



# Aggie

Spring 2005  
Volume 24  
Number 1

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**Alumni Publication of the Northwest School of Agriculture**

# From the Director of Development

## Mike Meyer

Don't miss the reunion that has been 100 years in the making. Our centennial celebration is starting to roll. The dedication of our new Centennial logo makes it official that the celebration is nearly upon us. And what better way to kick off the Celebration than with the All-Class Reunion this June 24 and 25 on the beautiful Crookston campus.

The reunion (featuring



the 50th reunion for the class of 1955) is our kick-off event for the centennial, and we have many special activities and events planned (see the inside back cover).

One of the activities scheduled will be the dedication of the Centennial Park and the Memorial Garden featuring our donor wall that we have been "selling bricks" for the past year to recognize alumni, donors, and friends of both the NWSA and UMC. **I have great news – it is still not too**

**late to get a brick recognizing you or someone you have appreciated!** The wall will be built as soon as the snow is gone and will be featuring maroonish and goldish bricks with donor names inscribed. The cost is \$100 for this chance to be a part of the lasting history of education on this campus. For more information on the brick campaign please see page 2.

Also, please be looking for our annual mailing to provide support for the NWSA alumni association. We will be conducting our annual drive soon and your support is what allows us to continue to produce the Aggie which in my opinion is the finest high school alumni publication in the land. (I know I

am biased, but I haven't seen anything better!) The support also assists us in providing for reunions, socials and other activities that helps us to keep the spirit of the NWSA alive.

And the spirit is alive as UMC continues to provide excellent education and learning opportunities to our students. If you would like to support the campus and the next 100 years of students learning on the Crookston campus, please get in touch with me at 218-281-8434. There has never been a better time as the University is matching payouts of endowments for new student of \$25,000 or more dollar for dollar! This doubles the impact of your gift. Our theme for the year is,



Mike Meyer  
Director of Development

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit," – Nelson Henderson.

Please consider leaving a lasting legacy.  
Mike

### The Aggie Vol. 23, No.4 Fall 2004

The Aggie is a publication of the Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni Association, published by the University of Minnesota, Crookston. The Aggie is published fall, winter, and spring by the Development Office. Send address changes and information for the newsletter to:

The Aggie  
2900 University Avenue  
University of Minnesota, Crookston  
Crookston, MN 56716  
Phone: 218-281-8439 Fax: 218-281-8433  
Email: rulseth@umn.edu

**Vice Chancellor for  
University Relations:**  
Robert Peterson, 218-281-8438

**Director of Development &  
Alumni Relations:**  
Michael Meyer, 218-281-8434

**Asst. Dir. of Development & Editor:**  
Elizabeth Tollefson, 218-281-8432

**Development Officer**  
Del Roelofs, 218-281-8441

**Support Staff:**  
Rose Ulseth, 218-281-8439,  
Email: rulseth@umn.edu  
Sue Dwyer, 218-281-8401,  
Email: sdwyer@umn.edu

### Board of Directors

Wilford Dostal '48 (Mary Lou)  
11662 390th Ave NW  
Angus, MN 56762-8941  
218-745-5927 (H)

Harvey Pulkrabek '48 (Phyllis)  
14209 Maple Inn Rd SE  
Mentor, MN 56736-9431  
218-574-2203 (H)

Roger Odegaard '60 (Gail)  
29045 320th Ave SW  
Crookston, MN 56716-8904  
218-281-3297 (H)

Bob Kresl '53  
431 Jackson Avenue  
Crookston, MN 56716  
218-281-1418 (H)

Harlene Overgaard Hagen '55  
4227 Bristol Run  
Shoreview, MN 55126  
651-631-2784 (H)

Betty Erikson Floan '47  
13407 380th St SW  
Fertile, MN 56540-9571  
218-574-2741 (H)

Lorraine Zipoy Love '54 (Allen)  
2022 10th Street SE  
East Grand Forks, MN 56721  
218-773-1507 (H)

Arlone Thoreson Cymbaluk '47  
601 4th Ave NE  
Crookston, MN 56716  
218-281-3083 (H)

Ray Dusek '57 (Terry)  
1506 Radisson Road  
Crookston, MN 56716  
218-281-1835 (W)  
218-281-1747 (fax)

Richard Widseth '49 (Phyllis)  
5025 Lavinia Road NE  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
218-759-8561 (H)

### EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Berneil Nelson '42  
423 Woodland, #107  
Crookston, MN 56716  
218-281-2838 (H)

Mike Meyer (Kaye Lynn)  
816 Reeves Drive  
Grand Forks, ND 58201  
218-281-8434 (W)

Liz Tollefson  
21188 270th St SW  
Crookston, MN 56716  
218-281-8432 (w)

## Ray Dusek

## *From the Alumni President*

Greetings NWSA Alumni,

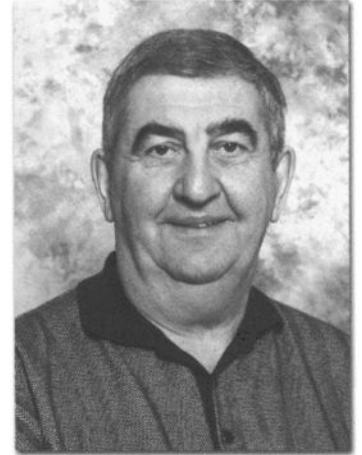
It is always exciting to report good news. The attendance at the NWSA Arizona Social is certainly good news. Ninety-eight alumni and friends gathered in Mesa, AZ for the social on February 25. Now, that should tell all of us how much Northwest School alumni like to get together. That is why it is so important for you to plan now to attend the NWSA Reunion this summer! Make sure you reserve Friday and Saturday, June 24 & 25 to gather on the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) campus with everyone from the

NWSA. Contact your classmates and friends to join you! What a great time it will be and this issue of the Aggie will help whet your appetite for what is in store for you at this year's reunion.

One of the things that will be a feature of the reunion is the dedication of the donor wall as part of the Centennial Park project. Have you purchased a brick to honor someone or commemorate your years at the school? I hope so, if you haven't contact Mike Meyer at 218-281-8434 or Sue Dwyer at 218-281-8401. In case you haven't met her,

this is a great time for you to welcome Sue Dwyer to the alumni office. She will be happy to help you with your brick so give her a call!

The class of 1955 will be celebrating their 50th class reunion. They have been busy working on plans for their class, and we hope to see many of you joining them for the reunion. I might be repeating myself, but it bears repeating, the more of you that come, the more fun it will be! Remember it is a chance to see old friends, honor our Top Aggies, and visit the campus where we grew up. I will look forward to seeing



you at the 2005 NWSA Reunion on June 24 & 25!

Sincerely,  
Ray Dusek  
NWSA Alumni President



### **Do you remember 1955? Fads and Fashions by Robert**

Looking around the campus again, we see many winter coats appearing following the drop in temperature. The style for boys this winter has been leather jackets. Some of the boys with these are Wilfred Moser and Henry Landin with brown ones, Ermil Johnson has a white one, Wayne Ramstrom, a tan one, and John Hoper has a sharp looking blue one.

Pink must really be the color this year. Many boys have pink shirts and pink corduroy trousers. David Mickelson has a pink belt and Donovan Edwards a new pink hat. "They look very nice boys!"

Now with graduation so close by many seniors are proud owners of new suits which will be on display March 25. Some of these seniors are Fred Clasen, Russell Carlson, Jim Olson, LeRoy Sondrol, Harlene Hagen, Barbara Kagg, and Jean Stromstad. *Excerpted from the March 4, 1955 "Aggie Rouser"*

## **Tractor Course for Girls Popular**

## *On the Cover*

*Excerpted form the January 1943 issue of the Northwest Monthly*

The Northwest School of Agriculture is training girls to become farm tractor operators. Two classes have been organized in the tractor and motors course for girls which started on January 5. The course has been streamlined to meet the needs of girls who will assist in the all-out production of crops on the farms of the Red River Valley. The girls are being trained to fill, in part, the depleted ranks of essential farm workers. Enough of the fundamentals of design and construction of tractors will be taught to give the girls a background of information for the proper handling and care of the different makes of tractors. Mr. William Barron, tractor specialist at the school, is the instructor in the girls' tractor course. Other courses in agricultural engineering open to girls include mechanical and farm drawing and farm home equipment. Girls may elect courses in poultry, crops, horticulture, meats, and dairying in addition to their regular academic and home economics courses. In the fall of 1943, thirty-five girls took the tractor course offered at the Northwest School. The following spring thirty-one girls enrolled. ❖

# Arizona Social

## NWSA Social Draws a Crowd

The 2005 Arizona Social was held in Mesa on February 25 at the Viewpoint Resort. An overflow crowd of nearly 100 NWSA alumni family and friends gathered over lunch to update each other on current activities and to reminisce on some stories from school days.

Lorraine Love '54 was

once again the coordinator of the event. Lorraine received a NWSA portfolio from Mike Meyer the Director of Development & Alumni Relations.

"Without Lorraine's efforts this event would not be nearly as successful as it has become," Meyer said. "She is a great NWSA Board member, and as we saw from the turnout, a great host!"

The ninety-eight people in attendance was up from a nice crowd of nearly sixty last year.

Alumni present represented every decade from the 30's to the 60's. Merl Jenkins '34 received an "Aggies Forever" sweatshirt for being the alumni from the oldest graduating class.



Nearly 100 alumni and friends gathered at the social in Mesa, AZ.



Lorraine Zipoy Love '54 works at the registration table.

He was there representing the class of 1938. Other door prizes were awarded with Les Hannah, Elaine Anderson and Tony Filipi winning some UMC and NWSA items.

In addition to coffee and conversation, Bob Peterson the Vice Chancellor for University Relations brought greetings from the campus

and provided a pre-lunch seminar featuring ideas on utilizing investment strategies to provide more income during retirement.

The Viewpoint has already been booked for the 2006 Arizona Social. So, mark your calendars for February 24, 2006. ❖

## Buy a Brick to Commemorate 100 years of UMC!

The Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) and the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) are recognizing faculty, staff, alumni, and other significant persons and events in the NWSA/UMC Centennial Park. This recognition will provide a lasting tribute to the people who have shaped and enriched our lives.

A brick engraved with your name, or the name of a person(s) you wish to recognize will be placed into the Donor Wall that will surround the Memorial Gardens.

Consider giving to the Centennial Park project to help preserve NWSA/UMC history. Buy a brick and become part of the commemoration of 100 years of educating on this campus.

Your gift will build a wall that remembers our past and preserves it for the future. Contact Mike in the Development Office at 218-281-8434. ❖



# For the best school in the land...

# School Song

## The Valley Aggie

At an assembly on Saturday October 29, 1927, a homecoming program was held in the form of a pep fest, with songs and school yells. The new school song, "The Valley Aggie," arranged and composed by Miss Simley and Miss Polski, was sung. The Aggies played the Bemidji State Teacher's College that day. The Northwest Monthly reported, "...the Bemidji Teachers presented an excellent exhibition of the National game and gave the visitors plenty of thrills. The game was lost in the last minute of play by a shoe string play, the final score being 6-0." Here are the words to the song that was introduced that day in 1927:

O Aggies cheer, O Aggies cheer, let's  
boost for our A.C.

With its vine-clad walls and its dear old  
halls, we're happy as can be.

With friends so true and a will to do, for  
our A.C. we stand.

So, let us sing till the Valley'll ring,  
For the best school in the land.

## The Minnesota Rouser

By Floyd M. Hutsell, Arranged by "Red"  
McLeod/Frank Bencriscutto

Minnesota, Hats off to thee!

To thy colors, true we shall ever be,

Firm and strong, united are we.

Rah! Rah! Rah! for Ski-U-Mah,

Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah for the U of M.

