The Winter Shows
1910-1985
Crookston, Minnesota

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Preface

Writing the history of the 75-year old Red River Valley Winter Shows proved to be much more than a mere chronological recording of dates and events. How does one do justice to recording the dreams, efforts, successes, and failures of people on the land of northwestern Minnesota, of the institutions that were born to service that rich agricultural scene? A complete compilation of all events and happenings at the shows for 75 years, including the thousands of people in the Red River Basin who planned and helped, would require several volumes rather than one.

The need for a one-volume historical publication aimed at recording significant events and preserving a celebration became a reality in the spring of 1983. Needless to say, a very busy several months ensued with communications via letter, telephone, personal interviews, and digging into volumes of premium books, program booklets and other publications dating back to 1910. Finally, pictures with cut lines, appendices material and twelve chapters sampling that glorious 75 years were delivered to the printer on August 2, 1984. Time was too short to eliminate all inadvertent errors. Your indulgence as a reader to the misspelled name or other mishap is begged.

One strives to record happenings as best understood. The historically close relationship between the University and the Winter Shows proved to be very helpful. Certainly the scene has changed from that first Winter Shows in 1910 to the 75th anniversary show in 1985. The reader is cautioned that only a sampling of events and documentation could be recorded for that period. The writer drew on 27 years of experience as president of the board of managers and upon the rich resource of hundreds of first-hand experiences with the volunteer doers and shakers who have already written the 75 years history with their lives carried out in the Red River Basin.
Acknowledgments

Putting a book together would be a most frustrating experience without skilled help to refine and process an immense amount of material. Thank you to Bernice Youngquist who eased the door open to slide in a cup of coffee to a sometimes weary writer. The response of citizens, up and down the Valley and beyond, through letters, telephone dialogue, and personal interviews certainly enriched the flavor and gave emphasis to the spirit, purpose, and accomplishment of the 75-year old Winter Shows.

The publication committee included Don Miller of rural communications at UMC; Ruth Ross, grassroots editor and journalist; and Dorothy McCulla, English teacher and editor par excellence. This volunteer committee provided very helpful critique as the ideas for the history evolved. They labored long hours with routine editing, with layout, and general technical expertise without which the book could not have been published.

The prompt and efficient word processing capability of the secretarial staff at the Northwest Experiment Station was the single greatest time-saver involved in the process of several revisions of each of the 12 chapters and attendant materials.

As has happened throughout the 75 years, the farm service industry, especially from Crookston, gave essential and substantive support to this project with their purchase of advertising in the anniversary publication.

Without the ready availability of the historical files at the University of Minnesota, Northwest Experiment Station, the time required for writing would have been substantially extended.

Another useful task involving the Winter Shows has been accomplished because people in the Red River Valley listened and cared enough to do something. Thank you.

Bernie Youngquist

The Board of Managers Says Thank You

The Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers publishes this seventy-five year history as one of several features during the 1985 anniversary celebration. The desire of the board is to preserve significant happenings and to record the depth of spirit and dedicated efforts of hundreds of citizens up and down the Valley. Many people engage in planning that useful midwinter break for their neighbors to enjoy.

The Board is delighted that Dr. B. E. Youngquist (the short Swede) consented to take on the writing project and we realize the time was short. Again, volunteer efforts have accomplished useful goals. Thanks to him and for the time and talent of the many other willing hands who pitched in as needed. God bless you all.

George P. Nornes, President
Red River Valley Winter Shows
Board of Managers, Inc.
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A hardy, Scandinavian family, the Olaf Nelsons, homesteaded shortly after 1900 on a site of land six miles southeast of Hallock along the south branch of the Two Rivers waterway. The earliest settlers at that time had learned to select the near-river locations for water supply and a source of wood for building and heat. Previously, Olaf had made a trip to this great prairie where the grass grew waist-high. He saw a few farms with big wheat fields, many men and horses, and found only a few families. Roads were nothing but trails. He made contact with a federal land agent and staked out a claim which had a river running across one corner. He couldn't wait to get back to St. Paul to tell Mary about the homestead, what it looked like, and where they could build a home and raise a family. There were no roads, yet, but the steamboat on the Red River was helping bring supplies, and there was a rumor that the railroad would be pushing further into the Valley.

Olaf and Mary Nelson worked in the sawmills at St. Paul to earn and save money. Then, with lots of faith in the future, they loaded tools, supplies, two children and household items into a canvas-covered prairie schooner, hitched up the horses and joined a wagon train headed for the big prairie country of northwestern Minnesota. After about two months of hard travel, they arrived, sunburned and mosquito-bitten, but in good spirits. Though not an easy task, with the help of neighbors, two temporary sod buildings were built to shelter the horses and people until more permanent log buildings could be constructed. Two milking shorthorn heifers came to Fargo by train and up the river on a flatboat the next spring.

Olaf was a jack-of-all-trades. He could work iron, build with wood, lay up rock walls. Mary carded wool for spinning yarn, milked the shorthorns, picked wild berries, launched a gardening project, sewed their clothing, made sauerkraut, canned vegetables, wiped the runny noses of children, and found time to be a loving wife. Books were hard to come by. The preacher came through from time to time for church services, which were held in Nelson's home. With the preacher's help, some books, and once in a while a magazine, showed up in the household. Both Olaf and Mary couldn't wait to read these books, especially those which had stories about farming and homemaking in other places.

The children were seven and eight years old when the country school was built. A cute little school-mom came part way by train, part by steamboat, and Olaf met her on the Red River with horse and wagon. A flurry of activity had been going on at the Nelson's home during that summer before the school opened. They built another room on the house so that the teacher would have a place to stay. This was more work for Mary, but she had a way of dividing all the jobs among the family; thus the household somehow kept operating. Of course there were times when she blew her stack, and Olaf knew for sure then that he'd been spending too much time working and not enough being a husband.

The school of eleven children was an immediate success and became the center of community life. Christmas programs, basket socials, school picnics, and annual meetings were the center of neighborhood life, building friendships and community spirit. A county superintendent of schools was a popular visitor at the country school. He brought news from the outside. He'd always tell a story to the children each time he visited.

Olaf and Mary learned that a rich man named Jim Hill had given land to the University of Minnesota to set up an experiment farm located near Crookston.

"Maybe we'll learn how to handle this wet sod better" said Mary.

"Ya, and I read in one of those magazines the preacher brought that new kinds of wheat are being made by wheat breeders. Ever heard of a wheat breeder, Mary? I wonder how that works", mused Olaf.

"Why don't you ask that railroad agent? He seems to know a lot about the University and about what he calls new ideas in farming," suggested Mary.

Time moved along. The children were "easy-to-learn", as the phrase went in those pioneer neighborhoods. The school-mom married one of the Spence boys and a new teacher had to be found. It was against the rules to hire a married teacher. Mary didn't quite see why such a rule made any sense.

The experiment farm was in business but was having trouble with water like anyone who was working on the flat farm land. This they learned one evening when the railroad agent had supper with the Nelsons.

"I doubt whether those professors will ever find a way to handle this wet land," said Olaf.

“Well, I don’t know. They just might. They got a guy by the name of Stewart to find out how to drain the water off of the land, so you can get on earlier in the spring and sooner after it rains in the summer," replied the railroad agent. "And you know that piece of land that Jim Hill gave to the University isn’t really too good a piece of land. It is kind of swampy. I suppose Mr. Hill figures if the professors can make that produce, the rest of the Valley ought to be able to manage water once we learn how.

Olaf, have you ever heard of a county agent?" inquired the agent. "I hear you might get one in your county sometime soon.”

“Ya, I read about the idea. We sure could use help, but who’s going to pay for it?” questioned Olaf.

“I heard that the University pays part of the cost, the federal government pays some, and that we pay some. I like that idea because I think that maybe then we’ll have something to say about what the county agent does,” said Mary. “Too, I heard a school of agriculture is being built right now and that our kids could go there six months a year for learning about farming, homemaking, and also they can take general subjects like arithmetic, writing, public speaking, music and history,” continued Mary.

“There goes my help with farm work," wailed Olaf.

“Yes, but I’ve been thinking about it too. Olaf. The kids could go to school during the six months of winter and be here for the crop season,” interrupted Mary.
“How will we ever be able to afford it?” questioned Olaf.

“I don’t know, but I want to know more about that new school. It sounds like exactly what we need out here where there is no school beyond the grade school within reasonable distance. If the kids are home in the growing season, you could take on that additional eighty acres of good fieldland that our neighbor wants to rent out on shares,” said Mary, almost all in one breath. She had an unusual tone of excitement when she thought of the welfare and future of the children and the family working together as a team.

The railroads pushed northward. One could get on the train and go all the way to Minneapolis and beyond. A county agent was coming within the next year if the county board of commissioners could agree on the idea. Some farmers weren’t sure it would be worthwhile. Others couldn’t wait. The new school of agriculture sounded good. Boys and girls had to stay there, and most of them stayed for the full six months, coming home only at Christmas time. The teachers stayed right with them at the school. There were some rumors of the boys and girls running wild, but those rumors were found to be untrue. A number of the teachers were these new agriculturists who did research as well as teaching. Those who were worried about spiritual life were encouraged to learn that there were chapel services every Sunday evening. It all sounded like a good home away from home and a chance to get some additional schooling.

It was the spring of 1910. The oldest Nelson child, Paul, had returned from the six-month term at the school of agriculture. He had been home only at Christmas during the six months.

Olaf and Mary met Paul at the railroad station, loaded up the trunk in the buggy, bought a few supplies at the general store, and headed back to the farm. The road by this time had been improved south of Hallock so the trip could be made under most weather conditions except when there were blizzards or in the spring when the frost went out and the surface was soft.

Paul was just full of talk. He told his parents that the new superintendent of the School and Experiment Station was a real doer.

“He even comes to visit our classes and teaches a class in leadership.”

He said there was going to be a Short Course, the teachers called it, for men and women from farms, that it would go on for about three or four days, and there would be something called a Crops Show where farmers could bring in a sample of the grain they had grown. A judge would decide which was the best sample, and the grower of the championship grains would be awarded a new silo.

This Crops Show idea was almost too much for Olaf. He wondered about it all, but yet he knew Mary would want to go. Paul said he’d come home and take care of the cattle while they went to the Short Course.

“How much is it going to cost?” asked Olaf.

“I don’t know,” answered Paul.

“I’ve saved a little money so we could take a trip some day,” confessed Mary. “That could be our trip. When’s it going to be?”

“They are talking about December, after the students go home for Christmas vacation so there would be room for people to stay in the students’ rooms. And you know, Dad, Mr. Selvig said that the men had to bring their wives.”

“Looks like we’ll be going, money or not,” said Olaf. “I’m sure glad that Mom saved a few nickels in a sock somewhere.”

The summer of 1910 was a bountiful crop year in the region. Carloads of grain were being shipped to the new markets. The bank was paid off for the new grain binder. Anne, the daughter, started at the Aggie School, as it was called, in the fall. Too, some mail came from the School and Experiment Station inviting Olaf and Mary to the Short Course and Farm Crops Show to be held in the new Kiehle building with its shiny auditorium, gymnasium, and seating space. Of all things, it had up-to-date moving picture equipment!!

The Short Course and Crops Show became the talk of the neighborhood, and when the time came just before Christmas in 1910, Olaf and Mary and a few other neighbors got together with teams and sleigh and traveled to town. They left the horses in the livery barn and took the train to Crookston from Hallock. A neighbor who didn’t go looked in on Paul and Anne, for they were taking care of the livestock while Dad and Mom were away at that first Farm Crops Show and Short Course. About 250 people showed up, including the Nelsons, from as far away as Roseau, Staples, Ada, Moorhead, and Warren. The Nelsons stayed in Paul’s room at the school. They ate the good food, listened and talked, and talked and talked. They sang songs. The staff of the Northwest School provided some instrumental music. It was really all too exciting to waste very much time sleeping. They heard some agricultural and home economics speakers from the Department of Agriculture at St. Paul. Their state senator spoke to them. The railroad agent brought them news of additional railroad land being available for farming at very attractive prices. From the research at the experiment farm, they learned some new ideas about how to drain land. Several varieties of crops had been tried, and these ideas were shared with visiting farmers.

Tired, they boarded the train for home on the Friday before Christmas, having made many new friends. They picked up more ideas than their heads could hold, and they had a lot of good wholesome fun. They returned refreshed and ready to do battle with making a living on that Kittson County farm. Not only that, Olaf was given honorable mention on his sample of wheat. The judge said all it needed to be a champion sample was to be cleaned up a bit. The quality of grain was as good as the championship sample, and Olaf learned that samples had to be prepared for show.

The writer of this book chooses to leave the saga of the pioneer Nelson family establishing themselves here in the Red River Basin and joining the enthusiastic visitors to the first Red River Valley Winter Shows, entitled then the Short Course and Farm Crops Show. The people at the first Short Course didn’t like the holiday season schedule because of the interference with family and church celebrations. The date was changed immediately, and the next Short Course was scheduled well into January. Olaf, Mary and family didn’t miss a Winter Show during their lives in the Red River Basin. Olaf served on the board of managers and on the Livestock Association for many years. Mary assisted with women’s activities. The third generation of Nelsons now join nearly 40,000 people attending the midwinter show.
CHAPTER II

National Setting and Local Evolution of the Winter Shows

The Morrill Act, signed into law by Abraham Lincoln in 1862, approximately 50 years before the first Farm Crops Show, was perhaps the most significant event in the history of American higher education. Going to college had been only for the wealthy and influential families. Few would dispute the importance of the access to higher education by the general public which the Land Grant University idea brought to the working people in each state. The commitment of service to all citizens of an entire state by such universities was what was different from private colleges. The close ties between the people of the state and its Land Grant University were developments that might not have been foreseen by Justin Morrill, the far-sighted author of the Morrill Act. This Land Grant idea was especially acceptable in the great Midwest. Farmers were quick to find the availability of highly trained researchers and educators on the staffs of the Land Grant Colleges.

The single most significant factor in the initial meeting of the farmers’ Short Course was that the Land Grant University of the State of Minnesota was reaching out to the pioneering farmers in northwestern Minnesota. An Experiment Station and a School of Agriculture had been established to provide outreach education for those who were living on the farm and for those who were servicing farmers, and to engage in research which would assist those on the land with their production problems. This reaching out was part of the philosophical mission of the Land Grant University. The superintendent and staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station provided leadership and expertise to launch the educational service of the Short Course and Farm Crops Show and to continue to provide ongoing stability and leadership for this new arm of the Land Grant College. They attempted to encourage and enliven organizations and create interest in the launching and the continuation of the Winter Shows. This leadership has varied through the years from too much University influence and effort to a leadership organized in a nonprofit service corporation representative of all major organizations, groups, and institutions in northwestern Minnesota. The service function of the University at Crookston continues and has been augmented greatly by another sector of the University, the agricultural extension service and homemaking education in each county.

Several names have been used as this midwinter exposition has traveled through the 75-year history. It began, patterned somewhat after the farm institutes that were being held in individual communities of southern Minnesota and North Dakota. The first show was called the Short Course and Farm Crops Show, and this title continued for some time. In 1918, the combined premium and program book was entitled "The Red River Valley Farm Crops Show and Northwestern Minnesota Farmers Week Meetings." In 1925, the program book and premium book was entitled "The Red River Valley Classic - The Red River Valley Winter Show." In 1928, the official program and premium book was called "The Northwest School Farmer’s Week and the Red River Valley Winter Shows." This title lasted until 1969 when the name of the event became "The Red River Valley Winter Show and the Northwest Farm and Home Week," and this is the title used today.

Probably the changes are largely the result of University leadership through the years. In fact, up until the late 1940’s the premium book as well as the program book were published by the Northwest School and Experiment Station as part of their service to the Red River Valley Winter Shows. In the late 1940’s the board of managers...
took over publication of the premium book, and the University continued publishing the program book until the early 1980's when it, too, was assumed by the Winter Shows board of managers.

While service and outreach educational concerns of the University were certainly paramount in launching the Winter Shows in northwestern Minnesota, yet in actuality, the University could not have accomplished that task by itself. The citizen leaders from the city of Crookston, from surrounding communities, and from the commodity organizations which were in the early history of their formation, all responded to the invitation of University leadership in the planning and operations each year. By the time the Winter Shows was ten years old, the Red River Valley Livestock Association, the Red River Valley Development Association, the Red River Valley Daughters of the American Revolution and the Crookston Commercial Club were substantial and strong cooperators with the leadership provided by the School of Agriculture and Experiment Station superintendent and staff.

Recorded history reads that Supt. Conrad Selvig recognized that leadership in each of the many counties was needed. There were very few county agents in the early years. The Red River Valley Development Association and the Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association were organized in 1914. These two organizations have provided a steady force of county level grassroots citizen leadership since 1914. Their involvement has included financial support and government of the show. It is interesting to note that Experiment Station staff personnel or the superintendent of the Experiment Station have always been among the officers of the Red River Valley Livestock Association, the Red River Valley Development Association, and the Winter Shows arrangements committee (the board of managers today). In fact, it wasn't unusual to find the superintendent and staff members of the Extension Service or Experiment Station providing

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**These Cenex Dealers In The Valley Congratulate The RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS ON THEIR 75th Anniversary**

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four board memberships on the board of ten. Too, there were times when the superintendent of the School and Experiment Station served as president of all three of the leading boards named. The neutral nature of the University resulted in automatic election of the superintendent as president of the show. This custom continued for 73 years until 1982.

This early group of organizations were primary in leading the show for about 45 years. There were a number of related groups like the County Agent Association, Boys and Girls Clubs, Crops and Soil Association, and farm clubs who became satellite cooperators with varying degrees of involvement. Today there are 21 different Valley-wide organizations represented on the board of managers. Each one is a cooperator in planning and executing the annual Winter Shows. A list of these and what they represent is found in the appendix. This group of cooperating organizations, in addition to a number of volunteer arrangements committees throughout the counties, is the greatest single substantive influence which has kept the Winter Shows alive in the past, maintains it in the present, and will in the future. Newly formed organizations serving farming across the region may well join the Winter Shows board in the future.

A list of committees established by the board of managers for 1984 is recorded in the appendix. Too, there are several committees existing in each county which are not listed. Adding up the total number of people who provide from a few minutes of planning to many, many days and weeks of time, the total number of volunteers in the 14-county area exceeds 300 people. If the Winter Shows ever loses this volunteer characteristic it may well lose its effectiveness as a unique educational arm of the grassroots leadership in the Red River Basin, an arm which harnesses the expertise of the Land Grant College to the energy and effort of all major organizations related to agriculture in northwestern Minnesota.

Life hasn't been always smooth and easy for the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The government of the show has gone through the stress and anxiety of cooperating organizations vying for an upper hand. The heavy volunteer nature of the organization even today presents problems to the management. Throughout the 75 years, however, the sincerity and purpose of the Red River Valley Winter Shows exposition has been proved. It was once upheld in the courts when the lack of information on the part of well-meaning but uninformed citizens involved the board of managers in a law suit where the Winter Shows had to fight for its life. The law suit went all the way through the Minnesota Supreme Court. The decision was made in favor of the ongoing Winter Shows.

The lesson learned here was that the Winter Shows had grown up, and relationships out in the 14-county area had become more complicated. A stronger organization was needed. Consequently in the early 50's, the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers was officially incorporated. A strong membership, nonprofit, tax exempt corporation was organized under Minnesota law. By and large, except for updating brought about by the changing scene, these articles of incorporation and by-laws are essentially the same today as they were in the early 1950's.

Bill Strickler of Euclid relates an interesting sidelight to the law suit experience. Four members of the board of managers were requested by the legal counsel for the Winter Shows to be at the hearing by the Minnesota Supreme Court in St. Paul. The court

These boys and girls represented their home schools and counties at the annual Red River Valley Spelling Contest held Friday in connection with the Winter Shows at Crookston. LaVerne Balme of Gully, Polk County was named winner of the trophy. Other contestants were: Allan Daslund of Perley; Lorraine Hietala of Sebeka; Ruth Stenslun of Drayton, ND; Twila Nygaard of Gryglia; Opal Walsh of Arago; Alice Davis of Graceton; Charles Swanson of Red Lake Falls; Delores Lehman of Breckenridge; Julia Lundmark of Bagley; Arnold Engelstad of Thief River Falls; Elaine Aasland of Warroad; and Bill Klinke of Lengby. Date unknown, probably in 1930s.
chambers were in the State Capitol building at that time. These board members traveled to the big city and arrived at what they thought was the Capitol. The building was impressive! Strickler, P.M. Finkenbinder, Crookston; Paul Engelstad, Thief River Falls; and J.H. Sargent, Crookston, climbed the expanse of steps and entered through the gigantic doors. It was quiet inside. A smiling person noted their entry and inquired.

"May I help you?"

"Yes" said Mr. Sargent, "Can you show us the room where the Supreme Court is located?"

The smile broadened on the face of the young Catholic priest, "You’re in the St. Paul Cathedral. I’ll go out with you and point out the capitol building."

On the way down the steps Paul Engelstad remarked, "Well, maybe that was the place to start anyhow!"

After a good chuckle by all and a short walk, they found the hearing room a short distance away, with Leonard Erickson, legal counsel to the board, awaiting them.

A major change in the Winter Shows operations came in 1960 when the Red River Valley Livestock Association, one of the cooperating organizations and an early and continuing supporter of the Winter Shows idea since 1914, gave the title to the buildings which the Winter Shows used in downtown Crookston. These buildings were turned over to the board of managers. Of course, that meant the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers could use this property as they campaigned for funds and as they acquired land and built new facilities on the site currently used north of the city of Crookston. Along with that change, a number of farm-related organizations and groups were interested in being a part of the new move from downtown Crookston.

The Winter Shows has an interesting relationship to the National Guard of the State of Minnesota. Back in 1914 it became clear that a National Guard armory would be built on Main Street in downtown Crookston. It was then that the Winter Shows committee went to work acquiring property right next door to the armory and building buildings with the understanding that the Winter Shows could rent the armory every year when the show was scheduled, and this good working relationship on Main Street, Crookston, continued year after year. Shortly after the Winter Shows built new buildings north of Crookston in 1961, the National Guard was looking for another location and needed a site on the outskirts of the city. The Winter Shows board of managers offered to sell five acres for that purpose. The National Guard selected that site after considering three different locations.

Here again for the second time in the history of the Winter Shows, a cooperative arrangement was established where the National Guard Armory would be available for use by the Winter Shows each year as scheduled.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows has operated at four different locations. In the very early years it was conducted at the Northwest School and Experiment Station. Immediately it was seen that this site was inconvenient because the visitors wanted the show sometime in February and that was when the campus was crowded with students. The Short Course and Crops Show was moved downtown in 1914 into a rented garage for the Crops Show and into the Grand Opera House and the Commercial Hotel for meetings. Show space was hard to find. As the Livestock Show developed, other garages and livery barns were found. The building of the new armory provided space for over a thousand people at a meeting and thus provided the third and more permanent location. Land was acquired and buildings were built in close proximity to the armory. The handy locations of the Presbyterian/Methodist churches along with the Grand Theatre and the public school buildings set up this third location, an arrangement which lasted from about 1920 to 1962. Today the Winter
The flags are out and decorative pylons at the intersections on Broadway Street, Crookston, looking northwards from Second Street. The Commercial Hotel served well as a place to stay, to eat, and to have meetings.

Shows finds itself in its fourth home on the northern edge of the city of Crookston on Highway 2 and 75, located on 25 acres of land with buildings and facilities worth in excess of three million dollars.

A very useful relationship was established in the late 1970's. The light horse management training program at the University of Minnesota Technical College in Crookston needed an up-to-date modern stable for housing and care of recreational horses. Here the Winter Shows board of managers and the University worked out an arrangement. The board of managers built a stabling facility for long-time lease by the college and also an additional arena for Winter Shows concession space which they also leased to the Technical College as a riding laboratory and teaching facility in light horse management. This is another example of the "do it yourself spirit" of people in northwestern Minnesota. These facilities would have cost the taxpayers over a million dollars, and here they've been provided by the cooperative relationship of the Winter Shows and the University at no capital building expense to the taxpayers of Minnesota.

There will probably never be enough money available to do all of the things that the Winter Shows board of managers would like to do. Maybe that is good. It keeps the volunteer planners and managers on their toes. There have been times when the financial outlook was a bit bleak but when you realize that the 75-year history includes two major world wars, a major depression, a fire, and 75 years of volunteer planning and leadership, the present several million dollar facility has to be an unusual accomplishment by citizens of the 14 counties. The board of managers has handled its money well over the years. Certainly the record is not clear of errors in judgment, but prudent management by the leadership may be best expressed by noting that some 20 banks carry the mortgage capital debt owed on the facilities. Details can be found in the appendix. Certainly hard-nosed bankers aren't going to set up long-term mortgage paper if past operations do not merit appropriate faith and trust.

The Winter Shows is a midwinter break. It is a time when people are ready to get out of the house and get away for visiting, for learning, and for having a little fun. Modern roads, automobiles, snowplows and communication media make this winter activity quite easy today compared with the efforts necessary by the pioneers. The balance of this book will attempt to gather in one volume a sampling of the human spirit and energetic dedication associated with the 75 year Red River Valley Winter Shows.

Salutes The
RED RIVER VALLEY
WINTER SHOWS
ON THEIR
75th ANNIVERSARY
McKINNNON CO., INC.
CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA
CHAPTER III
Leadership, Planning and Management

The farming scene at the first Farm Crops Show in 1910 was at best hazardous. The muscle of man and the oxen and the horse provided power to till the land.

It was up before dawn to feed the horses and after the day’s field work was done, which was usually after the sun had set, the tired draft animals were unharnessed, fed and curried. Mechanical power was yet the cumbersome steam engine and oil pull combustion engine. Farming was mostly a do-it-yourself operation. Services were just beginning to come on the scene, such as health care, local government, better roads, mail routes, telephones, and equipment dealers.

Farms were far apart! Schools beyond the county school were also far apart, and there were no school buses. Lack of technical information and communication in an area with great farming potential was in the mind of James J. Hill when he gave land to the University of Minnesota to found an experiment station and to establish a school of agriculture to teach what was learned on that experiment station. Agricultural scientists were just beginning to settle in the Midwest. The new school of agriculture was founded in 1905 to teach the isolated farm children at a boarding school during the six months of the late fall, winter and early spring season. Ag research and teaching personnel were hired, who brought in new ideas as well as conducted research on problems related to the Red River Basin’s agriculture.

The new experiment station was learning how to handle the rich lake-laid soils and the soils up on the shorelines of old glacial Lake Agassiz. This new information was getting out by word of mouth. The situation was ripe for a new input of farming knowledge into the lives of those out on the land.

William Robertson was the first superintendent of this new school of agriculture and it was an immediate success. He passed away enroute on the train to the Twin Cities after a very short service of barely five years. C.G. Selvig, an educator interested in farming and in rural life development, was superintendent of schools at Glencoe, Minnesota. He was a young visionary who had already caught the eye of the State governmental and University leadership for his aggressive and effective leadership. Selvig was appointed as superintendent of the 15-year-old Agricultural Experiment Station and the 5-year-old School of Agriculture. He brought the Farm Institute idea to northwest Minnesota, an adult education activity carried on by the University of Minnesota in southern Minnesota. Besides providing leadership for the School of Agriculture and the Experiment Station, he launched the first Annual Short Course in December of 1910. The Kiehle Building on the N.W. School campus was built in 1909, and it included an auditorium and a gymnasium. The Short Course and Farm Crops Show was held in this modern, exciting facility. This first Short Course laid the foundation for what became the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

A few counties had county agents when the first Annual Short Course was held, but even before the Winter Shows was ten years old nearly every county had one, providing leadership for extension education. This county representative of the University of Minnesota became a local leader for selected Winter Shows activity. He not only harnessed up his office staff but involved other citizen leaders in each county. Vo-Ag instructors began to be hired increasingly after World War I, and they liked the opportunities at the Winter Shows.

Too, the county board of commissioners became interested. Each county board granted modest funds after legislation was passed by the State legislature which enabled the counties in northwestern Minnesota to appropriate tax funds to be expended by the new association known as the Red River Valley Development Association. This was really the first organization specifically formed for the purpose of assisting with the planning and undergirding of operations of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The nature and operations of the Development Association are explained in Chapter 6 of this book. The livestock and poultry organizations became cooperating organizations alongside the Red River Valley Development Association.

The number of organizations, institutions and groups cooperating to produce the Winter Shows has grown during the 75 years. Today there are several volunteer committees in each county which change individual makeup from time to time, but for the most part come under the leadership of the county extension director. The Valley Farmer and Homemaker Committee is made up of the presidents of the major farm organizations in the county, plus someone from the Vo-Ag teacher ranks plus the director of the Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service, the county director of the Red River Valley Development Association, and the chairman of the county board of commissioners. The County Extension Director convenes this committee which selects the Valley Farmer and Homemaker couple to be honored at the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The County King Agassiz Committee is a revolving committee chaired each year by the County King of the previous year. He calls together a committee of three to five previous county kings. He may consult with Vo-Ag instructors, the county extension director, and citizen leaders to select a young person coming up the ladder of leadership as the county king for the current year and as the candidate for King Agassiz at the Winter Shows to follow. This selection is made in the late winter or spring of each year.

The honored Dairymen Committee, headed by the County Extension Director plus previously honored dairymen, meets to select the dairymen to be honored at the banquet at the time of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Located over the broad region are several general committees having specific duties, like the Women’s Division. These are covered in another section of this history.

Citizen leadership in the early days was found close to Crookston because communication for the planning process needed people located close to the Experiment Station and School of
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
Northwest Experiment Station superintendent and staff until about 1981. The board of managers did provide a publicity office and engage volunteers and some part-time paid people beginning in the 1960s when the new building was built north of Crookston. This system has continued to grow in capability. The most exciting thing happening with publicity is that the rural communications department of the Division of Agriculture of the Technical College has provided media service as an "on the job training" laboratory exercise for the rural communication classes, another example of a unique educational experience available because there is a Winter Shows. Also this group has begun to take on some preshow planning for advertising the show. Preshow publicity now is handled by the Winter Shows board of managers through the growing strength of the Winter Shows office.

When the new building was in the "talking" stage in the late 1950s and the decision was made to move ahead, there was just more frontline leadership needed than the superintendent and staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station had available. Consequently, a full-time Winter Shows manager by the name of Victor Hodgson, former City Clerk from the City of Crookston, was hired to take over follow-up and coordination and management of activities, beginning with the financial campaign and the building process, and for some time thereafter. Hope was that enough income could be generated so this full-time manager could be on the scene permanently. However, about two years after the building was built, it became quite clear to the board that they'd have to let this capable person go to another job. Mr. Hodgson carried the Red River Valley Winter Shows management through one of its difficult periods. The board was sold on trying again with a full-time manager; however, this, too, didn't generate the projected earnings because the second full-time manager had to be released to other job opportunities.

A part-time manager was then hired in 1966. Paul Brekken, though a full-time farmer, was willing to provide leadership for the Winter Shows beginning in November of each year and continuing through March. Under Brekken's management the board of managers was able to turn things around financially. The payments on the building were refinanced, details of which are mentioned in another section of this book. The building payments were met each year. In fact, when Mr. Brekken resigned, the managers were several years ahead on the remaining mortgage, with very little left to pay off. A nephew of Paul Brekken, Larry Brekken, was hired in 1979 to provide the same kind of part-time management until July, 1983. Previous to that time the board had again been evaluating the need for a full-time manager for several months. With Mr. Brekken's resignation, they hired such a manager, commencing July 1, 1983, Phil Miller. While a full-time manager is hired to coordinate and generally manage day to day affairs under the policies of the shows board, the Winter Shows is still a volunteer operation. This is one of the major strengths of the institution known as the Winter Shows. The board of managers are elected because they are the kind of people who will give of their time and energy and substance in planning and managing this exposition for northwestern Minnesota.

The concept of volunteerism in the planning and management is a very important part of the history of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The appendix section of this history has a complete listing of all the committees which now are active in planning and managing show affairs each year. There are many committees out in the counties which aren't listed. Among these volunteers is a committee of financial consultants from banks and savings and loan associations. This group is called upon whenever any unusual capital improvement is being considered or when refinancing of capital debt becomes an option. This committee has been very helpful to busy members of the board of managers, as they have managed fiscal matters through the past 30 years.

The full-time manager is on a salary. The board members, continue, however, to serve without pay. They may collect expenses for mileage and meals while on Winter Shows work. In a society where one can see the concept of volunteerism dying out in the country, one has to raise the question of how long volunteerism will be a viable force in the Red River Valley Shows? Without doubt, volunteer committees and ideas from the 14-county area in northwestern Minnesota have built, maintained, and strengthened the Winter Shows decade after decade. The idea is still alive and important in this part of the U.S.A.

Finally, it appears that with all the ongoing details, a combination of good strong volunteerism with a modest amount of paid management and a lean but capable clerical staff will be needed to maintain the thrust of the Winter Shows mission in the decades ahead.
CHAPTER IV

Educational, Promotional, and Social

The Red River Valley Winter Shows began and largely remains as a "people-on-the-land" idea. From the very beginning, in 1910, the idea concerned those who made a living from the land. In that first decade of this century the venture was a pioneering effort by a people who believed that this open prairie land and the transition land between the heavy forests of northern Minnesota and the prairie was a resource with a future. They believed one could earn an acceptable standard of living for themselves and produce food and fiber for themselves and for others.

The adult educational opportunities for those who were on the land and for those who were beginning to service the farming industry were nearly nonexistent. The situation needed educational service and agricultural research. The University was nudged to move ahead with educational service through the efforts of farsighted legislators and industrialists like James J. Hill. By 1910 the Experiment Station had gone through its birthing pains and had developed enough know-how so there was a modest list of farm practices which could be shared with the farming public. The School of Agriculture was established in 1905 and began teaching in 1906 with a staff which included professional agriculturists. People wanted to know these teachers.

