

# The NWSA Alumni Association AGGIE



A Newsletter for Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni and friends of the University of Minnesota, Crookston.

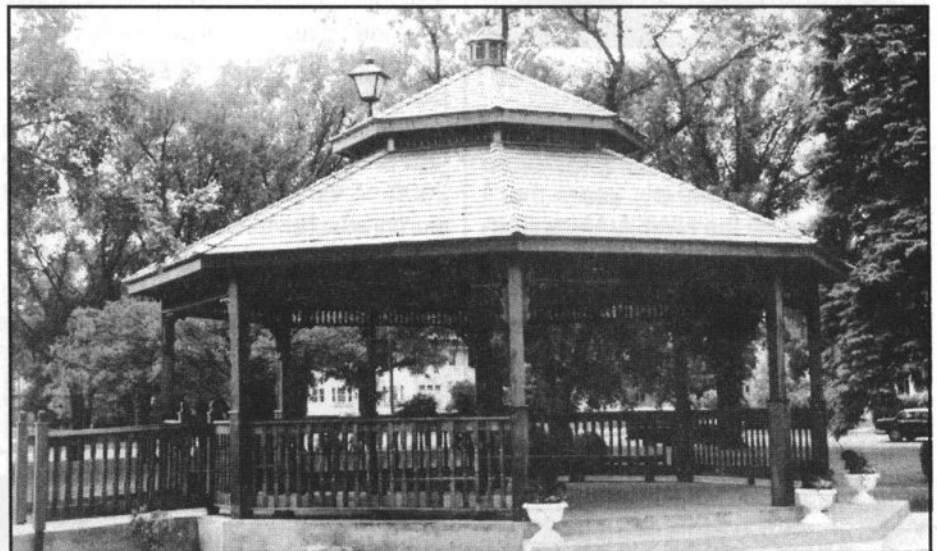
Volume 19, Number 3

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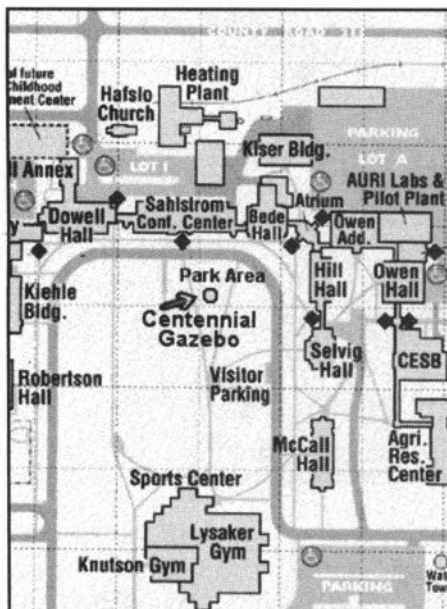
## Gazebo Project Will Commemorate NWSA Project To Be Completed By All-School Reunion

A new landmark will soon appear on the UMC campus: the centennial park gazebo. Construction began on the project in early May. The gazebo will be built just south of Bede Hall on the northeast corner of the Mall.

Locating the gazebo close to Bede Hall creates an ideal complex to host various campus functions and events. Officials expect the project to be completed in time for the NWSA All-School Reunion, June 23-24. A special dedication ceremony is scheduled during the reunion.



The Harris A. Peterson Gazebo is modeled after the Thief River Falls Centennial Gazebo (shown above), which was also built by Yoder Gazebos.



The gazebo and centennial park will be located in the NE corner of the mall.

The gazebo will be the focal point of a planned centennial park and garden. The park and garden will renovate that edge of the Mall, an area currently home only to a few trees nearing the end of their lifespan. The centennial park concept will evolve as the campus nears the year 2005. In that year the University of Minnesota will celebrate 100 years of educational service at the site now known as UMC.