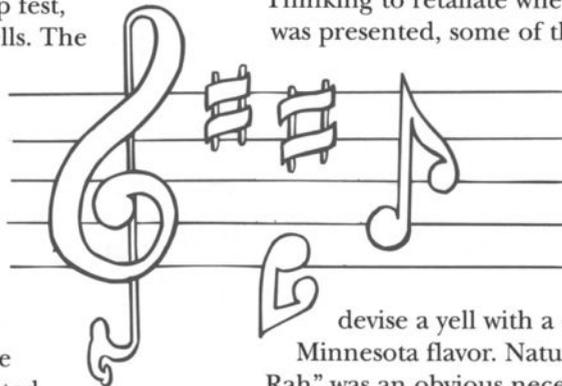
Here is the story of the Rouser taken  
from the U of M Marching Band  
Centennial Book, *Minnesota Hats Off to Thee*:

Princeton graduate Thomas Peebles was  
coach of the first Minnesota rugby team in

1884. When his squad would push over a  
touchdown, he would announce the fact to  
the world with a "Sis-Boom-Ah, Princeton."  
Thinking to retaliate when the opportunity  
was presented, some of the players decided

to compose a  
yell of their  
own.

John W.  
Adams and his  
roommate,  
"Win" Sargeant,  
determined to



devise a yell with a characteristic  
Minnesota flavor. Naturally, "Rah, Rah,  
Rah" was an obvious necessity in an effective  
college yell, and as something with a  
distinctive Minnesota flavor, he adopted the  
word "Minnesota," dropping one syllable  
and pronouncing it "Minn-so-ta." Two  
three-syllable lines needed a third, and he  
cudged his brains for a three-syllable  
Indian word that would express exultation.

The memory of a race between four  
Indian boys in two canoes, which he had  
seen the year before at Lake City,  
Minnesota came to mind, and he recalled  
how, as soon as one canoe pulled across the  
finish line ahead, one Indian put up his  
hand and yelled, "Ski-oo." Mr. Adams, who  
was somewhat familiar with Indian life in  
his younger days, remembered that this cry  
was almost invariably used by young Indians  
when winning an athletic contest of any  
kind and that the Sioux children generally  
used this exclamation to express exultation  
or pleasure.

Another syllable was necessary to make it  
harmonize, and Mr. Adams added "Mah,"  
to rhyme with "Rah" and "ta." As the yell  
was originally planned, the emphasis was  
placed on the second syllable of each line  
as follows:

"Rah, RAH, Rah

Ski OO Mah

Minn SO ta"

The yell was printed for the first time in  
the Ariel of 1885 in the following form:

"Rah! Rah! Rah!  
for Ski-U-Mah,  
Rah! Rah! Rah!  
for the U of M."

Rah, Rah, Rah  
Ski U Mah  
Minn-so-ta

About six or seven years  
later, the original yell was  
pronounced deficient in  
noise-making qualities, and  
a committee was appointed  
to revise the yell. The char-  
acteristic feature of the old  
yell, the "Ski-U-Mah" was  
retained, and the emphasis  
on the remainder was  
changed and a few new syl-  
lable added as follows:

Rah, Rah, Rah  
Ski-U-Mah  
Hoo-rah, Hoo-rah  
Varsity, Varsity  
Minn-so-ta

With the emergence of Go  
Gopher Victory in 1925, the  
phrase was modified, elimi-  
nating the words "Varsity,  
Varsity" and adding the  
fourth syllable to Minnesota.  
The words Rah, Rah, Rah  
and Ski-U-Mah have found  
their way into a number of  
songs and yells. ❖

# Alumni Spotlight

## Byron Hanson '37

*"Most men who have really lived have had, in some shape, their great adventure. This railway is mine."*

*James J. Hill (1838-1916)*

This quote by Hill was spoken when he informed the Great Northern stockholders on the occasion of his retirement as Chairman of the Board in 1912. That same year, he built a country home for his thirty-year-old son, Walter, his wife, Dorothy, and their daughter, Elizabeth, near Northcote, Minnesota. The original estate was 50,000 acres, and it was built to get Walter out of St. Paul.



"Famous St. Paul architect Thomas G. Holyoke designed the Colonial Revival home built by Hill."

Today, the beautiful 24-room home of Walter Hill located at "Hill Siding" is occupied by 1937 (advanced) Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) graduate Byron Hanson.

The house remains virtually unchanged in all the years since it was built. The cement walls and tile roof look as strong and stalwart as ever. Different families through the years have lived in the house, and the original estate divided. M. J. Florance, president of the State Bank of Hallock, Minnesota, owned the house during the late 1930s and 1940s. Byron's wife, Marva, who grew up in nearby Humboldt, Minnesota, used to baby sit there, but she was not impressed with the big house back then.

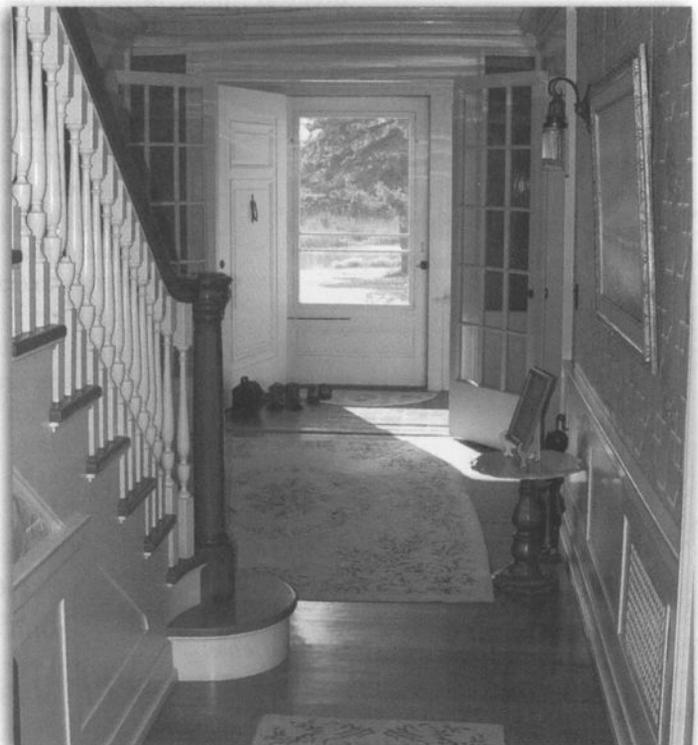
Walter Hill was not content with small town life in northwest Minnesota. The senior Hill thought the farm, with cattle imported from Scotland, would satisfy his son's need for adventure. Walter missed city life and simply transported his parties from St. Paul to Northcote via his father's



The 24-room home of L.W. Hill is the home of '37 NWSA graduate Byron Hanson.

railroad. When he was called to the side of his dying father on May 28, 1916, he summoned the family train kept at Noyes, eight miles north of Hill

Siding, and rode through the night. Within months, Walter left the farm and no one from the Hallock area ever heard from him again. He passed away in 1944



Two River flows gently by the home of Byron Hanson '37.



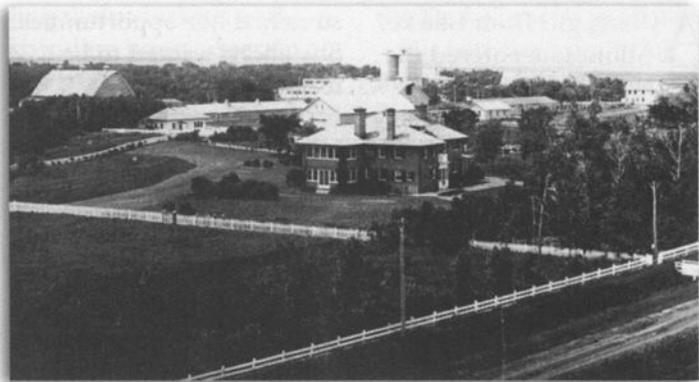
*“The house remains virtually unchanged in all the years since it was built. The cement walls and tile roof look as strong as ever.”*

somewhere out west.

Famous St. Paul architect Thomas G. Holyoke designed the Colonial Revival home built by Hill. It is a home with character, history, and a story to tell. That is true also of its owner. Byron grew up ten miles southwest of Hallock. He went to the NWSA to avoid having to board in Hallock and because they worked hard enough at the NWSA to complete in six months what the public school completed in nine. When Byron's eighteen-year-old brother, who also attended the Northwest School, was drafted, he

remarked that it was a good experience to live in a dorm and on his own. He said it prepared him well for the service, and he never got homesick. Following them to the NWSA were two younger brothers, LeRoy '41 and Kent '45 who both became medical doctors. LeRoy was an orthopedic surgeon; he passed away in 1986. Kent continues his work in family practice in Phoenix, Arizona.

Byron roomed with a cousin, Dale Bloomquist from east of Drayton. Dale became a captain on a merchant ship traveling all over the world; he passed away a



This scene of the Hill home shows the expansive farm operation.

couple of years ago. Both Byron and Dale enjoyed their days at the NWSA. He recalls John Milnar, A.M. Pilkey, R.S. Dunham, Arnold Folker, and of course, Retta Bede. He also remembers that if someone got permission to smoke, that student had to go to the furnace room, something he never had to do. He also enjoyed going on the bus to town to the movies.

Following graduation, he went home to the family farm to work. His father helped him buy a quarter of land. In 1940, he bought a car—a '39 Chevrolet—and he and 3 other young men headed out to California where Byron took a job with Lockheed. If he worked on Saturday, he got \$37.00 a week; if not, he made \$29.00.

In 1941, he married Marva, the young lady he had met at the state fair in St. Paul where he attempted to tell her how to feed her pig. The two farmed together their entire lives until Marva passed away October

15, 1994. Byron and Marva purchased the Hill home in 1967 from Zoe McGrew. Byron continues to live in the beautiful home he and Marva shared. The house has a servant's quarters, and there are four fireplaces downstairs; the two fireplaces upstairs are surrounded by tile imported from Italy. Each bedroom has its own sitting room where the light pours in from the windows and Byron has displayed family heirlooms. The house has very few electrical outlets since people did not use electricity for many things other than lighting at the time the house was built. The master bath upstairs has a marble shower with all the original fixtures still in use. It is truly lovely.

The Hansons had three children, a daughter, and two sons. Both of Byron's sons have passed away. One of those sons was state senator Marvin Hanson, a great supporter of the University of Minnesota, particularly Crookston; he passed away in March 2004. ❖



Byron Hanson '37 takes a look in the Aggie form his Senior year.

# Alumni Spotlight 1955

## Harlene Hagen

A young girl from Gatzke, Minnesota entered the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) in the 1950s to begin an adventure that was just one of many adventures she would take in her life. Harlene Hagen '55 the daughter of Delmar and Eunice Hagen was not the first of her family to attend the NWSA. Her father had two brothers and sisters that attended. Harlene said, "When I came to school here, I think it may have been part of my parents' way to guide me toward college. In addition, it was nicer to have me board at the NWSA and attend school; back home in Gatzke, I would have faced a three-hour bus ride round trip every school day."

Harlene feels that attending the Northwest School

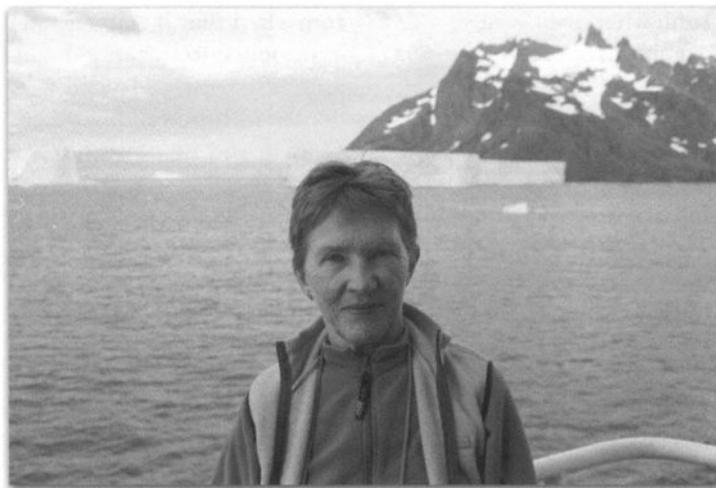


Harlene is a member of the committee planning her class' fiftieth reunion in the summer of 2005.

stretched her opportunities. She always wanted to be a teacher; her mother was her first grade teacher and was influential in Harlene's desire to teach. She had also been very active in 4-H and her church's youth group. Her father served on the NWSA board so Harlene knew that both her parents valued education and wanted to provide her with the best opportunities available.