Into this situation C.G. Selvig was appointed superintendent in 1910, and he didn't take very long to organize his staff and interested leaders to step into that adult educational vacuum. Selvig and his staff put together the first extension meetings for farmers. People came, they visited, they met new friends, they learned, and came away enthusiastic and wanting more. The feedback from farmers served to set the pace for the Agricultural Experiment Station. Researchers heard firsthand about problems out on the farm. Numbers of livestock increased immediately on the Station. The scientists went to work in horticulture, on soils research, on improved varieties, on looking at better procedures to manage the difficult soils and the water. The Winter Shows had been going about five or six years when the county agent system took a quantum leap forward in northwestern Minnesota. By the middle 20's most of the counties had a full-time county agent providing a much-needed adult education leader locally in each county. The presence of a top level adult education service in each county began to change the kind of meetings and seminars that were held at the Winter Shows. It didn't make sense to talk over the same ideas at the Winter Shows that were talked about and taught at the meetings of the county agents and of the home economists. The natural development in the adult education at the Winter Shows was to talk about topics which weren't covered at the county level. In the early 20's, too, the vocational agricultural departments in the high schools increased. Here was another support for adult education for the farming public. This group, too, teamed up with the Red River Valley Winter Shows and integrated it as an extension of and as a partner to their educational work.

Learning also took place at the attractive displays of machinery and other farm service needs. Ideas came from visiting with others from the region. New ideas from agricultural experts were brought in from outside and beyond. Every farmer and his wife, as they farmed and raised their family, encountered difficulties along the way. An opportunity to visit with other farmers helped understand these difficulties and was in itself therapeutic, inspirational, and educational. The Winter Shows has been educational, promotional, and social throughout the 75 years. While it actually began as a pioneer educational function serving those who were launching the farming industry in northwestern Minnesota, the show has been, in more recent times, careful to complement and strengthen the other educational agencies: extension and vocational agriculture.

Travel to the educational meetings in the early years was difficult. Few cars were in use, and the roads available were not usable the year around. People would travel from their farms to town by horse-drawn sleigh. After leaving the horses in the livery barn for care and feeding, the visitors, bound for the meetings, boarded the train for Crookston. They'd stay for a day or more. The railroad cooperated by providing a half fare for a round trip. During that period there was a daily train from Noyes to Crookston and return, allowing people to attend the daytime meetings. A daily train from Warroad to Crookston and return was scheduled and several from Moorhead would be arranged, as was one from Staples to Crookston.

People who wanted to attend the very popular evening meetings had to ask neighbors to look after their livestock. Some came for the entire Show, therefore a housing bureau provided rooms in Crookston. The railroad also furnished special sleeping cars on the track, with a steam engine hooked up for heat. Even with those helpful arrangements, it was quite a project just to travel back and forth to the Winter Shows each year.

The early formal educational programs were planned around topics of the time. The technical meetings for men and for women were immediately popular and, for a number of years, were very much like the extension meetings held out in the counties. Of course, though lacking the tremendous visual aids of today, the show, without a doubt, used the up-to-date communication devices of that day. The evening programs included speakers who usually came from the University of Minnesota, from state government or from outside of the state. The lecturers were very popular. Attendance ran from a few hundred to crowds of 1,500 or more. Occasionally the new armory, which held 1,800 seats, was filled, and the overflow would be housed in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. Very popular speakers addressed all three audiences. In later years the addresses were piped in by loudspeaker. People were more patient in those days with outside lecturers. They came to listen and to learn. The evening lecture idea was well received into the 1940's; in fact, the last top-notch lectures were scheduled until the middle 1950's. By that time radio, television, news-
papers, and other forms of media were reaching nearly every rural home in northwestern Minnesota.

Currently, the policy of the Board of Managers relating to the seminar series sets the following pattern. The superintendent of the Experiment Station is coordinator of the general agricultural and related seminar series at the Winter Shows. Each scheduled seminar has its own chairperson who sets up a committee to coordinate planning, arrangements, and follow-through.

The philosophy of what should be talked about has a threefold criteria. First, a real effort is made to avoid what is treated by county extension service or vo ag departments. Secondly, the topics that are talked about at Winter Shows are of general regional concern. Thirdly, high priority is given to natural resource conservation and planning, and new technology. For instance, the current International Sugarbeet Seminar and sunflower culture were first part of a Winter Shows seminar.

The Crops and Soils Seminar, as it is called today, is among the oldest continuous formal educational meeting at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Today it draws one of the largest crowds to hear the frontline, cutting-edge ideas. A noon luncheon provides a chance for informal talk.

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John Vallager Stephen Wright
cluded color schemes in the home, batik dyeing of garments, and trends in forms of dress, home decoration, and textiles. The entire gamut of activities for the housewife and partner in the farming enterprise can be found in the programs for women's meetings throughout the 75-year history.

An interesting development during the last 30 years, however, is that the women's programs are planned by the women's division of the Winter Shows with an ongoing committee of several women from the region and chaired by someone elected by the committee. The elected person serves on the board of managers. The Agricultural Extension Service home economics professionals of the county have always provided stable, modern, uninterrupted leadership to the committees as they planned and developed their annual presentations. Their program is far-reaching, including those topics which aren't necessarily covered in quite the same way out in the county meetings. Each year the women's meetings now draw the largest single crowd of all of the seminars.

Early in the history of the women's meetings, some of the local clubs provided leadership. The Fairfax-Andover Social Circle, as they were called in the second decade of the 20th century, served as hostesses for women's programs for many years. A very popular meeting place was the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches located in Crookston. Social groups of this nature, while they were active cooperators in the early history of the Winter Shows, are now part of the women's division planning committee.

Educational sessions about livestock were much a part of the study in the 1920's and 1930's but these were discontinued in the 1950's due to low attendance. This is understandable when one considers that livestock producers at the Winter Shows are always busy with their full docket of show competition and of purebred livestock sales. There isn't time during the show for the educational activities. Youth activities were emphasized beginning about the time of World War I, and these have continued to grow in importance. The youth work of the board of managers includes farm youth and youth from the cities and villages. Most interesting to us today were the earlier educational contests, including spelling, declamation, essay writing, and posture competition. The prominence of the country schools produced such an emphasis. Crops judging by FFA, 4-H, and regional schools of agriculture teams began in the early 1920's. Today nearly 1,000 youngsters are involved from FFA and 4-H judging in the Red River Basin. Educational programming in Extension and FFA uses the Winter Shows as an additional opportunity for competition.

For approximately 30 years, a Boys and Girls Club conference was held, at which some of the planning and coordination of the district 4-H work was conducted. This was first led by A.J. Kittleson and after him by H.H. Pflughoeft. These extension leaders were located at the Northwest Experiment Station shortly after 1910.
and until 1940 when the 4-H district office was moved to St. Paul. Today there’s a full gamut of crop judging, livestock teams, and dairy teams, as well as a grain clinic emphasizing clean grain production and storage. An arts-in extravaganza for 4-H youth is an exciting, recent development. A talent festival has been conducted for over 25 years, with rather attractive cash prizes for those who are judged winners. The Minnesota dairy princess is involved, and a youth horse husbandry clinic and judging contest are on the scene. In addition there are a cow clipping contest, a dog show, a futurity livestock show, and pony rides and a children’s barnyard for the tiny children.

The great American institution—the banquet for entertainment, for fun and fellowship—was an early item among Winter Shows events. In the past history of the Winter Shows these banquets tended to be held early in the evening, followed by lectures in the evening program. Today there are midday banquets as well as evening banquets. Banquet speakers are not as popular today. Evening lectures have practically disappeared.

Food, of course, is important to those who come to see the Show. The restaurants and private clubs in Crookston have always been good hosts. For nearly forty years the ladies of the Methodist and of the Trinity Lutheran Church provided coffee, pie, and grill foods at the old winter shows buildings downtown. The story is told that these hard-working ladies paid off a substantial portion of the mortgage on the new Trinity Church with proceeds from their annual feeding of the crowds at the Farm Crop Show. At present, the food concession in the new buildings is under the control of the Winter Shows board of managers.

Beginning about World War I a trend for various organizational meetings during Winter Shows began and grew for nearly a 30-year period. The various commodity groups, the new Northwest School Alumni Association, the purebred livestock associations, the board of managers, Crops and Soils Association, for example, would use the Winter Shows as a time to meet, for fellowship and business discussion. A few annual meetings were scheduled for that time of year.

As an example, the program of one of the early 1920 Winter Shows included the following meetings: Red River Valley Guernsey Breeders, Red River Valley Holstein Breeders, Crookston Association of Public Affairs, Red River Valley Livestock Association, Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association, Crops and Soils Association, Boys’ and Girls’ Club Conference, Red River Valley Development Association, Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni, the Seventh District Women’s Clubs, the Northwest Minnesota Press Association and the Northwest annual meetings at the Winter Shows.

Today there is so much other activity of a general nature that the organizations tend to have their annual meetings at less busy times of the year. While they might get together for a banquet or some social event, meetings at the time of the Winter Shows by commodity or breed-related groups aren’t scheduled.

The Red River Valley Development Association, however, still holds its annual meeting, where it merely reorganizes for the year ahead. The.
Winter Shows board of managers will schedule a full meeting during the latter part of the show to evaluate and record observations and make corrections as they look ahead to another year. Most other planning groups tend to meet at other times. For instance, in the women’s division, very shortly after the show was closed, the women’s division committee will meet to evaluate and begin planning for another year. The women’s committee has established a system of committee membership which rotates. They plan well, with experienced committee persons, and bring in new members regularly.

Governmental Involvement - The Winter Shows became an early focal point for discussion of governmental affairs. This idea began at the time of World War I with a group known as the Crookston Association of Public Affairs, which really carried on for nearly a 30-year period. This was the group that invited legislators, congressmen, governors, the secretary of agriculture and other notable leaders to visit the Winter Shows. As local leadership changed, the invitation and sponsoring of public affairs events became part of the managing and arrangements by the Winter Shows board of managers, beginning about the mid 1950’s. The Experiment Station, the School of Agriculture, and now the college have assisted. Today a noon luncheon is held to which Chambers of Commerce ag committees in the area and top state and federal government officials are invited, not only to be at the luncheon and share observations and concerns with the people and react to questions from the audience, but also to see the Show and visit with people informally. This opportunity for dialogue is valued by those in government and those who live here locally. The senators, representatives, and legislators would prefer to come and be quite free to visit at the Show and talk informally, rather than meet with particular pressure groups waiting to make specific requests.

The board of managers has a challenge here, and a great opportunity to invite legislators from outside of the Valley and expose them to the agriculture and way of life in this great northwest section of the State.

Music and song were missed by the pioneers out on the land. Sing-alongs were introduced before the lectures to satisfy this need. These were an inspiring part of every program. The Department of Music at the Northwest School of Agriculture provided great choral and sing-along leadership. Lucile Holiday, Ann Simley and A.H. Larson are among those who are dear to the hearts of people who lived in the 1920’s and 1930’s. Newspaper reports suggest that “the rafters rocked” with the singing of the audience as they joined in the national anthem, popular ballads, and the famous Red River Valley song. In fact, there was a special song created called “The Farm Crop Show”, which was sung with a great deal of gusto.

Another feature of several shows was the pageant where historical developments would be acted on the stage. C.G. Selvig was a great writer of pageants, assisted by other members of the community and of the staff of the Northwest School of Agriculture. The pageants were then produced by 4-H groups or by groups organized at

as well as sing for events including celebrity speakers. The late T.W. Thorson directed this group for nearly twenty years--the last concert celebrated the dedication of the new facility north of Crookston in 1962.
large, with representation from each county. These pageants were used to emphasize the progress made with new farm practices and new ideas that provided assistance to the farmwife as she struggled to be a mother, a partner, and a community leader. The assistance of A.J. Kittleson, who was the district 4-H club leader, and later of H.H. Pflugheft, and of county agents really made the pageant idea successful. The organization, practice, and production were great experience for those who participated. Fun and learning took place. Lifelong friends were developed.

While this kind of approach was very much needed in those early days, the radio, television, hi-fi, and you name it, are an entirely different form of entertainment today, and it just may well be that a sing-along may not be appreciated at the 75th annual educational seminars of the Winter Shows.

A regional musical effort of long-time duration was the formation of a group called the Northwest Singers. This group evolved in 1918 when a number of small choral groups from the 12-county area gathered for a couple hours of practice in the afternoon to prepare a choral concert for the evening. This unit became quite famous, and at peak there were over 200 singers who met annually to sing the famous Farm Crop Shows ballad and more formal and classical music for the enjoyment of those who attended the shows. The Crookston municipal band, the Fertile orchestra, the Northwest School musical groups, among others, provided music for many events. Many barbershop groups performed individually or as part of the Northwest Singers program. A rather active group was the Ross Brothers quartet, including Ferd, Henry, Otto and August Ross, from the Fisher area. The Ross Brothers traveled by sleigh from Fisher to Crookston to perform. A Ross quartet also sang with the Northwest Singers. Ferd Ross will be remembered as the father of Walter Ross, who lives in the Fisher area. The Northwest Singers continued for many years under the leadership of a number of people. The longest, most influential leader was T.W. Thorson of the Crookston Public Schools. The last time this group assembled with about 120 singers was at the dedication of the new arena and facilities built in 1961. T.W. Thorson conducted this choral group and they received a standing ovation. It was a moment when the human family of the Valley seemed to speak and hear a language dear to the hearts of all.

An enriching and continuing source of educational leadership for the Winter Shows, beginning in the 20's and lasting until 1960's, was provided by agricultural development agents for the railroads. John Haw, Paul Wagner, A.J. Dexter and Tony Meisen provided a great deal of leg work and frontline leadership. Through the years they were able to assist with getting special train schedules for the Winter Shows, with bringing in topnotch agricultural speakers, with arranging for sleeping cars on sidings, with helping entertain VIP guests, and providing technical leadership in the conduct of the Crop Show and the livestock shows. These men were the front-line, technical advisors for pioneer farmers who purchased railroad land. Of course, other farmers benefited too.

To summarize, the Winter Shows started out as the first organized adult education activity for the pioneer farm families in the Red River Basin. The women's programs, seminars, lectures, demonstrations, crops show, youth activities, livestock show and sale, the poultry and pet show, the farm service show, and added special events have changed with the changing methods and life styles of making a living in the Red River Basin. People still come 40,000 strong for fellowship, for learning and for fun in the middle of a long winter.


CHAPTER V

Government and Sponsorship of the Winter Shows

Webster's dictionary defines the word govern "to guide or to direct or to decide." Further, the word government is defined as "the act or process of managing, especially referring to a governing body or organization." Certainly, in 1910 the guiding force and directing body or organization of the first annual Short Course and Farm Crop Show was Superintendent C.G. Selvig and the staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station. By the time the second year rolled around, citizen-leaders in business and in the professions in Crookston joined the University staff.

The history of the guiding and governing organization which planned and operated the Winter Shows each year is a story of vision for the future, of courage to try something new. There were voices among the agricultural leaders which suggested that a strong agriculture could not develop in the Red River Basin unless there were livestock. Consequently, the Dairymen's Association, the Poultrymen's Association and the Red River Valley Livestock Breeders were among the earliest commodity groups to become associated with the Show. Even though a livestock show in midwinter was a question mark, livestock farmers needed every help available to successfully raise livestock in the rugged winters out on the prairie. The Crops Show generated wide interest. As a result, a special organization, the Red River Valley Development Association, was set up in 1914. This group had representatives from each of the ten counties and was the first association to give financial aid. They adopted the Farm Crops Show and built wide regional support. They scoured the countryside and secured top-level premiums. Until 1920 it was this Red River Valley Development Association which was the guiding and governing body of the Winter Shows. Other commodity groups were cooperating but weren't providing governing service to the annual Short Course and Farm Crop Show. The building of the new buildings in downtown Crookston brought on new problems. The nature of the Red River Valley Development Association did not provide for owning buildings nor could the modest appropriations provided by each county be used for constructing buildings.

The Red River Valley Livestock Association was beginning to come alive through the efforts of agricultural leaders who realized the importance of livestock as part of the future farming scene. County breeding associations had been formed in the early part of the decade, and a Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association was organized in 1914 at the short course. In 1917 this group reorganized at a Development Association meeting in Warren and were formally incorporated in 1918 under the laws of the State of Minnesota as the Red River Valley Livestock Association, Inc. It became the only organization cooperating with the Winter Shows which could own property. When the push came to erect buildings and facilities in the immediate area of the new armory, therefore, the Red River Valley Livestock Association took on that task.

The leadership of the Livestock Association and of the Development Association included many of the same people. For nearly four decades, 20's, 30's and 40's and even extending into the 50's, there was a strong cross-linking of directorships between the Winter Shows board of managers and the government of the Red River Valley Livestock Association. A quick look at the old premium books for those decades will show the name of a University staff member as president of both organizations. The livestock association became the leading cooperator in the fund drive for the first two buildings: the livestock pavilion in 1918 and the big livestock barn in 1919. The third building, which was built in 1920, met with some internal differences among the cooperating groups and with the post-World War I recession. It began to dawn upon leaders of the Winter Shows that the title to the Red River Valley Winter Shows facilities by a single commodity group might well be providing the shows with some problems. Consequently, the government of the Winter Shows took on a new name in 1920, the Winter Shows Board of Managers, and from that time the government of the exposition repre-

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sent Valley-wide commodity and farm-related organizations. Except for a few years in the late 1940's, this rather loosely organized board of managers has planned and operated the Red River Valley Winter Shows annually, even though the title to the buildings belonged to the Red River Valley Livestock Association.

In the 1940's, problems developed within the governing body of the Winter Shows. The board of managers was an organization of commodity groups and agricultural agencies joined informally for the common welfare of the Winter Shows. They succeeded in organizing grass roots volunteer committees in the original ten counties and swelling the number to 14 counties by the 1930's. The Northwest School and Experiment Station grew greatly in influence and respect, especially in the Red River Basin and even across the state and was noted for its top-level professional people and the caliber of leadership each one brought to a particular area of expertise, as in soils, agronomy, livestock, or horticulture. These leaders then became the “government in being” behind the scenes for the annual Winter Shows.

As sometimes happens in loosely knit organizations, it's easier to do the job of planning and leadership yourself than to go out and maintain that very important level of volunteer leadership out at the grass roots. That kind of situation nearly resulted in the demise of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. In 1948 the 30-year charter of the livestock group expired, and a move was made to declare the Red River Valley Livestock Association, Inc. as illegal with no state charter. While the Show kept rolling each year, it took a protracted lawsuit to settle the issue, which finally ended up in the State Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of the Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers.

Before the lawsuit, some explanation is helpful. The last of the three buildings built after World War I was built in 1920. The Livestock Association raised some serious questions as to whether they ought to be involved in building a building for an industrial show. The fund raising fizzled. The banks loaned money to build the major portion of the industrial building, and it wasn’t paid off until 1940. The Livestock Association was liable for paying the debts, as they had title to the buildings even though all organizations had helped raise the money. Income to the Livestock Association from renting the structures didn’t make full payments on the principal. The board of managers handled the modest income from tickets and concession booths which barely paid expenses of the show. Thus, there was a situation where misunderstandings could and did develop. Further detail on the lawsuit is noted in Chapter 11.

With the lawsuit settled, the board of managers went to work forthwith and officially incorporated under Minnesota nonprofit laws with appropriate articles of incorporation and bylaws. Generally the articles called for carrying on the work of the Show and related activities with a broad enough charge to meet the changing scene in agricultural production. The articles did place additional emphasis on the participation of any Valley-wide commodity organization or other related farm institutions who wished to have a person on the board of managers by making application. Such application was considered on its merits and voted upon. The original articles of incorporation have been amended officially and the amendments lodged with the Secretary of State on two occasions since that time.

In 1960 the articles were adjusted to include additional agricultural organizations. This action provided for a membership of no fewer than nine on the board, a number divisible by three, and one-third to be elected each year. The amendment was necessary when the new building program was being funded and when a great deal of interest on the part of several Valley-wide organizations expressed interest in the government of the Show. Organizations at that time which were expressing an interest were the Vo Ag Teachers Association, the Soil Conservation Districts, the Farm Bureau, Farmers Union, NFO, Potato Growers Association, the Sugarbeet Growers Association, and the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association.

Again, in 1972 the official articles were amended, adding appropriate language to the articles needed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue so that anyone giving funds to the Red River Valley Winter Shows could fit under the new laws which regulated charitable and educational giving. Further, the amendment provided that if the Winter Shows as an organization is ever dissolved the assets shall pass on to an organization providing similar charitable and educational service to society.

Since the first set was drawn up in 1953, the bylaws have been changed several times to fit the changing scene.
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-

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onded, the Livestock Association moved to study the building needs.
At their annual meeting on February 24, 1958, the committee report was presented and discussed. Upon motion by Bob Schafer and duly seconded, a unanimous decision by the Red River Valley Livestock Association was made to turn over title to their downtown show buildings to the Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc. The motion required that should the Winter Shows ever cease, the title to such buildings would revert to the Livestock Association. The latter stipulation was rescinded at a later meeting.
Additionally, the Red River Valley Livestock Association asked to have four members on the board of managers—each representing a separate class of livestock. The legal counsel of

The Superintendents of the Northwest Experiment Station were among the frontline volunteers and four of them served as president of the Winter Shows for 72 years. The bylaws were adjusted in 1981 to encourage a change in this practice. The four superintendents who served are pictured here along with the two presidents who served most recently.
the Winter Shows studied the actions taken by the Livestock Association, and the board of managers were advised they could legally move on accepting custody of the buildings and land. Four places on the new board of managers from the Livestock Association were duly elected at a subsequent meeting.

Action went ahead immediately to enlarge the board of managers to include additional organizations. Currently, there are 24 members authorized by the bylaws representing 21 different organizations. Some organizations, of course, are more active than others. It is interesting to note, however, that the three original strong leadership organizations which really provided the key governing minds and guides for the Winter Shows are largely the same: the Red River Valley Livestock Association, the Red River Valley Development Association and the University of Minnesota, now including the Technical College, the Northwest Experiment Station and the Extension Service out in the 14 counties. These three have now been joined by 16 other farm or farm-related organizations. The trend of too much involvement by University-based leadership was thereby reversed. This may well be the most significant governance change in the history of the shows.

The board has been reorganized into a strong regional committee structure and the idea of the managers' responsibility of each board member is stronger than ever at this time in history. With attendance growth from a few thousand people to nearly 40,000 and ownership of property in excess of three million dollars, however, the details of accounting and leg work in between board meetings are such that full-time help is needed for accomplishing details in an orderly manner. An interesting note is that the superintendents of the Agricultural Experiment Station have been president of the board of managers for 72 years! President Youngquist began working on the change in that format about three years before retirement, and one year prior to his retirement the presidency of the board of managers changed after appropriate revision of the bylaws. Currently, the president can serve two years and must come up through the ranks of vice presidency and have the personal qualifications of leadership and experience. A full-time manager was hired July 1, 1983. A complete list of the board of managers members, with organizations they represent, is found in the appendix, together with the officers at the time this history was written.

In summary, the government of the Winter Shows has gone from a very loose kind of grass roots cooperative effort to a more sophisticated nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation, incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota and broadly represented by the major agricultural organizations in northwestern Minnesota. The corporation is a nonprofit charitable and educational organization formed for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life as lived on the land and on the urban scene in northwestern Minnesota. It engages in educational activities which today complement but not duplicate those carried on by other organizations, agencies, and individuals here in the Red River Basin. It is a membership corporation and operates under rather strict articles and bylaws. If any organization ceases to provide any real ongoing usefulness in northwestern Minnesota or fails to do its part in the governing leadership it can be dropped from a membership role.

Of course, it's impossible for a board of managers of 24 members to be part of the everyday management. A strong executive committee has been formed of members of rather longtime tenure who are able to handle the details of planning that go with each show. Every board member is included on one or more committees and has responsibility for his or her particular sector.

At best, it's still a rather loose aggregation for planning the exposition looked forward to by a lot of people in the middle of a long winter. The Winter Shows hasn't lost one year in a 75-year span. Partial cancellation took place at the time of the flu epidemic in 1919 and during the war effort in 1939. Meetings were called off both times, but the crops, livestock, and industrial show were held.

Selected lists of officers, board members and committees are included in the appendix. There is a set of closely guarded bound volumes of all of the premium books and program books since 1910 in safe storage. These volumes include the list of directors and committees for any year about which the reader might have a question.

Someone raised the question, "What's the secret of the Red River Valley Winter Shows?" It's a grass roots organization. It has never asked for a cent of Uncle Sam's government money to build new buildings and buy land. How can they keep going 75 years and stay afloat when one sees volunteer organizations start and stop several times during even one lifetime? Other parts of this historical writing have made reference to the volunteer board of managers who plan and operate the Show each year. These volunteers represent the front-line organizations and institutions in northwest Minnesota. This group of 24 people is undergirded by about 300 additional volunteers organized into committees out in the 14 counties. New board members are added as new organizations petition for and are granted membership.

An interesting development currently is the growth of a new organization known as the County King Agassiz Association. Again, it's a loosely organized association of young couples who have been elected as county kings and gone through the King Agassiz coronation ceremony. Because they have developed a sense of belonging to each other, of having a common interest, they like to get together. That doesn't mean that every county king is gung-ho and active, but enough of them are so that it's a growing organization, and it may well be that some day as a group they'll take on other interests besides the Red River Valley Winter Shows King Agassiz activity.

The land grant University of Minnesota leadership for service and education, of course, is the ongoing stabilizing leadership, always there to provide expertise as needed.

In the years ahead, the government of the Winter Shows will be especially challenged to maintain the kind of membership that is responsive to what's happening among organizations in northwestern Minnesota. Special attention will need to be given to the maintenance of a strong volunteer corps of planners, doers, and participants in this mid-winter agricultural exposition. The process of new membership election to the board of managers must always be a careful procedure of communication. No organization should have a membership on the board of managers if it can't meet the commitments for the cooperative undertaking each year. Also, no person should be a member of the board of managers unless there is a commitment of time, energy, and substance to the ongoing effort. They must be people respected in their communities.
Community farm clubs created production booths demonstrating what was happening in their section of the Valley--1915 to 1930.

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CHAPTER VI

Origin of the Winter Shows, Who Kept it Going, and Who Is Active Today

Farming in the Red River Basin was in its infancy at the time the Winter Shows came on the scene. Farmers were having a lot of difficulty raising crops on what was largely soggy sod. Management of crop and livestock production required long hours of hard labor in all kinds of weather. Farm locations were few and far between. Often the closest neighbor might live half a day's travel away. Roads were nothing but trails on the prairie.

Railroads were beginning to provide useful service to major sections of the region. Mail service was in the early stages of formation. Newspapers and magazines were rare in the usual farm home. There were practically no county agents and Vo-Ag teachers in northwestern Minnesota at the time the Winter Shows became a reality. The only professional agriculture agents were the railroad agriculture development officers.

People out on the land were hungry for information. They wanted to know more about how to manage this rich, black soil. In the late 1800's, farmers began to form organizations for the purpose of promoting their interests and especially for exchanging experiences. Agricultural research was about 40 years old in the United States, and most of the research effort going on was far east of the Mississippi River. The Northwest Experiment Station was a new idea in the Valley and experiencing very sharp growing pains. Farmers wanted to hear about the happenings at this "state experiment farm".

It is not surprising that the Farm Crops Show (the Winter Shows today) began at the Northwest School and Agricultural Experiment Station. Superintendent Conrad Selvig, the staff of the school and station, and citizens from Crookston and surrounding area, saw a need for service and education for these pioneer farm families. An Annual Short Course was launched in 1910, and the man on the street dubbed it the Farm Crops Show. The official title in the early days was the Annual Short Course and Farm Crops Show. While the University provided the educational leadership and much of the organizational planning at the outset, Crookston community leaders, including bankers, machinery dealers, legislators and farmers, joined in to lend a hand in the development of this educational and social event.

People were especially anxious to talk because there weren't any telephones, radios, or electrical power. Successful short courses were being conducted by University agriculture and home economics specialists beginning in the 1880's in southern Minnesota. These were largely a community affair, however. Superintendent Selvig and his staff envisioned a larger field of service for northwestern Minnesota -- all counties needed service now. Everybody cooperated to give the new vision life and form. A few neighborhood clubs, including women's groups, expressed immediate interest. The early Farm Crops Shows sparked new organizations of farmers and farmers' wives, who looked forward to the midwinter break. People from all over the Red River Basin came on trains to spend several days learning, making new friends, and just getting away from home for a break, for even as little as a day or more was most welcome in the long, lonesome winters.

The following is a list of the various organizations who have been associated with the Winter Shows, along with a brief history of each organization. An asterisk indicates the organization, group or institution that belonged in the early years and is still active today. Otherwise an approximate date is given for those which became supporting cooperators with the Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc.

*Northwest School, Experiment Station and Agricultural Extension Service -- All three of these arms of the University were located here by 1910 or shortly thereafter on the land given by James J. Hill for the purpose of starting an experiment station and then building a school of agriculture to teach what was learned on the "state experiment farm." About the middle of the second decade of this century, the Agricultural Extension Service became part of the local government scene in northwestern Minnesota. These three educational, research, and service arms of the University have provided the major stabilizing force for leadership and direction during the 75-year history.

Minnesota Vocational Agricultural Instructors Association (1958) -- Several individual vocational agriculture teachers participated annually in show activities from the 1920's onward. The Vo-Ag Teachers Association voted to request membership on the Winter Shows Board in the late 1950's. Their students, the blue jacketed FFA members, are a familiar sight at the Winter Shows and make up a substantial part of the annual youth participation in the various judging contests and other educational events. The Winter Shows provides a unique opportunity for the teachers of vocational agriculture in their educational and training programs. The Minnesota Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association has provided ongoing expert leadership as a cooperating organization for nearly 30 years.

*The Red River Valley Dairymen's Association -- This association is one of the very oldest commodity groups in the Red River Basin and has one of the longest records of working with Winter Shows. The Dairymen's Association was organized under the leadership of Torger Hoverstad, the first superintendent of the Northwest Experiment Station. Cooperative creameries were just beginning to be formed in the different communities, and the time was ripe for an organization of processors as well as producers of dairy products to promote interests of the dairy industry. The Red River Valley Dairymen's Association continues today and is active in helping plan and sponsor the Honored Dairymen's Banquet and the Dairy
Show and related dairy production activities at the annual Winter Show. It was the first livestock association to step up as a serious cooperator.

**Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association** -- Providing Crops Show premiums, recognition plaques and the like soon became a problem for the first organizers and leaders of the Farm Crops Show. While business, banks, newspapers and other industry were very generous in the first two or three years of the show, such an annual provision became a burden on a few individuals.

Conrad Selvig, superintendent of the station, was the kind of person that thrived on getting the job done despite the problems along the way. He envisioned the Winter Shows as a northwestern Minnesota educational and agricultural developmental force. Through his efforts, county governments became interested in the Red River Valley Winter Shows, and after some enabling legislation, the counties were authorized to appropriate monies to help with selected operational needs. No county funds, however, could be used for constructing new buildings.

In these early years there wasn't any legal organization to receive such monies. Consequently a Red River Valley Development Association was established; its purpose was to promote and develop the industry of agriculture through the efforts of the Winter Shows. A constitution and by-laws were developed which called for each county board to appoint a citizen in the county to the membership board of the Development Association. The responsibilities of the board were and still are to expend the appropriations by each of the 14 counties for those projects at the Winter Shows which are sponsored by the Red River Valley Development Association. The superintendent of the Agricultural Experiment Station has always been a director-at-large.

In the 1920's and 30's, the Red River Valley Development Association was also active in matters of general public concern to northwestern Minnesota. For instance, in matters of drainage, soil conservation, water management, and Red River Valley Winter Shows management, the board of the Development Association could make recommendations and forward resolutions to appropriate agencies. Today that kind of action does surface from time to time; however, the major effort of the board of directors is confined to the several projects which they underwrite at the Winter Shows. The Association was officially incorporated as a nonprofit agricultural rural life development association in the 1950's when Dr. Olaf Soine was president. The new name adopted was Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association, Inc.

Today the board is organized with an executive committee and a project committee to carry out the policies of the full board. Each of the counties in northwestern Minnesota has one person on the board who serves for a period of three years. One-third of the board members are re-elected or replaced in accordance with the wishes of the county commissioners each year. The officers are elected at the annual meeting held each year during the Winter Shows schedule. Currently, they are expending a budget of about $13,000 annually, provided jointly by each of the 16 county units in northwestern Minnesota. The Development Association now concerns itself with four human resource recognition and development projects as well as with the Crops Show section of the Winter Shows. The Red River Valley Development Association has adopted a philosophy of recognizing civic leadership at the grassroots level. These people are recognized as the real builders of life in the Red River Basin.

The Valley Farmer and Homemaker Honors Banquet is 46 years old and still a top event of each show. Here a farm couple is honored, usually a man and his wife, who have largely made it in the business of farming. They are selected by a committee of their peers.

The competition among crops, livestock, and other judging contests began about 1913. Above includes teams from Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba. FFA, 4-H, Schools of Agriculture, and Farmers clubs are represented with
out in the county, aided by the county extension director. They are chosen for stable management of their farming enterprise, for solid family capabilities, for their service to community and government, for their service to their church, and for their stewardship over the soil and water resources. The Agricultural Extension Service is the key cooperating organization which facilitates this project at a high level year after year.

The King Agassiz project was started by the Development Association 24 years ago. This was a project in which the Winter Shows wished to recognize the young couples or single individuals here in northwest Minnesota who are coming up the ladder of leadership and civic responsibility. Here again, the county kings are selected by their peers in each county and are recognized as a County King Agassiz during the county fairs or other events. These county kings and their spouses come to the Red River Valley Winter Shows where they compete for the title of King Agassiz of the Winter Shows. The king is then the representative of the Winter Shows for the year ahead in various affairs and events in the region. The project has succeeded well, with the emerging leadership rising to the top each year. They have now formed their own association for fellowship and service purposes to Winter Shows.

