technology and those which are not being assumed by other arms of the adult education services. The long-time leading edge of educational expertise of the Land Grant University remains primary in this facet of the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

COMMUNICATION IN THE FARM SERVICE SHOW

There is so much communication today that it's very easy to get lost in the blizzard of words and the cacophony of sound. Yet, the ongoing programming efforts of the Winter Shows need to deal with the reality of a profitable farm production industry and the continuing improvement of the quality of life. For instance, farmers want to see a good display of the latest farm equipment at the show as well as a number of concessioners not quite so directly related to growing the crops and raising the livestock. Somehow we must insure that the up-to-date smaller farm equipment and the large farm equipment are both on display. The large commercial farmer, the small farmer, the hobby farmer, and the resident of the town and city need to be able to see what is available today, and they'd like to see it at the Winter Shows.

GOVERNMENT

The Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc. is a well-conceived legal entity to carry on the Winter Shows. The membership corporation is established with sufficient latitude and restrictions so that the mission of the board can be accomplished over time.

Yet, there is an informal cooperative effort outside the board which must not be lost. There will be times when a cooperating group with a new idea is seemingly going off on its own without the sufficient knowledge of the board of managers. Full and continuing communication will avoid misunderstandings and inspire valuable individual effort. The creativity of individuals and groups has always been encouraged and improved by the informal relationship that is working toward a Winter Show exhibition each year.

The "too loose organization" was corrected in the early 1950's. The groundwork is now laid for strong corporate leadership; yet just as important, the presence of a variety of organizational and individual ideas in the broad volunteer service thrust must be nurtured and encouraged for all time.

HIDING UNDER THE BUSHEL

The hustle and bustle of organizing thousands of details for the ten-day show and the concern for stretching pennies can result in losing the attention of the public to what, whom, and who of the Winter Shows. The premium book is now the only mailing going out to a few hundred people, compared to the more than 30,000 who attend. The majority who attend do not have ready information which lists all cooperating organizations, their purpose, and the citizens who represent them on the board of managers. These organizations who cooperate each year in a substantive manner have board members and officers. Who are they? Some way needs to be found to make this information more readily available to a broader range of people.

BUILDING NEEDS

There is no question about the convenience of having another wing on the south side, with the kind of facilities where many of the educational meetings could take place and where livestock facilities could be improved. With access to meeting space on the campus of the University, at the Northland Lodge, and at other places in Crookston, however, the Winter Shows can continue to provide good banquet meetings and seminar space for some time to come. Once the present building debt of about half million dollars is substantially reduced, it will be time to plan another addition. In the meantime, the board of managers must protect and preserve the current building, which can last another 50 years if the maintenance policies are aggressive and forward looking.

A WINTER SHOWS BOARD MANAGER

Yes, accepting a membership on the board of managers is an honor. It is also a trust and a responsibility requiring some priority on an individual's time, energy, and substance. Of course, the amount of effort expended by individual board members will vary as personalities are different. One characteristic must be somewhat the same for all board members -- a belief that the Winter Shows is a useful force and demands rather high priority on the service output of a board member.

The logistics of executive committee operations unfortunately place steady demands on officers and other executive committee members. Due to distance of travel, weekly planning meetings for several months in themselves limit those who can serve on the executive committee.

The board of managers may well need to discuss this problem more carefully with future prospective board members. Understanding responsibilities ahead of time and accepting same should help insure teamwork and creativity within the board of managers -- a distinguished, frontline, group of public servants.

COOPERATING GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

As in the past 75 years, the volunteer efforts of many people reaching into every county, plus the helpful spirit of cooperating organizations and agencies organized under the Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc., will meet the challenges of service to life in the Red River Basin for the coming decades.