"The NWSA formed many of my friendships," Harlene recalls, "There were dances at the Aggie Inn, parties, roller skating, and trips to town for movies. These all helped form the wonderful friendships I made and gave me the wonderful memories I have of school." Following graduation, she received a scholarship to Concordia College in Moorhead, but she discovered that she did not enjoy Concordia the way she had the NWSA. The extension agent in Marshall County had talked to Harlene's parents about the University of Minnesota, and so when Harlene decided to leave Concordia, she continued her education there instead.

She found the challenge and degree she wanted in home economics. She loved science, and the courses at the University were rigorous including such things as chemistry, physics, and even architecture. During that time, she took an art history course that piqued her interest in the world and in travel. She saw places she determined back then that she



would visit someday.

After graduation, she would again find herself at the NWSA. In a twist that she never expected, Harlene was offered a job as home economics instructor by NWSA superintendent Bernie Youngquist. She left her job as an NSP home economist in Grand Forks, and she and her family moved in an apartment next door to Faye Hughbanks. "It was a bit strange," Harlene says "to teach with the teachers that I had as a student." However, Harlene fit right in. Miss Hughbanks knit booties and scarves for Harlene's sons, and when the Kennedy assassination took place, they watched it on her television since they did not have one. "Miss Hughbanks doted on our family," Harlene remembers, "She was wonderful to us." Ma Brown and staff prepared delicious meals our family often dined after a busy day.

Harlene worked at the NWSA from 1961 to 1965. Her oldest son, Mark, and Clark Kruta (Ruth & Jerry's

son) enjoyed roaming the campus together, checking the football field with Herschel Lysaker, and visiting with Tillie Gebhardt, Berneil Nelson, and other faculty and staff that they knew. After four special years working at the Northwest School, Harlene took a job teaching in the St. Paul, MN school system. Eventually, she spent her time working on special assignments, social work, counseling, and administration. Her passion began in the field of education, and that is where it remained; Harlene spent 38 years serving in various capacities all in education. Her career was not her only passion however. Harlene loves to travel.

She has been on 22 major journeys over the years with her friend Elaine Christiansen and many more on her own. Harlene has visited all seven continents. While traveling, her goal was to experience what the local people live and do. She has slept in tents, hiked

*“There were dances at the Aggie Inn, parties, roller skating, and trips to town for movies.”*  
*– Harlene Hagen*

the Inca Trail and other mountains, rafted the Colorado thru the Grand Canyon, traveled in trains across Africa, China, and India, but one of the most exotic trips of all was one



The ice breaker on which Harlene traveled to Antarctica is pictured behind the transports used to take passengers to island stops.

she took last winter to Antarctica, the windiest, coldest, driest, cleanest, and least visited location in the world.

On board an ice breaker, hours were filled with lectures by famous experts in the fields of ecology, geology, wildlife, and photography. She was one of 68 passengers and 38 crewmembers,

representing 11 different countries. On four of the island stops on the trip, they would be the only human beings present that year, and

they used extreme care to leave the island untouched. Harlene tells about warding off elephant and fur seals with bamboo sticks by tick-

ling their whiskers, and spending hours observing penguins, albatross, petrels, whales and the beauty of nature surrounding us. Of the 27 zodiac landings, only one was a dry so our clothing was carefully selected to keep us dry at all times. She was in places rarely visited by travelers—like the U.S. base at Palmer Station, which allows only 12 groups to visit each year. Although a desert, Antarctica does have snowstorms, and Harlene experienced one of these unusual storms on Deception Island where they took shelter in a huge whale oil storage tank until safe to zodiac back to the ship. Fortunately, she is a good sailor and never experienced seasickness during her journey, even crossing

the Drake in a force 10 gale.

Harlene has wonderful memories of her trip to the Antarctic, and her enthusiasm for traveling is contagious. She still has places she wants to visit, and she says that going back to Antarctica remains a possibility. Right now though, she is busy rekindling memories of another kind. Those memories are shared by the class of 1955. Harlene is a member of the committee planning her class's fiftieth reunion next summer. Why don't you plan to attend, if you are a member of the class of 1955 or of any class? It is a time to celebrate the legacy of the Northwest School. Join us June 24 and 25 to celebrate 100 years of education on this campus. ❖

## The Airplane—A Recent Tool in Agriculture—Circa 1960

The Northwest School of Agriculture offers a course in aeronautics to Seniors which covers “the theory of flight navigation, basic maneuvers of flying, and regulations necessary for flight instruction.” This course is taught by the shop department with E. C. Miller as instructor.

Pictured at right are four boys who went one step farther and took some flying instruction from the Walters Aviation Corporation at the Kirkwood Airport and completed their solo flight in a minimum of eight hours of flight instruction. Reading from left to right are: Gary Knepper, Badger; Jerry Tjon, Twin Valley; James L. Hanson, Northwood, ND; Superintendent B. E. Youngquist of the Northwest School congratulating the group on having completed their first solo flight from the Crookston airport; E. C. Miller, aeronautics instructor; and Clayton Verke, Hatton, ND. These four boys are well on their way to understanding and putting to use another piece of equipment that man has invented and which can be very useful in certain phases of agricultural production.

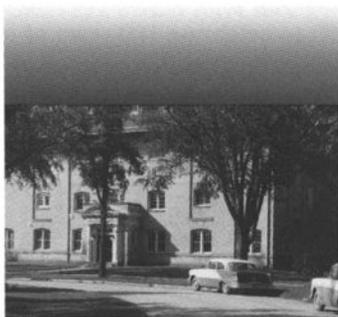


– April/May/June 1960 issue of the *Northwest School News*

**Join us for a reunion of the aeronautics students from the NWSA at the reunion on June 24 & 25! Contact Mike in the alumni office to find out more by calling 218.281-8434.**

## Alumni Spotlight

Lloyd A. Petri '67 from Nekoma, North Dakota found the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) to be both a rigorous and highly relevant agriculture school and a college prep school. Sitting and paging through his high school yearbook brought the memories flooding back. It will be thirty-eight years since Lloyd graduated, but he remembers fondly the impact his high school had on him. Lloyd describes the experience by saying, "We had excellent facilities, wonderful instructors, and great friendships."



"We were fortunate to be taught by an extremely talented and highly skilled instructional staff."

"Mr. Mazzitelli gave me one of the greatest gifts I have ever received in my life," Lloyd recalls, "He gave me the gift of believing in myself." Mazzitelli was his basketball coach and his speech instructor. "When one studies the lives of world leaders, you will find that each and everyone was mentored at some time in their life, well, Mr. Mazzitelli was my mentor," Lloyd says. "He believed in me, before I believed in myself." Mazzitelli convinced Lloyd that he was college material and education has played a huge role in Lloyd's life.

As a senior, Lloyd remembers the way Coach Herschel Lysaker molded and nurtured his players. He considered Donald Bergquist to be a stellar instructor who had a real rapport with his students. The rigor and relevance of our classes were second to none! Courses included a broad gamut all the way from trigonometry, geometry, algebra to soils, gas welding, and carpentry. "We were fortunate to be taught by an extremely talented and highly skilled instructional staff, most of them held advanced teaching/training credentials. A rather large number of them had terminal degrees, and to think that we had them as high school teachers, not many students within the United States could make that type of claim, even today" Lloyd explains.

The instructors weren't the only thing that impressed Lloyd. He appreciated the diverse student body as well. "The NWSA was a wonderful launching pad for life," Lloyd says, "It was an oddity to attend a residential high school and, in doing so, the NWSA brought together a diverse group of young people." Lloyd's roommate was Earl Germolous from Mahanomen. They formed a very close friendship during their time on campus together. "We were a closed community, meaning our cars were not allowed to leave campus from Sunday night to Friday afternoon," Lloyd explains, "We were a suitcase high school; we all went home on the weekends." He was only fifteen when he came to the Northwest School. Lloyd stated that "from literally over night, he moved from living in a small rural farming community (Nekoma's population was about 80) to living in a diverse closed community (24/5) where you had to work out your grievances and gain consensus with people you had never met before. In short, in order to make it, we were forced to develop new friendships from ground zero," Lloyd said.

David J. Anderson was the counselor in Stephens Hall when Lloyd was there. They had hall meetings to set rules. The halls were highly regulated and closely monitored; from 8:00 pm to 9:30

## Lloyd Petri '67



Lloyd Petri as pictured in the 1967 yearbook.

pm, students were to spend in study, and then at 9:30 they could get ready for the night. If we violated the rules, a letter was sent home to our parents. One time Lloyd was caught after hours visiting with another student in his room, and Lloyd said that was the only time (well, maybe not!) he was in trouble. "I knew when I left to attend the NWSA," Lloyd stated, "that my parents expected me to be serious about school. Back then, we respected those with the title of 'teacher,' and that respect came automatically with the title."

Lloyd's older brother Larry '66 also attended the NWSA, but Lloyd is not sure exactly how his parents came to the decision to send the two boys away to high school. He knows that having them around more months to help with the farm was important to his dad. He also recalled that

*"I knew when I left to attend NWSA, that my parents expected me to be serious about school."*  
*– Lloyd Petri*

NWSA instructors would recruit students by visiting farms in the summer. Lloyd thought that perhaps Harry Soderburg had stopped to visit with his parents. One thing Lloyd is sure of is that his parents thought education was very important. They moved their home from Nekoma to Grand Forks, North Dakota to give their eight children the opportunity to take advantage of the University of North Dakota (UND) or other educational institutions. All eight of them attended some type of post-secondary institution. A credit to his parents since his father only completed the sixth grade and his mother only completed the eighth grade. His mother however, returned to get her GED following the graduation of her eighth child from high school.

Lloyd took Mr. Mazzitelli's advice and went on to school attending UND where he obtained both his bachelors and masters in education. He worked for several years in the Devils Lake Public School as special education instructor for the high school. Following that, he was Supervisor of Special Needs and district Special Education Director (K-12) for the East Grand Forks

school district. In 1979, Lloyd took a position as Supervisor of vocational education programs at the Minnesota Department of Education and then became manager of the supplemental support services for the State Board of Technical Colleges. In 1995, Lloyd became the System Director for students with disabilities for the Minnesota State



Lloyd Petri '67 reminisced about how valuable his NWSA years were to him.

Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system and currently is the Program Director at MnSCU for the Perkins Federal Grants

Program working out of the Office of the Chancellor.

He has been involved in some part of education his entire life. "Now, the whole state of Minnesota is my classroom," Lloyd says with enthusiasm, and that classroom is huge, there are 170,549 students in the MnSCU system of four-year universities, community colleges, and technical schools. Lloyd remains a student as well; he is currently working on his dissertation for his doctorate in educational policy and administration at the University of Minnesota. Lloyd's story begins with his parents believing that education was important, and a teacher at the NWSA who gave him the gift to believe in himself, and it has led to a life that has impacted education across Minnesota.

Lloyd has not forgotten the people and places that are important to him. And over the years he has maintained his sense of humor, realizing that life is far too important to be taken seriously. An example of this is the passage that he recently submitted to be placed in his home town (Nekoma, ND) centennial history book. It reads, "Lloyd A. Petri is a divorced father with two wonderful adult daughters named Hope and Amanda. Word has it that

"Mr. Mazzitelli gave me one of the greatest gifts I have ever received in my life, he gave me the gift of believing in myself."

he spends time with a fine looking woman friend who lives in south Minneapolis. However, he spends his days gallivanting the skyways and city streets of downtown St. Paul, MN. His evenings are spent with fellow comrades under the old Wabasha bridge. To locate him, follow the scent of cheap cigar smoke and sour mash bourbon whiskey."