The most recent human resource effort is the Builder of the Valley Award. Here the Development Association recognizes the quiet but yet substantive grassroots citizen who shows personal growth in the region. The judging group is interested in the kind of people who provide unusual and extended leadership in their sector of the Valley. The committee looks for a person who has made a substantial contribution to the community, the state and the nation as well as who has the ability to make a living for himself and his family. Two such awards have been given to date and may not be presented each year. A committee from the board studies the candidates carefully in terms of the criteria which have been established.

The fourth human resource program is that of supporting youth programs, including expenses for plaques and premiums for demonstrations and contests.

Another major effort of the Development Association is furnishing premium monies for Crop Show winners each year. The Association continues to provide continuing and dependable cooperative support to the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

*Red River Valley Livestock Association -- This group was formed in the second decade around the time of World War I when livestock raising became a more prominent part of the Winter Shows. The livestock scientists of the Northwest Experiment Station provided the leadership for the organization of livestock breeders of the region and have actually been part of the association in one form or another continuously. The Livestock Association was incorporated under Minnesota Laws in 1918 and began to assume responsibility for the livestock show section of the Winter Shows. There was strong feeling among agricultural leaders that livestock had to be part of the developing farming scene here.

The armory was in the process of being planned and built in downtown Crookston beginning in 1914. It was natural for people up and down the Valley to envision that some facilities for Winter Shows next to the armory would be useful to the fast-growing Winter Shows. At that time the Winter Shows was planned and operations were handled by an informal committee, the strongest cooperators being the Red River Valley Development Association, the University, and the businessmen from Crookston. About 1916 there wasn't sufficient room any place in downtown Crookston for holding the fast-growing Livestock Show, including sheep, beef and horses. Then in addition, there was the Dairy Show encouraged and
sponsored by the Dairymen’s Association. In addition, the Poultry Show had been invited to join forces with the Winter Shows. It had been operating by itself.

The effort came on fast to build a building. Let’s get along! But the war effort delayed the action stage. The Red River Valley Livestock Association was very young and still groping for identity. Yet, with completion of incorporation, it was the only group which could take title to the property; however, it really didn’t want to plan and operate the Winter Shows each year. So, rather loosely, the big drive for funds developed. Shares were sold up and down the Red River Basin to build the first set of buildings and details on this are well recorded in Selvig’s book entitled “The Tale of Two Valleys”.

The Livestock Association continued. The show grew fast and filled the facilities year after year. For 40 years, the Livestock Association owned the buildings. They had a building committee to look after repairs. There was always a hassle over who was to pay for what as the Winter Shows board of managers planned and operated the show each year. By 1957 it became apparent to the board that the facilities downtown, while they were tremendous in 1920, were no longer useful to the burgeoning needs of the Winter Shows.

As a first step, the Livestock Association moved to turn over their title to the facilities in downtown Crookston to the Winter Shows board of managers, with the proviso that the new facilities be built and the livestock Association maintain four people on the board. David Hoff, farmer and member of the teaching staff of the University of Minnesota, Crookston, is the current president of the Livestock Association. The cooperative spirit and service of the Red River Valley Livestock Association as a major foundation block of the Red River Valley Winter Shows is indeed a story of faith and trust working together that can get the job done despite problems.

Northwest Minnesota Crops and Soils Association (1922) -- This group of crop farmers was loosely organized by Otto Bergh, an agronomist at the Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station. It continued as an informal organization of farmers and seedsmen until the 1920’s, at which time it developed its own constitution and by-laws which lasted until the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association began to have county associations in northwestern Minnesota. Ray Dunham, former agronomist, was the front-line leader for about 20 years. At the time the Minnesota Crops and Soils Association reorganized, with a member of each of the several County Crop Improvement Associations providing membership for the new Northwestern Minnesota Crops and Soils Association. The association became the leader in planning the Crops Show activities at the Red River Valley Winter Shows, replacing somewhat the detailed planning of the RRV Development Association.

In addition, they were helpful in sending some of the new foundation seed increases to southern locations for over winter increases. Seed was then sent back to the Valley and distributed through the county crop improvement groups. Currently this association is not very active. It has a modest amount of money on deposit and in addition to being one of the organizations on the Crops Show committee, it does help from time to time with cash support as needed. Medard Yurtzenka, farmer from Argyle, is president.

The University of Minnesota Technical College (1968) -- In the late 1950’s, the secondary level schools of agriculture were quietly looking to other opportunities for service to agricultural education. After the findings of Bernie Youngquist’s doctoral thesis along with findings of a legislative interim commission and an official University of Minnesota in-house task force study, the recommendation was made to the legislature to begin phasing out the secondary level schools of agriculture. A two-year collegiate institution built around the industry of agriculture and related services was initiated at Crookston and later at Waseca. The Technical College at Crookston began under Dr. Stanley Sahslstrom’s leadership in 1966, and as an arm of the University has strongly supported in a substantial way the present Red River Valley Winter Shows. The college under Dr. Sahslstrom’s leadership has developed a higher education seminar at the Winter Shows, which is well attended by all educators in northwestern Minnesota. Likewise, it supports the Winter Shows substantially with service and leadership expertise as noted in Chapter 11.

Minnesota Farm Bureau (1961) -- The Minnesota Farm Bureau is an organization of farm families organized for the purpose of developing and working on matters of mutual interest. The Farm Bureau became a continuing supporter of the Red River Valley Winter Shows very early in Winter Shows history. They were a primary group who helped to launch the county agent system in each county. The group, however, didn’t have a person on the board until the early 1960’s.

Red River Valley Potato Growers Association (1962) -- The Potato Growers Association is a two-state organization representing growers primarily from the Red River Valley. They joined forces with other organizations in supporting the Winter Shows in the early 1960’s and provided assistance and leadership with
the Potato Show. For years the organization has had a seed potato seminar at the Shows.

County King Agassiz Association (1981) -- The King Agassiz project, electing county kings annually in each county and also the King Agassiz is now 25 years old. These men formed an organization with their own constitution and by-laws in the late 1970's. The main purpose is to develop leadership opportunities among the county kings and to provide support to the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (1979) -- This is an association of farmers and others interested in the improvement of crop varieties in the state of Minnesota. The Minnesota Crop Improvement Association has always been interested in the Red River Valley Winter Shows and began to have more direct responsibility after the new building was built and put into operation in 1962. Gradually the contribution of the Crop Improvement Association to the Crops Show has increased and has really replaced the old responsibilities of the N.W. Crops and Soils Association. The Minnesota Crop Improvement Association is a major support organization now undergirding the Crops Show Committee at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. This wide-based committee evaluates, changes, and plans the show each year.

Minnesota Wheat Growers Association (1982) -- This is a commodity organization of farmers established to promote the welfare of the wheat-growing industry in Minnesota and beyond. Wheat producers are the most recent commodity group to request representation on the board of managers. Their support with grants of money and with top level representation is encouraging. Their headquarters are in Red Lake Falls, where they have built a building and where the executive director and staff are located. This commodity group is affiliated with other wheat-grower groups in the country and already has impact on the national and international scene.

*Women's Division -- Right from the beginning in 1910, the Annual Short Course included programming for the women. The immediate success and enthusiastic response by the women resulted in a local committee from farm clubs to assist the home economics teachers of the N.W. School with planning. In the late 1920's the agricultural extension service joined the effort. The earlier women's meetings extended over a four-to-five day period and continue so today except that there's more variety and more groups are included. The planning effort hit a low about the time the School of Agriculture phased out and the College was established. Sandy Johnson, Crookston, provides history on the exciting growth of the women's involvement since the mid-1960's.

Early 1960's

The Women's Seminar was organized by the Agricultural Extension Service in St. Paul with Miss Arlene Barkheim, N.W. District Supervisor. A one-day program, held in Bede Hall on the campus of the N.W. School, included topics of general interest, a luncheon, and a speaker. The county extension staff promoted the program out in the counties.

1968

UMC Faculty Women's Association joined with the agricultural extension service to plan and organize the Women's Seminar. Under the general chairmanship of Mrs. Jeannine Windels, the day has become a significant event to the RRVWS.

1968-1973

The seminar was held in several locations in downtown Crookston. The day-long seminar included speakers and mini-sessions on such topics as Fashion, a look Behind the Seams, Foodspiration, Ideas Galore for Home Decor. A highlight was a luncheon and style show. Crookston merchants supported the style show and provided door prizes.

1972

The Women's Division was organized. The purpose was to plan and coordinate an expanded women's program to take place in the newly built National Guard Armory adjacent to the Winter Shows building. The committee included women from the Red River Valley area, with Mrs. Jeannine Windels as chairman.

1973

This was the first year the Women's Division began programming at the Armory. Features were an Arts and Crafts Day, Senior Citizens' Day, and educational activities. It was the last year the UMC Faculty Women's Association was involved with the seminar held in downtown Crookston.

1974

This was the first year all activities pertaining to the women's program were held in the Armory.

1975

The president of the Women's Division became a member of the board of managers. Mrs. Jeannine Windels served as the first president of the Women's Division from 1975-1977. She was the first woman to become a member of the board of managers.
1977-Present
The Women’s Division is a committee of volunteers from the Red River Valley area that plan and coordinate the activities of the women’s program held in the Armory. A committee member serves a three-year term. The president is elected from this committee, serves a three-year term, and holds a position on the board of managers. The committee meets from September through April. Programs presently included are: an Arts and Crafts Fair, educational demonstrations, Senior Citizens’ Day, Town and Country Art Show, needlework display, and Women’s Seminar.

Purpose of Women’s Division
To foster information and educational programs with regard to the resources of the Red River Valley area and to conduct educational meetings featuring problems confronting farmers and homemakers (i.e. men and women of the Red River Valley).

Visions for the Future
Donna Rae Jacobson, present chairman of the Women’s Division, says “I feel the Women’s Division has made a contribution to the educational programming of the Red River Valley Winter Shows through the educational programs devoted to improving the ‘quality of life’ in the Red River Valley region.”

Mrs. Jacobson continues, “The future of the Women’s Division is bright due to the energy and enthusiasm of the volunteers who serve on the various sub-committees. These volunteers initiate programs which are indeed providing for the improvement of the quality of life as well as encouragement for participants to display their talents through art, photography and needlework. I believe we, the members of the Women’s Division, are at the forefront for new challenges which will be initiated during the 75th Anniversary and for years to come.”

Red River Valley Horse Breeders Association (1965) -- This association was organized in the early 60’s for the purpose of encouraging the recreation horse industry and particularly of taking charge of the horse show section of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. A number of horse breeding organizations, including some saddle clubs, make up the Red River Valley Horse Breeders Association. This group, while changing somewhat as the years have progressed, has been in charge of the Horse Show at the Winter Shows since the new building was built. This show has been very successful in involving many families who own horses and who come to the show in the middle of winter. They bring their entire family to exhibit the breeds in competition and to engage in the several sporting events like barrel racing. The show draws people from several states.

Minnesota Farmers Union (1971) -- This organization is part of the National Farmers Union, which is a nationwide association of farmers dedicated to the continued development of the agricultural industry and of the family farm as a unit of management. They joined the Winter Shows’ cooperating organizations in the early 1960’s.
Northern Minnesota Poultry Association -- This association began in the very early 1900's under the leadership of C. E. Brown, poultry husbandman at the Northwest Experiment Station. The organization started out as an educational effort, later assumed by the county extension service after World War 1. It became a show organization which took care of the poultry display at the Winter Shows. Currently, this group remains in charge of the Poultry and Pet Show. Harold Thome, international poultry judge and longtime representative of the Poultry Association on the board of managers, provides the following reflections:

The Winter Valley Winter Shows has a long and illustrious history, there is one organization which has been active for a much longer time -- the Northern Minnesota Poultry Association. This association, organized in 1902 by such people as John Saugstad, August As, Mrs. F.C. Mitchell, and Henry Boltman, has sponsored an annual show since that time. For the first 15 years of its life, the shows were held in downtown Crookston in whatever building was available. It was one of the best shows in the state at that time, as it is today. When the Winter Shows were organized each also had a separate show. This led to some problems, as they were individually competing for the same support, advertising and attendance. The Winter Shows president, Conrad Selvig, asked for a combined meeting of the officers of both organizations to discuss the problems. After much discussion it was agreed everyone would be better served if there was only one organization. It was agreed that the Winter Shows would provide a show room and pay the Poultry Association $125 annually to help pay premiums and other expenses. The Poultry Association agreed not to solicit donations, advertising or have separate programs. For 60 years this agreement has continued with one exception. For some years the Poultry Association has not asked for the entire $125. They have asked, and have received, what they needed to cover their expenses. This usually runs from about $45 to $85 annually. The poultry people feel that any balance of the $125 not used, should go for the betterment of the Winter Shows.

There isn't any question this agreement has been of mutual benefit to both organizations. The Poultry Association remains a vital force in the promotion of the Poultry and Pet Show that is well received by the public and helps to promote a combined agricultural activity.

Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts (1963) -- This is an organization of all the soil and water conservation districts in Minnesota and in particular those in northwestern Minnesota. Its membership represents the various soil and water conservation districts which are organized under the Minnesota statutes to encourage the conservation of soil and water in agricultural operations.

*Area Chamber of Commerce, Crookston -- An association of business and professional people in the Crookston area was organized for the purpose of developing and improving the quality of life in the Crookston community. When the Winter Shows began back in 1910, the Crookston Businessmen's Association was probably the most active cooperator to assist Superintendent Selvig and the staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station in planning and putting on the first farm crop shows. About the middle of the second decade, the businessmen's association appropriated $1,000 a year toward the planning and operational expenses of the Winter Shows. In fact, this practice was maintained until the Shows moved from downtown to the present site. The strong support given to the 14 county exposition by the Crookston community, without a doubt, is a foundation which the RRV Winter Shows has needed to remain in continuous service for 75 years.

Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association (1961) -- The seminar series for sugarbeet growers started in the late 1960's at the Northwest Experiment Station under the leadership of Olaf Soine, assisted by local sugarbeet growers. The success in terms of attendance was immediate -- overflowing the Kiehl auditorium, which held about 700 people at that time. Very little extension work was conducted out in the counties as the American Crystal Sugar Co. contracted for sugarbeet acres and controlled the production process via their fieldmen. The Sugarbeet Growers Association grew in strength and influence and requested membership on the board of managers in the early 1960's. They have been a strong cooperator of the Winter Shows.
CHAPTER VII


The financing of Winter Shows operations has always been a local grassroots effort; no application has ever been made for a grant of federal funds or state taxpayers’ money for building and facility construction. The funding of general operational expenses is developed from rentals for use of the building, from concessioner space rental, gate receipts, food concession profits, and gifts from individuals and businesses. No tax monies of any kind are appropriated for businesses. No tax monies of any kind were encountered. The structure was always funded by fund drives within the RRV area.

The support of time and money given by the community of Crookston and the immediately surrounding area was a major developmental factor for operations at the outset, but could not be continued at that level. Likewise, the support of building projects by the Crookston community has been substantial.

According to accounts in newspapers, correspondence, minutes of meetings, and program books produced annually, the first major fund drive for buildings commenced early in 1918. The Red River Valley Livestock Association was in the process of being incorporated. C.G. Selvig was elected as president of the budding corporation, and he was also president of the general arrangements committee for the planning and conduct of the Winter Shows. A campaign to sell shares at $10 each was organized in the ten counties which supported the Red River Valley Development Association. Additionally, and very interesting, is the fact that there were also $2 memberships sold in the RRV Development Association to individual citizens. This fee entitled them to a button which admitted them to show activities. The latter turned out to be more of a public relations than a fund-raising effort. Fifteen thousand dollars was raised for the first building, the livestock pavilion located adjacent to the old armory in downtown Crookston. It was a two-story building plus a basement measuring 50' x 142'. The plan was to house the Crops Show, a livestock judging arena, a food service section, and livestock.

Demand for livestock housing was greater than anticipated by the space available in the new pavilion; as a result the people proceeded to raise more funds, about $50,000. Not only did every county have a drive to sell shares, but Duluth and St. Paul businesses, and the Minneapolis Journal each provided a couple thousand dollars to add to the project. This additional money provided equipment for the livestock pavilion and made it possible to build Annex A, the second building, 73' wide by 141' long, a two-story livestock housing structure suitable for all classes of livestock.

Livestock breeders found that despite their good planning, some problems were encountered. The beautiful second floor of sturdy wood planking wasn’t necessarily impervious to urine trickling on the livestock housed below. Mid course corrections were made.

The first show in the livestock pavilion in 1919 was a time for celebration. The governor of the State, the president of the University, and major agricultural leaders from the Midwest were on hand to celebrate the event. What was planned to handle the largest anticipated crowds was already crowded the first year. Thousands of people came on the train looking for places to stay, places to eat, to see the new facility, to greet friends, and to learn. There was no question about the success, excitement, and the good feeling towards the new home of the Red River Valley Winter Shows!

There is evidence of some in-house disagreements while the RRV Livestock Association was taking title to the buildings. The campaign that sold the shares included men and women representing all facets of production agriculture. The University leadership found themselves refereeing the various demands made by participants of the show during the year 1919. The general arrangements committee changed its name to the Winter Shows Board of Managers in 1920, which, at least in word, identified the multiplicity of interests, including educators, county agents, researchers, businessmen, and farmers. Too, there was a problem of the limited space for the farm equipment demonstrations at the Industrial Show. There was sufficient space in the new armory, but the building served as the largest facility for the educational meetings.

Consequently, the success in fund raising by the cooperating organizations encouraged the leadership to plan Annex B, the third building in as many years for the Industrial Show, today called the Farm Service Show. The structure was 40' x 127' and stands today as the bus repair barn and storage building for the Crookston Public School District.

The campaign for funds began to lag in 1920. The post World War I farm depression was fast approaching. The economy was adjusting to the post-war period. One morning a banker from the city of Crookston met C.G. Selvig and was extremely pessimistic.

"We need $23,000 to finish that building, to pay for the land, and to equip it. And with the farm economy in such bad shape, I don’t think we’re going to get this done. I think we’re whipped.”

Well, that was a different kind of talk from had been going on previously, but it was true that raising money for the third building was in trouble. Some money was raised. The sale of shares of stock in the nonprofit RRV Livestock Association was in trouble. The banks got together and said, “Well, we’ll loan the money at the least possible rate of interest. Let’s go ahead and
build anyway.” The building was built and the first Industrial Show in the new building was held in 1921.

By the time the money-raising had been completed in the early 1920’s, about $70,000 had been raised for the three buildings, and when all the construction was completed in 1921, several thousand dollars was owed on the project. For several years, new producers at the Livestock Show were required to purchase a membership share or shares, but these didn’t amount to the kind of money it takes to build buildings. Only the interest was paid on the borrowed capital for many years. There was a fire loss in the mid-1930’s, and additional monies had to be borrowed to make the repair, for the insurance was not adequate. Finally in 1940, the balance against the capital investment in this first set of three Winter Shows buildings was paid off with a burning of the mortgage ceremony held at the annual board meeting.

The second major financial drive was held in 1959-60. Before the campaign for funds, several meetings were held in the region. The people of the Valley generally encouraged the board of managers, agreeing that a Winter Shows facility was needed. “Tell us what you need; we’ll help” was the inspiring answer. The board of managers consulted with fund-raising expertise before launching the drive for funds. A goal of $450,000 was set. Every member serving on the board had initially pledged the first dollars.

The campaign in Crookston and immediate surrounding area was conducted next and produced approximately half the total funds raised in cash and pledges. The counties outside of West Polk County kicked off their campaign at Breckenridge in late 1959. Wilkin County was the first to go over the top with its fund drive.

Agri-businesses up and down the Red River Basin were generous. The Minkota Electric Cooperative set aside $15,000 over a three-year period, and Agsco, Inc. was the first agri-business organization to pledge one percent of the goal of $450,000. Several agri-business leaders in the Twin Cities raised about $20,000 at two luncheon engagements arranged for the purpose of hearing the story about the Winter Shows project. The outside county campaign continued longer than the board of managers anticipated and really wasn’t completed before late 1960. The Board had adopted a policy that they would not proceed with any construction on the building until the financial campaign was well wrapped up. About $330,000 was finally raised by pledges and cash contributions from 3,000 farmers and agri-business people. Their names are all inscribed on a memorial plaque in the south arena of the Winter Shows facilities. Those in charge were able to proceed full speed ahead by 1961, engaging an architect and traveling about the country looking at exposition buildings. Finally the Behlen Manufacturing Company, a manufacturer of farm buildings and large steel buildings, expressed an interest in providing architectural service. In the final analysis they had by far the lowest bid on the building as planned and designed. The board of managers were roundly criticized for letting the contract to a builder outside the confines of the Red River Basin. When, however, the critics understood all the facts, the complaints changed from occasional sniping to compliments for a job well done.

The building was built in 1961 and readied for the 1962 show on land purchased from the University of Minnesota bordering the city of Crookston on the northwest. History has a way of repeating. The board of managers erred on some details. The housing for the Livestock Association was again a problem as it was in 1919. The board of managers had about expended their credit line. The Livestock Association came to the rescue by pledging support to assist the board of managers. This decision resulted in building the west pole barn in 1962 and the connecting barn between the west pole barn and the arena in 1964. Money was borrowed from the Valley Bank in Grand Forks with the personal guarantees of William Strickler and Bernie Youngquist on the note. (It seems the banker needed an expression of faith by those who were quite close to the scene). The pledges and cash raised by the campaign and the sale of the buildings in downtown Crookston were insufficient to cover the new project. The land and main arena cost about $460,000 and the pole barns about $19,000. The Behlen Manufacturing Company, through their Omaha bank, carried a mortgage on the arena for the balance due. The local banks assumed some small short-term notes for certain equipment, and the Valley Bank at Grand Forks carried the note renewable annually on the livestock pole barns.

The first mortgage and the short-term notes were refinanced in 1965 for $175,000. This financing was worked out at a low rate of interest and distributed among 20 banks in the Red River Valley, including Grand Forks, North Dakota. Some banks, figuring it was another contribution, believed they’d never get their money back. Payments on the interest and principal continued without default yearly, and by the time the new wing was built on the north side, the board of managers was several years ahead of schedule on principal payments.

The third campaign for building needs started with dialogue in 1974. There was a long list of concessioners wanting to buy space at the Winter
The first building completed in 1919 for the Red River Valley Winter Shows. It provided space for a livestock show and sales ring, space for the crops and poultry show, a lunch counter, and some livestock housing. It was used until 1961.

The second building constructed by the Winter Shows downtown, Crookston. It was built in 1919 on North Ash Street and called Annex A and was designed and used as a two-story barn for housing and fitting livestock for the Livestock Show. It served from 1919 to 1962. It was sold to the School District and remodeled for storage of buses.
**RED RIVER VALLEY SUGARBEET GROWERS**

**CONGRATULATE**

**THE RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS**

**ON**

**75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO AGRICULTURE**

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**LEADERSHIP**

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 Stickler 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...
$25 contribution, a total fund now exceeding $10,000 a year. A sustaining fund membership card is mailed to each member, along with a brochure explaining what has been done with the money each year. Each also receives yearly a financial statement of operations of the board. The membership is good for attendance on one day at the Winter Shows. To date, the sustaining fund membership has paid off in excess of $150,000 on the capital fund indebtedness of the Winter Shows. The fund will be needed for some time.

LIVESTOCK BARN

The Red River Valley Livestock Association in a meeting held October 12, 1961, moved to help underwrite the cost of a 60' x 180' pole barn to be located west of the arena. A temporary alleyway was provided by the board of managers between the pole barn and the arena for two years. In 1964, the Livestock Association again moved to help underwrite the costs of an 80' wide by 134' long pole barn connecting the first pole barn with the arena building. Input by the RRV Livestock Association was $3,000 plus $1,000 a year to help on the mortgage payment. The board of managers did retire the balance of nearly $20,000 on the two pole barns from Winter Shows operations in five years and relieved the Livestock Association of any more payments.

AGASSIZ RIDERS HORSE BARN

The Agassiz Riders, a saddle club from the Crookston area, wished to build a horse barn and permission to do so was given by the board of managers. This was a temporary arrangement for the saddle club, and when they moved out in the mid-1970s, the building which had deteriorated was dismantled. A new stable was built in cooperation with the University of Minnesota for their light horse management work and financed by rental payments by the University.

THE RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS FOUNDATION, INC.

The most recent management venture of the Winter Shows has been to establish a companion organization for the purpose of receiving gifts from the public as well as to assist with special financial projects, leaving the Winter Shows board more free for planning and operating the show year in and year out. The first project of the Foundation was to set up a permanent program fund of a minimum of $100,000, the income from which the board of managers would use annually for high-quality programming. The heart of the Red River Valley Winter Shows mission is education and communication, and today more than ever it operates as a cooperative and complementary educational and communication agency, emphasizing those matters which aren’t normally covered by other agencies.

Top notch seminars, youth work, women’s programs, cultural events, all of these have never had the kind of support that the board of managers would like to give for program expenses. The Foundation is in the final stages of requesting their tax exempt and nonprofit status from the Internal Revenue Service. The board of managers has personally pledged more than $10,000. The Winter Shows Corporation has pledged $10,000 over a five-year period to give a total of just over $20,000 toward the $100,000 goal. There is now about $6,000 cash in the permanent endowment fund. A campaign with regional co-ops and foundations will be conducted when the tax exempt and nonprofit status numbers are received.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers is an agglomerate of many interests working together each year to put on the mid-winter ten-day agricultural exposition. The books have been audited by certified accountants regularly. The board has computerized the financial records so that each month it has a report that is

The Winter Shows buildings and grounds midsummer of 1980. The new Armory barely shows on the middle right of the picture. The new University stable is the long structure in the rear with the outdoor riding and exercise standard adjacent. There are 25 acres of land on the Winter Shows site.
up to the minute for the needs of cost control and budget management.

There are three divisions which run all of their expenditures through the Winter Shows accounts: the Women's Division, the Poultry Show, and the Crops Show. However, there are other segments of the show which, in addition to providing support, backup, and assistance to the Winter Shows board of managers, have their own financial records, including income and expenses, for a portion of specific operations connected with the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The Red River Valley Horse Breeders Association takes in a considerable amount of money at registration time and pays this out for judges, show premiums, printing, and other expenses. The horse breeders' fiscal matters have grown to a point where a more businesslike handling of funds is now being installed.

The Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association, which was organized back in 1917, has experienced various ways of providing income through the years. They have done about everything from selling shares to selling memberships, and holding special sales, the income from which has been given to help make payments on mortgages. The organization was one of the first groups to which the state legislature appropriated modest funds to be used for the promotion of purebred livestock in the Red River Basin. Currently this amount is about $6300 per year. This is expended entirely by the Red River Valley Livestock Breeders Association for premiums at the Livestock Show and is subject to auditing by the state auditor.

The Red River Valley Development Association, started in 1914, is an organization made up of one member from each of the 14 counties with the exception of the two largest counties, Ottertail and Polk, which each has two members on the board. This board's major responsibility is to expend annually the modest funds appropriated by each county board of commissioners for use at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Currently, the funds are spent for the Crops Show, the Valley Farmer and Homemaker Honors Banquet, the King Agassiz project, an appropriation for the Winter Shows operations, for the Builder of the Valley award, and for modest directors' expenses and clerical expenses including mail and printing. This budget runs about $13,000 a year.

The Red River Valley Dairymen's Association is the oldest commodity group which receives a small stipend from the state legislature, currently about $1500 annually, which they use for promotional and developmental work with the dairy industry at the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

FISCAL POLICIES AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

There isn't any question about the volunteer nature of the leadership effort in the planning and the operations of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. At best it is loosely organized, and at times in its history this fact has made problems for the board. Any successful ongoing agency serving an area as large as is served by the Red River Valley Winter Shows is bound to be subjected to the criticism and mistrust by individuals wondering about the management of an annual budget now reaching $465,000. The Winter Shows has been able to solve the serious misunderstanding throughout the 75-year history because responsible fiscal policies are reviewed regularly. The close proximity to the professional leadership volunteered by the University of Minnesota has been a stabilizing factor in the settlement of issues over the years.

There is a real plus side to the loose organization, however, and that is that it does allow for the rather free development of individual and group ideas to float to the surface as planning and operations go forth year after year. This is even more effective where the leading cooperative agencies have modest budgets exclusive of that of the RRV Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc.
CHAPTER VIII

Activities and Events

In 1910 the N.W. School and Experiment Station began organizing adult educational service, including agricultural meetings for the men, homemaking meetings for the women, general lectures, making meetings for the schedule. Winter eight bound complete general, Northwest Experiment Station. program today as the Red River historical Shows. THE Winter oldest who was then the agronomist in the Northwest was teaching at the Red River West Valley Bergh suggested that the local small grain, corn, and forage quality of the crops be brought in for the Farm Crops Show. Further, he recommend- ed that to attract show samples from farmers, extraordinary effort be made to provide substantial premiums for winners in the crops competition.

The Kiehle building on the N.W. School campus was new, with an up-to-date auditorium seating 500, and equipped with a stage, lights, and the latest 35mm movie projection equipment. It included a gymnasium with space for the first Farm Crops Show. What an exciting setting for adult education to be launched for the pioneer farm families! Except by word of mouth, many people hadn’t heard much about this new Experiment Station or School of Agriculture. No extensive mailing list had been developed yet in the office. To establish a mailing list, Conrad Selvig wrote to each of the postmasters up and down the Red River Valley requesting from each the names of 25 farmers being served by the post office. Many names were received and information on the annual Short Course and Farm Crops Show was mailed. Communications were sent to selected business and industries for premiums to be awarded winners. The best ten ears of corn were awarded a 14” x 30” Playford cement silo worth $330. The best single ear of corn was awarded 20 rods of fencing for first place and a Cyclone seeder for second place. The sweepstakes award for wheat received a Jack Jr. gasoline engine worth $75. The winning oats sweepstakes competitor received a Bluebell cream separator. While this level of interest and support by industry was great at the outset, it soon became too much of a financial burden for the business community to provide these costly premium awards year after year.

Again, people of the Red River Basin rose to the occasion and suggested that crops were important to everyone and maybe all should share in the expenses involved in staging an annual Crops Show and providing premiums, more modest of course, for winners in the competition. To assume the responsibility for such an idea, the Red River Valley Development Association was born in 1914. Each county board of commissioners appropriated a modest sum to be used by the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association, which organized itself into a non-profit promotional and educational corporation under Minnesota statutes. The Crops Show became a major Winter Shows project of the Red River Valley Development Association beginning in 1914 and has continued so to the present, with other groups joining in the project. The expenditure of some $3500 paid out for premiums annually is currently underwritten by the 14-county Red River Valley Development Association. The total available for premiums is augmented today by support from seed processors. The Crops Show and the beautiful panorama of the RRV landscape are the first sights to catch the eye as today’s visitor enters the south arena. The Agricultural Extension Service has a booth located strategically in the middle of the Crops Show traffic as visitors examine the attractive arrangement of Crops Show samples. The county extension directors, area agents, and scientists for the Experiment Station are on hand throughout the week to answer questions from visitors.

Today, the Crops Show is planned and arranged by a committee representing various crop commodity organizations and individuals in the Red River Basin. The committee meets annually sometime after the show closes to evaluate and begin the next year’s planning. The Crops Show committee includes the Extension Service, the Minnesota Crop Im-

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improvement Association, the Crops and Soils Association, scientists and techni-
cians from the Agricultural Experiment Station, the seed processing
industry, and individual citizens. This
group labors to plan and conduct a Crops Show that relates the story of
Crop production in the Red River Basin.

The level of premiums paid to win-
ners in the Open, Youth, and Certified Seed Shows are rather modest. A real
challenge for the committee in the
years ahead will be to raise these
premium rates to a more appropriate
level. Probably other sectors’ contri-
bution to the Crops Show itself needs
to be reviewed and strengthened to
maintain usefulness for the modern
crop production picture. For instance,
how can the potato and sugarbeet
commodity groups tell an appropriate
story at the Winter Shows Crops Show? How does the importance of
international markets to Red River Valley farmers become real to show
visitors?

THE DAIRY SHOW

The Dairy Show, held in a garage in
downtown Crookston, began modestly
in 1917, the year of the first Live-
stock Show. A few head of Guernseys,
Holsteins, and milking Shorthorns were
exhibited in spite of difficult
transportation service. The midwinter
roads weren’t very practical for the few
small farm trucks that were beginning
to appear on the scene. Most of the
livestock from any distance at all had
to be brought into town by sleigh or
train to Crookston on the train and led
down the street to the show. Moving
cattle out of warm barns into a cold
transportation and preparing them for
a Dairy Show put a lot of stress on the
animals and on their owners. Despite
that, the numbers at the Dairy Show
grew as fast as space became avail-
able. The livestock farmers loved their
animals, and they not only worked
hard to put on a great show but they
were especially loyal to the idea of the
Red River Valley Winter Shows. Things were much better after the
livestock buildings were built in down-
town Crookston. The size of the show
was generally controlled by the
amount of room available in the barns,
by the weather conditions, and road
conditions.

The personal sacrifice and family-
based contribution made by dairymen
is well described in the case of James
and Darlene Muzzy in the late 1950’s.
Jim and Darlene were coming up the
ladder of dairy husbandry and commu-
munity leadership, working hard with
their young family and their dairy farm
operation. They took time to show at
the Winter Shows. They were among
the first to give substantial personal
support to the new building fund es-

tablished to buy land and build a new
facility just outside the city of Crook-
ston. They contributed breeding stock,
the income from which was deposited
with the board of managers. This
family has continued showing pure-
bred cattle. The Daleford Farms are
still among the leaders and winners at
the Dairy Show today. Of course, there
have been many contributions by
breeders of beef cattle, swine, sheep,
and horses, but space just doesn’t
permit more than one such story to
explain the spirit of Valley farm folks.

A dairy sale was attempted early in
the history of the Winter Shows, just
after World War 1. The results were so
poor that the sales committee of the
Red River Valley Dairymen’s Associa-
tion decided against trying such an
idea again in the middle of winter.
More recently, however, in 1983 and
1984, there have been two dairy sales
with a sharp increase in quality and
quantity especially for the sale of 1984
and with enough success to encour-
age more such sales of top-quality
cattle.