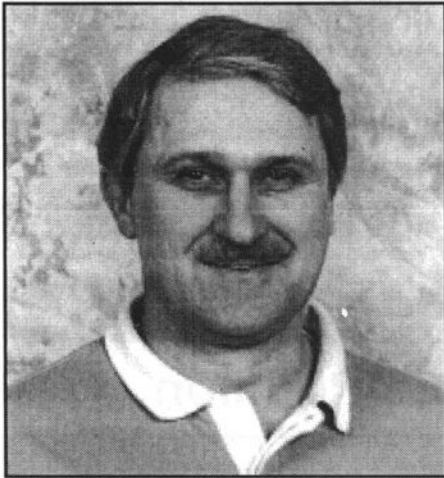
A special marker inlaid in the base of the gazebo will commemorate the U of M's Northwest School of Agriculture, UMC's precursor from 1905-1968. During that time 5433

alumni passed through the NWSA. Many of those former "Aggies" have gone on to become regional agricultural, business, and community leaders. Additional markers will eventually be added to the park and garden to recognize contributions of other alumni and to commemorate other events.

The gazebo will be 23 feet high, 28 feet in diameter, and nine feet high to the ceiling with a concrete base and a sloping ramp. UMC Facilities Management staff will complete the concrete work. The gazebo itself will be built by Yoder Gazebos in Arthur, Illinois. Once construction is finished there, the

(Continued on page 5)

# From the President



**Bill Gatheridge**

As I write this column for the last time, I reflect back on the six years that I have served on the NWSA Alumni Association Board of Directors. It really has been a fun and interesting time to work with other alumni from different eras of our "Aggie Heritage" and meet many of you who came back to your "roots" to attend these reunions.

What a pleasure to sit and review the nominees for the Top Aggie Award and to see how "well" so many of our alumni have done after leaving the Northwest School. So many of you are very deserving of this award that it gets hard to narrow it down to a chosen few. You all make me proud to say I'm a NWSA graduate.

It's been an honor to serve as your President the last three years, and I hope your reunions have been enjoyable for you. We have developed some new ideas as to the pig roast on the mall, class pictures with a classic car from each class' era, polo and sweatshirts with the NWSA logo, and now the gazebo project for the year 2000. A very special thank you to the alumni who have devoted their time and money to this project. The gazebo will carry the NWSA heritage into the future of the UMC campus.

My special thanks to the past and present board members whom I have

worked with over the last six years. We have tackled new ideas and made them work. The special 2000 reunion brought more new events to make this reunion one of the best – don't miss it. My many thanks to board member JoAnne Carlson for chairing the All-School 2000 Committee as this really helped lighten my work load.

In closing I would like to remind all alumni of two important facts. I ask that you remember our Heritage Fund with your donation each year and that you support your Board of Directors in the future as they try to carry our Aggie heritage on as long as possible. Yes, sometime we will have to dim the light as our numbers drop, but we can keep that glow of the NWSA heritage going on well after we've gone.

It's been a great six years. Thank goodness I live in Crookston, so I'll be able to see many of you in the years to come. God Bless You All.

*--Bill Gatheridge '64*

## Congratulations to the Year 2000 Top Aggies

**Andrew Skaar '40**  
Thief River Falls, MN

**Leroy Johnson '49**  
Glenview, IL

**Dr. Andrew Nielsen '49**  
Oak View, CA

**Roger Odegaard '60**  
Crookston, MN

### The AGGIE - Vol. 19, No. 3, Spring 2000

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# From the Director



**Del Roelofs**

By the time you read this column we will have completed the 1999-2000 academic year here at UMC. I think for the most part we entered the new millennium (I was never going to stoop to use that word) without a glitch. It's been a great year. UMC was named a U.S. News Best College for the second year in a row. Moving up, in fact, to the number two spot in our category in the Midwest Region. Then about a week or two ago, Yahoo! named UMC the most wired college in our category in the U.S. If my memory serves me right, I believe there were some 1300 colleges in our category in their survey. From a recognition point of view, UMC has been getting its share.

The great thing about all this is that with recognition comes additional success. First off, it takes a good deal of success to gain recognition, but once you receive the recognition success generally follows. This is certainly evident in the case of UMC. Enrollments are going up, and people are coming to the college from greater distances each year. Gifts to the campus are reaching new highs. All of these things correlate with the success and recognition of the campus throughout the state, region, and yes, if you will, the nation and world.