Lloyd plans to attend the 2005 NWSA reunion. He hopes that his classmates might come back too. He would like to rekindle friendships and share memories in the place where he spent so much time learning and living—the Northwest School of Agriculture. Join Lloyd on June 24 and 25 for the reunion, it will be the best one ever if you are there! ❖

**Join your classmates at the Centennial Reunion, June 24 and 25, 2005!**

# Faculty Spotlight

I am Virginia Thirkel. Retta Bede was my aunt—dearly loved by all her nieces and nephews. She thoroughly enjoyed her years at the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA). The faculty, staff, and student body were all her second family and she brought home to Duluth, Minnesota stories of her involvement with them as well as accounts of activities that went on with campus life in general. It was not unusual to have members of her second family drop in to visit while she was in Duluth. After I graduated from high school, I spent the 1935-36 school year at the NWSA, living in



This photo from the 1934 yearbook was the original NWSA classroom building and was the first building to bear the name Bede Hall in her honor.

Robertson Hall and taking two classes. So, I have my own fond memories of that time and the people I knew there. (I also remember that as being a very cold winter!)

During her fall and winter months while she was on campus, she taught courses in Home Economics. One course was home management when girls in small numbers lived in the home management quarters where they planned, cooked, and served their own meals, in addition to learning some of the fine points of entertaining. Over the years, I had occasion to come in contact with a few of the girls who had fond memories of her and their experience there.

And of course, she was house mother in Robertson Hall. I'm sure there are generations of young people, now grown, who have memories and stories to tell of that time. She conducted summer camps at the school where she demonstrated the latest cooking techniques and equipment and many of the people who attended the camps will also remember her judging at the county fairs. She was well known and remembered in that whole northwest section of the state.

Aunt Retta had a wonderful sense of humor and was a master of quick repartee. When the old dining hall was dedicated in her honor, she was truly pleased. At that time, I told her I thought that was quite and

honor, and she said, "Well, we're both old and falling apart!" She would also be pleased, as we are, to know that the ballroom in the new building will bear her name, and that the china hutch moved from the old building to the Heritage Room in Kiehle Hall will be known as the Bede hutch. That the school chose to continue her name in these ways is a tribute in itself.

My Aunt Retta was born in Anacostia, District of Columbia on September 5, 1890 and the family moved to Pine City, Minnesota in 1900. She attended school in Pine City and after gradu-



Author Virginia Thirkel attended NWSA in 1935-36.

ating from high school went to the University of Minnesota graduating with a degree in home economics. Until she came to the NWSA in 1925, she taught grade school classes in both Walker and Keewatin, Minnesota. In 1927, the family moved to Duluth and that was home from then on through all her years of retirement.

In her retirement, she lived

with her sister, Helen, and they led a full and busy life. They had many friends in Duluth, and she was active in two or three organizations as well as volunteering at St. Luke's Hospital. They



Retta Bede in 1927



Retta Bede in 1957.

*“Aunt Retta had a wonderful sense of humor and was a master of quick repartee.”*  
*– Virginia Thirlkel*



Retta Bede, taken while living in Duluth.

traveled frequently in this country and in 1963 took a very extensive trip abroad. On that trip, they stopped in Baghdad to visit their niece, Marjorie Akins, whose husband was with the State Department and was posted there. A place that certainly holds special significance today.

She and Aunt Helen owned a cottage on Long Lake just west of Duluth where they spent their summers. They had company all summer every summer. She once told me she had made up as many as ten beds at one time. She was, to use her expression, as busy as a cranberry merchant. They had a rowboat, and there were fishing poles and a fire pit for bonfires at night. It was a wonderful place for family and friends to gather. And, it was there we gathered to celebrate her 80th birthday.

In 1978, she and Aunt Helen moved to a retirement community where they had an apartment. In 1979, Aunt Helen died and

Aunt Retta continued to live there until June of 1980 when she suffered a major heart attack. After that heart attack, she moved to Benedictine Health Center where a wonderful staff treated her as family. She was somewhat frail but getting around quite well. Then a little after a year there, on October 26, 1981

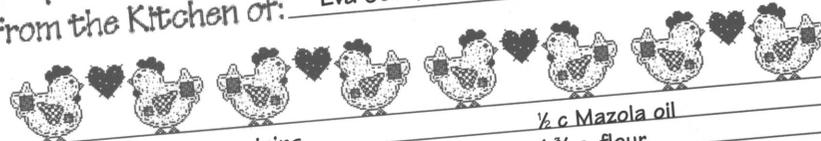
she slipped away in her sleep. She was 91 years old.

*Editor's note: Retta Bede is survived by four nieces and one nephew, Virginia Thirlkel, Marjorie Akins, Nancy Foster, Eva Joell, and John Bede. This article was written by Virginia on behalf of all of them. Retta Bede was from Duluth, Minnesota and held her B.S. from the University of*

*Minnesota. The 1934 yearbook says about her: “Her infectious laughter brightens many a homesick heart. Interestingly gay, saucily winsome, and conversationally intelligent.” This article is a tribute to a lady whose influence has been felt by generations of Northwest Schoolers and whose memory lives on in our hearts. ❖*

### Recipe: Retta Bede's Raisin Bars

From the Kitchen of: Eva Joell, from California (Retta's Niece)

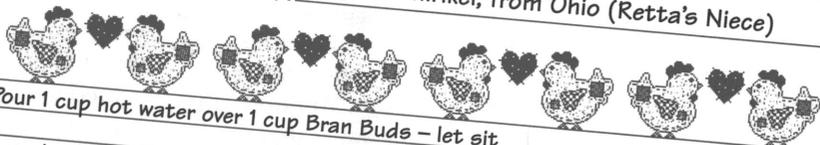


|             |                                |                 |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 c. water  | 1 c. raisins                   | ½ c. Mazola oil |
| 1 c. sugar  | 1 egg, slightly beaten         | 1 ¾ c. flour    |
| ¼ t. salt   | 1 t. soda                      | 1 t. cinnamon   |
| ½ t. cloves | ½ c. chopped walnuts, optional |                 |

Bring water and raisins to boil. Remove from heat. Add Mazola oil, then cool. Sift of mix together the flour, salt, soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Add the sugar, egg, and flour mixture to the cooled raisin mixture. Mix well and then add chopped nuts. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes in a greased 9x13 pan. Sprinkle with powdered sugar if desired. It may also be served plain with ice cream or whipped cream.

### Recipe: Retta Bede's Graham Muffins

From the Kitchen of: Virginia Thirlkel, from Ohio (Retta's Niece)



Pour 1 cup hot water over 1 cup Bran Buds – let sit

|                                      |              |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| ½ c. shortening                      | 1 ½ c. sugar | 2 eggs |
| Cream sugar shortening and add eggs. |              |        |

|              |             |           |                   |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 2 ½ c. flour | 2 ½ t. soda | ¾ t. salt | 1 pint buttermilk |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|

Mix dry ingredients and add alternately with buttermilk to creamed mixture. Add 2 cups All Bran cereal. Fold in Bran Buds.

Bake at 350° for 20 – 25 minutes or at 400° for 20 minutes. This batter will keep for 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

# Alumni Spotlight 1955

## Wendell Kelm

If you ask Wendell Kelm '55, for a list of what he did not like about attending the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) the list has nothing on it. "Each teacher was unique and taught in their unique way. I had so many different classes to choose from, and I got to meet students from all over," Wendell said. "I feel it was a unique experience going to school there, and we got a great education."

Wendell came from Neche, ND to the NWSA

when he was a junior. Another boy from Neche, Jim Winkler, had attended a year at Crookston and he thinks that influenced the decision for Wendell to come. It was 120 miles from Neche to Crookston, and he is glad his parents decided to send him here. His dad had also suffered a heart attack and it made it possible for him to go to school and still be around for the important times on the farm to help.

His NWSA memories are good ones. One memory of the classroom Wendell recalls clearly is a farm management class from Dr. Soine. Wendell explains, "Dr. Soine asked us to define the term farm management. We answered with what we thought were pretty good answers." Dr. Soine responded, "What kind of farmers are you going to be?" The definition Soine gave is one that Wendell can recite to this day is this: "Farm management is the application of agricultural and economic principles to the organization and operation of a farm."

The activities Wendell was involved in were many and the thing he loved most about his participation was



Business Staff from the 1955 "Aggie": James Olson; Mr. Reiersgord, Advisor; Wayne Erickson; and Wendell Kelm.



Wendell Kelm as pictured in the 1955 yearbook.

the fellowship they shared and getting to know other students personally. That is one of the reasons he knows it was a great school attend. He excelled at the NWSA too. Named valedictorian of his class, he still has a copy of the valedictory address he wrote with John Mlinar's editing marks still there. He was nervous the day he gave that address too. Wendell says, "It was a hard thing to do being a farm boy, I wasn't used to being up in front of so many to speak."

His first year, Wendell roomed with Harley Thureen and Marvin Dahl in Stephens Hall. The second year, he roomed with his brother, Dean, and Marvin Dahl in Robertson. If you ask him if he ever got into trouble, he says not really. However, truth be told, he and four or five others went to the roller

skating rink in Winger, MN. Classmate, Wayne Erickson, recommended the rink and so they decided to go and find out. "We didn't quite make it back in time," Wendell says, "I thought we would get campused, but we didn't. Maybe it was because it was the weekend." Whatever the reason, he said the skating rink was a good one.

Wendell loved farming and that is why following graduation he attended University of North Dakota only two weeks before deciding he would return to the farm in Neche. He was there until 1997 when he decided to leave the farm and attend the Lutheran Brethren seminary in Fergus Falls, MN. He graduated about two and a half years ago, and currently helps serve three different churches west of Fergus

*"I feel it was a unique experience going to school there (NWSA), and we got a great education."*  
 – Wendell Kelm

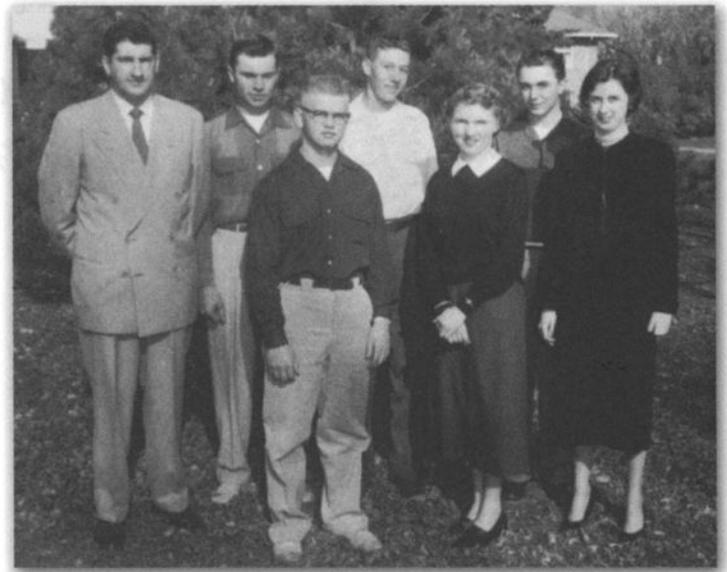
Falls. He and his wife, Lois, have three daughters.

"I haven't been back to a reunion in some years," Wendell shares, "I plan to come back this year. I hope many of my classmates do too." Wendell goes on to reflect, "It is a good time to come back to a reunion because it is time we renewed friendships and had a chance to reminisce together." He also shared some important parting thoughts from the last pages of the 1955 yearbook.

"When our four years commence, we pass through these gates..." Wendell says, "When we looked fifty years

into the future, it looked like a long way down that road, like a century. When I look back, I wonder, where did those years go?"

The reunion is a great time to find out about your classmates and friends, join Wendell and many others as they come back, and enjoy the company of Northwest School alumni. For more information on the reunion, contact Rose in the alumni office at [rulseth@umn.edu](mailto:rulseth@umn.edu) or by calling 218-281-8439. ❖



Senior Class Officers and Advisors, 1955, First Row: James Olson, Vice President; Harlene Hagen, Treasurer; Miss Croal, Adviser; Second Row: Mr. Whiting, Adviser; Wendell Kelm President; Keith Chisholm, Seargeant-at-Arms; and Donald Wald, Secretary.