The Red River Valley Dairymen’s
Association included more dairy pro-
cessors than farmers in the early years.
They secured a modest appropriation
from the state legislature as early as
1916 to promote the dairy industry in
northwestern Minnesota and immedi-
ately began to spend some of those
funds at the midwinter Dairy Show.
This custom has continued throughout
the 75-year history. Currently, the
Dairymen’s Association, along with
the dairy scientists from the Agricul-
tural Experiment Station and the Ex-
tension Service out in the counties,
provide the sustaining leadership for
educational activities, for show com-
petition arrangements, for youth activ-
ities, and for the Honored Dairymen
program.

This dairymen’s confederation is
probably more active than ever today
at the Winter Shows and expends a
major amount of their modest appro-
priation for Winter Shows dairy pro-
motional activities. The strong leader-
ship of Dr. Ed Frederick, dairy scientist
at the Northwest Experiment Station
in the fifties strengthened dairy activ-
ities at the show. Dr. George Marx
today continues to provide the front-
line leadership spark that coordinates
the activities of the dairy planning
committee: dairymen, extension per-
nersonel, and officers of the Red River
Valley Dairymen’s Association. The
leadership of dairy farmers also is
stronger today than ever in the plan-
ning work for Winter Shows activity.

THE LIVESTOCK SHOW

Livestock species, including beef
cattle, swine, sheep, and horses, were
uppermost in the minds of the profes-
sional agriculturalists and the farm
leadership as the Winter Shows was
being born. During the 1915 Farm
Crops Show, a Red River Valley Live-
stock Breeders Association was
formed. Essentially it was a federation
representative of the several county
livestock breeder groups which had
recently been formed by a few breed-
ers in each county. The first officers
of the new Red River Valley Livestock
Association were Tom Canfield
(county agent from Lake Park, presi-
dent), Mike Jeffers (Red Lake Falls,
vice president), and C.G. Selvig
(superintendent of the Experiment Station, secretary). Fifty-eight breeders from the ten counties became members. Directors of the new association were Al Jensen (Clearbrook), C.L. Spalding (Warren, MN), E.C. Schroeder (Moorhead), K.O. Kolstad (Fosston), F.A. Green (Stephen), J.A. Houske (Halstad).

A livestock judging contest and demonstration was held in a garage in downtown Crookston in 1916. Planning then went forward during 1916 for the first Livestock Show, which was held in downtown Crookston in 1917 at the Sathre Garage. Eighty-seven head of livestock including, a few dairy cattle, were brought to Crookston and prepared for show. These competed for $300 of premium money raised by the Crookston business community. Despite the temporary stalls, undependable roads, and weather, the reservations for the next year's Livestock Show in 1918 required renting an additional garage and an old livery barn.

The first Livestock Show in the new buildings downtown was held in February of 1919 after the brick livestock pavilion was built in 1918 on Broadway. Interest in livestock was growing. The Association incorporated and secured a $2,000 state appropriation to be used for promotional expenses of the show in northwestern Minnesota. The state aid for such development activity remained at $2,000 for a few years and was raised in the mid-20's to $5700 annually. In 1930, the economic downturn resulted in a cut to $4700. Currently, the modest appropriation of $6300 is spent entirely for premium payments to livestock exhibitors who are successful show winners at the annual Livestock Show.

The breeders cooperated early with the county agents, the school of agriculture teachers, and the vo-ag teachers, by providing animals for livestock judging contests. Competition in the show was restricted to Minnesota breeders until 1962. Then the show was opened to anyone from anywhere. Not one year of competition has been missed since 1917, although 1935 came very close to breaking this record. But everybody pitched in, fixed the roof section damaged by fire, and the show proceeded as scheduled. The purebred sales idea was picked up by the reorganized Livestock Association, encouraged by Experiment Station scientists, railroad agricultural development agents, and county agents.

Typical is the 1948 catalog which advertises a two-day sales of registered sheep, swine and cattle consigned by Minnesota and North Dakota breeders. One hundred eighty-three head of registered livestock were described in the catalog, including bred gilts, ewes, Holstein and beef cattle, and milking shorthorn cattle. A.J. Dexter, agricultural development agent for the Northern Pacific Railway Company, was the sales manager selected by the sales committee from the Livestock Association. Mr. Dexter provided leadership for developing a system for the purebred sales. A committee of livestock breeders from the Livestock Association was appointed each year to make the plans for the sale; a sales manager was hired to handle the management details, and a banker acted as clerk. The total sales were deposited and after sales expenses were paid, the committee remitted to all who sold purebred livestock on the sale. In recent years, sheep and swine offered on the purebred sales are just under 30 for each species and from 80 to 90 head of beef cattle. Bill Strickler, former president of the Red River Valley Livestock Association, provided the following up-to-date figures on livestock numbers at the show:

- **Sheep:** 1981 - 154; 1982 - 160; 1983 - 165; 1984 - 209.

In the late 1940's, a group of agricultural leaders, including A.J. Dexter, agricultural development agent for the NP railway; Glen Johnson, district 4-H leader; J.E. Roningen, East Polk County Agent; and George Nornes, vo-ag instructor, began to talk about a Junior Livestock Futurity Show. The idea was to provide an opportunity for boys and girls to raise purebred livestock and show at the Winter Shows. The idea behind the Futurity Show was outlined by J.E. Roningen, East Polk County Agent, McIntosh, as follows.

*The Junior Livestock Futurity of the Red River Valley Winter Shows, Crookston, was set up by the Red River Valley Livestock Association in 1948 as a Junior Heifer Futurity Show. The Swine and Sheep Futurity began with the 1950 show.*

Objectives of the Futurity Show:

1. To encourage boys and girls to build purebred herds and flocks by starting with outstanding purebred females.
2. To teach young men and women, efficient livestock production and proper livestock management through actual practice.
3. To get the full cooperation of the breeders of purebred livestock to furnish top animals of good foundation stock to qualified boys and girls at reasonable prices and to give helpful information on caring for and showing of livestock at the Winter Shows.
4. To solicit the full cooperation of the county extension agents, agricultural instructors, and 4-H club leaders not only to give instructions to Futurity members on the care

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and showing of calves, pigs, and sheep, but also to create in the Futurity members a desire to build up purebred herds and flocks in the Red River Valley.
Moorhead; and Don Hart, Fargo, in the final hours of the 1964 Horse Show. The meeting laid the groundwork for the Red River Valley Horsebreeders Association. The association later expanded, with representation from all major horse breeds in the two states of North Dakota and Minnesota represented at the show. Accordingly, the number of directors for the Red River Valley Horse-breeders Association increased in number, with a specific breed responsibility being assigned such directors in each of the two states.

Horse Show managers were elected by the Horsebreeders Association each year. Through the years the managers included Everett Solheim, Charles Malarkey, Mrs. Barb Schafer, Gand Forks, North Dakota; and Marilyn Hagen, East Grand Forks. Many volunteers were recruited by the association each year. Without the volunteers the Horse Show would not have been. The Red River Valley Horse Show event has grown from a half-day event in the very early 1960's with few horses to a major Winter Horse Show event drawing exhibitors from several states. An approved breed show is usually accomplished.

The Agassiz Riders, Inc., a saddle club based in the Crookston area, leased the Winter Shows facility for a fall Horse Show in 1964. The management and conduct of that show have continued under their leadership through the years. A number of the people involved in the winter Horse Show have also been involved in the Agassiz Riders Saddle Club.


SPECIAL EVENTS

Many regularly slated activities and some new events at the Winter Shows were organized and reorganized in the early 1960's under the leadership of George Norms, Climax, Minnesota, and called "Special Events." These tended to appeal to different interests, cultures, needs, or beliefs of groups in the Valley. The special events that have been annual affairs for many years include the talent festival, now 25 years old, the Future Farmer of America Children's Barnyard showing of young farm animals, free pony rides for the children, and Donkey Basketball which fills the Strickler Arena with teams from Gentilly, Euclid, Crookston and Climax competing.

The Hall of Fame honors individuals who have given long-time outstanding service to the Red River Valley Winter Shows. More detail is included in Chapter 10. Forty-five individuals have been so recognized and are listed in the appendix.

The King Agassiz Coronation Banquet is a gala event celebrating the crowning of a new King Agassiz after a week of selection interviews and events with the sixteen County Kings, official judges, and the King Agassiz committee.

The Dog Show is a recent addition to a very special interest group. A Miniature Tractor Pull was featured on Saturday evening in the arena for a number of years. The 4-H Arts In Entertainment performances have captured the hearts of Winter Show visitors the past two years.

The radio program, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, with host Cecil Malme, was well received at the shows during the day in just the past year.

A special opening ceremony has been developed in the shows building, with a color guard, show officials, and
legislators participating with the singing of the United States and Canadian National Anthems.

Professional entertainment programs have been scheduled from time to time, featuring such performers as Joe Feeney of the Lawrence Welk Show, the Emeralds from Nashville, Tennessee, and Luther Bjørke, the wild Norwegian from Grand Forks.

A recent special event is organized and sponsored by the bankers of the Red River Valley, who provide funding to find a nationally recognized expert to speak to the agricultural industry in the Valley. The first speaker was Orion Samuelson of WGN TV in Chicago, whose filming of the Winter Shows was seen on over 100 TV stations across the country and who addressed nearly 2,000 people in the Technical College gymnasium.

High school bands were featured each day for a number of years until their school programs became too crowded for participation at the Winter Shows.

A draft horse pull was added to the program in 1983 under the able leadership of Dr. Gary McVey of the Technical College. This event plays to a full house every year.

A western rodeo was a special event for two years under the encouragement of Vern Hagen of East Grand Forks.

A major TV network in cooperation with KXJB TV taped a program “What’s on Your Mind” with Winter Shows visitors in 1984.

A concessioners’ bean feed and/or coffee reception has been sponsored by city officials and Winter Shows Board to say thank you to exhibitors.

The government day luncheon with show officials, national and state legislators, city, county and community elected government bodies, and major agricultural producers and farm organizations is an unusual opportunity for meaningful fellowship and dialogue. The agribusiness committee of the Crookston Chamber of Commerce cooperates with the board of managers to stage this event.

More than one Secretary of Agriculture from Washington, D.C. have visited. Vice presidents of the United States have been special guests. The annual visit by officials from the North Dakota Winter Shows at Valley City facilitates an exchange of ideas.

The foregoing list isn’t inclusive of all events but gives a picture of the variety of interests served at the Winter Shows today.

**WOMEN’S DIVISION**

The official program for the first annual Short Course planned for farm families at the Northwest School and Experiment Station in 1910 has as much space given to the women’s educational program as that for the men. The importance of the crucial family partnership in farming was recognized in those pioneering efforts in rural education for adults. This has continued throughout the history of the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The early programming was almost entirely planned by the home economics faculty of the Northwest School of Agriculture. In time, leaders from various farm clubs and federated women’s groups were active for a few years in the planning process. Later, as home economics agents became part of the county extension service, these well-trained educators volunteered to provide stability and updated expertise to the women’s planning committee.

Today, the women’s division remains strong. It is representative of rural women and has probably one of the best-organized regional committees to plan, integrate and conduct the feminine section of the show each year. The ladies’ planning committee has a representative on the board of managers. For more detail see Chapter 6.

**POULTRY AND PET SHOW**

Details of the development of the show have been provided by Harold Thomforde, Crookston and are included in Chapter 6. The Poultry and Pet Show today is a very popular part of the show. Children, especially, enjoy the animals and birds. Poultry producers and fanciers continue to compete.

**LIGHT HORSE MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTION - U OF M TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

The educational arm of the University located at Crookston has always figured strongly in providing expertise for several facets of the Winter Shows and this leadership continues today. One difference today is that the University of Minnesota Technical College makes direct use of the Winter Shows facilities in its educational programming. Quoting from Gary C. McVey, head of the Division of Agriculture:

“...The light horse management program of the University of Minnesota, Crookston, has utilized the facilities of the Red River Valley Winter Shows since 1972. When the program began, it was located in the Red River Valley Winter Shows barns located west of the south arena. During several summers, the program utilized the old Agassiz Riders Club barn which was located where the new College stabling facility is today.”

McVey continues, “In 1977, an idea was developed in which the Red River Valley Winter Shows would extend their educational thrust in northwestern Minnesota by building a stable and an arena usable as a teaching-riding laboratory. The stable and arena would be leased by the Technical College. Accordingly, the
old Agassiz Riders barn was razed the summer of 1977 and plans and specifications were developed for a new modern stabling facility, and bids were let. I acted as superintendent of the construction for the new facility. By January, 1978, construction proceeded to the point where the light horse management program could be moved to the new facility. On Sunday afternoon, January 9, the horses were led through waist-high snow to a new home."

Since 1978, the College has leased the new stable for housing the horses and the north arena as an educational teaching laboratory. In addition, the College rents the ten-acre parking lot to the west of the buildings for an exercise area and for limited pasture. The College also leased a piece of land from the National Guard and has established an outdoor riding arena and exercise standard. This has proved to be an excellent arrangement for the College and the students majoring in light horse management.

A first class stabling and training facility has been provided, with no building investment cost to the taxpayers of the State of Minnesota. Instead, local institutions cooperated to provide this useful, educational facility for studies of the Technical College. Several workshops and club shows under the auspices of the College are held in the facilities during the year.

**FOOD SERVICE**

The food service concession in the new facilities north of Crookston has always been maintained by the board of managers. Their policy is to maximize the profits from the food service to assist in meeting the capital debt each year. The food service facilities have been improved from time to time. Currently, the public seems reasonably happy with the short-order type of service provided.

There is a policy against admitting concessioners who make food service their major activity. One booth has been permitted, the 4-H group of West Polk County, where the 4-H’ers and their leaders can set up a booth to sell ice cream to show visitors as a club fund-raising project. Otherwise, all food service is a function of the Winter Shows board of managers. Many visitors to the Winter Shows are on a midwinter outing and may wish for more than the short order service available at the arena. The city of Crookston has several excellent dining facilities which are well patronized by show visitors.

**BETWEEN SHOW ACTIVITIES**

The large floor space of the arenas and barns has developed some use between each Winter Show. March is popular for farm sales. Financial organizations suggest that a farm sale this time of the year in the Winter Shows building will increase the income from their sales more than enough to pay the moving cost and renting the arena.

Several educational functions of rather substantive influence are held annually, including the International Sugarbeet Growers Institute, sugarbeet growers from Minnesota, North Dakota and Manitoba and the largest of its kind in the USA. The Red River Valley Beef Cattlemen’s Institute is the largest single beef cattle educational function in any part of the Red River Basin annually. The College, too, conducts light horse management clinics and training activities. A Home and Hobby Show was recently held and was successful at its first try in 1984. The regional high schools and some colleges rent the space for training and holding track meets in the spring each year, as weather in the Red River Basin isn’t always conducive to outside track activity.

Any group may contract to lease the buildings, providing their use fits the facilities available in the building and is in keeping with the general mission of the Winter Shows. The facilities were built for the Winter Shows exposition and may not be suited to all needs.

The Winter Shows properties belong to all the people in northwestern Minnesota. Consequently, the rental fees are modest; however, any group renting the facility must contract for such use, must carry its own insurance, and must pay the modest rental fee plus the costs of janitorial help, lights, heat, and maintenance.
CHAPTER IX

Farm Service Show

Men and women from Red River Valley farms liked the first Annual Short Course and Farm Crop Show held at the University Campus at Crookston in 1910. They wanted more time for exchanging ideas among themselves, for hearing about farming from other areas, and for hearing speakers on governmental and other topics. The crop show was an immediate success. It demonstrated the quality of grain and forage which was being produced in N.W. Minnesota. The women's meetings were especially appreciated.

Farming at this time was certainly largely a do-it-yourself enterprise. However, farmers were beginning to buy services which were evolving in towns and villages. Farm machinery sales and service, financial services, health services, schools, cultural activity, water management know how, were among the growing needs of people on the land.

A war between major nations always increases the rate at which technology is developed, and this fact was no different in World War I. The services that developed to support the farming industry grew at a faster rate right after the war to-end-all wars. Consequently, farmers, their wives, and children not only wanted to learn about food and fiber production, but they wanted to see the latest and newest equipment.

The first Industrial Show was held in the new buildings downtown and was a success. On-the-farm equipment for the dairymen, newest machinery to be powered by horses, the developing farm tractors, farm tractor equipment, and household equipment were shown by enthusiastic concessioners. Some salesmen made enough contacts to carry them through months of customer sales and service. The initial show was an exciting happening but a big problem for the arrangements committee. The armory space was needed for the popular evening lectures. Already, the ponderous steam engines, oil pull tractors, and grain separators wanted space. The need for ground level space with large doors was clear by 1919. Two buildings were completed by the Livestock Association by that year and paid for by gifts and the sale of shares. This success encouraged the show managers to plan a third building for the "Industrial Show" as it was called.

Livestock producers weren't too excited about the third building. The farm economy was going downhill. Yet, plans were developed, some funds were raised, and the rest borrowed to build Annex B, known as the Industrial Building. The building was 40' x 144' and was specifically set aside for the Industrial Show, what is known today as the Farm Service Show, a major segment of Winter Shows. It, too, was an immediate success when put to use in 1920.

The Winter Shows Board of Managers, the official title of the planning leadership in 1920 and since, disapproved of the frivolous concessions, the carnival atmosphere and the kind of activities which merely parted people from their money and really didn't give anything substantive in return. The board has never approved.

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the noisy hawking type of concession but rather has emphasized attractive, well-designed, booth displays, those that depend on people stopping by in a reasonably quiet atmosphere to look, to learn, and to question. This policy hasn’t been easy to maintain, and there have been times when concessions slipped in without the board knowing all the facts. Needless to say, these hawkers weren’t allowed to come back a second year.

While sales of a product or service is the name of the game, again, the board of managers likes to emphasize that showing a product is of prime importance.

Overbearing and overt sales campaigning which tends to disturb other concessioners or unduly pursue the customer is avoided. Currently, there are concessioners which have been with the Red River Valley Winter Shows for over 40 years, and there are many others who have exhibited between 20 and 30. The whole gamut of services to the farming industry can now be found at the RRWV: farm machinery, household machinery and equipment, mass media, farm buildings, fertilizers, pesticides, governmental service, farm organizations, church, homemaking, and youth groups, farm organizations, and Hobbyists. This long list doesn’t fully cover the variety of concessioners who buy space at the show each year and tend their booths for the Farm Service Show.

Today the total number of concessioners is 331. The income is about $147,600. The first show had 26 concessioners who collectively paid $510 to show their wares in the armory. There were those who could not be admitted because of their large equipment or because all space had been allotted. Today there is still a waiting list of people who want to display at the show. A list of the first concessioners at the 1917 show is in the appendix, as well as a list of those who were at a recent show. Three farm service concessioners who have been with the Winter Shows for 30 years or more are Agscos, Inc., Grand Forks, ND; Bemidji Woolen Mills, Bemidji, MN; and Townsend, Inc., Fergus Falls.

Here are some of the comments: “We make most of our living at fairs, celebrations and the like.”

“The Red River Valley Winter Shows is one of the best run shows and we do a top dollar business there every year.”

“We meet hundreds of our regular customers, talk over new products, and meet new friends. It is one of the best shows of its kind for our business.”

“The Winter Shows at Crookston has been a good outlet for woolen goods. Paul Brekken was one of our favorite people with the Winter Show.”

The industrial show at the current time is a substantial source of income for operating the Winter Shows. The standard charges made at this time are $3.75 per square foot of space. The rate is less than at some of the other regional shows held in the wintertime, such as the shows in Brandon, Manitoba, and Valley City, North Dakota.

A farmer from the region recently commented that “the Service Show isn’t as useful as it used to be. The amount of farm equipment shown seems to be going downhill. The new ideas coming on the market aren’t necessarily at the Winter Shows as they used to be.” A few farmers from the eastern part of the region have observed that the smaller kind of farm equipment that they used to be able to come to see is not always displayed. Can the winter shows insure that the latest in small farm, as well as large farm equipment, be at the show each year? Maybe this criticism needs a good look in the years ahead!

There are many small booths creeping in with their objective of accumulating names on a list and communicating with the prospects about their product after the show is over. Many booths offer a gift to lucky people at drawings held at the close of the show. Literature on services abounds. A few visitors come equipped with their ink pads and stamps and visit all of the booths getting their names on the prize drawing lists.

One concessioner who wishes to remain unnamed indicates that he has been at the show for many years and he has made his living selling equipment and facilities to farm people. He is enthusiastic because he learns from farm people as they stop by his booth at the show. They help him stay abreast of building needs on the changing farm scene. He says he makes contacts annually which add up to over sixty percent of his business for the entire year. A concessioner who represents one of the farm organizations indicated that the Red River Valley Winter Shows is one of the solid farm expositions in the entire midcontinent. Further, he indicated that having it in the midwinter was especially good because while a few can go south to Florida and Arizona, most people have to stay here.

Attending an exposition in the middle of winter gives them a place to go, to visit, to see new ideas, to talk over some of their plans, and to go back home renewed and uplifted. A member of an organization says he has a chance to renew acquaintance with his far-flung membership over the entire northern Minnesota. He wouldn’t miss the show for anything.

What’s the future of the Farm Service Show? Undoubtedly, the board of managers would be hard put to meet the expenses of the ten-day exposition without the rentals from a Farm Service Show. All good and worthwhile ideas need constant evaluation and adjustments as needed. There is an undercurrent of thinking that questions whether the trend of the modern Farm Service Show is away from a learning experience with the latest equipment and ideas for food and fiber production. Is there too much emphasis on commercialism and not enough on displaying new products and new ideas which build the quality of farming? Is having a member on the board of managers from the farm service industry appropriate? This idea isn’t new, but has been dropped from time to time because the concessioners aren’t an organized group. Representing the interests of all concessioners would be very difficult for such an individual board member. The board of managers recognizes the communications gap and is spending an increasing amount of time with the concessioners each year. Maybe the board of managers needs to be listening to what show visitors are saying about the farm service show.

Certainly the number of services available to the modern farm enterprise are nearly countless in number. Finding a desirable balance between new and continuing ideas and services each year is probably the major challenge facing the board in the immediate years ahead. An interesting, neat Service Show of wide variety should be of most educational value to the greatest number of show visitors, both farm and non-farm families.
CHAPTER X

Quality of Life - People

The Winter Shows began as the service and educational arm of Minnesota's Land Grant University. The University was beginning to reach out into the countryside in northwestern Minnesota in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The people on the land were struggling to make a living and a satisfying life. The best established educational arm about 1910 was the one-room country school, readily available to most farm families. Farmers and others who came to the first Winter Shows programs were lonely for fellowship, eager to hear about the new "experiment farm," and ready to listen to outsiders. Music, singing, pageants, educational contests, all added a special quality of experience for the early visitors of the Winter Shows. People on the land were longing to hear the voices of knowledge, of investigation, of experience to speak to them, talk with them, to answer questions.

For the most part, it was the community leaders and innovators who came to those early short courses. Such a trend continued even as the Winter Shows changed program ideas to fit the shifting scene from horsepower to tractor, from walking to the mailbox to the modern three-wheeler, from almost no communication with the outside world to so much that sorting out what is fact and what isn't becomes a daily challenge.

The individual members of the board of managers, of course, have changed with time. An estimated 300 men and women have served on the board during the 75-year history. Some have served over 40 years -- a generation of time. Generally, tenure on the board extends several years. This longer tenure, yet with the constant infusion of new people, provides stability of purpose and the creative challenge of new ideas.

A study of the program booklets finds a recurring theme which gives emphasis to speakers, events and activities that extended the quality of life. The major projects or activities which are particularly designed to enhance the quality of living are explained in this chapter.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

A natural and immediate happening in the early Winter Shows was the emphasis given to the human family, out there working with the soil and water to produce crops and livestock. All hands in the family were organized to survive in the setting chosen by the pioneer farmers of the Valley. It wasn't surprising, therefore, that leadership of the Winter Shows included youth very early in the 75 years.

Interestingly enough, the earliest youth contests were related to that very prominent institution out in the country, the one-room country school. Spelling contests were popular and continued as long as the country schools were on the scene. Declamatory, posture, essay, and one-act play contests were programmed for nearly two decades beginning about 1915.

Vocal and instrumental music by youth groups in those early years provided entertainment at programs. The music department of the Northwest School of Agriculture and their students probably sang and played at more Winter Shows programs than any other single group of Red River Valley youth up until 1968, when the N.W. School phased out to make room for the Technical College. In the late 1950s, and through most of the 70's, high school bands were bused in during the day to play and to see the show.

A Talent Show now known as the "Talent Festival" was developed by the board of managers, with the Crookston Jaycees initially cooperating to start the project.

This talent contest provided an opportunity for young people to compete in drama, dance, voice, and instrumental. The 75th year, 1985, will be the 26th consecutive Talent Festival to attract amateur youth as individuals or groups. Currently, the music department of the Technical College organizes the Talent Festival each year as a service to the Winter Shows exposition. As many as 50 auditions have been held each year, from which approximately a dozen top numbers are selected for an evening of final competition in Kiehle Auditorium at the University of Minnesota Technical College. Expert judges select the top three numbers, and cash prizes are awarded by the Winter Shows board of managers. Weather permitting, the

Youth activities at the Winter Shows includes more than judging contests, showing livestock, and attending clinics. Opportunities to serve and to experience the unusual are available. This group of FFA students serve the King Agassiz banquet and also get a chance to visit first hand with former Senator and Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

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The area Bremer Banks have been serving the needs of the people in the Red River Valley for decades. During this time, we have been proud of our association with the Red River Valley Winter Shows and the innovative programs that are conveyed through it.

We congratulate the Winter Shows on their 75th Anniversary serving the Red River Valley.
The Bremer Banks Listed Below Salute The Red River Valley Winter Shows:

First American Bank of Crookston

First American Bank of Grafton

First American Bank of Larimore

First American Bank of Warren

First National Bank of Crookston

State Bank of Shelly

Members Bremer Financial Corporation
Kiehle Auditorium is filled to capacity, as many people enjoy amateur entertainment by young people.

The vocational agriculture department of high schools and the boys and girls 4-H clubs in the region have integrated the Winter Shows into their youth programs. For over 20 years, the first Saturday of the ten-day show has been set aside as Youth Day. More than a thousand 4-H’ers, FFA’ers, and others from the entire Northwestern Minnesota and even from North Dakota gather to compete in a wide variety of educational contests, demonstrations, and clinics.

An opportunity to see young farm animals just born or being born and a chance to ride on a pony are provided by the Crookston and Climax Future Farmers of America chapters each year. Preschool children from surrounding communities find this a very special day, which ends up with tired parents and tired ponies but happy kids.

To summarize, the youth events in today’s Winter Shows are stronger than ever. The lives of youth are enriched and strengthened. Among today’s strong families living in the Red River Valley many speak with pride about the ribbons, the championships won, the wholesome experiences, the fun, and chuckle over some of their mistakes at the Winter Shows.

**VALLEY FARMER AND HOMEMAKER HONORS BANQUET**

The Red River Valley Development Association was looking for ways in the 1930’s to generate respect and pride into the farming scene during those difficult depression years. Under the leadership of Supt. Tom McCall, who at that time was also president of the Red River Valley board of managers and the Red River Valley Livestock Association, the leaders traveled the countryside and consulted with extension workers and other rural groups, asking how can we demonstrate to the public at large the kind of attitudes and values which really are the building blocks of communities at the grassroots level in good years as well as in poor times? How can we find them? Should we just have a top farmer and his wife honored for the entire Red River Valley or one for each county?

Out of these discussions developed a plan to honor a farm couple from each county for the good example they set with their family life, their community service, their farming operation, and their concern for conserving the natural resources of soil and water. To serve on a selection committee in each county, the group invited the county agent, the leaders of the various farm organizations, a Vo-Ag instructor if available, the director of the Red River Valley Development Association in the county, and a member of the county board. This must have been a reasonably good plan, for since 1938 it is still used in approximately its original form.

Has the program been successful? One county extension director writes:

> The Valley Farmer and Homemaker committee in the county is always an exciting committee to work with. They seem so willing to come to a meeting to search out a deserving couple to receive the honor at the Winter Shows. I have helped select 26 couples. I sense the real honor these couples experience and probably because they know they have been selected by a cross section of their peers and neighbors. I make it a point to visit with them immediately after the selection has been completed and usually they say it must have been a mistake that they were actually chosen. The committee should really find someone who is more outstanding. Seeing them early gives the honored couple time to find someone to milk the cows or do the chores while they attend the honors banquet and the Winter Shows.

The extension director goes on to point out that this is a very worthwhile program because:

> “These people are without a doubt deserving and something special. The honors banquet is a top-notch event and the beautiful presentation of the plaque leaves lasting memories. I find these plaques always in a very prominent place in the homes of honored couples. Our local newspapers are very helpful and give front page space for the write up sent in by the county extension director, pictures and the like. Over the years, I have attended several of the banquets and find all most meaningful. The program has always been appropriate and succeeds in featuring the importance of the kind of leadership and the kind of values, the kind of attitudes that these people maintain in their communities. The Valley Farmer and Homemaker Honors Banquet is the finest program at the Winter Shows and let’s hope it can continue for many more years.”

Another quotation from another county:

> “Seldom is there an event or activity that cannot be improved. For this year’s Valley Farmer and Homemaker Banquet, however, I am hard pressed to think of a suggestion. The keynote speaker was missed, but the special award given to the Builder of the Valley used that time well and really augmented the honors given to the Valley Farmer and Homemakers. I was so pleased to feel that the addition of a new award in no way complicated the honoring of the Valley Farmer and Homemakers for 1984.”

Over a 46-year period more than 700 couples (usually a farm couple) have been honored in the 14 county
The Red River Valley Development Association has presented two “Builder of the Valley” awards in recent years. Mr. Edgar Hetteen (left), Thief River Falls, developer of the snowmobile, inventor of the straw chopper for modern grain combines, among many accomplishments, was honored with his wife, Hannah. Mr. Melvin Ouse, Rothsay, MN, farmer, REA leader, flying farmer, strong family leader among many other leadership roles and his wife, Celia, were the most recent so honored. Both recipients received a personalized plaque memorializing their contributions and grassroots leadership as Builders of the Red River Valley.

Keynote speakers include industrial leaders, university presidents, governors, senators, congressmen, authors, state legislators, and farmers. A complete banquet is tastefully and efficiently served, and a beautiful, personally engraved plaque is presented by the Red River Valley Development Association.

Here again, the service leadership of University personnel must be noted. The superintendent and staff of the Northwest School and Experiment Station have, under the Development Association committee, looked after the legwork and details of arranging the banquet affair year after year. This University group adds permanence and smoothness of operation to the event. The leadership of the extension director in each county adds that necessary expertise, stability, and respect to the yearly selection process and is certainly one of the continuing factors insuring the success of the program.

To summarize, the Valley Farmer and Homemakers Banquet is a high point at each Red River Valley Winter Show. The board of the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association, cooperating with the Winter Shows board of managers, takes a great deal of pride in this activity. Without question the people who have been honored through the years are recognized by their neighbors as having enhanced the quality of life for themselves as well as for all their neighbors here in the Red River Basin.

**BUILDER OF THE VALLEY AWARD**

The Winter Shows has always been characterized by an element of vitality, a sort of a forceful aggressiveness throughout its history, despite the loosely structured organization. New ideas are tried. Some fail and others continue. In more recent years a deliberate effort has been made to seek public opinion and reactions during the ten-day show. The “Red Jacket Boys”, the board members, circulate among the crowd of visitors, listening and questioning. Planning committees and a variety of cooperating organization boards are doing more evaluating each year. Emerging from such dialogue comes the remodeling of old ideas and the trying of new ideas. In such an evaluation session by the board of the Red River Development Association about four years ago was born the Builder of the Valley honors idea. It took about two years to develop and adopt the Builder of the Valley Award project. As a reminder to the reader, the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association is a nonprofit corporation representing the 14 counties in northwestern Minnesota. Their major purpose is to encourage resource development through the Winter Shows. The Builder of the Valley Award was developed to recognize unusual grassroots leadership and creativity which have contributed significantly to the quality of life on land in the Red River Basin and beyond.

The award is intended to be among the top honors given at the Winter Shows. It recognizes people who work quietly, and through their steadiness, creativity, and community involvement do build the quality of life economically, socially, and spiritually. The honor is awarded to farmers or those who provide services and who live in northwestern Minnesota. It is the policy of the board of directors to give the award from time to time and not necessarily annually. A project committee from the board studies all the recommendations for this award in detail. Recommendations of the project committee are then acted on by the full board of the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association for final decision. So far two such awards have been given.

**KING AGASSIZ PROJECT**

During the late 1950’s the quiet but forceful enthusiasm of the board of managers and fund-raising task forces (all volunteers) out in each county
went beyond the planning and funding of a building and a facility for the next 40 or 50 years. They searched for a symbol of emerging leadership in agriculture. A "princess" was suggested as was a "snowman". A 150' long by 25' high Red River Valley panorama painted on the front of the new Winter Shows building wasn't practical. A farm animal mascot was impossible because of its care and upkeep. This brainstorming among the Winter Shows board was finally placed in the hands of a committee who were to search for a symbol that would reach out into every county annually and could develop into something that would be maintained by people out in each county, yet focused on the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The King Agassiz project was born.

The first committee meeting was held December 12, 1960, at 3:30 p.m. at the Northwest School of Agriculture. The board of managers appointed George Nornes as chairman, and he gathered the following committee around him for this meeting. Mrs. Sonja Knapp, Marlin Johnson (Asst. County Agent, West Polk County), John Drake and Fred Schulzke (Advisory from the fund-raising campaign office). Mr. Ray Eggert (Beltrami) was added to the committee. The committee minutes records suggestions for added committee membership.

The idea of finding a county representative in each county to be honored continued to grow. The involvement of county agents and Vo-Ag instructors to select the initial county candidates was discussed because a name for the county representative didn't come easy. Titles from "atomic age farmer" to "Agassiz Farm King" were developed. Finally from a list of 18, King Agassiz for the Winter Shows region and County King Agassiz for the county representative were picked.