Things are shaping up for the reunion. Elsewhere in this issue (p. 7) you will find a schedule of the events planned for the reunion, along with the names of the four Top Aggies to be recognized at the banquet Saturday evening.

As you will note there are many highlights on this year's schedule. Your Board of Directors and the Reunion Planning Committee have worked very hard to make this a very memorable occasion for everyone. Those of you in attendance last year will remember the kickoff of the fundraising for the centennial park gazebo. I'm delighted to announce that we will be dedicating the gazebo during this year's reunion. As you may recall, we had received an estimate that the gazebo would cost approximately \$50,000. We received our first two \$1000 checks during last year's reunion. Throughout the year others joined in the effort, and our gazebo fund began to grow.

On December 31, 1999, it went way over the target. How did that happen? That is the day Harris Peterson, Class of '42, made a very generous gift of stock to UMC and the Northwest Research and Outreach Center. The total value of Mr. Peterson's gift was in excess of \$165,000, and \$50,000 of the gift is designated for the gazebo. As a result we

will be able to dedicate the Harris A. Peterson Gazebo at this year's reunion. The dedication will take place on Saturday right after the pig roast.

With dedication of the gazebo the first phase of the NWSA centennial project will be complete. The gazebo will serve as the centerpiece of the centennial park celebrating the 100-year anniversary of the establishment of the Northwest School of Agriculture. This project will provide the "town square" atmosphere to this beautiful area of our campus and serve as a living historical link between the NWSA and UMC.

You should also be advised that all gifts received for the centennial park project and gazebo are credited toward the Campaign Minnesota, Crookston goal of \$5,000,000. By the time you read this newsletter we should have surpassed \$3,000,000 with three full years remaining in the Capital Campaign.

The second phase of the centennial park project will be announced at this year's reunion. For more information on the centennial park project or Campaign Minnesota, Crookston, please contact me at 1-800-232-6466 or 218-281-8438 or stop by the office if you're in the area.

--Del Roelofs

## Heritage Annual Fund Drive Update

To date 229 gifts have been received for a total of \$9797. Both of these totals are down considerably from last year. As you know, this year we tried something different and it appears right now that maybe it isn't working. This year we had the University of Minnesota Foundation conduct our annual fund drive. We did this for a couple of reasons, the first being that it actually costs less for us to have them conduct the fund drive. The other reason is that the phone-a-thon keeps falling on the same NWSA graduates each year.

About the time you read this issue of the Aggie, you will receive another ap-

peal on this year's Heritage Fund Drive from NWSA President Bill Gatheridge. Watch for it, and please send your gift in support of the Heritage Fund.

The Board of Directors would also like your input on the Heritage Annual Fund Drive as they prepare for next year. Please send your comments to the NWSA Alumni Office, 2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716 or call 218-281-8438 or 1-800-232-6466 ext. 8438.

# From the Assistant to the Chancellor



**Judy Neppel**

I am delighted to have the opportunity to write this column introducing myself and conveying greetings from Chancellor Don Sargeant in his absence. My name is Judith Driscoll Neppel. I am new to the position of Assistant to the Chancellor for Project Management here at UMC. I was born and raised in East Grand Forks. My two brothers and Dad farm in the East Grand Forks (EGF) area. My husband, Dale, and I live in the EGF community. He is the campus Vice Presi-

dent of Northwest Technical College—East Grand Forks. We have a daughter, Melissa, who is a teacher in Mesa, AZ.

Over several years of teaching and administration, my career has led me to the position of Senior Vice President at Northwest Technical College and ultimately to UMC. My experiences along the way have been great, as I met and worked with many dedicated people. My most rewarding experience was the work I did in developing and implementing new programs that met regional employers' needs and that allowed our constituents to get a great education leading to a fulfilling career.

One of my career dreams has been to work in the University of Minnesota System. I am very happy to have the opportunity to do that now, and I look forward to being a part of the continuing growth and development of UMC as a four-year institution. Working closely with UMC for the years I was at NTC means

that I recognized before coming here what a great place to get an education this campus is—and the potential it has for the future.

The Chancellor is in Brazil as this newsletter goes to print. He is meeting with business and industry representatives and the leadership of the University of Brasilia. His goals are to further the collaborative partnerships in agriculture that UMC has in that country now and to enhance educational opportunities for the future.