## *Spotlight on Development*

### **A Better Alternative—The University of Minnesota Foundation**

Martha is 83 years old and she bought a commercial annuity contract several years ago that was earning a good rate of interest. That contract is worth \$50,000 and she invested \$25,000 in the contract. Recently that rate has dropped significantly and she now needs some additional income, but she does not like the fact that the earnings rate is low and she will have to pay income tax on all of the income taken out if she makes withdrawals.

She had named the University of Minnesota Foundation the beneficiary on the annuity contract with the proceeds to benefit a scholarship fund for students attending the University of Minnesota, Crookston. She does not want to annuitize the contract because if she lives a long time there might not be much left at her death or maybe even nothing left. She wants to know if there is another alternative.

One alternative would be to cash in the contract and establish a charitable gift annuity with the University of Minnesota Foundation. At her age she would receive a 8.8 % payout with quarterly payments of \$1100 of which \$793 of each payment would be tax-free. She would also receive an income tax deduction of \$25,243 which would offset the \$25,000 of income she would have to report when she cashes in her commercial annuity contract.

She likes the fact that the University of Minnesota Foundation is able to manage her money so that, at her death, there will always be a nice gift to establish the scholarship fund for a student at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. While this is an excellent alternative for a commercial annuity, it is also a great alternative for donors who might have government savings bonds that are either not paying a high rate or in some cases has stopped earning interest because they have matured.

If you are interested in this or other creative ways to use your assets to provide more benefits to you and your family during your life-time and help you with you charitable gift goals for the University of Minnesota, Crookston, please contact Michael Meyer, Development Director at 218-281-8439. ❖



*As we get ready for our reunion, we enjoy*

# Looking back...

*with our golden anniversary class!*

## Class Prophecy 1955

*Excerpted from the Aggie Rouser*

**Leonard Bailey** – mayor of Tabor  
**Rick Onstad** – manager of Harley Davidson Company  
**Charles Kramer** – general manager of Zundapp Factory, running a close second with Rick.  
**Wayne Ranstrom** – head of casino tables in Las Vegas  
**Kent Omdahl** – retired in Florida after making a \$100,000,000 on the “Omdahl” special sport car  
**Donald Taus** – made his first million and driving a 1965 Cadillac  
**Henry Hettwer** – owner of Flowing Well  
**Stanley Johnson** – searching for uranium at Menagha  
**Ronald Porter** – operating Herb’s Barn in Arthur  
**Art Grothman** – raising carrot tops  
**LeRoy Sondrol** – general contractor at Reynolds  
**Wendell Kelm** – still trying to get acquainted with the blonde in Eagles Drug Store  
**John Hoper** – still saving money so he can trade off his ’47 Chev.  
**Syl Greskowiak** – cleaning his house up after his parties  
**Wayne Erickson** – Figuring out ways to get to Grygla  
**David Mikelson** – raising turkeys and on his second million  
**Willard Loing** – head of the new Charles Atlas School  
**Bob Strandberg** – operating an animal hospital in Warren  
**Jim Roberts** – still trying to settle affairs in Lancaster  
**Don Cragmile** – happily married to Clarice and raising Yorkshires  
**Glen Finkenbinder** – operating his dad’s farm by Crookston  
**Jean Stromstad** – babysitting for John and Harlene and waiting for the sergeant.  
**Jeanne Vanek** – waiting for Stromie to get married so she can be a bridesmaid  
**John Love** – Brigadier General of National Guard  
**Jerome Fugelseth** – same thing as John  
**Ardell Sherry** – doing road shows with Tommy Collins  
**James Dudgeon** – head of Tommy Collins fan club in Chicago  
**Lowell Hanson** – wrestling coach at M.S.T.C.  
**Henry Landin** – Following in his father-in-laws footsteps as representative of the 67th district

**Ronald Karlstad** – Looking for his teeth in a snowbank  
**George Torkelson** – new owner of the Jewel  
**Raymond Wiertzema** – playing the harmonica and accompanying Sherry and Collins  
**George Johnson** – still having trouble in Warren  
**Robert Zimney** – waiting for a dollars worth of gas and a date with Eunice  
**Don Overgaard** – living on a sheep farm with Joe  
**Robert Johnson** – still sneaking the Model A uptown  
**Raymond Baatz** – catching sheep and hauling bales at Ewings  
**Robert Glass** – half ownership in Brekkens  
**Clarence Grove** – swimming in the English Channel  
**Ed Grove** – swimming in the English Channel  
**David Boman** – scraping and moving for the highway department  
**Keith Freeland** – singing Ol’ Man River during station breaks at N.B.C.  
**James Olson** – head patrolman in North Dakota  
**Bob Kuznia** – National Bridge Champ with Horgan  
**Wilfred Friesen** – bailing his brother out of jail in Canada  
**Howard Duncan** – still breaking the rod bearing bolt on tractors  
**Richard Dufault** – his own orchestra  
**Willis Finifrock** – raising turkeys on a farm near Barnum  
**Melvin Allrich** – farming near Twin Valley  
**Charles Armstrong** – track coach at Euclid  
**Mary Lou Arverson** – in competition with Marilyn M.  
**Dorothy Benson** – dancing at Fourtowns  
**Sheryl Eisert** – head telephone operator in San Francisco  
**Harlene Hagen** – still babysitting, but with John’s help  
**Marge Iwen** – going to dances every Wednesday and Friday night at Herb’s barn  
**Bernice Jones** – happily married to John  
**Barbara Kagg** – living on a farm near Angus and raising that dozen  
**Glenn Filipi** – flipping little Kaggs around  
**Marlys Love** – raising kids and helping Glen raise hogs  
**Donna Miller** – playing annual concerts at Carnegie Hall



**Marilyn Balstad** – teaching home economics in St. Hilaire  
**Donald Wald** – keeping house and farming while Marilyn teaches  
**Shirley Norgaard** – teaching business law at B. S. T.C.  
**Angeline Salentiny** – still waiting to be bridesmaid for Carol  
**Carol Soltis** – still taking John home  
**Arnold Skeie** – still trying to get his foot in the front door at Gonvick  
**Kendell Truhn** – owner of the Ford Company in Warren  
**Jerry Kowaliuk** – contractor in Chicago  
**Charles Hawkins** – selling Farmer's Union products and insurance  
**Mardell Boyum** – doing custom baling all over Minnesota  
**James Halstenson** – playing in Dufault's orchestra  
**Keith Chisholm** – coaching at Gary  
**Clinton Balstad** – raising Herefords  
**Ermil Johnson** – still a private in the army  
**Spencer Larson** – building roads  
**Gene Palya** – running his own business in Tabor  
**Orvin Drangstveit** – farming near Goodrich  
**Roger Laudnerville** – he finally let a Janice catch him  
**Paul Tollefson** – farming 12 sections and raising a dozen kids  
**Harold Ash** – still having a good time and building hot rods  
**Russell Carlson** – speed driver at Indianapolis Speedway

**Milton Caylor** – welding instructor at Dunwoody  
**Fredrick Clasen** – mechanic for Carlson at Indianapolis Speedway  
**Marvin Dahl** – farming at East Grand Forks  
**John Deschene** – farming at Argyle  
**Alphie Doyea** – going to Syl's parties  
**Dennis Dragseth** – operating Crookston Recreation Center  
**Dicky Eastvold** – living at Halstad  
**Robert Eaton** – skating on Olympic teams  
**Wallace Eftefield** – raising little Eftefields in Stephen  
**Gerald Engesether** – farming at Winger  
**Marvin Engesether** – farming with Gerald  
**Hilaire Prudhomme** – teaching French at the Northwest School  
**Robert Palm** – still repairing his Chev  
**Wayne Nelson** – supplying Mr. Mlinar with playing cards  
**Wildred Moser** – booster for the Farmer's Union  
**Larry Lisell** – hockey player at Roseau  
**Melvin Larson** – driving a new Mercury  
**Robert Kuznia** – finally growing up  
**James Paulson** – raising registered seed near Fosston  
**Kenneth Sanders** – farming in he peat bogs near Goodridge  
**Donevan Edwards** – still arguing John Deere and International with Jim Paulson

## Senior Day - Wednesday, March 16, 1955

### *Excerpted from the Instructions for Senior Day 1955*

Senior Day is a day of recognition and honor to the Senior Class. To make it a success all students must understand their part in the observance of this day.

- I. At the Assembly program the Seniors will sit in the Junior section of the Auditorium—the front ten rows. The Juniors will sit in the back section, all other students in their assigned seats.
- II. In due respect to the Seniors, the following courtesies should be observed:
  - a. Seniors may go to the head of the lunch line
  - b. Underclassmen will carry books and trays for Seniors if asked to do so
  - c. Underclassmen will bow to Seniors if told to do so, voluntarily
  - d. Underclassmen will open doors for the Seniors and help them on and off with their coats
  - e. Any other courtesies on the part of the underclassmen will be appreciated
- III. Note to Seniors: the above regulations are strictly voluntary on the part of underclassmen.
- IV. Seniors will be recognized by their dress, white shirts, etc.

THE SENIOR CLASS

# ...to 1955



# Alumni Spotlight 1955

## Marilyn Balstad

You might not know it, but perhaps you do, it was a Balstad family tradition to attend the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA). Marilyn Balstad was no exception. Growing up in rural Fosston, Marilyn's father, Rudolph, graduated from the NWSA in 1918. Marilyn's husband, Darol, jokes that she attended the University High School. Actually, Darol is right, attending the NWSA is a rare opportunity, and she feels privileged to have attended the University of Minnesota's high school in northwest Minnesota.

Miss Bede greeted Marilyn with the words, "Another Balstad girl," so the Balstad reputation had preceded her. However, Marilyn was the last of the line. Miss Bede was one of her favorite teachers. "She introduced us to shrimp and broccoli, things that we did not have access to on the farm," Marilyn shares. She also wanted the girls to understand football. A sports enthusiast herself, Miss Bede would draw plays on the blackboard and try to help us understand the game. Her class in home management was one of the highlights of her high

school home economics experience. During quantity cooking class, Marilyn worked with Mrs. Wogslund in the bakery and enjoyed herself tremendously.

Marilyn remembers Mr. Whiting as one of the class advisors and her social studies teacher. The other advisor was Mary J. Croal. Mr. Whiting told us, Marilyn recalls, "You must meet your friends at church." Miss Larsen was advisor for the school newspaper, the Rouser, on which Marilyn and Donna Miller worked as co-editors. Miss Larsen was stern but fair and they could get help whenever they needed it. Marilyn says, "I still appreciate journalism and as co-editor of the Aggie yearbook, she was involved in a lot of journalistic endeavors.

Berneil Nelson was always there to help us in the library, which she says she frequented every day to read newspapers and study. Mr. Foker taught her mechanical drawing class, and she remembers he wanted the printing to be precise. Marilyn remembers the respect that everyone had for T. M. McCall and Mr. Reiersgard. "We just knew they were interested in students, they cared about our progress, and they wanted us to graduate from the NWSA," Marilyn says.

Now if you wonder what her least favorite class was, she can tell you easily. It was swimming! Taking the tests included diving off the

board, and she remembers going down for the third time before Margie Iwen came in to rescue her. The instructor did not make her return to the water, and she still doesn't know how to swim to this day.

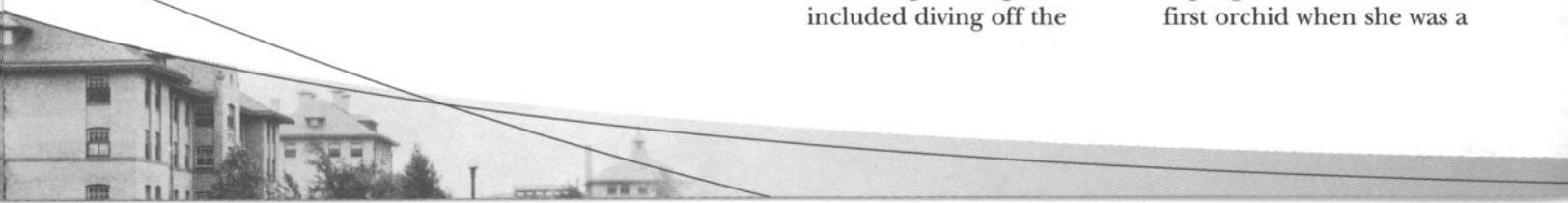
Marilyn can't talk about school without including her enjoyment of music: choir, glee club, band, and mixed octet. As part of these groups, she sang at the Winter Shows, banquets, Presbyterian Church, and the Elks' or Eagles' banquets rooms. Music lessons, practice rooms, the NWSA had it all. Her only regret is not being more disciplined during her practice time.