The County Kings are chosen locally in each county, and the King Agassiz is selected by expert judges at the Winter Shows. Deadlines were set. Machinery was established out in the county for the selection of candidates. The following rules applied: The first selection committees in the county were made up of the county extension agent and Vo-Ag instructors. Local newspapers cooperated by writing a story on the project requesting nominations be sent to the county agent, the final selection in time to be honored, announced and publicized prior to the Winter Shows.

Choosing these candidates is not a beauty or popularity contest. The person chosen must have qualities of leadership needed to reach the rich potential of farming and related living in the Red River Basin. The candidate must be 25 to 39 years of age. The person is judged chiefly on what he does with what he has. His basic farming progress is demonstration of his talent as a developing, farm businessperson. The way he overcomes obstacles is important as are his general community reputation, and his personality to represent the Winter Shows before the public in an adequate manner. The committee met several times and by early January cleared the hurdles for the King Agassiz idea. Information went out to the counties. The counties produced nine County Kings for the 1961 Winter Shows. It was a very creditable beginning. The committee was enlarged to make the final plans, with George Nornes as chairman, Mrs. Sonja Knapp (FHA, Climax), Marlin Johnson (Asst. County Agent, West Polk County), Ray Eggert (Beltrami), Mrs. Gilman Hanson (Crookston), T.W.

Dr. James Lofgren, President of the Winter Shows, officially signals a new era by shifting the hat from King Agassiz XXII (bare headed) to Marvin Hanson, Hallock, MN, at the 1983 Winter Shows. L to R: President Lofgren; Charles Swanson, King Agassiz XXII, Michael Swanson, Steven Swanson, Patti Swanson, Gail Hanson, Marvin Hanson, King Agassiz XXIII; George and Kate Hanson.

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Thorson (Crookston), Jean Solheim (Crookston), Bertha Ross (Fisher), and Mrs. Andy Dragseth (Eldred).

An interesting description of the first coronation is described by Mr. Marlin Johnson, a committee member.

"Richard Fitzsimmons, farmer, legislator, from Argyle, MN was named King Agassiz I. During the coronation at the Central High Auditorium, with a packed house, the trumpeters did not get the prearranged signal from T.W. Thorson to sound the trumpets at the right moment. Finally, Mr. Thorson spoke out very loudly to 'blow the trumpets.' The Grand Forks television station was on hand to record the event. On the television news that evening, we saw the trumpeters and in the background we heard T.W. Thorson's voice say blow the trumpets and the appropriate flourishes then came forth."

So a new idea was born rather quickly. It grew fast! Within a couple of years, every county had a County King Agassiz with two in each of Polk County and Ottertail County because of their very large size. This process produces 16 County Kings each year, and it is rare that the slate isn't full. The original committee must be given great credit for their foresight and their long-time interest. New committee members have been added as replacements for retirees. The former County Kings now exceed 300 in number. King Agassiz XXIV was elected in February of 1984. The program has succeeded in identifying the young leadership coming up the ladder. The early County Kings are now found in local, regional, and national positions of responsibility. The majority of the County Kings still live in the northwestern scene. They have formed a County King Agassiz Association, and this group is now beginning to assume responsibility for planning Kings Agassiz activities at the Winter Shows. They petitioned successfully to have a person on the board of managers. Mr. Karol Berglund of Ada was elected their first representative on the board.

At present, the King Agassiz planning committee is changing to include the immediate past king, the board of managers representative, chairperson of the King Agassiz Association, along with other former County King personnel. Mr. Nornes is still active on the committee. Out in the counties the selection of the County King has also changed. The previous year County King puts together a committee of previous County Kings and makes this selection in the spring of each year. The person selected is then crowned at the county fair or before some other suitable audience in the summer. The reigning King Agassiz and family are usually on the scene to help with the crowning.

This King Agassiz group is a growing force for leadership development in northwestern Minnesota. The system works now because it really does identify the high-quality leadership at present.

This activity developed somewhat differently from a number of major events at the Winter Shows because it had no initial frontline leadership from the University of Minnesota. Rather, the University cooperated. The leading person who has given years of stability and leadership has been George Nornes, former Vo-Ag instructor from Climax, Minnesota, who himself was King Agassiz III. Erman Ueland, another King Agassiz and Vo-Ag instructor from Fertile, served on the committee for many years and provided steady, forward-looking leadership. The guidance of women on the original committee must not be overlooked. Without the ladies many of the ideas involving the family of the King probably would have been overlooked. The Red River Valley King Agassizes have established friendships that reach into their homes from time to time, building a relationship which has to be a plus in northwestern Minnesota.

The County King Agassiz Association is traveling toward the point where it can operate under its own steam as part of the Winter Shows human resource development activity. In its early stages of organizational life it has prepared a constitution and by-laws. The men and their wives gather at Winter Shows time for fellowship and welcoming the new crop of kings each year. The number of former kings attending the coronation ceremonies is growing.

The coronation ceremony has developed into one of the finely-tuned, exciting, well-conceived events of the Winter Shows week. Without a doubt it's an experience that the young couples or singles involved will long remember. There is increasing emphasis on involvement of the County Kings' family. This is a most desirable and a very healthy trend and needs further encouragement.

There is also a current development today where the University of Minnesota extension service is providing emerging leadership training experience for individuals like the County Kings. This trend could develop into an exciting and useful experience as these young citizens have an opportunity to widen their sphere of understanding and experience. Each group of County Kings will have the opportunity to grow and develop in a program over which they have some control of the purpose and content.
WINTER SHOWS HALL OF FAME

Without a doubt, the freewill service of hundreds of citizens is what produces the Winter Shows each year. The many who give a few minutes to a few hours of time and energy are led by other volunteers who provide days and weeks of leadership service. The board of managers wondered whether there might not be some way to honor such dedicated leadership. In the early 1960’s the group suggested that any person having given long-time and unusual service to the Winter Shows should be recognized with due explanation at an appropriate meeting or banquet at the Shows. A personally engraved plaque would be presented. Framed and dated pictures would be hung in the permanent Hall of Fame gallery located in the Winter Shows Arena.

A total of 54 citizen-leader-servants have been honored to date. A list is provided in the appendix.

The original Hall of Fame committee appointed by the board of managers included George Nornes, chairperson; Harold Thomforde, B.E. Youngquist, and Paul Brekken. Nominations are made by the board of managers annually.

A change in definition was made in 1968 when a citizen-leader might be honored for volunteer leadership in the Red River Basin for other reasons besides Winter Shows.

SENIOR CITIZEN DAY

The Winter Shows without question has something for everyone, and senior citizens are not overlooked. They are included in the programming and the service activity of the women’s division. They come in by the busload from all parts of the region. The board of managers reduces the price of their tickets at the door, and the women’s division committee always has something interesting for those who want to visit together and tour the show.

HORSEBREEDER’S HALL OF FAME

The Red River Valley Horsebreeders established a program honoring those who provide planning and operations service to the Horse Show. They have done a good job of recognizing volunteer service. Plaque presentations are made at suitable ceremonies, and a gallery of pictures of people so honored is maintained in the Winter Shows Arena by the Association.

TO SUMMARIZE

The quality of life in the Red River Basin depends much on the values, activities, and stewardship of people who live on the land here. The Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers places highest priority on those programs of the midwinter shows which recognize and encourage the kind of human resources which enhance the quality of life in northwestern Minnesota and beyond.

The late Carl Ash was a leader in extension education for the Red River Valley, a respected friend of the farmer and a trusted leader among leaders. He is an example of the solid foundations undergirding the 75-year-old Winter Shows.
CHAPTER XI

Letters, Interviews and Telephone Calls

Early in 1984 letters were sent to 68 individuals inviting opinions and observations about the 75-year old Red River Valley Winter Shows. An item was also placed in the quarterly Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station News published in early April of 1984, announcing the Winter Shows history writing project and inviting contributions. More than 60 responses were received via letter and telephone and have been included throughout the book. This chapter, however, records a number of letters and quotations from the interview process, all of which capture in their own way the consistent spirit of the volunteers who have been part of the 75-year history. Each letter or quotation will be introduced with the person's name and a few words about his or her connection with the show.

C.J. (Rudy) Gustafson of Route 2, Underwood, Minnesota, was a county extension agent for five years in West Ottertail County and a leader of the fund raising taskforce to construct facilities in 1960. Later he directed the Farm Service Department for the Ottertail Power Company and retired recently as vice president for development. He has one of the long-time records of volunteer service to the Winter Shows.

I began attending the Red River Valley Winter Shows in 1946 when I was West Ottertail County extension agent. I was the coach of the 4-H judging team and escort for the farm couple from West Ottertail County selected to receive the Valley Farmer and Homemaker Award from the Development Association. I continued to attend each year until about 1980. I left the Extension Service in 1951 and established the Farm Service Department for the Ottertail Power Company but continued attending the Winter Shows as a commercial exhibitor and as a volunteer helper in conducting various events at the show.

My job for many years was superintendent of the livestock judging contest, working with O.M. Kiser and later others instructing the participants in the mechanics of the contest and organizing the listening to oral reasons. While with Ottertail Power Company, I spent the entire week at the show. Now as I reflect on those years, my most vivid memories are of several very severe cold and stormy days that somehow seemed to occur the week of the Winter Shows. This convinces me that there had to be great educational value to make it worthwhile for farmers to leave home and drive to Crookston and they did, in ever increasing numbers year after year.

As for the judging contests in the years following World War II, participants, including 4-H and FFA members, the subcollegiate teams from the Minnesota Agriculture Schools and the Park River North Dakota Aggies as well as great numbers of young farmer teams coached by the Veteran's Agricultural Instructors working in the region for several years after World War II.

The reason for farmers coming to the shows were the educational benefits they received from studying the commercial exhibits. The exhibits usually featured new products and ideas. The chance to see and to study high-quality livestock, poultry, crops exhibits, and talk with agriculture extension specialists who were always at the show, and finally for the knowledge they could obtain by attending the broad scope of seminars and lectures conducted by University of Minnesota staff members as well as other recognized experts. This was true for the farmer's wife, for there were annual sessions planned for the ladies.

As a professional person working in agricultural education, the Winter Shows had great value for me. It put me in close contact for a whole week with fellow workers and specialists so that I had a chance to ask questions and to get answers to things that were bothering me.

The building of a new arena located on the site north of Crookston was a great undertaking and a tribute to the leadership of Bill Strickler, Bernie Youngquist, Harold Thomforde, and the leadership of many others. It changed the character of the show. Instead of the events being scattered in many locations, it brought everyone and everything together. In a way that was kind of sad because there was a certain romance and excitement in having many things going on at the Methodist Church, Presbyterian
Church, the high school auditorium, out at the agriculture school, at the Chevrolet garage, at the old armory, at the Grand Theatre, and like places. But it was very fortunate that no major catastrophe occurred in the old location with the big wood heating stoves and the overloaded electrical circuits.

I think of Mr. Townsend, a concessionaire from Fergus Falls, who sold balloons and ice cream and the like to show visitors. Every time he used his ice crusher, he'd blow a fuse. I know that Chauncey Carlson, who was the local manager for the Ottertail Power Office at Crookston, insisted that his service representative be close during the entire show. It was truly an accident waiting to happen. With so many people crowded inside you could barely move.

The timing of the show was perfect. In the dead of winter, people were looking for an excuse to get off of the farms or out of their businessplace for even a day. They were in a receptive mood and a good frame of mind. There have been great changes in the past 75 years in agriculture and I'm sure that the Red River Valley Winter Shows can lay claim to its full share. There were tremendous numbers of people, many far removed from Crookston who gave of their time and talent to make it successful. I don't know if it would be possible today to start from scratch to organize such an event. I don't think so. Beginning with the dairymen, poultry raisers, Development Association, the hog men, the sheep producers, the beef cattle breeders, Crops and Soil Associations, the women's crew, horticulture society, the farm organizations, commodity organizations, all getting together for a week to schedule all the programs and events and doing it for 75 years in a row.

Herb Mauritson from Shelly, Minnesota, a farmer and a horse breeder, and former member of the board of managers.

My memory of the Winter Shows goes back to the old days in the buildings downtown. What a set up that was in comparison to what there is to work with today. Many times during my years with the show, I've caught myself complaining about the lack of funds for something we really would like to do or have. But when I think back about Bill Strickler, Bernie Youngquist, Harold Thomford, and others putting their necks out a country mile to get a new piece of land with the buildings and facilities. I really marvel at your faith and guts. The Show itself has been more than just that for years. It's an institution in itself. People really look forward to it for months. It's a break in the winter. It would be sorely missed. The fellowship and the educational aspects go hand in hand. Neither more important than the other. Seeing all the new ideas in equipment and products are exciting even to those who can't afford to avail themselves of everything they might want and even need. It's a show where both men, women and youth are served and the rich and the poor can both afford it. Nothing is so high priced as to be a burden to anyone.

I was active in the horse show from the beginning. I remember when Gene Miller of the Northwest Experiment Station provided leadership for the first three-day winter show. He invited a group of us horse breeders to get together and suggested that we form a Red River Valley Horse Breeders Association and provide the leadership for the horse show portion of the Winter Shows in the future. Actually, this is where the Red River Valley Horse Breeders Association commenced with the objective in mind to have a winter show at the Valley City Winter Show as well as the Red River Valley Winter Shows at Crookston. It has been a very great experience. I don't regret the time and effort and money I've spent. The greatest value I've received is working with a lot of fine people, making many friends that I would never have known without the Winter Shows.

Frank Forbes, Vocational Agriculture Instructor, County Agent and Agricultural Extension Administrator, and member of the board of managers for a number of years.

I've observed the Red River Valley Winter Shows for 45 years and I see it as a focal point for various educational programs during its 75-year history. During that time the Red River Valley region evolved from the horse and buggy time society to a high developed agricultural-industrial complex society equal to that of any in the world.

The emphasis on youth educational programs through 4-H, FFA, and FHA judging demonstration activities has had a great influence in developing leadership skills among the farm families from one generation to the next. There's a continuing need for these types of activities in the future. The Valley Farmer and Homemaker Award where an outstanding farm couple from each county is selected by their peers as an example of top farming and homemaking expertise and service to the community and care for the soil and water has brought honors to many in every county. The crowning of the King Agassiz each year from a group of county kings selected by their peers out in the counties on an annual basis recognizes outstanding young men and of course they are usually young couples coming up the ladder of leadership ability and service to their community. It is in itself one of the outstanding projects of the Red River Valley Development Association.

The Agricultural Extension Service in each county has played a major role in the continuing success of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Several county agents, men and women, have served on various committees and boards during the 75 years. The county extension staff have assisted in the planning and carrying out of the adult and youth educational activities. Agents for years have served and yet today serve as superintendents of livestock and crops exhibits. Those experienced leaders, working with the best livestock and crop producers in the region, added a valuable dimension to the Winter Shows. I remember the contributions to the swine industry by the purebred swine breeders from various parts of the Valley, Swine would be housed on the second floor above the cattle. When the floor leaked, one would hear some rather loud grumbling from Howard Balk, who was the county agent from Clearwater County and superintendent of the cattle exhibitors below for more than a 20 year period.

I participated actively in the Winter Shows for over 20 years beginning about 1936. At that time I had FFA, 4-H and young farmer judging teams participating in the shows. I was superintendent of the swine department for over 10 years. During the post-war years, I served as a member of the Winter Shows board of managers. That was a time when tremen-
dous change was taking place in agriculture. Agri-educational program and exhibits focused on new crops and crop varieties with herbicides, insecticides, fertilizers, farm machinery and equipment, farm storage, grain drying, livestock feeding and breeding, and overall management. As I look back over the history of the past 75 years, it would be hard to visualize a February in the Red River Valley without people making plans to participate in this very worthwhile event which even though led by volunteers has met the challenges of the changes over time.

**Juel and Leona Torvi.** Juel Torvi was a farm foreman at the Northwest Experiment Station for some 35 years and was one of the Station staff members who did a lot of legwork getting things ready for the show each year.

My first show was the winter of 1926. Our work then as well as for many years was to move all necessary equipment and supplies for running the show including chairs, cabinets, typewriters, files, and the like to downtown Crookston for the full week of the show and then move it all back to the Experiment Station. Many of the meetings were held out at the School of Agriculture and another job was to keep the entrance open which was quite a challenge in stormy weather. In those days we used a team of horses and an eight foot wooden scraper made in the carpenter shop. One man would hold the scraper and the other man would drive the team. There were evening meetings and the snow-removal days sometimes were sixteen hours of wading around in the deep snow. If a real big storm came along, the Highway Department would help open the entrance. Later a caterpillar was purchased and then in the 50’s a snowblower was added on the John Deere R tractor and we thought we were in heaven. A large surplus airport type snowblower was acquired and used to clear snow on the Winter Shows ground after the new buildings were built.

In the early 1920’s, the Northwest Experiment Station dairy herdsmen would always show dairy cattle at the show. This was discontinued in the 1930’s. Mrs. Torvi worked with the Trinity Lutheran Church Ladies Aid. These church ladies did an outstanding job of serving food at the Winter Shows, serving from 6 in the morning until 10 in the evening. They served coffee, donuts, pies, cookies, and the best hamburgers and baked beans. The story is told that the new Trinity Lutheran Church mortgage had a large portion paid off with money earned at the Red River Valley Winter Shows food concession by the Trinity Lutheran Church Ladies Aid.

**Dr. Gary C. McVey,** Head of the Division of Agriculture for the University of Minnesota Technical College, and member of the board of managers.

Dr. McVey suggests that as the Red River Valley-Winter Shows looks down the road, the program emphasis needs to continue strong in the area of crop and soil technology, livestock production, chemical fertilizer use, and farm management. For the future we need to be more concerned with how life is lived in the Red River Valley Basin. We have a decreasing number of people actually living on farms and a slightly increasing number of people living in towns but dependent on agriculture for their livelihood.

The increasing dependence on the foreign export of food and fiber to maintain the financial vitality of agriculture in the Valley requires new approaches of communicating to the political representatives the needs of the agricultural community. There needs to be more emphasis placed on the importance of international trade and in providing high quality educational services in the elementary through post-secondary areas in our sparsely populated Valley. More program time needs to be devoted to the environment of the Red River Valley, including the effects of using large quantities of chemical, bare land farming systems and how these relate to the soil movement, human health and so forth. Specialty crops and agricultural financing need increased attention.
Dr. Olaf C. Soine, Professor Emeritus, long-time member of the Northwest Agricultural Experiment, president of the Red River Valley Development Association, and secretary-treasurer of the Winter Shows board of managers for an extended period of years, now retired. Dr. Soine served on the Crookston City Council, also as mayor, and is a deeply loved and respected man.

Ask any citizen of Northwest Minnesota this question and I'm sure you would get a variety of answers, all of them positive. Perhaps a little review of the early beginning and constant growth of the Winter Shows would be helpful. What the early pioneers started has been carried on by their children. Little did those early pioneers who settled in the Red River Basin of Minnesota realize that this region would one day blossom into the greatest small grain, forage, sugar-beet, sunflower, and potato producing area in the state of Minnesota. However, there were problems in those early days with adequate drainage, little knowledge of crop varieties adaptable to the area, lack of capital for machinery, and the like.

Perhaps the most serious problem at this early stage was the lack of information and supply of seed for recommended crop varieties. The Red River Valley Winter Shows was the major influence in providing this kind of information as outstanding speakers were brought in from all over the nation to challenge Valley residents with new ideas. Farmers were given the latest agricultural information early enough in the year to plan for the coming crop season. Very stimulating programs were arranged for the farmers' wives with emphasis on the home and homemaking.

The attendance has increased every year which in one way testifies to the quality and value of the Winter Shows. Economically, the city of Crookston surely benefited from the large influx of people during this one week.

The winters tend to be long and at times dreary in the Valley and the Winter Shows is a welcome mid-winter change of pace. Aside from intellectual stimulation, farmers and their wives found a welcome opportunity to socialize, to learn new tricks, and to have some fun in the process.

Paul Visser, long-time member of the board for the Red River Valley Livestock Association, as well as a member of the board of managers, and a farmer from Ada, Minnesota.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows has promoted education for adults and especially for youth. It has also been good for related industries. It has been a place to meet people and exchange ideas. It has been a great help to livestock producers to exhibit and sell breeding stock and to make contact with future buyers. I consider my service and work with Winter Shows and the Livestock Association one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences of my life for myself and my family for the last 40 years.

Melvin Ouse, Rothsay, Minnesota, long-time member of the Red River Valley Development Association, a member of the fund raising task force for the new facility, and one of the long-time livestock showmen at the Winter Shows. Melvin and his wife Celia were honored with the "Builder of the Valley" award in 1984.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows has meant a great deal to Northwestern Minnesota and its people. From its small beginnings to what it is today, it has been a significant factor involving people and the information of needed organizations. I like the way that the Winter Shows has made it a point to demonstrate the kind of grassroots leadership that really builds Northwestern Minnesota. I think of the Hall of Fame, King Agassiz program, Valley Farmer and Homemaker program, the Builder of the Valley awards, all which recognize people and their efforts to make this area and country a better place to live. The hundreds of people who have been recognized during the past 75 years could not have been accomplished without a show of this nature.

We who live in the Red River Basin are fortunate to have the Northwest Experiment Station and the College just next to it to provide the ongoing leadership for a show of this kind. The experimental research farm has given farmers an opportunity to see and select good practices in crop production for the region. The shows have given farmers an opportunity to see and learn the latest and to exchange experiences. The livestock industry has benefited from having all kinds of livestock displayed and by having livestock sales of the top animals for breeding purposes which has improved the herds and flocks in the Red River Valley. The Winter Shows have been held in midwinter when the people are the least busy and have time to attend. Last but not least, it gives people an opportunity to fellowship with each other and that may be just as important as the educational program.

Mr. Howard Balk, Ortonville, Minnesota, long-time agricultural extension agent in Northwestern Minnesota and superintendent of cattle at the Winter Shows for over 20 years.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows has been one of the greatest educational organizations with very little cost to the taxpayer. The importance of the Winter Shows has been outstanding in the fields of livestock improvement, crop improvement, farm management, home program, 4-H club work, and other activities for the good of farming. The farmers exhibiting livestock at the Winter Shows were innovators in their home communities causing friends and neighbors to improve their herds by the use of better sires and superior females. The same can be said about the crop improvement program. These programs plus others made the farms in the Red River Valley a better place to live. While acting as superintendent of cattle at the Winter Shows between 1937 and 1957, I saw a marked improvement in the quality of livestock and crops in the educational programming especially in the youth programming in the Winter Shows.

Richard W. Fitzsimons, Executive Director, Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association, was named King Agassiz I back when that program first began about 25 years ago. Dick Fitzsimons was a farmer from Argyle, Minnesota. He has a distinguished record in the Minnesota Legislature. He also was a long time director of the Red River Valley Development Association board.

My first experience in attending the Winter Shows in Crookston was in 1937 when I showed an exhibit of
corn in the 4-H division. Since that time I have not missed very many shows until the last few years when professional meetings conflict with the dates.

The Winter Shows has changed very greatly over the years in many respects. But the one thing that has not changed is the numbers of people who come to the shows. They increase in number each year. Before the new building was built, the crowds of people had to wind their way through halls and corridors in the old buildings. At that time there were many farm families in attendance with quite a few small children being carried by their parents. The older children had a wonderful time running around to all those corridors in spite of the congestion. When anyone talked about the Winter Shows during the 40's, it was usually about all the storms that seemed to plague the annual event. My personal experience was of many trips when visibility was poor and almost impossible at times. During all this the Winter Shows was a major factor in speeding the process of changing the Red River Valley from a horsepowered agriculture to a fuel-powered agriculture. Even more important, the Winter Shows provided a forum where farm families could come to learn new farming practices and cultural methods. This was particularly important in the late 30's after the long years of farm depression changed to new hope for farming. It was equally important following World War II when the enormous changes prompted by war were shifted from making guns to making plowshares. Much of the strength of the Winter Shows has been its many volunteers.

Without the volunteers in the past and in the future, the special flavor of the Winter Shows would be lost. First of all, financial resources will always limit the show in expenditures so too great an overhead would force the show to charge higher admissions, resulting in lower attendance and a show with much less appeal to the general farm public.

Agriculture will never remain static. The exciting future of agriculture will be to those who respond to the changes that will surely occur. The world is the competitor for Red River Valley Farmers. The long history of the Red River Valley Winter Shows indicates farmers here are ready and willing to adopt new ideas to stay competitive. Tomorrow will be no different. Competition will be greater and total farm numbers will likely be smaller. All the more reason for the Winter Shows to continue to look ahead as it has always done. With careful management and boldness in programming, the Winter Shows can continue to be a leader enhancing the quality of life in the Red River Basin for the next 75 years.

Benton Rindahl, Barnesville, Minnesota, farmer, member of the Livestock Association board of directors, and member of the board of managers.

The Winter Shows over 50 years ago to the Rindahl family was a place to purchase purebred cattle and hogs. I think the first hog we purchased was about 1931. Later I sold my own hogs and cattle besides showing our dairy cattle.

After serving on several boards connected with the Winter Shows and when I was vice-president, I had to take over the meeting for the president when he was called away for an emergency. That was an experience I won't forget. Another event to remember was when some people from Valley City came over to our meeting to get some ideas on how to start their own show and look how they are today each with the thousands of people who come to each of their wintertime expositions. Another thing to remember was the futurity show. It has been fun to see the younger generation learning at the Futurity Show and taking over as board members of the Winter Shows. Probably the greatest value and the thing looked forward to each by people is meeting and and making friends, getting to know some of the breeders that put themselves out to start the show like Mr. Finkenbinder of Crookston. I think maybe the third generation from that family is helping now, of Mr. Lerud (Roy Lerud's father), and of Mr. Sargeant (who sold our first bred gilt in the early 30's).

One of the nicest men we got acquainted with was Mr. Pfughoef, a district 4-H leader at the Northwest School of Agriculture. That was before we had a county agent in Clay County. We put up with the storms and with the hard work, bringing our livestock to the show, getting them ready for competition, but all of that was paid off when we met our friends again and all of it really was an experience that I will always cherish and I know that life is better in the Valley for a lot of people because of the Winter Shows.

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Ted Peet, retired farmer from Wolverton, who led the fundraising forces in Wilkin County for the new facilities and served on the Winter Shows board of managers.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows surely has an interesting history surviving a fire in 1935, blizzards, depression of the 1930’s, and two world wars, but still the show never missed a year.

The Winter Shows is unique in that it encompasses a large relatively rich agricultural area which was once nothing but a big lake. It gives the people there a chance to think of this area as a whole and discuss the success of agriculture in the past as well as to look to new challenges in the future. It is good to look to the past to learn from experiences. The most exciting challenge though is in the future. The thought on most people’s minds is where do we go from here. People attend the Winter Shows for many reasons. The most important, however, is that it is a place to go to find new ideas. People of the Valley have always been looking for ways to better their way of life. The shows of the past 75 years have provided such an opportunity. I’d like to share an outline looking to the future.

1. Short-term objectives of one to five years.
   A. Changes needed next year.
   B. Changes necessary during the next five years (this may include facilities and other immediate changes that should be made.

2. Long-term objectives (more indefinite but looking 10 to 20 years) but is one that is a great challenge.

3. A. Genetics -- impact on agriculture.
   B. Space age -- impact on agriculture.
   C. Computers -- impact on agriculture.
   D. Implications of world trade.
   E. Conservation of our soil resource.
   F. Marketing agricultural products -- should the local elevators join others to provide more clout?
   G. Recreations -- The Winter Shows is an excellent place to focus on new concepts and the emphasis on the front line cutting edge idea should continue in the future.

Marvin R. Campbell, retired banker and member of the board of managers during those difficult years of financing new buildings, land, and facilities.

I came to Crookston in 1955 as president of the First National Bank and it wasn’t long after arriving that I realized the importance of the Red River Valley Winter Shows to the community and to the area which it serves. Since plans were already in progress for the next show to be held in February of the year I arrived, I’ll never forget the crowded corners, the limited space, the poor air conditions that existed in the buildings on Main Street utilized for the show for many years. It was at that time I became aware that something had to happen with the Winter Shows facility.

I also recall the fund drive which was begun to raise funds in the very early 60’s. The short Swede, Bernie Youngquist, came on the scene and it was good to have him aboard. The Crookston community and the regions served by the Winter Shows were generous with their contributions and financial support. The new facility was built and ready for use in 1962. It’s hard to believe that nearly 40,000 people go through that place now in ten days.

I was elected to the board about the time that the problem began to be identified with financing the project. New management had been acquired in an attempt to develop more income during the periods of time when the building was not in use. These efforts not only failed but they complicated the existing financial problems to the point where foreclosure by the Omaha Bank holding the mortgage was threatened, with the other communities vying for the Winter Shows because of our vexing problems. We owed about $143,000 on the building and that was accumulating interest at 12 percent. Financial obligations developed with our local merchants. Current bills were past due. The buildings downtown were sold but the income was a lot less than anticipated. When the future looked about as bleak as we had seen it for many months and years, the board wisely selected Paul Breken to be their manager. Commencing with this action, the board suggested that the loan to the Omaha Bank, together with the outstanding current short-term debt, be refinanced by a cooperative participation of area banks and other financial institutions. My first reaction to the idea was negative. I didn’t realize that the shows would continue to be supported under the circumstances which existed at the time. Loan documents were prepared by legal counsel, Leonard Erickson, with the help of Harold Thomforde and others on the board, I was able to sell the program of participating loans based on each individual financial institution’s assets. After much effort and a little arm twisting, the entire loan participation was committed.
with 20 banks and local savings and loan associations. A special rate of six percent was paid to the participating institutions with a balloon payment due after five years.

It was at this time that the finances of the shows, despite its past problems, turned around under the new management. In fact, payments to the financial institutions were always made promptly and by the time the balance of the loan was due in 1978, reserve had been established for debt service by the board of directors. It was about this time that I was informed that I would be leaving Crookston to assume the presidency of the Citizen's Bank in Brainerd. Realizing that the loan was due and that some attention would be given to this, I committed myself to obtaining renewals on the part of the financial institutions at the rate of seven percent over a term of five years. This was accomplished just prior to my departure for Brainerd. I am told the repayment of this was three years ahead on the principal by the time that the five year term was up.

This success and contribution to the general welfare of life in northwestern Minnesota is history. And it's a history of which many hard working volunteers of the Valley can be justly proud. I was glad to be part of it.

Dr. S.D. Sahlstrom, provost, University of Minnesota Technical College. Dr. Sahlstrom heads one of the cooperating institutions in northwestern Minnesota. Without the continuing help of institutions like the College, the Red River Valley Winter Shows would soon lose its vitality.

The legislature provided funds for the development of college programs at the University of Minnesota, Crookston in 1965. Since that time various offices and departments of the College have contributed freely of their time and effort to assist in supporting the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Individuals have done so because of their commitment as citizens of northwestern Minnesota to this important educational function. The Red River Valley Winter Shows is a volunteer organization and administrators and faculty have felt an obligation to provide their personal support. In addition, the College as a good citizen of the community has felt that it was important to be active in the support of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. It has always been felt that bringing people onto the campus was an important contribution to the educational process as well as a valuable asset to the College in acquainting people with the facilities for technical collegiate education. Through the support of various seminars and special educational events, the College has made a substantial contribution to the Winter Shows and in turn the Winter Shows has contributed valuable information that could be used to enhance the quality of life in northwestern Minnesota. The following is a list of special events that have been particularly the responsibility of the College:

1. Education Day -- Beginning in 1966, the College has planned and promoted Education Day. A committee of superintendents works with the College administration in planning this special event. Attendance has always been high and topics relative to public education have been discussed each year.

2. Talent Contest -- The Talent Festival responsibility was accepted by the College in 1967. During the early years the event was assigned to the University relations department. In the recent years, the department of music has had the responsibility for the Talent Festival. From every indication that event has been a remarkable success each year.

3. Youth Day -- The entire faculty in the Division of Agriculture has been involved with the activities of Youth Day. In addition to the College faculty, staff members have been involved in arranging space needs on the campus and preparing facilities for that event.

4. Contributions from Other Departments -- The audio visual department has been involved with special events. They assist with arrangements for the King Agassiz banquet, especially, the audiovisual equipment needs and other items throughout the entire Winter Shows.

5. Food Service -- The food service department and the hospitality division have both been involved with many events each year.

6. Rural Communications Department -- Students from the rural communications department have been involved each year in preparing pre-show advertising. The Winter Shows provides an "on-the-job-experience" for communications students as they organize to operate a service to the radio, newspaper, and TV media including news coverage and photography. The Winter Shows provides scholarship awards to the outstanding student reporters.

7. Horse Activity -- The Division of Agriculture has been involved in providing leadership for the horse

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pulling contest as well as making arrangements for the horse show each year.

8. Service on the Winter Shows Board -- The provost recommended that the assistant provost for academic affairs serve on the board in the early years of College. Recently, the chairman of the Division of Agriculture has been recommended as a replacement. The College has made provision for a board member since the beginning of the collegiate program.

9. Scheduling -- In order to provide greater service, the College changed its scheduling in order that the winter quarter would be completed during the week of Winter Shows. Additional facilities could thus be made available for the activities of the show.

In essence, the College is committed to the concept of a viable, successful Winter Shows each year that can effectively serve the people in northwestern Minnesota. That commitment will continue in the future and is based on the philosophy that the University is here to serve people as well as to provide courses of formal instruction. In addition, individuals within the community college are encouraged to contribute as good citizens of northwestern Minnesota.

Lyle Kiel, Crookston, farmer and former member of the board of managers and member of the fund-raising team in 1960.

The Winter Shows has been one of those causes for good for the advancement of agriculture and certainly the quality of life is better because the Winter Shows is part of that life. I've only heard one criticism and that is that some think the trend of the Farm Service Show is going a little bit heavy toward wearing apparel, organizations, knickknacks and not enough farm machinery. I've been glad to be part of the fund raising crew for the building facilities and I look with pride on the days which I spent on the board of managers. Keep up the good work.

James R. Lofgren, past president, Red River Valley Winter Shows, former secretary-treasurer of the board of managers and plant breeder for Dahl­grens, Inc.