The Chancellor asked me to extend his personal invitation to each of you, the alumni of the Northwest School of Agriculture, to attend an **All-School Reunion on June 22-24, 2000**. He looks forward to seeing all of you there and plans to have an excellent turnout for a well planned and fun filled event. Call your classmates and get your group together to join us. And plan to have a great time. See you there.

*--Judy Neppel*

## Class Leaders

Special thanks to the following class leaders who agreed to be hosts for their class by contacting you and encouraging your attendance at the All-School Reunion. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact your class leader or the NWSA Alumni Office at (218) 281-8437.

The listed Honored Classes will continue on the five-year schedule. However, the All-School Reunion includes all classes and provides you the opportunity to not only see your classmates, but also renew acquaintances from other years.

### 1925

Alumni Office

### 1930

**Bill Strickler**, Route #1, Box 53 Euclid MN 56722 (218) 281-1868

### 1935

Alumni Office

### 1940

**Andy Skaar**, RR 1 Box 103, Thief River Falls, MN 56701 (218) 681-3601

### 1945

**Gerhard Ross**, 119 Golf Terrace, Crookston MN 56716 (218) 281-2807 • **Pauline Finkenbinder Purath**, RR 1 Box 224, Red Lake Falls MN 56750 (218) 253-2500

*(Please Note — 1950 Seniors will celebrate their 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary in 2000-2001)*

### 1950 ADVANCED YEAR

**Phil Hamre**, RR 1 Box 26, Nielsville MN 56568 (218) 946-3771 • **Eunice A Peterson** Waterworth, RR 2 Box 147, Newfolden MN 56738 (218) 874-3742 • **Duane Wimpfheimer**, RR 1 Box 114, Euclid MN 56722 (218) 281-5749

### 1955

**Marilyn Balstad Melby**, RR 3 Box 217, Bagley MN 56621 (218) 657-2364

### 1960

**Donna Babinski Kuta**, 319 Edgumbe Drive, Mahtomedi MN 55115 (651) 777-3184

### 1965

Alumni Office

# Gazebo Project

Continued from page 1

building will be marked, disassembled, and shipped to Crookston, where it will be reassembled on site.

Yoder Gazebos is a company owned by Old Order Amish. The Amish choose not to use commercial electricity; the equipment they use in the construction of the gazebo will be powered by hand and by stationary gas engines. The painstaking craftsmanship is actually part of the "art" of the project, and it is an appropriate process for the centerpiece of a centennial park.

A group of workers from the company will travel to Crookston with the disassembled gazebo and then reassemble it on the UMC campus. Of course, the Amish don't own or drive motor vehicles, so a Mennonite friend will bring the construction crew in his extended cab truck.

One of the key players in the gazebo project is John Zak, who works in UMC's Media Services Department. Zak was inspired by the construction of a gazebo in nearby Thief River Falls for that city's centennial celebration back in 1995. Yoder Gazebos also worked with that project.

"It seemed like a nice way to work toward our own centennial at UMC," says John. "It is an interesting twist that UMC, a campus recognized nationally for its use of technology in education, would contract a company that uses little modern technology to create its high quality products. But part of the concept of the entire centennial park is to mark the past and look toward the future."

John brought the gazebo idea to Del Roelofs, UMC's Director of Development, and together they presented the idea to the NWSA Alumni Board of Directors. The Board enthusiastically supported the project and immediately allocated money for planning. Many members of the Board also donated money toward the project themselves.

Perhaps the most instrumental person to play a role in the project is Harris Peterson, a 1942 graduate of the NWSA and owner and CEO of Minn-Dak Growers, Ltd. Harris' generous donation of \$50,000 made the gazebo project a reality. The gazebo will include his name on the special marker commemorating the NWSA.

"I played a lot of basketball (we had a pretty good team), and I learned a great deal," says Harris as he recalls his memories of attending the NWSA. "I worked my way through school putting in 25-30 hours a week as the janitor of third floor of Senior Hall. This worked out fine, since that's where I lived while at the NWSA."