Attending the NWSA put us ahead of our time. Things like National Honor Society, Tri-Hi-Y, and the Newman Club, and things like record keeping during summer home projects helped us develop social skills, speaking skills and intergenerational skills.

"We learned respect for faculty and administrators," Marilyn explains. She had the opportunity to baby-sit for Mr. and Mrs. Sumption, because students lived with the faculty. It was part of dorm life, which Marilyn loved. Having roommates, housemothers, and keeping her room tidy were all a part of attending school here.

Cheerleading was another thing that Marilyn loved and stands out as one of the highlights. She received her first orchid when she was a

Marilyn Balstad '55 poses in her white corduroy cheerleading outfit.



*"Miss Bede introduced us to shrimp and broccoli, things that we did not have access to on the farm."* —Marilyn Balstad



Marilyn Balstad as pictured in the 1955 yearbook.

sophomore when she attended prom. "We still talk about the Eiffel Tower

we built for the prom in 1954. The theme was 'Evening in Paris.' We covered it with tinfoil, it is something we should have for our fiftieth reunion," Marilyn smiles.

I was only campused once when I went to a dance in Halstad. My parents got a call and I never wanted that to happen again. My parents were so supportive of us. They came to see us in everything, making the 90 mile round trip.

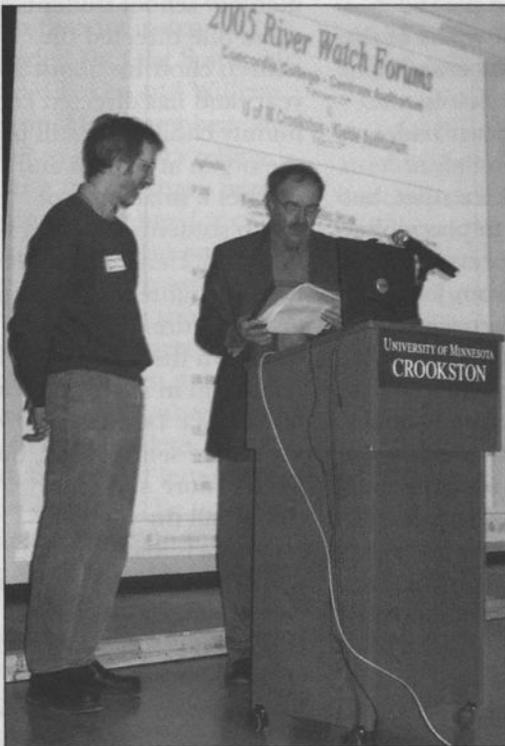
Marilyn was encouraged by Mrs. Kurt, the nurse, to go to college. She attended the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota

where she received her degree in home economics with a minor in science and English. She went into extension work following graduation where she worked as a home economist until 1964. She and her husband, Darol "Red" Melby, have two sons, Jon and James.

"My years at the NWSA were truly the best years of my life until I was married. It will be so special to go back for our fiftieth reunion because there are so many classmates I have not seen since 1955! I am sure we haven't changed at all!" Marilyn declares. "And, to

"Cheerleading was another thing that Marilyn loved and stands out as one of the highlights."

think, it is the 100th anniversary of the NWSA, what a milestone. I am anxious to see the Centennial Gardens. The Crookston campus is the most beautiful U of M campus in the entire state." ♦



UMC's Joe Massey, presents Wayne Goeken with a Distinguished Service to Conservation Award at the River Watch forum held March 2 on the UMC campus.

## *Spotlight on UMC*

### UMC Hosts River Watch

UMC was host to aspiring young scientists and environmental stewards when the 10th anniversary of the River Watch program in the Red River Basin was held in Kiehle Auditorium on March 2. UMC's Natural Resources Department co-hosted the River Watch Forum attended by over 150 high school students from 19 schools in northwest Minnesota and northeastern North Dakota.

Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator of the Red River Watershed Management Board received a Distinguished Service to Conservation Award presented by UMC's CEO Joe Massey. The day-long program featured students presenting their findings, data analysis methods, and a poster contest. Laura Bell, Lab Services Coordinator in the Natural Resources Department and two Water Resource students Jen Kaser, Kellogg, MN, and Kevin Geitzen, Grand Forks, ND, handled registration and were the judges for the displays entered by some 18 schools from northwestern Minnesota and northeastern Minnesota.

The program started with the four schools on the Sand Hill River in 1995 and has grown successfully and vigorously over the years. Additional schools also monitor the southern basin and a forum for those students was held at Concordia College in Moorhead. Learn more about the monitoring program by visiting: [www.ndsu.nodak.edu/tricollege/watershed/watchproobj.htm](http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/tricollege/watershed/watchproobj.htm)

# Alumni Spotlight 1955

## Donna Miller

Growing up on a farm just south of Crookston, Donna Miller loved to be outdoors. "I enjoyed being with my dad in the fields," Donna explains, "and attending the Northwest School gave me an extra three months to enjoy the outdoors." Donna came to the Northwest School many times while she was growing up, and her mother, Laura Buck, was a 1928 graduate.

Her mother would have had a challenge teaching her homemaking skills Donna says, but she found that through taking the home economics courses and projects through 4-H she learned many of the



Donna Miller as pictured in the 1955 yearbook.

skills that she used the rest of her life. "Miss Bede was a fabulous teacher and dorm mother," Donna said, "she was demanding, but we really learned from her."

When she was a freshman, she lived in Selvig, and after that she lived in McCall. Her roommate was Bernice Jones of Goodridge, MN. "She lives in Ely, MN now," Donna explains, "and we have kept in touch through the years." Dorm life was good for Donna, it prepared her for college life, and even though she went home on weekends, she learned to do things on her own by attending school.

If you inquire if she ever got into any trouble, Donna is quick to tell you she didn't. "I didn't want to get campused, and I didn't want to get involved in anything that might get us all campused. If someone got into some trouble and did not confess, it resulted in an all-dorm campusing. "I never liked when that happened," Donna states.

One of Donna's favorite teachers was Alice Ittner. "She did so much to help me adjust to a different lifestyle and a bigger school." Donna goes on to say, "When I was in country school, there were only two in my class. My classmate, Raymond Baatz, and I both graduated from the NWSA." Her English teacher, Jean Kjorlie, was another favorite, along with Mary Croal, her piano teacher along with her vocal instructor, Miss Harmon. "I



Donna Miller pictured with the cast of "Cheaper by the Dozen." She is in the front row, seated at the far right.

remember Mr. Pilkey too, he taught my math class, and he always tried to keep us on the straight and narrow."

Donna enjoyed being a part of the Aggie board and remembered it as a great experience. She loved all of the music activities like glee club, choir, and piano lessons. "I got to be part of the band when I was a sophomore," Donna shares, "something I never had been able to do before." She played the trumpet, but always wanted to play violin. Her final semester, she took violin lessons from John Miller, and at her senior recital, she played "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"—an accomplishment she was very proud of.

She enjoyed so many things about the Northwest School. One highlight was playing the role of the mother in the play "Cheaper by the Dozen." Donna received the Caleb Dorr Scholarship, was elected to the National Honor Society, and was a member of Tri-Hi-Y. When the classes had their music contests, she served as accompanist

for two years.

After her graduation from the NWSA, she attended Macalester College in St. Paul, MN and graduated with a bachelor's degree in music. She taught music in the public schools in every grade from 1-12, but found that she enjoyed the elementary school students the most. She directed the church choir for about 30 years and has directed community choirs. She still plays the organ at church and teaches a small class of piano students. She and her husband, Dennis Swan, have three daughters and seven grandchildren, the eighth one is on the way. They live on a farm in southwestern Minnesota. Donna says, "We say we are semi-retired, but we are more and more retired all the time."

Donna is planning to come back for the reunion this summer, and you should too! "I haven't back in a number of years," Donna explains, "I am looking forward to coming back to reminisce with my classmates and friends from the Northwest School." ♦

## Paul Tollefson

# Alumni Spotlight 1955

Until the eighth grade, Paul Tollefson attended the school in Beltrami, MN, but it was almost inevitable that he would attend the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) because so many of his family had. His brothers, Bert '42, Russell '45, and his sister, Doris '54, had already graduated, and his younger brother, Roger '57, would follow their example as well. Paul never spent too much time worrying about how well he did in school until he reached sixth grade. He was rewarded for applying himself with better grades, and so when he came to the NWSA, he enjoyed learning the things that interested him.

His favorite instructors included Dr. Olaf Soine, Mr. Arnold Foker, and William Barron. He remembers Mr. Foker in carpentry telling them it takes a sharp pencil to draw a fine line for cutting, and he thinks of it every time he draws a line. He enjoyed the shop classes taught by Mr. Barron. Paul took the greatest interest in those classes. "I never was much of an athlete," he said, but he did letter in cross-country. The team was coached by Philip Larson. He also enjoyed the classes from Dr. Soine who taught students in his classes all the basics. His summer projects in weed and seed identification and combine use each won a blue ribbon.

"I never got into trouble," Paul explains, "I stuck pretty



Paul Tollefson as he appears in the 1955 yearbook.

close to the rules, but I had a lot of fun" He was a bit surprised when he found out that he was salutatorian of his graduating class. "I never really thought about it," Paul said, "I just did what I was supposed to do, and I guess it worked out."

One of the things Paul enjoyed the most about attending the NWSA was the camaraderie of living in the dorm. "My roommates and I always had a good time and got along," Paul recalls. That part of life at the Northwest School was probably the highlight for him as it was for many of the students. He lived for three years in Stephens Hall with Mr. and Mrs. Lysaker as preceptors, and his senior year, he lived in Robertson. His roommates included Alphonse Doyea, Ardell Sherry, Mardell Boyum, and James Paulson.

When he graduated in 1955, Paul thought he would go home to farm, but about two weeks before the

University of Minnesota began its fall semester, Paul's sister, Doris, convinced him he should apply to go to college. "They accepted me," Paul said, "so I thought I would go for a couple of years." He went longer, graduating in 1960 from the University with a degree in mechanized agriculture and a minor in agronomy. He and brother, Roger who also attended the University, traveled around the state of Minnesota singing with the 60-voice Lutheran Student Choir while they were both students there.

Following his graduation, Paul farmed in partnership with his brother, Duane, and eventually on his own. For close to forty years, Paul farmed near Beltrami. Never married, Paul retired in 1999. However, he met and married his wife, Elaine, on August 29, 2003 when he was 65 years old. He became an instant grandfather to Elaine's six grandchildren ranging in age from 1½ to 21 years old. They live close giving Paul

"He remembers Mr. Foker in carpentry telling them it takes a sharp pencil to draw a fine line for cutting, and he thinks of it every time he draws a line."

has the chance to get to know Elaine's children and grandchildren, something he is really enjoying.

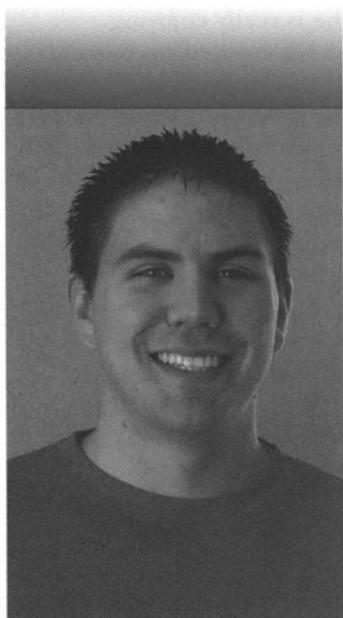
He enjoyed his years at the Northwest School, and he believes that the education he received was a good one. Paul is considering a visit to UMC during the reunion to see some of his classmates and friends. It is something you should consider too, the reunion is a great time to re-connect with friends and classmates who were so much a part of your life as a student. There is no better time than now, and we would love to see you there! ❖



Paul Tollefson, third row, second in, as he appears with the 1955 cross country team.