It was during my first year as agronomist at the Northwest Experiment Station that I became involved in the Winter Shows. I arranged for the Crops and Soils seminar program and worked with the barley show samples that were judged as malting or feed barley, I'll have to admit I only understood a very small portion of the Winter Shows at that time. I knew what I was doing and its importance but I did not see the large picture.

My first experience in arranging the Crops and Soils program was on the whole, very satisfying. The program usually didn't take shape until shortly before the deadline for program printing. During the seminar I got the feeling that the speakers were coming across as anticipated. Afterward I was happy with the acceptance by the audience and the timely information beyond the normal county extension meeting information. The barley show had 75 exhibits. This was an improvement over the 30 in the year just previous.

The Winter Shows remains a leading force in the Valley. The broad and varied program reaches young and old, adding to their educational and spiritual needs. There is a strong challenge each year to have seminars that keep up with fast-changing innovations of this computer age. Managing the shows within the financial framework is a major challenge. Attracting new people to the Winter Shows needs to be a high priority.

The people of northwestern Minnesota have a feeling of loyalty and pride in the Winter Shows. There is a strong comradeship existing among the various cooperating organizations and individuals who plan the show yearly. The future will bring new leaders with new ideas. Consequently, the show will continue to evolve. Some building expansion and replacement, particularly the cattle barns, will be necessary in the future. A new wing on the south side would complete the dream of the people who gave funds in the early 1960's.

Charles and Patti Swanson, Kittson County. Charles was elected King Agassiz XXII.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows is one of those leading edge organizations in the thick of new developments encouraging the fellowship among farm producers and the sharing of ideas and planning. The Winter Shows is important to life in the Red River Valley and particularly to the family farm structure.

The King Agassiz project is an exciting and very useful experience in human resource development in the Red River Basin. It gives young people the chance for greater experiences as they travel up the ladder of leadership and responsibility. It is important for the future strength of farming teamed up with agri-business in the Red River Valley. We have been impressed with the high quality of programs involved since our first association with the Winter Shows. We were very honored to be a family awarded the King Agassiz crown. The King Agassiz experience was certainly one of our great family experiences and a highlight of our lives.

Dr. Laddie J. Elling, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Crops judge at the Winter Shows.

I have judged the crops show for about the last five years. I sincerely believe that since a high percentage of the agricultural income from the Valley is crops, that this emphasis is appropriate to the Winter Shows. Year in and year out, the quality observed in the crops is excellent. But of course some years produce better crops than others. I like the idea of the crops show surrounding the main entrance to the show. The farming panorama in the background gives credence that crops are the most important to the area, and people observe them as they enter the show.

I was a participant on the program when the shows were held downtown Crookston. The new buildings and facilities are a tremendous improvement and a real feather in the cap of the people in northwestern Minnesota and they keep the show moving.

You will recall that Professor Dunham, Otto Swenson, Dr. Al Schmidt and others cooperated with the show in the crops contest for many years. Some of us newcomers work only with the judging but we respect very much the leadership of Professor Dunham and others.

George Nornes, one of the two senior members on the 24-person board of managers, long-time vo ag instructor from Climax, Minnesota, now working
as business administrator for Agri-
Energy, Inc., George serves as presi-
dent of the board of managers and is
chairman of the special events com-
mittee. Few volunteers have a such a
distinguished record of long-time and
outstanding service to the Winter
Shows.

The early years of the Winter Shows
brought together people from the Red
River Valley for educational meetings,
for fellowship, for a chance to ex-
change their pioneer experiences.
They came to make family life more
meaningful. Basically, this has not
changed greatly in 75 years. The
change to the advanced technology of
today and the idea that agriculture is
more than farming has added to the
scope; yet the reason for existence of
the Winter Shows remains the same.

Probably the most important aspect of
life in the Red River Valley as encour-
aged by the Winter Shows is the
family unit. Those early communities
held together by close ties of families,
community activities and their church
made small settlements in the Valley
and look with pride on their home-
town. The Red River Valley Winter
Shows gave these small groups an
opportunity to expand their horizon.
They had a place to go once each year
to meet new friends and to visit old
and to actually enjoy many family
reunions. The Red River Valley Winter
Shows then became a community
away from home that they could take
pride in being part of the mutual
respect and faith which grew out of
the activities of the Winter Shows.

The Winter Shows has always kept up
with the changing times and it will do
the same in the future. Nearly 40,000
people look to the ten-day event for
opportunity to learn, to making the
best even better. They expect some-
thing new, and the Winter Shows
seminars, programs and shows and
exhibits will need to continue to pro-
vide that for them. The board of ma-
nagers will need to look toward more
and/or improved space or more effi-
cient use of the present space in order
to get the total program under one
roof. Really we cannot look to a much
greater attendance at the shows in
terms of the number of different
people attending but we will need to
provide the kind of environment that
will cause people to come to the show
daily for most of the ten-day exposit-
tion so they don't miss out on the

chance to upgrade knowledge and to
enhance their way of living, mentally,
physically, and spiritually.

The King Agassiz program started
with the idea of having a young agri-
culturalist, farmer or one who services
farmers, of the Valley region reign for
one year as an ambassadorial symbol
for the Winter Shows. Too, the person
named is one who symbolizes the
modern complex agricultural business
of northwestern Minnesota. The
above objective has not changed since
those early days. The procedures have
changed over the past 25 years includ-
ing the upgrading of the selection
procedures, the inception of the
County King Agassiz Association,
which is comprised of all the past
county kings, and the schedule of
commitments necessary for the kings
in the local counties, Red River Valley
and state to meet increasing interest
and demand for these young men to
appear at fairs, banquets, parades and
the like. The King Agassiz program
has changed its procedures, but its
original objective remains that of rec-
ognizing young citizens coming up the
ladder of leadership here in north-
western Minnesota and providing op-
portunities for them to grow and de-
velop.

Vocational agriculture and the Future
Farmers of America have been a bene-
factor and a beneficiary of the Red
River Valley Winter Shows. Some of
the high schools that offered vo-ag
and FFA in the 1930's such as Warren,
Climax, Fertile and McIntosh, partici-
pated in Winter Shows activities. Vo-
cational agriculture programs as an
integral part of the curriculum re-
quired learning by doing, job types of
experiences on their home farm and
educational experiences such as were
provided by the Winter Shows. Judg-
ing contests in livestock were the first
opportunities at the Winter Shows. Later, crops judging and identification
were added.

As ideas progressed and the curri-
culum changed, opportunities such as
cow clipping demonstrations, public
speaking, meats judging and identifi-
cation, potato judging, livestock
futurity shows, poultry and horse
judging, were made available to FFA
members. Adult and young farmer
education classes are also an integral
part of the total vocational agriculture
programs of the area high schools.
And these classes often had livestock
judging teams entered in competition.

These adult farmer classes and/or
farm management classes often came
by bus to the shows during these
events to further their education by
attending seminars, meetings, and
the shows other activities. Many of the
adult livestock and crop exhibitors got
started showing in the youth division
of the shows and have built successful
farming operations from the experi-
ences they had as youth exhibitors at
the show.

Vocational agriculture instructors
from many towns in Minnesota bus
their entire FFA chapters to the show as an annual educational experience. Some of the schools, such as Fisher and Climax, bused their entire student body to the show for a day. The progressiveness of school administrators and teachers play an important part in providing the ongoing interest in the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

Marlin O. Johnson, county extension agent and area crops and soils agent with the agricultural extension service, long-time cooperator with Winter Shows planning, chairman of a very key committee arranging the Crops and Soils seminar as well as active on other planning groups from time to time.

My first visit to the Winter Shows was back in the mid-forties as a young man growing up in Kittson County. Since 1957, I’ve been with the agricultural extension service here in Crookston, first as an associate agent for West Polk County, and since 1970 as regional area crops and soils agent stationed at the Northwest Station. The major interest and involvement with Winter Shows has been the crops and soils seminar. I’ve also from time to time provided leadership to the sunflower and some of the more specialized seminars. My interests have also been in what’s happening in the sugarbeets, water resources, and potato seminars. From 1957 to 1964, I was heavily involved in youth program and special events of the shows. The first Talent Festival was sponsored by the Crookston Jr. Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Winter Shows. Tom Cochrane and Marlin Johnson, who were Jaycee’s at the time, were co-chairman of this activity. The talent show was a success from the start and has continued annually since. It is one of the very fine youth programs supported by the Winter Shows board of managers. West Polk County was pilot project for the horse project in this end of the state. The first 4-H show was held at the Red River Valley Winter Shows in 1958. I recall about eight or nine 4-H horses that entered the show. People like the Charles Malarkeys and Vern Hagens were instrumental in getting the show off to a good start. The first year I rode herd on the 4-H horse show and after that year, it was blessed with bountiful leadership. Winter Shows meetings have brought together people from this end of the state that have a common interest in problems as well as developments in agriculture. When these meetings were started, as is true today, there was need for a regional forum for discussion and dialogue. The Winter Shows has provided this opportunity. Many developments in agriculture, whether it be in sugarbeets, sunflower, era wheat, or the dairy industry, relate back to initial meetings at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. A number of these meetings were pivotal in sanctioning what was to take place in the future. The philosophy of the Winter Shows seminars was to focus on the cutting edge of these topics that can mean significant changes to Valley agriculture. Attempts are made to bring in leading authorities as speakers and resource people. The programs are often of futuristic scope but also always carry updated information that is of value and interest to the farm producer for the current year.

The crops and soils seminar through the years has tried to focus on topics that are in the forefront of change. An example of significant change was the semi-dwarf wheats and their introduction into Valley agriculture. From the period of 1970 through 1974, semi-dwarf wheats were a part of every crops and soils seminar. Some authorities and farmers were greatly concerned that these wheats were not of sufficient quality and would be damaging to the image of Valley spring wheat production. Others were concerned about problems at harvest or control of weeds because of the short growth stature of these wheats. An overriding strength, however, of the semi-dwarf wheats are their increased yield potential and profitability to the farmer. Leading scientists and marketing experts from the University of Minnesota, the United States Department of Agriculture and industry are invited to talk part in these seminars. There were sometimes heated discussions and questioning from leading farmers across the Valley area. Finally, the acreages of semi-dwarf wheats increased from less than one percent in 1970 to 90 percent in 1975. The sunflower crop was pioneered through research conducted at the Northwest Experiment Station in Minnesota. The initial educational efforts on producing sunflower crops became part of the Winter Shows seminar series. Seminars were conducted for about a ten-year period. Coming to these seminars in the early years of the sunflower industry were people that now are leaders in the development of the industry and became leaders in the development of that industry that followed. As the industry developed, it became viable on its own and at that point the Winter Shows and the Experiment Station had less direct involvement than when it was in the developmental stage. The course of the sugarbeet industry relates back heavily to the meetings at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Key people from the Valley met and discussed the future of sugarbeets as well as the technical developments at the time. The significant beginnings that originated from the educational meetings early on should not be underestimated. For instance, the initial extension meetings for sugarbeets were paramount in those early years of the industry. Drainage and water management have been a key to the development of the Red River Basin since its development over a hundred years ago. The early meetings that took place at the Winter Shows and at the Experiment Station related to drainage. Drainage focus changed to water management in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Today the major focus is on water management for reduced flooding as well as conserving moisture for irrigation, as well as a concern for the quality of underground water. As one looks to the future, irrigation will probably become developed with a great deal of sophistication. Water resource seminars have brought together people that are concerned about water and are in a leadership position to do something about it.

Walter Ross, former member of the board of managers, retired farmer from Fisher, MN.

Walter remembers the Winter Shows as a child of 10 when his father, Fred Ross, suggested that the family get dressed up and they were going to take the team and go to the Winter Shows. It was a ten mile ride with the team and sled, with hay and blankets and warm bricks to keep the feet warm. The Winter Shows at that time was in downtown Crookston. By the time you’d heard the speakers and did a lot of visiting, it was long into the darkness of the night before the Ross family got back to their home near Fisher. Travel, at best, took time and effort. Those who were lucky enough to be located near the railroad, could get on some special trains that came...
and returned in the same day. Walter and Bertha Ross were elected Valley Farmer and Homemakers. They recall with a great deal of satisfaction the women's meetings, the lectures, the meetings for the men, seeing new ideas, and visiting with people you hadn't seen for quite a while.

Albert Kopecky, farmer, Angus, MN.

Albert remembers coming to the show in 1921. They would get on the train at Angus and come to the show and go back in the evening. At first, the trains went a little too early and the crowd couldn't stay for the evening lecture. The show leadership prevailed on the railroads to change their schedule so that people who were able to get to the train would come early in the morning and leave after the evening lectures and programs were over and even the furthest away people in the Valley could get home by about midnight and hitch up their teams at the livery barn and make their way back to their home farms. Albert says he remembers the early Winter Shows as being such an important influence in helping with the introduction of certified seeds and other crop improvement practices and especially to see what others were doing. Albert Kopecky's boyhood was spent on one of the self-supporting farms where the milk and butter and cream and meat and vegetables, potatoes were produced sufficiently so that none of this had to be bought in the grocery store. He says the Winter Shows helped them understand how to produce more of these commodities, some of which could be offered for sale in the marketplace. Albert has a box of literally dozens and dozens of ribbons he won as a crops exhibitor at the Crops Show over a 40 year span of time.

William Strickler, Euclid, MN. Bill Strickler is a farmer operating a cash crop-livestock farm located between Euclid and Angus, MN. Bill's early experiences in the livestock business had its beginnings at the Winter Shows. He served as president of the Red River Valley Livestock Association for an extended period of time. He is one of the long-time (32 years) members of the Winter Shows board of managers. He also serves as secretary-treasurer of the Red River Valley Winter Shows Foundation.

I first visited the Winter Shows as a youngster in the mid-1920's. My first participation was showing Angus in 1935. I joined the Livestock Association as an active member in 1938. I became president of the Red River Valley Livestock Association in 1944 and served until 1983. I was elected to the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers in 1952 and have served continuously since.

The Winter Shows buildings on Main Street in Crookston were built using the corporate umbrella of the Red River Valley Livestock Association. The board of managers planned and executed the show each year although the Livestock Association was more active in the planning in those early years than they are today. Money to operate the show was always very short. Tom McCall and Olaf Soine went to the bank and signed a note for $1,000 or so in about November of each year to get the show rolling. Money to maintain the buildings was always short. Too, it wasn't always clear who was to pay for the maintenance, the Livestock Association or the board of managers. Consequently, the general maintenance level of the buildings kind of went downhill and repairs tended to be too much on an emergency basis. Some people out in the counties didn't understand how the Winter Shows operated and over time this resulted in the lawsuit filed in the early 1950's. A thirty-year charter for the Red River Valley Livestock Association ran out in 1948 and a suit was filed which suggested that the charter ran out and consequently the assets should be returned to the stockholders. This may well have happened and the Winter Shows would have died at that point, if the plaintiff had prevailed in the suit. A district court ruled in favor of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The plaintiff appealed the Minnesota Supreme Court and the court ruled again in favor of the Winter Shows.

One result of the misunderstanding was to tighten up the operation of the Winter Shows. The show had gone on for 40 years as a loosely organized group of volunteers working together to promote and develop agricultural enterprise and strengthen the quality of life on the land in northwestern Minnesota.

The show had grown considerably during these 40 years and it was impossible to keep all people informed on all details of who was doing what and where. Too, some stockholders felt their shares should be worth something as they owned the buildings. Actually the shares were contributions to a cause but this wasn't understood by all who purchased shares to build the first set of buildings downtown in Crookston. Too, the law suit experience prompted the board of managers and the cooperating organizations to take a good look at their corporate structure. As a result the board of managers incorporated as a nonprofit membership corporation under Minnesota law. This action set up a well defined body which clarified who does what. This body was representative of all cooperating organizations in northwestern Minnesota who expressed an interest in the Winter Shows. From then on understandings were clarified and the Winter Shows continued its mission. It also affirmed the title to the buildings as the Red River Valley Livestock Association.

In the mid-1950's, the crowds at the Winter Shows were continuing to grow. Safety of the public was a concern. Lack of space for farm service concessioners, lack of parking space for visitors, and lack of room for appropriate additional building downtown added up to a problem. These problems suggested relocation and rebuilding. The Red River Valley Livestock Association shifted the title of the buildings over to the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers for the purpose of supporting a rebuilding project providing that four Livestock Association members would be on the board of managers in the future.

I served as co-chairman of the Valley-wide task force to raise the funds to acquire land, to build a building, and to provide facilities. The fund raising went good but was short of providing all the needed space. Consequently, the Livestock Association agreed to cooperate in building a livestock housing barn west of the arena. Bernie Youngquist and myself went to the Valley Bank at Grand Forks and Mr. Holmquist, the bank president, agreed to loan the funds. The note was signed by both of us on behalf of the Red River Valley Livestock Association and the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers. The Livestock Association agreed to provide $3,000 in cash.
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 with the Livestock Association agreed to assume responsibility 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.
Haven't missed a Winter Shows in 60 years. I look forward to seeing friends, meeting new people, and especially to see the dairy cattle. I used to stay here the whole week at the Commercial Hotel. Besides visiting, I'd learn new ideas and have some fun. I liked meeting the people from the University -- the county agents, A.M. Pilkey, O.M. Kiser, and others. The Experiment Station has always had good people who were willing to help us farmers. I liked those short course classes at the Northwest School and Experiment Station as I learned new ideas and got acquainted with the experts. I think the Winter Shows is needed for a long time in the future. People who live here look forward to the show with great anticipation every year.

Harold Thomforde, Crookston. Long-time businessperson, former mayor, international poultry judge. He has the longest continuous record of service on the Red River Valley Winter Shows board of managers. He was elected to the board in 1936 and served until 1981 representing the Northern Minnesota Poultry Association. Harold writes:

Due to my long-time connection with both the poultry and combined Winter Shows, I would like to express a personal observation. It is my opinion that the combined Red River Valley Winter Shows has been a dominant factor with the overall advancement of agriculture in the Red River Valley. It is my candid opinion that a good share of the success is due to the leadership the organization has had. I have worked with all of the presidents of the organization: Conrad Selvig, Austin Dowell, Tom McCall, Bernie Youngquist, and Jim Lofgren. All have been tremendously effective leaders. However, the most progress was made under the dedicated leadership of Dr. Youngquist. Since 1956 when he became president, he has led us from the small, old, cramped quarters in downtown Crookston to our large complex of new buildings located on the outskirts of our city. The field of agriculture activities tripled. The meetings and seminars have quadrupled and the people taking a part have increased at least ten-fold. The financial standing is now on a firm foundation and the future is assured. Our thanks go to all of these leaders and to the many volunteers up and down the Valley. We hope this kind of broad-visioned leadership continues in the future.

Ann Simley, Associate Professor Emeritus, Hamline University, St. Paul, Ninety-three years old and now living in Madison, Wisconsin. She was a Northwest School of Agriculture teaching staff member in 1922-1930.

Not long after I arrived at the N. W. S. A. in October of 1922, I heard about the Winter Shows. Mr. Selvig had made it very clear to me that part of my job there was to get every student on his feet before an audience at least twice a year. He felt that these young people were the potential leaders of the 30's and 40's. We accomplished this objective by demonstrations, speeches, plays, poetry reading, short story telling and any form of public address. We had a debate coach who had that work.

Winter Shows was a busy time. Our students and faculty were involved in various ways. I remember one year Mr. Selvig wrote a pageant script which was an ambitious undertaking. About 50 students took part and the music department also. We had to plan and execute our costumes and what scenery and props we needed. As I remember it, the audience enjoyed the show and the experience for the student was valuable.

Many of the students also had the opportunity to exhibit their produce or animals. I know there was judging experience also.

Outstanding speakers and entertainers were brought to Crookston for this cold and often stormy, but exciting week. I was there when radio was in its infancy and not so much more than a plaything. So the live talent was of great interest to the community as well as the school. There were political speakers from the Twin Cities and Chicago, and inspirational and humorous speakers. I remember an author of some popular novels of that time. Even after 60 years, I remember a woman whose subject was how to hang pictures. The decor in many homes took a new turn after that.

Of course we were interested in the prizes our students won. Wallace Miller, former manager of Minnesota Valley Breeders Association, had a display of russet potatoes that took first prize. After the show, he gave them to me. I took them to Wisconsin where my father planted them in our garden. For years we had the best baking potatoes in town.

During the short school year, we were too busy with the academic program to find out what was happening in the animal division. But at the Winter Shows we saw these prize animals. I was surprised even though I had lived on a farm until I was 18 years old. The sheep impressed me. I knew where we got the expression "pull the wool
over his eyes". I couldn't see their eyes at all. I learned much about the science by listening to student demonstrations and talks.

My childhood years on a Wisconsin farm taught me little about the profit and loss part of farming. But one incident at Crookston has often come to my mind. One of the boys had planted 20 acres of potatoes which he hoped would bring enough to pay for his year at the A.C. He had a good crop, but the price was so low, and the shipping costs so high, that before he left for school, he had to plow it all under. Somehow that little incident comes to my mind frequently. That student's name was on the "In Remembrance" list.

Andy, the bus driver, was a very busy man during Winter Shows week. He was on the road hauling faculty and students all day and into the night.

I felt greatly honored after I had been at Hamline for three years, to be invited to come back as an entertainer for one of the programs. On the return trip, I woke up the next day, still in Fergus Falls where the train was stuck in a snowdrift most of the night.

In my 40 years of teaching, I have never experienced a school like N.W.S.A. Conrad Selvig had a vision for the Red River Valley which he was able to develop and bring to reality through the students who attended that school. Knowing so many of them through those eight years, I feel his dream came true.

In six months, the students easily did what takes nine months in public schools. With 24 months in all rather than 36, I saw them competing in colleges and universities very favorably. Three who went to Carleton graduated Phi Beta Kappa. I have noted with great pride the successful lives these men and women have led. In addition to all they have done for themselves, they have given us some great families. They gave much to their children.

Canadians frequently attended our Winter Shows. I recall having a part in a program by our faculty, given at a dinner at which the mayor of Winnipeg was present. He spoke to us and said, "if you come to Winnipeg and need help, call me."

So the Winter Shows were good for the school, community and for the many guests from far away places. It was a great place for getting together and getting acquainted. One can't recall each event but the whole experience was enriching.

The experience of 8 years at the N.W.S.A. is something I treasure.

Born on a farm near Crookston, Edith Carlson, teacher and Crookston resident now 101 years young, taught in one-room country schools near Beltrami and Fisher. She remembers the School of Agriculture as the "Cow School". Horses were very helpful under blizzard conditions as they could find the way home. She remembers the early Winter Shows leaders from Crookston, including C.G. Selvig, P.M. Finkenbinder, Senator Stephens, John Saugstad, W.E. McKenzie, Joseph Ball, Lee R. Boyd, S.M. Swenson, and J.H. Sargent.

The new livestock building had space for coffee, pie, and hamburger service. The men of the Methodist Church provided such volunteer service as a moneymaking project. It wasn't successful. The ladies took over and served for several years and the food service to the public was good and the project was a good moneymaker. Mr. Saugstad thought the food service should be passed around to other churches. The Trinity Lutheran Church ladies aid served for many years. It was a good moneymaker but very tiring for the ladies.

More people came every year to the Winter Shows in spite of the winter weather so it must be good even today.

Sam Bigger, West Polk County Extension Director, long-time member of the board of managers, trustee of the Winter Shows Foundation, key cooperator and expert for educational programming where use of Winter Shows facilities is involved.

My first contact with the Red River Valley Winter Shows was back in the late 1940's when I was a high school student at Frazee High School. Roy Johnson, who was the Vo-Ag instructor, brought myself, Don Greaser (farmer at Audubon, MN), Duane Shafer (farmer at Frazee), and Bobby Hendrickson (in business for himself in Minneapolis) to Crookston as the General Livestock Judging Team from Frazee. We didn't win the contest that year, but we were the top sheep judging team. Too, Don Greaser ended up being the top farm youth judge for the Winter Shows that year. This was our first experience at a regional judging contest. We grew as a team and eventually won the state judging contest, and went to the national judging contest in Kansas City, MO. The Winter Shows started us on our way to greater accomplishments.

I became interested in sheep production. I saw an ad in the Winter
I have attended most of the Red River Valley Winter Shows in one capacity or another since the late 1940's. I missed a couple years when I was in the Service about 1955 and followed by school at NDSU. After graduation I taught Vo-Ag in Frazee, MN and had judging teams and FFA and 4-H exhibits at the Winter Shows starting at about 1960. Dennis Palmer exhibited sheep and now is a dairy farmer in the Evergreen area, east of Frazee. In the early 60's, I became the Extension Agent in Norman County, bringing 4-H judges and livestock exhibitors to the Winter Shows from that area. In 1964, I became the acting County Agent in Kittson County, and one of my responsibilities in taking over that was to be sheep superintendent at the Red River Valley Winter Shows that year. Dr. D. Riemer was the general livestock superintendent in about the middle 60's. In Kittson County, we also brought along a lot of crop samples to the Winter Shows, as we had our own Crop Show in Kittson County and all the samples from there were brought down to the Winter Shows. That is about the time I got involved in the crop show. Ozzie Dahlenbach, the county agent from Clay County, was very prominent in the crop show at that time. Carl Ash was a great promoter of the Red River Valley Crop Show. In fact, he was a great producer for a lot of things in the Red River Valley when he was county agent in West Polk County.

I became involved in the King Agassiz committee early in the 1960's. I was a member of the crop show committee in those years. I was involved in the planning and putting on of some of the Winter Shows extension meetings in the 60's and early 70's. We didn't have quite as large a meeting schedule in those years as we do now. We designated some days for dairy, some days for crop production, and had educational meetings to correspond.

There seemed to always be a willingness to change in the Winter Shows. It was a great "Red River Valley get together"; meeting some of the people you hadn't seen for a year, and there was always opportunity to pick up new ideas. I remember visiting with an elderly farmer from Pembina County in North Dakota at one Winter Show. After visiting with him, and finding out who he was and where he was from, he said he made every one of them. I said, "Why do you come to the Winter Shows?" His remarks were that we never make a change in our farming operation that we don't come down here and see what's new and if we are going to buy a piece of equipment, we can come down here and maybe look at several brands of the same kind of equipment in one day that would take us a couple of weeks to run around the country and to different dealers to see.

As we moved along in the 70's, there was a decision to build a new addition onto the Winter Shows building. I was happy to be a part of that and to be on the finance committee for the new building. In fact, along with Dr. Youngquist, I was one of the fund raisers, and remember visiting with people in every county from Fergus Falls to Roseau, and Bemidji, and the excellent response I got from the co-ops I was contacting and people sitting on the co-op boards. I don't think I ever had a negative response the whole time I was trying to raise money for this new building. We were very successful at raising money because of the good image the Red River Valley Winter Shows had projected throughout the years. I became a Winter Shows board member in 1972 and also a member of the executive committee of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The year the North wing was planned, built, and money raised, I kept track of the Winter Shows related meetings, and I had over 50 meetings in one year either with the board, the finance committee, the building committee, or some other committee that year. It was a big step in those days to acquire the funds necessary to build that addition.

I think it has been a great asset to the Red River Valley to have the Winter Shows. I can remember county agents and groups of farmers coming here from various counties in the southern part of the state, and wanting to know how we got funds to build and how could they have a Winter Shows in their area. When we told them there were no Federal or State funds involved and this was all done with local money, they were surprised. They never did build a Winter Shows in other parts of Minnesota. I think it is a unique and positive thing for the people of the Red River Valley and Northern Minnesota to have the initiative to help themselves, and I think that is what the Red River Valley Winter Shows is all about. It gave people a
chance in the early days to exchange ideas on farming; it gave them a chance to see the new crops that were being introduced and a place to find out where the quality seed was being produced. They could buy the new varieties of good seed to take back to their area. They were the leadership kind that came to the Winter Shows in those years and they still are.

The Winter Shows is not as important today for finding the new varieties and new farming methods, but it is still an unusual opportunity to see the innovations, new machinery, and new techniques. Too, the Winter Shows produces a view of the kinds of things that are on the horizon and may not be recommended practices yet today. It provides an opportunity to see some of the research that is ongoing before it becomes new practices on the farm. These innovative farmers are the ones that will look at a particular practice and if it looks like it is going to work on their operation, they will take it back and try it out in their own experimentation.

The first place that some farmers of the Red River Basin saw computers was at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Computers are new in agriculture and they are being accepted very rapidly, as farmers take this new tool and adapt it to their business. The kinds of programs farmers are developing to use on the computer to help them do a better job of farming are fantastic.

I see the Red River Valley Winter Shows of the future being the kind of organization that will bring to a modern agriculture the evolving techniques and ideas that are up on the front line-cutting edge of agriculture. It may not be the place to look for new seedstock, though these opportunities will still exist. It may not be the place to come and look at machinery, but those opportunities still exist. I think as we look down the road, we are going to see more kinds of information in the area of marketing, new methods of marketing, new methods of market development, and maybe even some new crops as we evolve toward the year 2000.

I see a potential for the Red River Valley for being one of the greatest vegetable-producing areas of the world. We have a tremendous capacity here for the production of vegetable crops, like the cole crops, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower. We also have a great potential for green snap beans, green peas, and carrot production, with a capacity to produce a tremendous tonnage of these crops in our heavy soils in the Red River Valley with their efficient water utilization. Our problems are going to be harvesting techniques and as we develop the kind of machinery that does not require footing in this heavy muck-clay when it gets wet, some method of propelling and controlling the height above ground that does not depend on contacting wet soil. We have a potential to become a real important vegetable growing area. It may not happen for ten or twenty years.

The 30 years of association with the Red River Valley Winter Shows have been rich and rewarding; the things I have seen happening over the last 30 years have been positive. It has made a difference. The future of the Red River Valley Winter Shows is going to be just as important as the lay citizen leadership of the Red River Valley wants it to be. Hats are off to the board of managers of the Red River Valley Winter Shows and the 300 volunteer committee persons out in the 14 counties. My congratulations to them in their 75th year.

Dr. Larry J. Smith, of Crookston, MN is the sixth and current superintendent of the University of Minnesota, Northwest Experiment Station. He came to the Station as the agronomist for general crop research. Later he shifted to the agronomic position created for sugarbeet research. He has been active with the Barley Show, the Sugarbeet Growers Institute, and other crop activity. Currently, Dr. Smith is chairman of the planning group for the educational seminar series at the Winter Shows and represents the Northwest Experiment Station on the board of managers.

The University of Minnesota, Northwest Experiment Station has been involved with and supported the various functions and organizations of the Red River Valley Winter Shows since its inception 75 years ago. The degree of support has been multifaceted. Four superintendents of the Northwest Experiment Station have served terms as president of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. All have served on the board of managers. The Northwest Experiment Station provides a forum for the exchange of innovative ideas, information, and fellowship. Many of the friendships and research ideas I have had over the past 13 years started in 1971 when I arrived in Crookston, Minnesota, just in time for the opening ceremony of that year's Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows and its staff, along with the citizens of northwestern Minnesota, will continue to serve on the various volunteer organizations that have made the Red River Valley Winter Shows what it is today and to the improvements to the quality of life they will make during the next 75 years.
CHAPTER XII

The Future

The Red River Valley Winter Shows began as a service and research reporting outreach of the Land Grant University of Minnesota through its Experiment Station and School of Agriculture located at Crookston. The educational and service objective has continued, adapting to the changing scene of three-fourths of a century of living-on-the-land in the Red River Basin. The changes which will be faced in the next 75 years are likely to be just as numerous and far-reaching as in the last 75 years. Certainly a lot of refinement and sophistication is appearing on the food and fiber production scene. The number of people living on the land is going to be smaller; however, these people will still have their homes anywhere from 250 to 400 miles away from the seat of state government and of the Land Grant University.

The government of the Winter Shows will probably continue to be a nonprofit service and educational corporation. The Land Grant University will continue to provide expertise and leadership for some 21 or more other similar regional or statewide organizations chartered under the nonprofit corporate laws of Minnesota. The Winter Shows will continue to improve the quality of life as long as there are volunteers out in the 14-county area who consider the Winter Shows a worthy investment of their personal time, effort, energy and money.

Agriculture will still be the foundation for the economy of this section of the state.

A MID-WINTER BREAK

Considering the capriciousness of weather, we will continue to experience a long and rather lonesome winter in the Red River Basin. The midwinter break will always be welcome. If for nothing else, it's a chance to have a change of pace, to get away, to renew friendships, and have a little fun. Too, and probably more important for most visitors to the Shows, there is an opportunity to pick up new or check out evolving ideas.

FINANCING THE WINTER SHOWS OPERATIONS

There will never be enough money to do all the things the board of managers would like to do and that people out in the region would like to have done. The individual board members need to continue being actively involved in management. The routine of day-to-day affairs will be in the hands of a capable and service-minded office staff and manager. An undue overhead of paid staff must be avoided. The example of deficit spending by the federal government has most citizens worried and must be avoided for the Show’s ongoing operations. The management has usually operated in the black. This prudent fiscal policy must be pursued if the faith and trust of the public are to be maintained.

STRENGTHENING TIES OUT IN THE COUNTIES

The grassroots leadership needs to be maintained and strengthened wherever necessary. The more interest created among those who produce crops and pure seeds in the Crops Show, the better the Crops Show will be -- likewise for livestock and other farming enterprises.

The Valley Farmer and Homemaker award identifies the real builders of grassroots leadership who have risen to their golden years and are still respected leaders in each county. The Livestock and the Daughters Association each have a continuing role to play.

The King Agassiz project probably has unusual potential for the continuing grassroots support and patronage of Winter Shows. Northwestern Minnesota has always produced more than its share of leadership at the state and national levels. The Agassiz project can insure a unique system of doing that job on a continuing basis and doing it even better in the future.

It's just possible that the youth programming needs a youth committee including FFA and 4-H expertise and lay persons to make evaluations yearly and to provide the coordinating role with youth programs.

The involvement of the weekly press has lagged in recent years. There has been advertising in local weeklies -- yes. But that feeling by the weeklies of being among the cooperators who arrange this show each year needs more involvement.