Harris spent three years at the NWSA, completing the advanced year and graduating in 1942. "To be honest, I went to play basketball," he says, "but the opportunity to go to school taught me that it was necessary to have an education to survive. Farming and agriculture have always been about surviving."

Well, Harris survived and prospered. Today he is the owner and CEO of Minn-Dak Growers, Ltd., a world-wide supplier of mustard, buckwheat, and confection sunflower ingredients to the food industry.



**Harris A. Peterson**

Harris' name will appear on a marker inlaid in the floor of the gazebo. The proposed marker design is shown below.



Harris is pleased to help provide this monument for his alma mater. He says the NWSA "was an important part of my life. My fellow classmates and I were like family, and I think we all had a tremendous advantage in realizing our dreams by attending the Northwest School of Agriculture."

Plans call for the area from Bede Ballroom to the gazebo, garden, and park to become a focal point for concerts, performances, receptions and other gatherings on campus. In addition to the events planned for the gazebo during the NWSA All-School Reunion, UMC already has plans to host an old-fashioned ice cream social there on August 18 as part of Crookston's Ox Cart Days festival.

The question is: who will be the first NWSA alumni members to use the gazebo for a celebration of their own?

# Early Northwest School Aviation Student Visits Former Instructor

Gene Miller, former instructor at NWSA, and Vernon Askegard, class of 1956, met recently when Vernon was in Crookston. The two were reminiscing about the early beginnings of aviation at the Northwest School in 1956. Askegard took the course which Miller pioneered, then called Aeronautics, at the school and was motivated towards a career in aviation.

Winning an essay contest sponsored by the Minnesota Flying Farmers, which had a cash value enabled Vernon to take flying lessons. He took his first hours with Christ Kiriek, pioneer aviator then at the Crookston Airport. When Vernon graduated from the NWSA in 1956 he attended UND. He was also enrolled in the Air Force ROTC program. He flew more with the UND Flying Club, then five years in

the Navy. He flew off the aircraft carriers in ASW (anti-submarine warfare) and made 300 carrier landings.

Vernon is now retired after flying 32 ½ years with TWA, often flying routes from New York to Europe, London, Paris, Milan, Rome, Athens, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Madrid, among other famous destinations. He has accumulated 30,000 flying hours during his career as an Airline Transport Pilot and rated in 707's, 727's, L1011, 747, and 767's.

Vernon's recent note states, "It is with never ending gratitude that I was introduced to flying by my Northwest School of Agriculture shop instructor, Gene Miller. I have had several guardian angels in my life, and Gene was certainly one of them. My story is certainly a great



Gene Miller (left) shakes hands with Vernon Askegard (right), airline pilot just retired. Miller inspired Askegard to take up aviation at the Northwest School. Vern visited Crookston on October 18, 1999.

example of how one instructor can make a difference in someone else's life. For a farm boy with very humble beginnings, it has been more than I could possibly have dreamed of!

Thank you Gene."

## Arizona Social Enjoyed By Many



Over 70 people attended the NWSA Social in Mesa, Arizona, on February 24, 2000. The Social was held at Superstition Mall again this year, and as you can see everyone had a great day.

## Have We Heard from You Lately?

Let us know any information or news you'd like to share with your NWSA classmates and friends. Write us a letter, email us a note, or give us a call! Photos are welcome. Please include your year of graduation.

### Via US Mail:

NWSA Alumni Association  
University of Minnesota, Crookston  
2900 University Avenue  
Crookston, MN 56716

### Via Email:

[ardis@mail.crk.umn.edu](mailto:ardis@mail.crk.umn.edu)

### Via Phone:

1-800-862-6466 ext. 8437

# NWSA All-School Reunion

The NWSA Alumni Association Board of Directors will host an All-School Reunion June 23-24, 2000.

**June 23-24  
2000**



★ Watch your mail for registration materials!

.....  
In addition to the 5- and 10-year NWSA Reunion held the last Saturday of June, the Board of Directors, along with assistance from volunteers, are expanding the Reunion to include an All-School Reunion for the year 2000.