## Scholarship Spotlight

The Northwest Heritage Scholarship helped Mike Holte attend the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC). Like his grandfather before him, Mike, wants to spend his life farming. The senior, majoring in agronomy, is from Shelly, MN, and he and his grandfather, Ames Holte, '32-'33, both had a passion for farming. Mike said, "My grandfather retired in 1982,



Mike Holte is a recipient of the Heritage Fund Scholarship.

but I didn't even know he had retired until many years afterward, because he was out at the farm all the time at work."

Mike loves agriculture. The idea of being your own boss, setting your own hours, and spending your time out of doors is appealing. UMC is preparing him for that career. His favorite classes are in precision agriculture taught by Gary Wagner and Paul Aakre. His advisor, Marv Mattson helped get him excited about attending UMC following graduation from Norman County West in Halstad, MN. Now, Mike is the Agronomy Club president and has helped to plan trips to Brandon, Manitoba Canada, American Crystal Sugar in Hillsboro, ND, and this spring they will visit Missouri where they will tour Monsanto.

Another thing that influenced Mike's decision to attend UMC is the technology. He liked that lap top computers and other technological advantages of the campus. Those things along with the small class size drew Mike to UMC after high school. His two step-brothers, Nick '01 and Jeremy Paulsrud '96, also attended UMC and that helped determine his decision also.

The first three years Mike was at UMC, he played baseball. Ames Holte was an ath-

lete as well. He played basketball for the Aggies, and although he passed away in 1996, Mike remembers him sharing a story about a free throw contest where he made 99 out of 100 baskets. Here is a record of that story from the May 1933 *Northwest Monthly*:

*Ames Holte, Shelly, member of the Junior class, and forward on the 1932-33 basketball team, was awarded the gold basketball offered by the Athletic Association to the winner of the annual basketball free throw contest. The contest is limited to members of the school basketball squad and each contestant was required to take 25 shots per day during the basketball season. The four highest, based on daily average and regularity, entered the finals, each taking 100 shots. Holte joined the Northwest School family last fall and plans to return next fall. He is expected to be an important cog on next year's basketball team.*

Ames left a great legacy to his grandson. Mike receives the Heritage Fund Scholarship because of his grandfather's attendance at the Northwest School, and when he graduates, he will farm the same land that his grandfather returned home to farm in the 1930s. This spring Mike will marry Erin Thompson, a UMC student

## Michael Holte



Ames Holte played forward on the 1932-33 basketball team.

he met his freshman year. She is a double major in Early Childhood Education and Business Management. They have a two-year old daughter, Korina. Like his grandfather, Mike will leave UMC prepared for a career in agriculture, and he and his soon to be wife, Erin, will carry on the tradition that is now UMC. It is a legacy of Ames Holte and the legacy of the Northwest School of Agriculture. ❖

## Welding Facilities Back

Paul Aakre and Kent Freberg, professors in Agricultural Systems Management (ASM) are proud of the new welding facilities at the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) campus.

Maintenance welding and metal fabrication plays an important role in many of the career paths chosen by students in the Agriculture and Natural Resource majors. Careers in ag education, agronomy, farming, landscaping, golf and turf management, livestock production, and power and machinery are all influenced by the welding skills of employees. Welding and metal fabrication has been a part of the University since the early days of the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA). Since the fall of 2000, UMC students have been taught welding at the Crookston High School. The new facilities will allow UMC students better access to training at a time that will be a better fit for their schedules. The facility is geared to provide training for "maintenance

welding." Students will obtain experience in stick welding (SMAW), tig welding (GTAW) and wire welding (GMAW) applications. Plasma cutting, oxyacetylene welding, cutting and brazing will also be included.

Currently, an introduction to welding has been taught within a course called ASM 1034 Ag Facilities Maintenance. With the lab on campus, an advanced course will be added that will be especially beneficial to ASM and Ag Education students. Four new Miller and Lincoln welders were purchased adding to the five existing machines. The lab will have the potential for three wire welders, four combination stick and tig machines, and two additional stick machines plus a plasma cutter. Oxyacetylene welding and cutting tables will be added.

Paul Aakre and Kent Freberg designed the facilities while most of the work was accomplished by senior ASM student Adam Koplin

## Spotlight on UMC

from Campbell, Minnesota. Upon graduation from UMC, Adam plans to pursue an advanced degree in Mechanical Engineering at North Dakota State University. UMC is also grateful to Larry Altringer, owner of Crookston Welding for his contribution to building the facilities. Professor Ron Del Vecchio,

Agriculture Department Head was also instrumental in pushing for the improvements and expansion. "Having these facilities on campus will enhance our ability to attract students to our campus," says Aakre. Total cost of the facilities including four new welders will cost the University less than \$8,000. ❖



Front Row: Joe Massey, UMC's CEO, Kent Freberg, Larry Altringer, and Paul Aakre. Back Row: Adam Koplin, Lyle Westrom, and Ron Del Vecchio are pictured in the new welding facility designed by Freberg and Aakre.

**Be a part of the AGGIE! Submit your news for Class Notes!**

**Don't forget a photo!**

Name (please include your maiden name) \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation/Attendance \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

May we publish your email address? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street, City, State, Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

News you wish to share (please attached a sheet of paper if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Rose Ulseth, 2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716 or Email: [rulseth@umn.edu](mailto:rulseth@umn.edu)

## Alumni Spotlight

## Esther Torgerson '33

*Preface: The autobiography below is being sent in to the Aggie in memoriam to my mother, Esther (Torgerson) Petsch who passed away at the age of 90 on November 20, 2004. The following is her autobiography, in her own words, that she wrote at the AC at the age of 19, and which I discovered a few years ago while archiving all her memories. During her last years, thanks to the Aggie, Mom and I enjoyed reading all the alumni stories about the old days at the AC. And she remembered clearly many of the people and events featured in the articles, even though her short-term memory was very poor the last 4 years.*

*Her whole life she spoke to me wistfully about the AC and how much she loved it there and that she owed so much to her teacher/director Rose (Polski) Anderson for helping her excel in piano and voice. I had been told that they got together occasionally for years after that. And now I understand that Rose is over 100 years old and living in St. Paul, as I found out reading an interview written in the Aggie not long ago about her.*

*In 1932, Mom was awarded "The Highest Scholastic Standing in the Study of Voice." She was very active in the Glee Clubs, Musicals and played piano for the orchestra, and solos, both piano and voice, for graduations and such. She also entertained many friends and classmates in the dormitory hall where she lived.*

*During summers, she sang with the "Torgerson Family Band" around Fosston for barn dances, picnics, and dance halls. Her mother, Olga, who like her grandmother played guitar, her dad, Louis, played violin, and her brother Orrin played the accordion. Mom went on to sing on the radio briefly in the 30's and the family in Fosston would listen on the radio if the reception were good. Her Dad called her the Norwegian Songbird of the Red River Valley. Actually, her "stage name" was sometimes Gail Daniels, apparently because she was supposed to lose the "Norwegian" sounding name and dialect in order to be successful in music.*

*She went on to sing her whole life in choral groups and clubs even until just a month before she died, when she still sang her favorite, Grieg's "Solvieg's Song," by memory, in Norwegian to us. She never forgot the Norwegian songs and the love of music that she learned from her grandmother who came from Lillehammer, Norway and lived on the farm with the family. I hope you enjoy what she wrote herself below about the music in her family, her life before the AC, why she went there, and how much she loved it! Sincerely, Linda (Petsch) Solheim.*

## My Autobiography

*Written at the AC by Esther Torgerson Petsch at age 19, in 1933, during her Advanced year.*

I was born the seventeenth of April, 1914, in the same home in which I live now, located seven miles northeast from Fosston, Minnesota, beside Turtle Lake. Fosston is said to be the boundary line between the plain country and the forest region, and most of my life so far has been spent in, on, or near the vicinity of my birth.

My father descended from a well-bred family of Norway. My Grandfather

loved adventure and when he came across the ocean in search of it, he landed in Minnesota and bought a farm, which is our present home. He married soon and his wife died leaving him with seven small children to care for, but he married again some time later and my grandmother bore him six children, namely, Oline, Julia, Albert, Louis my father, Anton and another younger brother who died while still quite young. My father's grief was more than my grandparents' grief as this boy was the one who seemed to have the most talent in music and loved it.

My grandfather did not appreciate music at all but my grandmother loved music. When she was a young girl, she sang in a large Norwegian choir in Lillehammer, Norway. Possessing a beautiful clear voice, she sang solos accompanying herself on the guitar. She saved all the money she could possibly save and eventually saved enough to pay her fare to America where she met and married my grandfather. I still remember, although she has been dead for many years, her clear and bell-like voice even in old age. She would sing to me the same songs

which she sang in her happy youth and she had a faraway dreamy look in her eyes, I would know she was thinking of the times so long ago when she had sung the same tunes and ballads to other eager ears. Always she would say that I would just have to become a great singer someday so she could be proud of me.

My father was born in our present home. He was the third to the youngest child, although not the oldest. He was always responsible for everything at home. While he was still a young lad he learned to play the violin but no in the usual way. His



*"My grandfather loved adventure and when he came across the ocean in search of it, he landed in Minnesota and bought a farm."*



Esther Torgerson in her graduation photo.

father disliked music, and especially the violin. So my father didn't dare ask him for money to buy a violin, but he saved the little money he could and finally bought a new violin. When his father saw that he had bought a foolish violin, he strictly told my father he didn't want to see the thing around the house or he'd burn it up and he certainly didn't want to hear it! So my father hid his precious violin in the stable in the barn and when he wanted to play, as he frequently did, he settled himself in the hayloft and when he saw his father coming, he would run and hide it again. He was very persistent I trying to learn to play and he did learn to play very well after some time. During those trying days he made a vow that his children should

have all the education in music or otherwise that they wished for.

As they grew up, the rest of his brothers and sisters got married or sought a career of their own. His youngest sister, Julia, left home at the early age of fourteen and worked her way through school out west. She made her own way through music school

and after a few years became a much beloved music instructor of piano and violin. His youngest brother, Anton, took a homestead in Canada and studied the violin and learned to play by notes very easily.

Dad was left at home to take care of his parents who were getting on in age, as no one thought of staying home to give my father a chance, he had to take all responsibility and stay home. He was of an excellent constitution of body, very tall, well set, and strong. When he was twenty-eight years old he met my mother, then a young girl of only seventeen years. She is small, very frail to look at but a wonderful worker. A year after meeting each other they were married. My brother Orrin was their first

child. I was the second and the last.

Then my career begins. Although my life hasn't been exactly an exciting one and there are no tragedies or misfortune of real interest, it's been an ideal life. My parents are gentle, generous, good-humored, and affectionate to each other and my brother and myself. They have always given us everything we have ever desired.

I can't recall my grandfather's death, but I was six-years-old when my beloved grandmother passed away in the year of 1920, and I remember the last she said to mother and father was to give us a chance in music and turning to me she said, "Be a good girl and remember, make me proud of you someday in my heaven." She spoke to me in Norwegian and of course I could talk only that as I was taught to speak Norwegian and couldn't speak an English word when I started school in the country at the age of eight. I was teased constantly because of this.

I continued going to the country school until I was through the sixth grade. We had three miles to walk back and forth every day, and at last my father bought a cutter or sleigh and we rode to school. Three neighbor children, two boys and one girl rode with us also, and I remember some good times riding behind on sleds tied to the cutter and holding onto ropes tied behind and standing on skis.

"We had three miles to walk back and forth (to school) every day, and at last my father bought a cutter or sleigh and we rode to school."

All this time, during the summer months I went to Norwegian school at our church one-half mile from home. My brother had been reading for the minister and was to be confirmed the following May after finishing the eighth grade, and folks asked him what he wished as a confirmation present and he said, "An accordion." So my father bought a ten-dollar accordion for him.