THE RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS FOUNDATION

A group of leaders have completed establishing a nonprofit, tax exempt foundation as a subsidiary corporation to work hand in hand with the Winter Shows. Starting such a foundation today is a meticulous process because of the precise and exact nature of setting up nonprofit, tax exempt corporations under the current federal laws. The purpose of the foundation is to assist the Winter Shows board of managers with appropriate projects. The foundation recognizes that the Winter Shows will carry on routine operations of the show. The foundation, however, will be an arm of the Winter Shows. It will continually look toward strengthening educational programs and provide leadership assistance in unusual major building projects.

The first project of the new foundation was to establish a permanent endowment entitled "The Program Fund". Already over $20,000 has been pledged or paid in cash toward the initial $100,000 goal. The aim is to complete this goal within the next three years. Once the permanent endowment has been established, the funds therein will be invested in safe income-producing securities. The income from the program endowment will be used entirely by the Winter Shows for program expenses such as seminars, speakers, and youth activities. The Winter Shows foundation will in time provide opportunities where grassroots citizens may wish to will a quarter section of land or other asset to be used in the mission of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Machinery is now established to make such a gift possible.
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 cacaphony 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 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 the what, how, 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.
The Winter Shows parking lot a day or so after a winter storm and typical of a day when three to four thousand people visit the Show.

Friendly, but serious competition at the "draft-horse-pull" fills the seating space.
Appendix

News Release - First Short Course - 1910 (77)
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Excerpts From Printed Program - 1910 (79)
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Board of Managers Including Organization Represented and Term of Office - 1983-1984 (84)
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Typical Examples of Committee Involvement and of Organization Meetings (94)
Excerpts From Booklet Printed for the Dedication Ceremonies February 14, 1962 (95, 96)
Sustaining Fund Leaflet - 1984 (97, 98, 99)

The Northwest Experiment Farm, located one and one-half miles north of the City of Crookston, Minnesota, was established in 1895 with the object in view to study the agricultural conditions of Northwestern Minnesota. The farm has 640 acres, most of it is tile drained. In 1905 the Crookston School of Agriculture was established. It is under the direction of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota. The school aims to give a practical education to farmers' boys and girls. The enrollment has increased from 20 in 1905 to 135, with a larger number planning to come during the second term, beginning January 3.
Copy Of First Publicity Article Sent To Area Newspapers

Announcing The First Short Course And Crops Show

There will be held at the CROOKSTON SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE during the week of December 19-24 a Short Course in Agriculture and Domestic Economy. These lectures and demonstrations will be given by the best experts of the Minnesota, North Dakota Agricultural colleges.

Premiums valued at over $1200 will be given to farmers who exhibit the best corn, oats, wheat, etc. and to the women who exhibit the best work in sewing, baking, etc. There will be a charge of $1.00 for the week’s instruction. This allows each one the right to enter the contests. For the Short Course catalogue, giving full program and particulars write to Supt. C. G. Selvig, School of Agriculture, Crookston, Minnesota.

Prizes valued at over $1200.00 have been donated as premiums for the best corn, grain, cooking and sewing work exhibited during the First Annual Short Course to be held from December 19 to 24, 1910 at CROOKSTON SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE. For the best 10 ears, any variety, raised in Northern 20 counties of Minnesota, a cement stave silo valued at $330 will be given. The owner of the next best 10 ears will receive a $45 Deere & Webber Drop Corn Planter. A $75 Cream Separator for the best peck of oats; a pulverizer attachment, a fanning mill, a feed mill, two incubators, two litter carriers, woven wire fencing etc., as well as cash prizes are offered in the various contests. If interested, send for a Short Course Catalog. Address: Supt. C. G. Selvig, School of Agriculture, Crookston, Minnesota.

The following men and women are to appear on the programs of the 1st Annual Short Course at the Crookston School of Agriculture: Dean A. F. Woods, Prof. T. L. Haecker, A. D. Wilson, D. A. Gaumnitz, F. Henry, F. L. Washburn, G. P. Grout, Mrs. Blair and Miss Bull of Minnesota Agricultural College; President Worst, Dean Shepperd, Prof. Waldron and Miss Haggart of Fargo Agricultural College; Governor Vessey and Prof. A. E. Chamberlain of South Dakota. G. W. Cooley, Engineer of Highway Commission will talk on “Good Roads”. Besides these men, the instructors of the Crookston School of Agriculture will conduct classes and demonstrations. Dairying Rotations, Grasshoppers, Soil Fertility, Corn Culture, Cattle, as well as Household Topics, will be discussed and scientific methods demonstrated.

A catalog may be secured by addressing Supt. C. G. Selvig, School of Agriculture, Crookston, Minnesota.

Women as well as men will find a great deal to attract them at the 1st Annual Short Course to be held at the Crookston School of Agriculture during the week of December 19-24. It is planned to provide lodging for the women who attend the girl’s dormitory just completed.

Those who expect to attend will confer a favor by notifying Supt. C. G. Selvig, so that arrangements can be made.
CROOKSTON, MINN., October 25, 1910.

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO ALL POSTMASTERS IN THE RED RIVER BASIN REQUESTING THE NAMES OF FARMERS. THE IDEA WORKED AS A LIST OF NEARLY FOUR HUNDRED WAS PROVIDED TO BE THE INITIAL LISTING OF FARM PEOPLE ON A WINTER SHOWS MAILING LIST.

Dear Sir:

Will you please send us the names of from 25 to 100 farmers who get their mail at your office? We wish to send them information regarding the FARMERS' SHORT COURSE to be held Dec. 19-24, 1910 at the School of Agriculture located at the State Experiment Station near Crookston. See enclosed announcement.

If you would underscore the names of farmers having sons or daughters of ages sixteen or up who might be interested in attending this school, you will do another valuable service. You are likely beset with many requests of this nature but Postmaster Steenerson of this city, assured me that he thought the Postmasters of whom this request is made would send the names for the purpose stated.

Please use the enclosed blank lists.

I wish to thank you in advance for your service and to assure you of our earnest purpose to do everything we can for the upbuilding of the agricultural interests in Northwestern Minnesota.

Yours very truly,

Dict. CGS.

Superintendent.
ELIGIBILITY TO CONTESTS.

Any person may attend this Short Course and any person in the North Twenty counties of Minnesota may enter any of the contests according to the following rules and regulations.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

The price of admission to the Agricultural Course is $1.00. This entitles the holder to daily instruction, lectures and entries to the contests.

All those wishing to attend these courses should prepare themselves in advance for the sessions. The following points indicate the requirements for admission to Short Course:

1. Each person must be accompanied by J. D. Birkby, in charge of the Short Course.
2. Each person must be accompanied by G. J. Elvegg, in charge of the Short Course.
3. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
4. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
5. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
6. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
7. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
8. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
9. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.
10. Each person must be accompanied by A. E. Chamberlain, in charge of the Short Course.

EXHIBITS.

1. The superintendent will have all exhibits properly displayed and judged for those who are unable to attend personally. Exhibitors desiring to ship samples should direct same to Sup't. C. G. Selvig, School of Agriculture, Crookston, Minnesota.
2. Exhibitors should secure tickets from those who are unable to attend in person.
3. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
4. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
5. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
6. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
7. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
8. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
9. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.
10. Each exhibitor is required to attend at least one session of the Short Course in person before the exhibit will be entered.

PREMIUMS.

1. The advance freight charges from factory to Crookston, plus damages, plus the cost of assembling and displaying of all machinery given as prizes, shall be borne by the winner.
2. The freight charges from Crookston to address of winner shall also be borne by the winner.
3. CASH. All cash prizes will be paid by Sup't. C. G. Selvig to the winner.

SALE.

1. All samples shown will become the property of the Short Course.
2. All samples will be sold at Auction Saturday, Dec. 24, at 1:00 p.m. to the highest bidder.
3. All samples purchased at the auction must be paid for either by check or cash before it is allowed to leave the Auction ring.
4. All prizes are the property of the exhibitor.
5. These ribbons must be left on the exhibits until you return to exhibit them to the best advantage.
6. Colors designating awards will be as follows: Sweaters, royal purple; first, blue, second, red; third, white; fourth, blue, and fifth, red.
7. It is urged that purchasers at the auction rate take their samples immediately after settling for same.

JUDGING.

The judging will be done by competent experts from agricultural colleges and schools. The judging will be done at some time during the closing week of the course. The judges will give a talk at the close of their work explaining the desirable points shown in the best exhibitors.
EXCERPTS FROM THE PREMIUM LIST PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR THE 1915 FARM CROPS SHOW

Official Premium List of the FARM CROPS SHOW Crookston FEB. 16-17-18-19, 1915 of the Northwestern Minnesota Agricultural Meetings to be held in connection with the Farm Crops Show NEW ARMORY, CROOKSTON FEB. 16-17-18-19, 1915

Value of Farm Crops Shows

These previous Farm Crops Shows have been held in Crookston, indicating what the Minnesota Red River Valley is capable of producing. This section is known as the bread basket of the world, so all small grains have flourished here as in no other section. Of recent years, corn, also, has been sowing to the front, and the Farm Crops Show of 1915 demonstrated beyond a doubt that it is one of the staple crops of the valley.

The corn show will demonstrate much more emphatically that corn is not only one of our successful crops, but that it is one of our leading crops. Wherever you traveled during the past summer in the ten counties comprising the Minnesota Red River Valley, frequently corn fields were to be seen on practically every farm. Where but a few years ago a corn field was a rare sight, now the farm without a corn field varying from ten acres to eighty acres is the exception and not the rule.

FIRST SHOW IN 1910.

The first Farm Crops Show was held at the Crookston School of Agriculture in 1910, and this paved the way for future exhibits. The start was modest, the quarters were cramped, but the possibilities for such shows in the future were plainly shown. The next show was held at the same place, and showed much a gain in every department, but last year it was necessary to hold the show in the largest room available in Crookston, which proved entirely inadequate to meet the requirements.

This year, therefore, the great show is to be given under the auspices of the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association, and to locate II. Crookston’s splendid new armory building has been secured, with a main floor space of 500 feet. In addition to this, there is a gymnasium and other rooms in the basement together with a gallery and two commodious waiting rooms on the first floor. It is believed that every foot of the available space will be necessary to house the show.

The county comprising the association include: Clay, Becker, Norman, Mahaska, Polk, Red Lake, Pembina, Marshall, Kittson and Ramson, and the farmers and business men of these ten counties, whose wealth is rooted, have a great opportunity—and are sure to emulate it—in connection with the coming Farm Crops Show.

FOURTH ANNUAL

MINNESOTA RED RIVER VALLEY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

FARM CROPS SHOW

FEBRUARY 16, 17, 18, 19, 1915.

PROGRAM

OF THE

ANNUAL

RIVER VALLEY’S GREAT NEED.

FEBRUARY 16, 17, 18, 19, 1915.

COMMITTEES

GENERAL CHAIRMAN—C. G. Selvig.

SECRETARY—N. S. Davies.

TREASURER—L. D. Foskett.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: H. W. Miner

A. D. Stephens

Leslie Waller

C. L. Skog

C. G. Selvig

Lee R. Boyd

N. S. Davies

W. J. Taylor

W. D. Fiskett

J. M. Callicott

C. M. Bumpman

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE: C. L. Skog

C. W. Final

Bert Lovina

J. J. Kelly

James Fower

ARRANGEMENT COMMITTEE: J. M. Callicott

J. A. Cowley

C. H. Zeeland

I. P. DeMott

G. A. Youngquist

J. M. Callicott

A. C. Ogas

K. R. Strandell

Otto Eloff

EXHIBIT COMMITTEE: Lee R. Boyd

M. F. Rosebush

F. L. Renard

Ross Chesterman

K. R. Strandell

Harry Hitchcock

RECEPTION COMMITTEE: A. D. Stephens

Martin O’Brien

Thomas Morris

W. J. Lyon

W. J. Loyen

W. E. McKenitz

CORN PALACE COMMITTEE: W. J. Taylor

W. L. Ireland

J. F. Fourreut

T. R. Seward

Tom Mortenson

G. H. Sandberg

A. R. Britton

S. W. Wheeler

B. D. Keck

DECORATION COMMITTEE: W. C. Bumpman

C. C. Bowen

Harry Schmidt

Not only the farmers and their sons, but the farmers’ wives and daughters were recognized at the coming show, and a total of over $2,000 worth of premiums have been provided. While the premiums are extremely liberal, the farmers and districts of the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association feel very confident that the main object of the agriculturalists from every one of the counties is not merely the winning of prizes, but rather to show their loyalty to their respective counties. The great opportunity is laid open to show what the Minnesota Red River Valley territory is capable of producing.

CROPS FLOURISH HERE.

Not only all the small grains, but corn, alfalfa, clover, potatoes, sugar beets, and in fact, practically everything that can be produced anywhere in the agricultural line, flourishes here. All that is required is continued intelligent effort in order to realize the maximum prosperity.

The place that your county will make for itself in the coming Farm Crops Show depends upon individual loyalty shown by the residents of the various counties. It should be remembered that the exhibits displayed will be seen, not only by the residents of the various counties, but by thousands of farmers from outside the state.

VALLEY’S GREAT NEED.

The great need of this fertile valley at the present time is more farmers. For the highest production, of which the soil is capable, there should be a farmer on at least every quarter section, while at the present time we do not average a farmer on each section.

Let us all show that loyalty which is born, not of false and contrary, but which is ingrained with love for our fellowman and for all the things that tend toward better living conditions, better environment in every walk, all of which means a better and broader future for our sons and daughters.

This, in a nutshell, is the underlying object of the Farm Crops Show. Behind it is, in every respect, the progressive men and women who stand for the highest and the best things of today, and who are planning on the real big things, the things worth while for the future.
WOMEN'S COURSES

ELIGIBILITY.
1. Any woman or girl may attend the Short Course and any woman or girl of the North twenty counties of Minnesota may enter any of the contests according to the Rules and Regulations.
2. The cost of admission to the Domestic Science Course is $1.00; that of the Commercial course $1.50.
3. Each contestant must be twenty-one years of age at the time of entering.
4. Each contestant must be a resident of Minnesota.
5. Each contestant must be a regular member of the Domestic Science or Commercial course.
6. Each contestant must have been regularly classified in the Domestic Science or Commercial course.

WOMEN'S CONTESTS

Any woman living in the North twenty counties of Minnesota, who has never been regularly classified in the Domestic Science or Commercial course, may enter any of the contests. These restrictions in no way apply to those who have attended Short Courses.

RULES GOVERNING ENTRIES.

1. All entries must be made on regular forms which must be filed with Miss Agnes R. Doerr, Secretary of the Domestic Science Course.
2. All entries must be in not later than March 15th, 1916.
3. Each contestant writing her name or placing any other than her own name on her entry will be disqualified.
4. All persons who have bought tickets to the Domestic Science course may enter these contests without any additional expense. Any person who has not bought a ticket to this course will pay an entry fee of $1.10 per entry.

FINISHED PRODUCT - 60 POINTS.
Method of working, including neatness, accuracy and quickness - 25 points.
Reasons for methods used - 60 points.

All articles in the home contest must be strictly the work of the person entering same.

Articles made or entered in these contests become the property of the Short Course.

WOMEN'S BAKING CONTEST.

Best Bread Made in Home.
First Prize - Mandy Lee 250 Egg Incubator $25.00, Northerm. King & Co., Minneapolis.
Second Prize - White Mop Wringer $15.00, White Mop Wringer Co., Fallsville, N. Y.
Third Prize - 4 lb. Creme Breakfast Food, Crockston Milling Co.
Fifth Prize - One year's subscription to the Housekeeper.
Sixth Prize - One year's subscription to the Housekeeper, The Housekeeper Co., Minneapolis, Minn.

SPECIAL BREAD CONTEST.

Prizes donated by Crockston Milling Co., Crockston, Minn. For the best bread made in home from "Creme" flour.
First Prize - 1 dozen Large Creme Rolls, Crockston Milling Co.
Second Prize - 10 lb. Sack of Creme Flour.
Best Graham Bread Made in Home.
First Prize - Snow Ball Washing Machine $5.50, J. E. O'Brien & Co., Crockston.
Second Prize - 25 lb. Creme Breakfast Food, Crockston Milling Co.
Fifth Prize - One year's subscription to the Northwestern Agriculturist.
Seventh Prize - One year's subscription to the National Food Magazine.

REGULATIONS.

These rules and regulations in no way apply to those who have attended Short Courses.

1. All persons who have bought tickets to the Domestic Science course may enter these contests without any additional expense. Any person who has not bought a ticket to this course will pay an entry fee of $1.10 per entry.

INTEGRITY NOTICES.

1. The classes and lectures will be given promptly on time. The doors will be closed four minutes after the time scheduled to begin to avoid noise and confusion. Re-group.
2. Meals will be served for twenty cents each in the Dining Hall of the School of Agriculture to all who come and will be provided with proper supervision. The person who will be furnished board and lodging, also, until all rooms are filled, for forty cents a day. The meals will be served in the Domestic Science Hall as soon as the contestants are ready to have them served. The contestant is to be present at least five minutes before the meal is served.
3. All contestants must be in charge of the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast. Any contestant who is not in the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. will be disqualified. The contestant is to be present at least five minutes before the meal is served.
4. All contestants must be in charge of the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast. Any contestant who is not in the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. will be disqualified. The contestant is to be present at least five minutes before the meal is served.
5. All contestants must be in charge of the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast. Any contestant who is not in the Administration Building at 7:00 a.m. will be disqualified. The contestant is to be present at least five minutes before the meal is served.
6. All the classes and lectures will be presented on time. The Administration Building will be held in the various buildings of the School of Agriculture. The lectures and exhibits of exhibits will be on hand on the day you arrivals. The Administration Building will be maintained where you can obtain information regarding the program, use the telephone, etc.
7. It is our purpose to assist you in whatever possible to get the most out of the Short Course. You will not be able to attend the evening lectures if you do not attend the morning lectures.

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DAILY PROGRAM OF SHORT COURSE WORK.

Monday, 1:10 P. M. to 3:45 P. M.
Lecture on "Soil Fertility" and "Manures".
Dr. W. J. H. Pinkston, North Dakota Agricultural College.

Tuesday, 8:10 A. M. to 10:30 A. M.
Lecture on "Dressing and Curing Foods".
Prof. L. H. Harker, Minnesota Agricultural College.
Dairy Stock Judging.
Prof. W. G. Grohs, Minnesota Agricultural College.

Wednesday, 8:10 A. M. to 10:30 A. M.
Lecture on "Orchards in Northwestern Minnesota".
Prof. R. W. W. Ward, Minnesota Agricultural College.
Judging of Cattle and Horses.
Prof. G. J. Vanouse and Prof. A. A. Daniels, and Assistants, of the Western Minnesota Agricultural College.
Lecture on "Hogs and Sheep".
2:45 P. M. to 4:15 P. M.
Lecture on "Silk" and Demonstrations.
Prof. Daniels and Mrs. Daniels, Assistant Crookston School of Agriculture.

Thursday, 8:45 A. M. to 10:45 A. M.
Lectures: "Husk Corn" and "Hides".
Prof. A. D. Wilson, Minnesota Agricultural College.
Saturday, 8:45 A. M. to 11:45 A. M.
Lecture on "Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing".
Prof. R. W. W. Ward, and Assistants, Crookston School of Agriculture.
Lecture on "Dyeing and Printing".
Prof. W. G. Grohs, Assistant Crookston School of Agriculture.
Lecture on "Textiles and Their Uses".
Mrs. Blair.
Sunday, 10:10 A. M. to 11:45 A. M.
Sewing Demonstration-Mrs. Blair and Miss Agnes Agnew, Assistant, Crookston School of Agriculture.
Lecture on "Formation of the Natural fibers".
Mrs. Blair.

COURSES IN DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

Monday, 1:10 P. M. to 2:30 P. M.
Lecture on "Home Decorations".
Mrs. Margaret Blair, Minnesota Agricultural College.
Lecture on "Soil Fertility," Miss Margaret Blair, Minnesota Agricultural College.

Tuesday, 9:00 A. M. to 10:00 A. M.
Lecture: "Textiles and Their Uses."".
Mrs. Blair.

Wednesday, 8:45 A. M. to 10:45 A. M.
Lecture on "Home Making and Handicrafts".
Miss Alice G. Haggard, Graduate Nurse, Instructor in Home Nursing, North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo.
Demonstration in Bunilding. Miss Haggard.
5:30 P. M. to 6:30 P. M.
Lecture: "Home Sanitation".
Miss Haggard.

Thursday, 8:45 A. M. to 10:45 A. M.
Lecture on "Bread and Rolls".
Miss Mary B. M. Mason, Minnesota Agricultural College.
Demonstration in Baking. Miss Mason and Mrs. Flora McLean, Assistant Crookston School of Agriculture.
Demonstration and Class in Sewing. Miss Mason.
5:30 P. M. to 6:30 P. M.
Lecture on "Cooking and Eggs, Milk".
Miss Mason.

Friday, 8:45 A. M. to 10:45 A. M.
Lecture on "Sewing".
Miss Mason.

Saturday, 8:45 A. M. to 10:45 A. M.
Lecture on "Cooking, Serving, and Stew, Sewing, Miss Mason.
1:30 P. M. to 2:30 P. M.
Lecture on "Sheets, Store-Cotton, "
Mrs. Blair.

Sunday, 1:10 P. M. to 2:30 P. M.
Demonstration and Class in Sewing, Miss Mason.

Awards of prizes. Auction sale of exhibits. Questions Box.

DIVISION B. WHEAT CONTEST.


DIVISION C. OATS.

First Prize—Berger Cold Blast Lantern.
Second Prize—Berger Cold Blast Lantern.

DIVISION D. RYE CONTEST.

First Prize—Best Mix. $20.00. American Seed & Wire Co., Chicago.
Second Prize—Best Mix. $10.00. American Seed & Wire Co., Chicago.
Third Prize—Best Mix. $5.00. American Seed & Wire Co., Chicago.

DIVISION E. BARLEY CONTEST.
"Northwestern Minnesota is doing a fine piece of constructive development work through the annual Winter Crop and Livestock Shows at Crookston, in connection with Farmers' Week and Women's meetings at the Northwest School of Agriculture. Probably no single agency has done as much to arouse and foster interest in a more diversified and properly balanced type of farming in the Red River Valley."

"The writer's visit to the show and meetings at Crookston last week was his first visit in four years. The expansion of the show during that period has been steady, and significant of the change which is gradually taking place in the agriculture of that territory. The show reflects the trend toward better breeding and better conditioning of the livestock exhibited, and toward a constant improvement in the quality of grains and grasses produced in the Valley."

"It was sixteen years ago that the first of these winter shows was held at Crookston. Starting in a small way to develop the right type of farming for that territory, it has spread out until it commands attention of farmers far beyond the confines of the Red River Valley. Last week, for instance, there were stock judging teams from four other Minnesota agricultural schools, Manitoba and North Dakota, and breeders present from all parts of the state.

Crop Varieties Increase

Increased acreages of alfalfa, sweet clover, corn, the development of a sugar beet industry that promises to grow in importance, and an astonishing development of the dairy, sheep, and swine industry are some of the indirect results of Red River Valley Shows and meetings. Directing this promotional work all these years has been C. G. Selvig, superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station, recently elected to Congress from that district. At all meetings last week, praise of Mr. Selvig's leadership was sung by all those who know him.

"But, let it be understood that I am not responsible for the success and development of these shows," he modestly said at a meeting attended by business men and farmers from all over the Valley. "Success has come through the finest type of cooperation from people living in all the thirteen counties comprising the Minnesota Red River Valley. They have contributed their time and their money. And don't forget that the county boards in each county are giving from $75 to $500 each to this show, that the Legislature is allowing appropriations totaling $5,700, all of which goes to provide the premiums which encourage our farmers to produce finer and finer exhibits. Business men and farmers of the Valley have also invested $73,000 in buildings, against which there is an indebtedness of only $8,000."
1983-84

RED RIVER VALLEY

WINTER SHOWS

BOARD OF MANAGERS, INC.

PHILIP A. MILLER ........................................... Manager
"DR. JAMES LOFGREN, Crookston (85) .................. President
Northwest Minnesota Crops and Soils Association
GEORGE NORNES, Climax (84) ....................... 1st Vice President
Minnesota Vo-Ag Instructors' Association
DR. GARY C. MCVY, Beltrami (85) ................. 2nd Vice President
University of Minnesota - Crookston Technical College
WAYNE WAGNER, Crookston (85) ..................... Secretary/Treasurer
Minnesota Farm Bureau
LESTER AMUNDSON, East Grand Forks (84)
Red River Valley Potato Growers Association
KAROL BERGLUND, Ada (86)
County King Agassiz Association
GLEN FINKENBINER, Crookston (86)
Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association
BRUCE HAMNES, Stephen (86)
Minnesota Crop Improvement Association
ART HOWARD, Warren (84)
Minnesota Wheat Growers Association
GLEN FINKENBINER, Crookston (86)
Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association
DONNA RAE JACOBSON, McIntosh (86)
Women's Division
GARY JOHNSTON, Angela (86)
Red River Valley Livestock Association - Dairy
HERB MAURITSON, Shelly (84)
RRV Horse Breeders Association
ROGER ODEGAARD, Crookston (84)
Red River Valley Dairymen's Association
JAMES OSLUND, Beltrami (84)
Red River Valley Livestock Association
EDGAR OLSON, Fosston (85)
Red River Valley Livestock Association
BARBARA OSETH, Crookston (84)
Agricultural Extension Service
RONALD REITMEIER, Fisher (85)
Minnesota Farmers Union
DON SIMMONS, Crookston (86)
NFO
ANDY SKAAR, Thief River Falls (86)
RRV Development Association
DR LARRY SMITH, Crookston (86)
Northwest Experiment Station
WILLIAM STRICKLER, Euclid (86)
Red River Valley Livestock Association
JOHN THOMPORDE, Crookston (86)
Northern Minnesota Poultry Association
LEONARD YUTRZENKA, Argyle (86)
Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts
CLIFFORD H. ZAFFKE, Crookston (85)
Chamber of Commerce

* The number after each name represents the last year of the membership term. The member can be reelected or replaced at the annual meeting of the year noted.
ORGANIZATION OF BOARD OF MANAGERS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS 1983-1984

Purpose of the Winter Shows:

To enhance the quality of life in northwestern Minnesota through charitable and educational activities, valley-wide fellowship, cooperation and assistance with area youth programs, encouragement of rural leadership, and by fostering wise stewardship of the national resources.

Keep in Mind

The Winter Shows belongs to all the citizens of the 14 county area. We are a non-profit organization and the Winter Shows has a tradition of integrity to maintain.

Standing Committees

King Agassiz Committee: This committee is responsible to plan and carry out all events in regard to activities for the County King Agassiz and the coronation ceremony.

Donald Sargeant, Chairman
Bud Berglind, Vice Chairman
Marvin Hanson
Gayle Hanson
Nancy Hoerner
George Nornes
Gary Johnson
Paul Breken, Sr.
Phil Miller
Mary Beth Sargeant

Crop Show Committee: This group of individuals plans and carries out all details concerning the Crop Show including premium book review, appointment of a superintendent, arrangements for volunteer help to set up the Crop Show, selecting judges, and coordinating awards ceremony with the Crops and Soils Seminar chairman.

Bruce Hamnes, Chairman
Scott Love
Ray Derry
Art Howard
Marlin Johnson
John Wiersma
Medard Yutrzenka
Don Staehnke
Jim Lofgren
Neil Plante
Doug Peterson
Lester Amundson
Glen Finkenbinder
Jerome Hermann
Harley Otto
Leonard Yutrzenka
Ray Thompson
Bob Engen
John Thorson
Phil Miller, ex-officio

Educational Seminars Committee: Arranges a time schedule and meeting place for educational seminars held in conjunction with the Winter Shows.

Larry Smith, Chairman
Seminar Chairpersons
Executive Committee: Carries the more routine business of the Winter Shows working closely with the manager. Responsible for routine decisions of the day to day operations of the Winter Shows. Major policy decisions are left to the discretion of the entire Board of Managers.

Jim Lofgren, Chairman
Donna Rae Jacobson
Gary C. McVey
George Nornes
Don Simmons
William Strickler
Wayne Wagner
Clifford Zaffke
Phil Miller, ex-officio
Tom Poole, ex-officio

Finances and Budgeting Committee: Responsible for developing the budget for each year and recommends how monies are to be handled throughout the year.

Clifford Zaffke, Chairman
Phil Miller
Wayne Wagner
George Nornes
Jim Lofgren, ex-officio

Horse Show Committee: Full responsibility to carry out all details of the Winter Horse Show.

Herb Mauritson, Chairman

Livestock Show Committee: Responsibility for the planning and carrying out of details of the Livestock Show including entry deadlines, sale procedures, and awarding of prizes and premiums.

Dave Hoff, Chairman
Gary Johnston
Edgar Olson
Harlow Grove
William Strickler
Roger Odegaard
Jim Olslund
Lonnie Spokely

Armory and Women's Events Committee: Plans events especially directed toward the female populace including a day of meetings and speakers, and a day for the Senior Citizens of the Valley.

Donna Rae Jacobson, Chairman
Lynn Garry
Marion DeBoer
Edna Casey
Jody Hanson
Marilyn LeBlanc
Sandy Johnson
Sharon Knutson
Mildred Umness
Rana Capistran
Dee Ann Leines
Linda Boucher
Thelma Ross
Joyce Balstad
Barb Kuznia
Sue Jacobson
Jan Newman

Photography Contest Committee: Determines rules and regulations, selects judges, and displays photographs suitably.

Mark Kisketon, Chairman
Peg Braaten
Paul Holmen

Poultry and Pet Show Committee: Encourages exhibitors to bring a well rounded variety of poultry and pets.

John Thomforde, Chairman

Publicity and Advertising Committee: Prepares a budget and utilizes students majoring in rural communications supervised by the instructor to prepare daily news releases during the Winter Shows.

Gary McVey, Chairman
Don Simmons

Scheduling Committee: Responsibility to carefully schedule all events of the Winter Shows to avoid conflicts of time and space.

George Nornes, Chairman
Bud Berglund
Barbara Oseth
Donna Rae Jacobson
Larry Smith
Wayne Wagner
B. E. Youngquist
Tom Poole
Harlow Grove
Roger Odegaard
Gary McVey
Herb Mauritson
Cecil Malme
Phil Miller
Denice St. Michel, Recording Sec.

Special Events: This committee and its several sub-committees plans all special events including Spiritual Emphasis program, Talent Festival, Bankers Night program, and Donkey Basketball.

George Nornes, Chairman
Harold Thomforde
Cecil Malme
Erman Ueland
Paul Breken, Sr.
Wayne Wagner

Valley City Delegation Visit: Plans annual visit including a noon luncheon.

John Thomforde
Phil Miller

Valley Farmer and Homemaker Banquet Committee: A function of the RRV Development Association.

B. E. Youngquist, Chairman

Youth Activities: Coordinates and plans all youth activities especially those on the first Saturday of the Show.

Barbara Oseth, Chairman
Dick Byrne
Debbie Peterson
George Nornes
Lowell Gunderson

Building and Grounds Committee: Obligated to make periodic inspection of all areas of the grounds and buildings and identify areas which need attention.

Gary McVey, Chairman
Phil Miller
Wayne Wagner
William Strickler
Gary Johnston
Exhibitor Relationships Committee: Make plans and carry out means of making all exhibitors welcome and listen to them for their comments.

Glen Finkenbinder, Chairman
Lester Amundson
Art Howard
Andy Skaar
Ron Reitmeier
Leonard Yutrzenka
Bruce Hamness

Transportation and Parking Committee: Study feasibility of arranging transportation from distant points to the Winter Shows. Have a plan for overflow parking or weather related parking problems.

Don Simmons, Chairman
Bud Berglind
William Strickler
Bruce Hamness
Butch Melbye
Morris Hovelsrud

75th Anniversary Committee: Make plans for a special 75th year celebration of the Winter Shows, including an historical publication and modification of stationery.

B. E. Youngquist, Chairman
Don Sargeant
William Strickler
Phil Miller
Don Miller
Harold Thomforde
Paul Brekken, Sr.
Jim Lofgren, ex-officio
Cliff Zaffke
Norma Ross

National Heritage Festival: Plan for the 1984 festival to be held in October 1984.

John Thomforde, Chairman
Bruno Jurchen
Phil Miller
Henry Gredevig
Rama Urs
Mil Sahilstrom
Pat Larson
George Nornes
Jim Lofgren, ex-officio
Vera McKenna
Barb Oseth
Sandy Harada
Dell Hoff

Sport, Home and Hobby Spectacular:

Jim Lofgren, Chairman
Phil Miller
Brad Ames
Wes Plummer
Tom Poole
Larry Altringer
George Nornes
Don Peterson
Harold Opgrand
Carol Royal
Arla Anderson
Mike Harlen

Bankers Night Committee:

George Nornes, Chairman
Don Sargeant
John D. Carpenter
Gary McVey
Jim Lofgren
B. E. Youngquist
Sam Bigger
Elwood Lund
Larry Smith

Hall of Fame Committee:

Harold Thomforde
Paul Brekken, Sr.
George Nornes

Red River Valley Horsebreeders Association:

Tom Densmore, President
Charles Malarkey
Jim Olson
Harvey Peterson
Lannis Bergsgaard
Sherman Tollefson
Bill Rosenfeldt
Terry Nowaski
Karl Ruud
Barb Schafer
Tove Altepeter
Renne Moos
Ken Trauger
Herb Mauritson
Joe Urbaniak
Gale Pawlowski
Niel Wieser

Capitol Improvement Budget Committee:

Gary McVey
Wayne Wagner
Bill Strickler
Jim Lofgren
KING AGASSIZ

Red River Valley Winter Shows Ambassador

King Agassiz is the official ambassador for the Red River Valley Winter Shows

Each year, the supporting counties are invited to nominate a County King Agassiz for recognition at the Winter Shows. He will be a farmer or anyone who services farming, and he is to be between the ages of 25 years and 40 years. He is a person who is coming up the ladder of opportunity in agriculture and who has developed his business soundly and serves his community well. He possesses personal qualities that will be valuable in carrying out his duties should he be chosen as King Agassiz for one year.