## Tentative Schedule

### Friday, June 23, 2000

- 8:45 a.m. UMC Campus Video
- 9:00 9-hole Golf Scramble & Lunch • Minakwa Golf Course
- 9:00 Bus Tours & Lunch as follows:
  - Grand Forks Visitors Center
  - Aerospace Center/Weather Service
  - Cabelas
- 4:30 p.m. Arrive at UMC, Crookston
- 7:00 All-School Gathering • Northland Inn

### Saturday, June 24, 2000

- 8:00 a.m. Registration • UMC Conference Center
- 10:00 Choir Practice • Gazebo
- 11:00 Campus Tours
- 11:30 Luncheon/Pig Roast
- 1:00 p.m. Gazebo Dedication (Choir)
- 2:00 Class Meetings
- 3:00 Class Pictures (1930, 1935, 1940, 1945)
- 4:00 Class Pictures (1950, 1955, 1960, 1965)
- 5:30 Buffet Dinner
- 6:30 Meeting and Program
- 8:30 Barbershop Singers
- 9:15 NWSA Singalong

Joanne Carlson has agreed to chair the Reunion Committee along with Arlone Thoreson Cymbaluk, Ray Dusek, Betty Floan, William Gatheridge, Willie Huot, Irene Pulkrabek Larson, Marilyn Balstad Melby, Berneil Nelson, Ken Poole, Pauline Finkenbinder Purath, Gerhard Ross, David Tucker, Donna Babinski Kuta, Conrad Zak. Ex officio: Del Roelofs.

# Class Notes

## Robert Glass '55 Alexandria VA 22310

Entered the U.S. Navy immediately following graduation and served for 33 years, retiring in 1988 as a Commander. Traveled the world during my career covering all 50 states and every major continent except Australia. Vietnam service included three lengthy shipboard deployments with amphibious forces followed by a one year in-country tour with river forces. Divorced in '87, remarried in '90. I spend my days enjoying various hobbies including woodworking, plus I have a modest home maintenance business.



## Donald Hingst '64

PO Box 30412 • Billings MT 59107

Hi Class of '64. Just a few words on my life since the last time we saw each other. I went for one fall quarter of school at ND State School of Forestry at Bottineau, ND. Then went to NDSSS in Wahpton and took up auto body, graduated in '77, and worked in a couple of shops around Crosby and one in Sobby, MT. I then went back to Crosby and worked for the park board in the parks for five summers and did odd jobs in the winter. Got married, and we had a son. My mom and dad have passed on. I got divorced and found my current lady 17 years ago in Sheridan, WY. We have a 12 year old son and she has two previous children. I work at Sutton's Sportswear, where we print and embroider shirts and other garments. I'm the screen maker, but I also cover for other people. I've been there for five years and enjoy it very much. I have a computer. Hope to hear from anyone soon.

## Melvin Pearson '36

Recently published a book entitled "Memories of Things Past - My Early Life on the Farm 1924-1936." Published by Norbakk Press in St Paul.

### *In Memory Of...*

**Robert W Larson '29**  
Crookston MN  
January 27, 2000

**Maurice C Gulseth**  
Fertile, MN  
December 23, 1999

**Merle Hennem '48**  
Donaldson, MN  
February 15, 2000

**Robert Overend**  
Hallock MN  
December 26, 1999

**John Bridgeford**  
East Grand Forks, MN  
February 18, 2000

**Rose Baldwin**  
Hallock MN  
January 1, 2000

**David W Short '47**  
Mentor, MN  
December 3, 1999

**John Wilmer '61**  
January 30, 2000

**Perry S Sevald '29**  
Fertile, MN  
December 11, 1999

**Daniel Keefe '45**  
Thief River Falls, MN  
December 3, 1999

**Wallace Miller '25**  
Daytona, FL  
January 7, 2000



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The University of Minnesota is celebrating its Sesquicentennial. It promises to be a magnificent affair, a unique blend of honoring historic accomplishments and looking to the 21st century at the University of Minnesota. As a coordinate campus, the University of Minnesota, Crookston is sharing in this once-in-a-lifetime celebration! Hats-off to the University of Minnesota!

NWSA Alumni Association  
University of Minnesota, Crookston  
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