1961 KING AGASSIZ NOMINEES

Merle Anderson, Climax
Polk County
Marvin Dauner, Hawley
Clay County
Richard Fitzsimmons, Argyle
Marshall County
George Helmstetter, Roosevelt
Lake of the Woods County
Wayne John, Greenbush
Roseau County
Lloyd Ouse, Rothsay
Wilkin County
Willard Purath, Red Lake Falls
Red Lake County
Andrew Skaar, Thief River Falls
Pennington County
John Swiers, Jr., Bejou
Mahnomen County
Mac Tobkin, Perham
E. Otter Tail County

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF KING AGASSIZ’S, 1961 - 1984

King Agassiz I - (1961-1962) - Richard Fitzsimmons, Argyle
King Agassiz II - (1962-1963) - Herman Natwick, Ada
King Agassiz III - (1963-1964) - George P. Nornes, Climax
King Agassiz IV - (1964-1965) - Leonard Yutrenka, Argyle
King Agassiz V - (1965-1966) - Erman O. Ueland, Fertile
King Agassiz VI - (1966-1967) - Robert H. Schafer, Mahnomen
King Agassiz VII - (1967-1968) - Charles Brantner, Jr., Moorhead
King Agassiz VIII - (1968-1969) - Edgar L. Olson, Fosston
King Agassiz IX - (1969-1970) - Sheldon Erickson, Badger
King Agassiz X - (1970-1971) - Wallace Sparby, Thief River Falls
King Agassiz XII - (1972-1973) - Ronald A. Ulven, Hawley

King Agassiz XIII - (1973-1974) - Duane Ekman, Argyle
King Agassiz XIV - (1974-1975) - Karol Berglind, Ada
King Agassiz XV - (1975-1976) - Art Brandli, Warroad
King Agassiz XVI - (1976-1977) - Lowell Anderson, Hallock
King Agassiz XVII - (1977-1978) - Charles Swanson, Fergus Falls
King Agassiz XVIII - (1978-1979) - Sherwood Peterson, Baker
King Agassiz IX - (1979-1980) - Bruce Hein, Frazee
King Agassiz XX - (1980-1981) - George Flaskerud, Fosston
King Agassiz XXI - (1981-1982) - Donald Sargeant, Crookston
King Agassiz XXII - (1982-1983) - Charles Swanson, Hallock
King Agassiz XXIII - (1983-1984) - Marvin B. Hanson, Hallock
King Agassiz XXIV - (1984-1985) - Donald Martodam, Hawley
King Agassiz Program

MUSIC ................................................................. Marie Nelson
WELCOME ........................................................... Don Sargeant
INVOCATION ...................................................... Karol Berglind
INTRODUCTION .................................................... Don Sargeant
MUSICAL SELECTION ............................................. Cecil Malme
HALL OF FAME ................................................... George Nornes
Recipients: Jerome Dahlberg
Everett Solheim
SEATING OF KING AGASSIZ 23 ................................... Marv Hanson
PAGES ............................................................... George and Kate Hanson
REMARKS BY KING AGASSIZ 23 ................................ Marv Hanson
CORONATION PAGEANT ........................................ Duane Ekman
Charles Swanson
RESPONSE ........................................................... King Agassiz 24
CLOSING SONG ................................................... Cecil Malme
HALL OF FAME RECIPIENTS -
1964 THROUGH 1984

1964  Paul Engelstad - Farmer - Pennington County
1964  P. M. Finkenbinder - Farmer - Polk County
1964  Orville Kiser - Animal Scientist - Northwest Experiment Station
1964  T. M. McCall - Superintendent, Northwest School and Experiment Station
1965  A. A. Dowell - Superintendent, Northwest School and Experiment Station
1965  Stuart McLeod - Dairy Processing - Pennington County
1966  Emil Lerud - Farmer - Norman County
1967  Milton Marmarine - Farmer - Clearwater County
1968  Carl Ash - County Agent - Polk County
1968  Donald Sinclair - State Senator & Farmer - Marshall County
1968  Herman F. Skyberg - Farmer - Polk County
1969  Adolph Skyberg - Farmer - Polk County
1969  T. W. Thorson - Music Educator - Polk County
1970  Al Dexter Agricultural Development Agent - Northern Pacific RR
1970  Olaf Soine - Soil Scientist - Northwest Experiment Station
1970  Harold Thomforde - Agribusiness - Crookston
1971  Melvin Ouse - Farmer - Wilken County
1971  Carl Spong - Livestock Specialist - Fargo
1972  Marvin Campbell - Agribusiness - Brainerd
1972  Henry Flaskerud - Farmer - Polk County
1973  Bennitt Aarestad - Farmer & Agribusiness - Norman County
1973  Raymond S. Dunham - Agronomist - St. Paul
1973  C. G. Selvig - Superintendent, Northwest School & Experiment Station
1974  Oswald Daellenbach - County Agent - Clay County
1974  William Strickler - Farmer - Polk County
1974  B. E. Youngquist - Superintendent, Northwest School and Experiment Station.
1975  Paul Visser - Farmer - Norman County
1976  Paul Brekken, Sr. - Winter Shows Manager and Farmer - Polk County
1976  Thomas Botko - Farmer - Marshall County
1977  George P. Nornes - Vo Ag Instructor - Climax
1977  Harold H. Ross - Farmer - Polk County
1978  Harley Shurson - County Agent - E. Polk County
1978  Orin C. Turnquist - Extension Horticulturist - Farmington
1979  Charles Campbell - Northwestern Bank - Hallock
1979  James Edgar - Minn. Crop Improvement Assn. - Warren
1980  Roger Ward - Farmer - Kittson County
1981  Andy Erickson - Farmer - Roseau County
1981  Alfon Hanson - County Commissioner - Polk County
1981  Donald Peterson - Farmer - Polk County
1982  Sam Bigger - County Extension Director - Polk County
1982  Harvey Werk - Farmer - Grant County
1983  Clifford Zaffke - 1st American Bank - Crookston
1984  Jerome Dahlerberg - KROX - Crookston
1984  Everett Solheim - Farmer - Polk County
ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR 1982 - 1984
RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS - CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA

FRIDAY THROUGH FRIDAY-4:00 p.m.

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<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
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<td>Activities</td>
<td>635</td>
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<td>Season</td>
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<td>THURSDAY</td>
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<td>Activities</td>
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<td>Gate</td>
<td>1387</td>
<td>1535</td>
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<td>Season</td>
<td>93</td>
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<td>Sustaining Passes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Livestock Exhibitors</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>151</td>
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<td>Booth Passes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifetime Passes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3951</td>
<td>4040</td>
<td>3365</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

FRIDAY (4:00 p.m.) 1982 1983 1984
Draft Horse Pull:
| Activities | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 |
| Gate       | 180  | 114  |
| Lifetime Passes | 306 | 250  |
|           | 0    | 2500 | 1763 |

HORSE SHOW - FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY

FRIDAY
| Activities | 35   | 87   | 40    |
| Gate       | 615  | 456  | 357   |
| Exhib.     | 192  | 185  | 189   |
|           | 842  | 728  | 586   |
| SATURDAY  |       |       |       |
| Activities | 1315 | 1241 | 1203  |
| Gate       | 279  | 275  | 231   |
| Exhib.     | 1594 | 1516 | 1434  |
|           | 1579 | 1516 | 1434  |
| SUNDAY    |       |       |       |
| Gate       | 950  | 651  | 656   |
| Exhib.     | 279  | 275  | 237   |
|           | 1229 | 926  | 887   |

SUMMARY

FRIDAY THROUGH FRIDAY - 4:00 p.m.
| Activities | 8150 | 6551 | 6644  |
| Gate       | 21607| 22467| 22980 |
| Season     | 636  | 730  | 446   |
| Passes     | 1560 | 1078 | 1758  |
| Livestock Exhib. | 136 | 151 | 99 |
| Booth Passes | 3940 | 4388 | 4681  |
|           | 36029| 36165| 36608 |

HORSE SHOW - FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY

Activities | 35   | 87   | 40    |
| Gate       | 2800 | 2348 | 2216  |
| Exhib. Tickets | 750 | 735  | 651   |
|           | 3665 | 3170 | 2907  |

TOTAL ATTENDANCE - TEN DAYS

| Activities | 8185 | 6944 | 6684  |
| Gate       | 24487| 24015| 25196 |
| Season     | 1386 | 1465 | 1097  |
| Life Passes | 1560 | 1572 | 1508  |
| Livestock Exhib. | 136 | 151 | 99 |
| Booth Passes | 3940 | 4388 | 4681  |
|           | 39694| 39335| 39265 |

1. Cumulative figures for week.
2. Includes Higher Education Seminar of Friday.
3. Many exhibitors paid at door.
EPOCHAL EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS:

1910 First meetings and Crop Show; donated merchandise prizes.

1913 First Farmers' Livestock Judging contest held at shows.

1914 Meetings and shows moved to downtown Crookston. Red River Valley Development Association organized.

1915 Red River Valley Development Association raised $1,000 for crops premium.

1915 Armory completed in Crookston. Provided largest meeting space for evening lectures.

1916 Enabling legislation passed by legislature to permit counties to appropriate funds for use by the Red River Valley Development Association at the Winter Shows.

1916 Crookston Association of Public Affairs began financial support - $1,000 annually.

1917 First Livestock Shows held in downtown garage - $300 premiums. Valley-wide organizations of livestock breeders, dairymen and poultrymen affiliated with Winter Shows.

1918 June meeting of Red River Valley Development Association at Warren. A "kick-off" meeting for fund-raising campaign for Winter Shows building.

1919 $15,000 raised and Livestock Pavilion on Broadway completed for livestock and crops show. Armory used for meetings and concessions.

1919 Legislation provides funds for premiums to Livestock Association.

1920 Annex A, Livestock Buildings, on Ash Street completed.

1920 The title "Winter Shows Board of Managers" was given the reorganized planning board representing several cooperating organizations and agencies joined together to manage the Winter Shows each year.

1921 Annex B, Industrial Building, completed and used. Some 2600 shareholders contributed more than $70,000 for entire project.

1923 Two donation Livestock Sales held to help pay on outstanding debts; $7,000 was collected.

1927 Original annual grant of $2,000 was made by state legislature for livestock premiums raised to $5,700; (reduced to $4,700 in 1933).

1927 President C. G. Selvig elected to Congress, after 17 years of service to the Winter Shows. Succeeded by Superintendent A. A. Dowell.

1937 President Dowell accepted position in Agricultural Economics Department, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. Succeeded by Superintendent T. M. McCall.

1938 Valley Farmer and Homemaker Award established.

1940 The final note of $7,000 against the Winter Shows building is paid.

1947 Livestock Futurity Show founded to encourage youth to become established in the livestock industry.

1953 The Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc. becomes officially incorporated under Minnesota and federal non-profit tax exempt statutes.

1956 President T. M. McCall, retired after 45 years of service to the Winter Shows. Succeeded by Superintendent B. E. Youngquist.

1958 Red River Valley Livestock Association transfers title of Winter Shows buildings to the Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc. for the purpose of building new facilities. Four members of Red River Valley Livestock Association to be on Board of Managers.

1958 "Brainstorm meetings" held out in Valley counties to explore building ideas. Rural leadership said, "Go ahead - we'll help."

1959 A full-time assistant to the President was hired by the Board of Managers to direct task of building planning and financing activities.

1961 The livestock show opened up to all farmers of all states.

1961 (August 11) - Three hundred citizens of the Valley attend the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the New Winter Shows building.

1961 (November) - Red River Valley Livestock Association underwrites an additional building (60' wide x 180' long) for livestock. This insured that the entire show could take place on the new site and at the Northwest School.

1961 King Agassiz project launched. First king was Richard Fitzsimmons, Argyle.

1961 Red River Valley Development Association votes to provide yearly support to the operating expenses of the Winter Shows.

1962 The new arena and west livestock barn dedicated on February 14, 1962. The first show in the new facilities was held February 18-23 and this was the fourth home in 52 years.

1963 Purchased 10 more acres of land to the west of present property.

1964 Hall of Fame established to honor long time service to the Winter Shows and to agriculture.

1964 Connecting pole barn built between the west livestock barn and the arena. Personal loan guarantees and pledges by the Red River Valley Livestock Association secured financing on short term.

1964 Sustaining Fund launched.

1965 Built new Armory on land sold to City of Crookston by Winter Shows.

1965 Twenty Red River Valley banks refinanced the remaining mortgage of $175,000.

1966 Livestock judging and sale ring name Strickler Arena in honor of William Strickler, longtime president of the Red River Valley Livestock Association and vice president of the Winter Shows Board.

1976 Raised $192,000 during fund drive among Valley wide cooperatives and agribusiness to build north wing on the arena plus other improvements.

1979 MIDA Bond arranged to fund balance due on the north arena, provide livestock association show space, finance college horse stable facilities and improvement of internal facilities.

1980 There are 21 separate organizations and agencies having membership on the Board of Managers.

1982 James Lofgren becomes president of Winter Shows, succeeding B. E. Youngquist. First time in history of Show that someone other than superintendent of Northwest Experiment Station is president.

1983 The Red River Valley Winter Shows Foundation, Inc. a companion corporation to the Winter Shows was organized as a nonprofit corporation under the tax exempt nonprofit status. Their first project is to establish a $100,000 permanent program fund, the income will be provided to the Winter Shows board for educational and human resource programming. Just over $20,000 has been pledged or received in cash to date.

1983 Builder of the Valley Award is founded. First honored recipient was Edgar Hetten, Thief River Falls, an inventor and developer.
### Elected Officers of the Leader Organizations for the Winter Shows

Full Board member information is available in bound volumes containing all programs and premium books.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Red River Valley Development Assn.</th>
<th>Red River Valley Livestock Assn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>C.G. Selvig, Pres., NWES</td>
<td>Tom Canfield, Pres., Lake Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N.S. Davies, Sec., Crookston</td>
<td>Mike Jeffers, VP, Red Lake Falls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>L.D. Foskett, Treas., Crookston</td>
<td>C.G. Selvig, Sec., NWES</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>C.G. Selvig, Pres.</td>
<td>Frank Jeffers, VP, RLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.M. Sivertson, Sec.</td>
<td>W.V. Gousseff, Sec., NWES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lee R. Boyd, Treas., Crookston</td>
<td>M.E. Dahl, Treas.,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W.R. Low, Sec., Crookston</td>
<td>F.A. Green, VP, Stephen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.H. Saugstad, Treas., Crookston</td>
<td>O.M. Kiser, Sec., NWES</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>T.M. McCall, Pres., NWES</td>
<td>S.W. Sivertson, Treas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C.M. Pesek, VP, Thief River Falls</td>
<td>William Ash, VP, St. Vincent</td>
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<td>O.G. Norbeck, Sec., Crookston</td>
<td>E.W. Spring, Sec., Crookston</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.W. Spring, Treas., Crookston</td>
<td>T.M. McCall, Pres.,</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>T.M. McCall, Pres.</td>
<td>William Ash, VP, St. Vincent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R.S. Dunham, Sec., NWES</td>
<td>E.W. Spring, Sec.,</td>
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<td>E.W. Spring, Treas.</td>
<td>S.W. Sivertson, Treas.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Strickler, VP</td>
<td>William Ash, VP,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.C. Soine, Sec.-Treas.</td>
<td>E.W. Spring, Sec.,</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Paul Brekken, Mgr., Crookston</td>
<td>H.C. Strander, Treas.,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.E. Youngquist, Pres.</td>
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<td>William Strickler, VP</td>
<td>William Strickler, Pres.,</td>
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<td>O.C. Soine, Sec.</td>
<td>Robert Shafer, VP,</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>Larry Brekken, Mgr., Crookston</td>
<td>Harvey Windels, Sec.,</td>
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<td>B.E. Youngquist, Pres.</td>
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<td>William Strickler, VP</td>
<td>Duaine Espegaard, Treas.</td>
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<td>James Logfren, Sec.-Treas., Crookston</td>
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<td>B.E. Youngquist, Pres.</td>
<td>William Strickler, Pres.,</td>
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<td>Andrew Skar, VP, Thief River Falls</td>
<td>Robert Shafer, VP,</td>
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<td>Allan Magnusson, Sec., Roseau</td>
<td>Harvey Windels, Sec.,</td>
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<td>Robert Cameron, Treas., Crookston</td>
<td>Gerald Henneberg, Treas.,</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>Philip Miller, Mgr., Crookston</td>
<td>David Hoff, Pres., Crookston</td>
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<td>James Logfren, Pres.</td>
<td>William Strickler, VP</td>
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<td>George Nornes, VP, Climax</td>
<td>Harvey Windels, Sec.,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wayne Wagner, Sec.-Treas. Crookston</td>
<td>Gerald Henneberg, Treas.</td>
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</table>

*Address appears only on first mention of name.
AN EXAMPLE OF THE COOPERATIVE EFFORT PUT FORTH BY MANY DIFFERENT COMMITTEES IN THE 14 COUNTY AREA. THIS MATERIAL WAS PROVIDED BY DR. GEORGE MARX, NORTHWEST EXPERIMENT STATION AS THE PLANNING EFFORT OF THE DAIRY COMMITTEE AND THE RED RIVER VALLEY DAIRYMAN'S ASSOCIATION.

1. Sponsor Dairy Day at the Winter Shows - traditionally the first day of RRVWS.
2. Sponsor the Honored Dairymen’s Banquet for top dairymen couples from each of northwest Minnesota counties.
3. Promotes the dairy industry of the RRV since 1903 - oldest commodity organization in State of Minnesota (82 years).
4. Major contribution at time of rebuilding program.
5. Purchase the ribbons and plaques awarded at the dairy shows.
6. Involved in sponsoring the (youth) Dairy Futurity Show.
7. Help sponsor the FFA Cow Clipping Contest held at the Winter Shows and more recently at the NWES dairy barn on Youth Day each year.
8. Works with American Dairy Association (ADA) to operate booth and obtain the appearances of the Northwest Dairy Princess and affiliates of the Northwest Dairy Association.
9. Presents the special RRVDA Service Award (received by B. E. Youngquist in 1983, Paul Visser in 1984, Harley Shurson and Blake Peterson in 1982).
10. Promotes the use of real dairy products in eating establishments and awards the Butterknife Award at the RRVWS dairy banquet each year.
11. Collects money from numerous dairy-related and affiliated businesses to award to dairy exhibitors, pays for stall fees and incentive payments.
13. Assists the RRV Holstein Association in promoting the dairy cattle sale at the RRVWS.
14. Promotes Dairy Day through ticket sales, Dairy Day news release, for a number of years an educational booth (called Dairy Show Clinic) in the arena.
15. Promotes the 4-H dairy demonstrations and sponsors the awards (very popular event and large numbers of participants).
16. Present officers (Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association):
   - Roger Odegard, President, Crookston
   - Mylo Carlson, Vice President, Angus
   - Gerald Thorson, Sec./Treas., Fargo
   - Dale Springer, Director, Fosston
   - Eldo Bently, Director, Twin Valley
   - Murl Nord, Director, Blackduck
   - George Marx, Ex-Officio, Crookston

SCHEDULE OF VARIOUS ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER GROUP MEETINGS TYPICAL OF THE 1930’S.

Members of the Livestock and Farm Crops Judging Contest teams and 4-H club exhibitors’ annual dinner meeting, 6:00 P.M., Monday, December 11. H. A. Pflughoefl and E. R. Clark in charge.
Red River Valley Crops and Soils Association luncheon meeting in the Red and Gold room, Crookston Hotel, 12:00 noon, Tuesday, December 12.
County Agent Association dinner meeting, Crookston Hotel, 6:00 P.M., Tuesday, December 12.
Red River Valley Guernsey Breeders’ Association meeting, Room B, downstairs, Armony, 4:30 P.M., Wednesday, December 13. Harry Woolson, secretary.
Northern Minnesota Red River Valley League of Municipalities annual meeting, Council Chambers, City Hall. Registration of delegates, 9:30 A.M., Thursday, December 14.
Red River Valley Beekeepers’ Association annual meeting, Main Hall, Armony, 10:30 A.M., Thursday, December 14. P. N. Tri, president.
Red River Valley Livestock Association business meeting, 11 A.M. Thursday, December 14, gymnasium room, downstairs, Armony. O. M. Kiser, secretary.
Northern Minnesota Poultry Association 26th annual meeting will be held at 1:00 P.M., Thursday, December 14, in the Poultry Association room at the Winter Shows. John Saugstad, secretary.
Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association annual business meeting, Crookston Association room, 4:00 P.M., Thursday, December 14. W. R. Low, secretary.
Board of Managers of the Red River Valley Winter Shows luncheon meeting, Crookston Hotel, 12:00 noon, Friday, December 15.
County Superintendents’ luncheon meeting at Hotel Crookston, 12:00 noon, Friday, December 15.
Northwestern Minnesota Singers’ Association banquet, 5:00 P.M., Friday, December 15. Place to be announced. N.A. Thorson, secretary.
Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni Association reunion and party, Northwest School, 8:00 P.M., Friday, December 15. Dr. Harry Hedin in charge. Register at Alumni Booth in Crops Exhibit Room.

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Dedicating:

* A headquarters to associate the rural leadership of the Valley.
* A force to encourage top-level rural youth to be farmers.
* A team of farmers and non-farmers harnessed to the tugs of knowledge and understanding.
* A stimulus to continually evaluate our responsibility to the water and soil of this Valley.

The Challenge Ahead

WHAT

Just over three thousand citizens, acting as individuals or as a business, have built the first major section of the new home for the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Again, men and women of courage and foresight have embarked on bold actions of faith in the Agriculture of the Valley Area. Building fund gifts ranged from $15,000 to a few dollars and averaged just over $100 per pledge.

The Arena completed, as it is, cost $313,000 in contracts for labor, materials, and equipment. Total money pledged to date of publication is $320,000. Raising this money has involved expense, and, some pledges will not be paid; consequently, there remains some "unfinished" fund raising to complete the funding for this Arena section.

In late November of 1961, the Red River Valley Livestock Association voted to underwrite the construction of a 60' x 180' pole-type cattle barn. This action made available approximately 67,500 square feet of space under roof compared with 62,114 square feet of usable show activity space in the old buildings.

The facilities at the University of Minnesota, Northwest School and Experiment Station supplement the above facilities and in the immediate years ahead will be used for all educational forums and seminars, crops judging, potato judging, luncheons, banquets, grain clinic, farm organization meetings, public speaking contests, and 4-H dairy demonstrations held during Winter Shows week.

WHY

Citizens of the Red River Valley have taken the major step to rebuild an important force to lengthen and to strengthen the stature of its agriculture in the next half century. The Board of Managers sees this rebuilt facility as an exciting venture associating agriculture and those who service agriculture.

The University of Minnesota sold the 20-acre site, on which the buildings rest, on the merits that Red River Valley citizens were planning a facility designed to be a "key force" for expressing agricultural leadership.

WHERE

The original plans as publicly announced by the Board of Managers called for a larger building. While this building is an adjustment to the available funds, the Board of Managers is not abandoning the goal of an adequate facility.

Plans are already under way to launch the ingathering of funds for appropriate additions to this already challenging monument to Red River Valley agriculture. The new plans will be explored and focused at the 1962 Red River Valley Winter Shows. All farmers will want a chance to express their faith and a little investment in this next step. This faith, as expressed by these first some 3,000 "free-will gifts" to the construction of the new building, must be kept.
Leaders in Fund Drive Effort

Principal leadership for the fund drive which began in the fall of 1960 was spearheaded by the men as listed. The names of hundreds of "workers" could not be listed, yet they provided an invaluable part of the team which is rebuilding the Winter Show buildings. More than 3,000 individuals and businesses contributed to the facilities now in use. Their names are all engraved on a large 48" x 96" plaque hung in the Winter Shows Arena.

General Chairman:
William Strickler, Euclid

Divisional Chairmen:
Robert Backstrom, Warren
Delmar Hagen, Gatzke
Rudy Gustafson, Fergus Falls
Melvin Ouse, Rothsay

County Chairmen:
Becker:
Oscar J. Olson, Lake Park
George Scherzer, Callaway

Clay:
Robert Gee, Moorhead
Perry Trowbridge, Comstock

Clearwater:
John Hulteen, Clearbrook

Kittson:
Andrew Anderson, St. Vincent
Earl Glidden, Hallock

Mahnomen:
Robert Schafer, Mahnomen

Lake of the Woods:
Carlos Grove, Roosevelt
Ellis Palm, Baudette

Marshall East:
Julian Rodahl, Thief River Falls
Norman Anderson, Middle River

Marshall West:
M. R. Yutrzenka, Argyle
John St. Germaine, Argyle (Task Force)

Norman:
Paul Visser, Ada
David Johnson, Ada
Lyle Larson, Halstad
Albert Forsell, Twin Valley

Otter Tail:
Alvin Kvare, Pelican Rapids
Jeff Tikkanen, New York Mills

Pennington:
Andrew Skaar, Thief River Falls

Polk:
Alvin Wagner, Crookston
Francis La Voi, Fosston
Edgar Olson, Fosston

Red Lake:
Dean Vatthauer, Red Lake Falls
Willard Paruth, Red Lake Falls

Roseau:
Hilding Grafhn, Roseau

Wilkin:
Ted Peet, Wolvert
Louis Toelle, Nashua

City of East Grand Forks:
Leonard Driscoll
Sheldon Preston
Al Tabert

City of Crookston:
A. O. Myrold
Robert Stone

Task Force Chairman:
Herman Natwick, Ada

Red River Valley Winter Shows

Board of Managers, Inc.

The management and direction of the Red River Valley Winter Shows is governed by a sixteen-member Board of Directors who have incorporated as a non-profit corporation. The directors are duly elected representatives of thirteen area-wide cooperating farm or farm-service organizations.

The routine coordination of the appropriate activities of this Board of Managers is delegated to a full time executive director with an office to be located in the new building.

1960 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

V. F. Hodgson, Executive Director

B. E. Youngquist, President
Superintendent, Northwest School and Experiment Station

William Strickler, Euclid, Vice-President
Red River Valley Livestock Association

O. C. Soine, Northwest School, Secretary/Treasurer
Red River Valley Crops and Soils Association

Bennett Aarestad, Halstad
Red River Valley Potato Growers Association

M. J. Augustine, Thief River Falls
Red River Valley Dairymen's Association

Marvin Campbell, Crookston
Agricultural Committee, Crookston Chamber of Commerce

Gordon Clow, Lancaster
Red River Valley Livestock Association

Wayne Ewing, Beltrami
Red River Valley Livestock Association

Gerhard Ross, Fisher
Red River Valley Beet Growers Association

A. M. Larson, Beltrami
Farmers Union

Howard Newell, St. Paul
University of Minnesota - Agricultural Extension Service

George Nornes, Climax
Minnesota Vo-Ag Instructors' Association

Theodore Peet, Wolvet
Farm Bureau

Benton Rodahl, Barnesville
Red River Valley Livestock Association

Walter Ross, Fisher
Red River Valley Development Association

Harold Thomforde, Crookston
Northern Minnesota Poultry Association

Past Board Members Serving on Building Planning and Development

Harold Wiseman, Crookston
Stuart McLeod, Thief River Falls

Adolph Skyberg, Fisher
Earl Bergerud, St. Paul
Lyle Kiel, Crookston

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BOARD OF MANAGERS

The Red River Valley Winter Shows Board of Managers, Inc., is a non-profit membership corporation composed of the persons listed below representing organizations as listed. These people have been selected by the membership of the organizations they represent. One-third of the twenty-three members are elected for a term of three years at the annual meeting held each June.

LARRY BAEKKEN
Manager

DR. JAMES P. LOFGREN, Pres.
Crookston
N. W. Minnesota Crops & Soils Assn.

GEORGE P. NORNES, 1st Vice Pres.
Climax
Minnesota Vo. Ag. Instructors

CLIFFORD H. ZAFFKE, 2nd Vice Pres.
Crookston
Chamber of Commerce

WAYNE WAGNER, Sec., Treas.
Crookston
Minnesota Farm Bureau

LESTER AMUNDSON
East Grand Forks
R.R. V. Potato Growers Assn.

KAROL BERGLINO
Ada
County King Agassiz Assn.

GLEN FINKENBINDER
Crookston
RRV Sugarbeet Growers Assn.

MARLYS FINKENBINDER
Crookston
Women's Division

BRUCE HAMNES
Stephen
Minn. Crop Improvement Assn.

ART HOWARD
Warren
Minnesota Wheat Growers Assn.

HERB MAURITSON
Sheffy
RRV Horse Breeders Assn.

DR. GARY C. MCVEY
Crookston
U of M Technical College

ROGER OEGEARD
Crookston
RRV Dairymen's Assn.

JAMES OLSBLUND
Beltrami
RRV Livestock Assn.

EDGAR OLSON
Fosston
RRV Livestock Assn.

BARBARA OSETH
Crookston
U of M Extension Service

RONALD REITMEIER
Fisher
Minnesota Farmers Union

DONALD SIMMONS
Crookston
NFO

WILLIAM STRICKLER
Engid
RRV Livestock Assn.

JOHN THOMFORDE
Crookston
N. Minn. Poultry Assn.

PAUL VISSER
Ada
RRV Livestock Assn.-Dairy

DR. B. E. YOUNGQUIST
Crookston
RRV Dev. Assn./N. W. Experiment Station

LEONARD YUTRZENKA
Argyle
Minn. Soil & Water Conservation

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WINTER SHOWS TODAY

In 1985 the Winter Shows will be 75 years old. The success and ever increasing growth of this event can be attributed to the planning and dedication of nearly 300 volunteers in the 14 county area of Northwest Minnesota. Educational services, senior citizens day, youth activities, livestock shows, and commercial booths are a few of many highlights of the Winter Shows each year. More than 35,000 individuals attend this gathering in late winter to obtain new ideas and to see friends of years gone by.

LATEST IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Major improvements of the Winter Shows facilities have been undertaken on three different occasions since 1910. Encouragement to carry out these improvements has come from the citizenry of Northwest Minnesota to the Board of Managers. Several banks listed herein have underwritten the financing of the latest project.

In 1977 the Winter Shows added the North Arena, a $500,000.00 investment. This addition provides 33,000 square feet to be used for youth activities, regional horse shows and the growing agribusiness exposition. The facility is heated, lighted, and fully insulated for use at anytime of the year.

Because such an addition is a benefit to all the people of the Valley, it was suggested that regional co-ops, local co-ops and area wide agriculture service industry be invited to provide investment contributions. This group raised 50% of the total project costs. The remaining half of this capital investment ($250,000.00) is being paid through the earnings of the Shows and the sustaining membership program. The interest on the mortgage, repairs and maintenance of the entire Winter Shows complex are paid through operational income. In 1981 refinancing was accomplished through a twenty year Industrial Development Bond resulting in a lower interest rate, a considerable saving in interest each year.

SUPPORT THROUGH SUSTAINING FUND MEMBERSHIPS

The debt for capital improvements is substantially aided each year through Sustaining Fund Memberships. Memberships are of two categories, both of which help toward debt reduction.

The first category of membership is the SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP which is obtained by persons making a $10.00 tax deductible contribution each year. The membership card issued provides the holder one day's attendance to the Winter Shows the current year.

In 1978, the LIFE MEMBERSHIP payment policy was revised to enable a sustaining member to obtain a Life Membership by contributing $25.00 a year for ten years. Each year the contributor makes a contribution he or she receives a five-day pass to the Winter Shows and after the tenth $25.00 contribution, a lifetime pass is issued.

A LIFE MEMBERSHIP may also be received by those who contribute $200.00 or more in a lump sum toward the capital needs of the Winter Shows. Life Memberships entitle the bearer a card for admission to each day of the Winter Shows every year for the rest of their life.

An annual financial report of the Winter Shows is sent to all members and is available to others on request.
All funds collected through the annual membership drive are restricted for use to capital debt reduction.

**ANNUAL TOTALS**

Sustaining Fund Memberships currently total from $12,000.00 to $15,000.00 annually. The membership has more than doubled since 1964 and about 75% of the members have paid annually since 1964. The majority of the funds are raised by return mail from a letter sent out from the Winter Shows office.

**THE CAMPAIGN**

The Sustaining Fund Membership is maintained and added to each year by the following methods:

1. A local Crookston drive is organized to solicit new members from Crookston and the surrounding area. Approximately 50% of the contributions come from this group.
2. The County King Agassiz Association representing the 14 County Red River Valley Winter Shows area forms another unit vital to the campaign in each county.
3. Past members are solicited annually by mail.

Send Contributions To:

**RED RIVER VALLEY WINTER SHOWS**

**BOX 402**

**CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA 56716**

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**THE BUILDING COMPLEX**

Pictured above is the Main and North Arenas. The Winter Shows building complex belongs to all citizens of the 14 county area of northwestern Minnesota. The building complex is located on Highway 2 & 75 at the north edge of Crookston on 20 acres. The complex is used for the annual Winter Shows the last full week of February, for agriculture institutes such as the Sugarbeet Growers Institute, the Red River Valley Beef Cattlemen's Institute, regional and district Horse Shows, and area youth events. The University of Minnesota Technical College has a long time lease for utilizing the North Arena for Light Horse Management instruction. Area high schools use the main arena for indoor track during the spring of the year. Numerous farm auctions are held in the Winter Shows.

These financial institutions of the Valley area are current participants in the Industrial Development Bond.

Argyle State Bank
First National Bank, East Grand Forks
First State Bank, Fertile
Farmers State Bank, Fosston
Valley Bank and Trust Co., Grand Forks
Red River State Bank, Halstad
American State Bank, Moorhead
State Bank of Shelly
Twin Valley State Bank
Peoples State Bank, Warren
First American Bank, Warren
Crookston National Bank
First National Bank, Crookston
First American Bank, Crookston
Gust Swenson
And Sons, Inc.

North
4th and Main
CROOKSTON, MN

Founded In
1946

Gust Swenson

Proudly Salutes The
RED RIVER VALLEY
WINTER SHOWS
On Their
75TH Anniversary