I also read for the minister and my father said that if I would read and be confirmed in Norwegian he would start me in music and would get a piano for me besides. I was more than eager to do this

The folks decided it was too far for me to walk to school during the winter months when I started seventh grade in Fosston, as we lived seven miles from town. I had to stay there in order to go to school. I boarded at a home there in town. I was used to being alone as to company or friends, I never cared for a girl-friend probably due to the fact that I

*“My father kept his promise and I received a new piano for a present upon my confirmation.”*

have no sisters, but I was very lonely for home and my folks awhile and then a girl next door to my room care over to visit one day, we grew interested in each other and I found her to be an accomplished musician, and a willing friend. We were together constantly, I needed someone to inspire me and she would never tire of helping me with my music lessons.

I took the eighth grade in town too and Marjorie and I were now inseparable. My brother had had two accordions since I started school in town, both bigger and better than the one before. He took piano lessons occasionally in town from my same instructor and began to read notes quite well, then his accordion got too easy for him and he wanted one larger so my father bought an Italian Cromatic for him. That year, 1927, I was going to school in Fosston, Orrin went to the Agricultural School at Crookston, Minnesota and he worked mostly with his music and carpentry. He commented on the efficiency of the music instruction of that school to us.

My father kept his promise and I received a new piano for a present upon my confirmation. I studied hard on my music that summer without taking lessons. And that fall, Mr. LaVoi

from the Northwest School came to visit Orrin and asked us both to go there to school. My parents had planned to send me to my Aunt Julia in Idaho as she had always begged to have me stay with her to go to school and take music from her besides. But our hopes and plans crashed with the sudden news of her death four years ago. My folks thought I would have a very good chance in music, so a little encouraged, I decided to come to the Northwest School but Orrin went on to McPhail School of Music in Minneapolis, Minnesota and with the good start he had down here he did wonderful work.

I liked school here as a freshman and liked my new roommate, Beatrice Eggum, my cousin from Dalton, who was a senior at that time. After our registration, we were strolling about the

campus grounds and suddenly Gladys I (another friend) stopped and exclaimed “Oh what a swell farm, they even have a glass chicken house!”, and she was looking at the greenhouse.

I have enjoyed the friendship of all my roommates so far and especially of my cousin and roommate, Beatrice, who was called home upon the serious illness of her mother, who is my aunt and my father’s only living sister, much loved by everyone. My four years here have been very busy, but I have enjoyed my work although sometimes it is trying. I put all the time I can to the study of music and I’ll forever be thankful to the folks for sending me to this school.

I have learned enough about music to be able to play with my brother on Fair Programs and other special



Esther Torgerson Petsch had a lasting love of music lived to see passed on to her grandchildren. Esther passed away in November 2004.

programs. Also Orrin organized an orchestra of his own and we play for more than one dance or celebration and in his way help earn our way through school and music lessons.

*Written by Esther Almira Torgerson, Age 19, 1933. ❖*

*Postscript: Esther’s brother, Orrin Torgerson attended the AC from 1927-28. Esther followed in his footsteps in 1929 and stayed four years, and then also moved to Minneapolis to go to MacPhail College of Music. Orrin eventually married and went back to farm with his father and grandfather on the old homestead, and raised two children there. The Torgerson family has been on this farm for over 108 years now, with four generations having lived there. Orrin’s wife, Ila still lives on this beautiful farm. His children and grandchildren all have been encouraged in music, like his father did. Esther stayed in the city and married Harold Petsch, an engineer, who started his own company, and then retired in the 1960’s to live on Lake Minnetonka. Her whole life, Mom continued to entertain us on her grand piano and passed on her love of music to her two daughters, and her four grandsons. I have played piano and sang now for 50 years, but will never be near as accomplished as Mom was, as she played and sang constantly every day for over 80 years. However, one of my sons, Brad, who is now 25, took piano and saxophone lessons when he was young, but then at about 15 he switched to guitar, (informing us that this was his greatest passion). So he now plays lead guitar in several of his own bands, writes songs, (and sometimes sings). Funny how it has gone full circle, back to Brad’s great great Grandmother who played guitar for Mom and told her to be a star someday. And so Mom’s love of music still goes on....*

*– Linda (Petsch) Solheim, Minnetonka, Minnesota*

# Loren Kiser

## Campus Kids

I was one of the three dozen or so campus kids until I left in the summer of 1935 for the Naval Academy. My father, Orville Kiser, was the animal husband of the Northwest School of Agriculture and Experiment Station. After thirty years on campus, he retired in 1952 and moved to Crookston. His picture is on the wall of the hippodrome (Winter Shows Building) along with Thomas McCall and other Red River Valley pioneers.

Looking back at the twenties and thirties, I can say that I grew up in the best of places at the best of times. We campus kids were a privileged bunch. We had all the advantages of country life—clean air and wide open spaces and none of the hard life of farmers—down to dusk chores...

We also took part in some of the Aggie events. Several of the campus kids were in the A.C. orchestra. In the orchestra in the 1928 Aggie, I am not much bigger than my baritone. Jean Dunham and Bob McCall played violins, Bob Sunderland played a cornet, my sister, Joy, had a clarinet, and I had a baritone. In some of the Aggie annuals, I am shown with a saxophone. We played for special events, such as graduation and Christmas programs.

I "helped" around the A.C. When calves were born or mares foaled, I was on hand. In the dairy barn, I pushed the manure cart outdoors and dumped it. I



Loren Kiser in uniform.

weaned calves by shoving their heads into a can of milk with my fingers in their mouths and gradually drew out my fingers when they began sucking. At threshing time, I was on the scene. I held shoats so the veterinarian could give them cholera shots.

When the school icehouse was filled in the winter, I was on the scene to "supervise." A bobsled with big blocks of river ice pulled up in front of the icehouse. There was a wooden elevator operated by horsepower to carry blocks to the upper levels. Saw dust was shoveled over the ice. Every two or three days during the summer my job was to go to the ice house, saw off a chunk and lug it home for our ice box. Dad didn't get a refrigerator until after I left home. When Dad's muskmelons

and watermelons began to ripen, he carried some over to the ice-house and buried them; we had cold melons until well into autumn.

It was an all hands job to drive the fattened steers to the corral where they were loaded into cattle cars and sent to packing plants in St. Paul. Sometimes the Holstein bull was also shipped out when new

blood came to the herd. One year, I road with Dad in the caboose. Other farmers were along to keep an eye on their livestock. A couple of times the train stopped because of a hot box. We got out and went to our cattle car to see how our cattle were making out. We stayed in a hotel in St. Paul and rode the Great Northern River Limited back the next day. And this train was really limited. One passenger car with very hard seats hitched to some freight cars. In winter, a small stove did its best to keep the chill for the car. Only a box of dried sandwiches and candy bars were provided. Since the conductor had many duties, these items were sold on the honor system; you dropped your coins for whatever you took. Flat paper cups were

This is part two of a two-part series from campus kid Loren Kiser. The beginning of this story appeared in the last issue of *The Aggie*.

in a rack by the small tank of water.

Most families on the campus had a car. We had a Model T Ford that Dad bought in 1921 for \$612. This had to be cranked because Charlie Kettering was still tinkering with the self-starter, I think. It was quite an improvement over Dad's first car, a 1905 Model T because it had detachable tire rims. This made it much easier to fix flats. Dad got several extra rims and tires, so on a trip the flats could be changed quickly and the patching to tubes done at the end of the trip.

It took five or six days to drive to Sedgwick, Kansas where my paternal grandfather lived; we camped along the way. Canvas in a frame fitted over the tops of the seat with a hole cut for the steering wheel. A lean-to fit over the roof of the car. Ma and my two sisters slept in the car, and Dad and I bunked on folding canvas cots. Cooking was done over a campfire. Coming into town in the evening, Dad

*“It took five or six days to drive to Sedgwick, Kansas where my paternal grandfather lived; we camped along the way.”*

would fill up the gas tank and ask, “Where’s the campground?” Usually, it was on the outskirts of a town. There were no conveniences aside from an outhouse and a pump. We kids thought it was high living if we got a cabin for the night. These were small one-room shacks with a wood stove and a couple of bedsteads, plumbing was outside.

Joy and I learned driving on this Model T. I imagine that I was no more than eight or nine when Dad let me take the wheel. I scared him once when coming into



“Golly, we had so much to do that boredom was a word we never knew.”

the A.C. from Highway 75. Dad told me to slow down, but I kept going, and I think we were on two wheels before Dad reached over and pushed up the gas lever. The Model T was easy to drive as it had only three pedals—forward, back, and stop. Speed was controlled by a lever on the right side of the steering wheel; the lever on the left side controlled the spark. When Joy and I got more competent, Dad let us drive it by ourselves to the horse barn and wash it. I got my first driver’s license after entering high school. There was no test. I just mailed two bits to the Minnesota Highway department with my vital statistics, and they mailed back the license.

In 1928, Dad bought a four-door Pontiac sedan. This had a beautiful Indian head cap for the radiator. This had a self-starter, but in the winter, the battery did not have enough juice to turn the big six-cylinder engine over. Some people put another battery on the line, but Dad made me go to our garage and crank the beast. I had to lug over a bucket of hot water. Then, after wrapping the engine block in a burlap bag, I poured on the hot water and cranked. Sometimes it started right away; other times I worked up a sweat before it thundered into action.

In 1932, I got a Ranger bicycle from the Mead Cycle Company in Chicago. All



Loren Kiser sitting on the NWSA campus mall.

the campus was there when I uncrated it and put it together. Dad got the first ride to my disappointment. A tool kit came with the bike, and this was tied inside the toolbox mounted between the double cross bars. The headlight was powered by a dry cell about the size of a quart milk bottle. Now, I had the freedom of the open road and could go places with Russ. Sometimes, he would ride out the A.C., and we would dine off plums, crab apples, and grapes in the A.C. orchard. At times, we bunked down in one of the school dormitories when school was not in session.

In 1932, Alan Brurud and I were looking for something to do on a sunny August day, and we hopped a freight train without any idea of where it was going. We wound up in a small

town. While sitting on the curb, a farmer approached and asked if we wanted to work. Sure, we did. He hired us for twenty bucks a month. We got into his wagon and went home with him. It was harvesting time. We joined other workers in the third floor. One old guy packed tobacco around his lower jaw before going to



Loren poses for a photo after a successful hunting trip.

*"...(we) were looking for something to do on a sunny day, and we hopped a freight train without any idea of where it was going."*

sleep. Periodically during the night, he would spit out the window. The juice killed all the grass beneath and took paint off the windowsill. We were rolled out early in the morning to help with milking and then out in the field to shock wheat—ten sheaves in one stack. The binder twin soon raised blisters on our hands so when we went to town on Saturday night, we got some gloves and a sack of Bull Durham, which came with twenty cigarette papers. I noticed that the farmer's hands were thickly calloused.

A couple days after we started work, my father drove into the barnyard, tossed out a suitcase and said, "Next time, let us know where you are," and drove off.

One day a steam tractor chuffed into the farm pulling a threshing machine. We were given a team and wagon to bring in the sheaves for threshing. Using a pitchfork was hard on our tender hands, but we stuck it out. We could get a nap on the way back to the farmyard after giving horses their head. The steam engine fascinated me.

We ate really well. Three or four women manned the kitchen. In addition to the usual three meals, lunch was brought out to the field at

ten and three. Then, there was a bedtime snack after the evening chores were done. Overall, it was an interesting month, and I earned ten bucks to boot.

During my last two summers in Crookston, I worked in the sugar beet fields. This was hard work. I had to leave the house at four in the morning because by mid afternoon,



Kiser family camping trip.

the sun was too hot to do any work in the fields. We were paid by the mile. The job was to crawl along on hands and knees and thin out each hill leaving only one sturdy plant to grow. I sewed sponges into my knees, but nothing could be done about protecting fingers that had to be forced into hard black soil to take out the weak plants. After each row was done, the man in charge checked it, and if it was done well enough, we were credited with so much mileage. Following the thin-

ning was the hoeing. I tried this, but gave up. Dad's hoe had a shortened handle and my back just was not up to bending over for six to eight hours.

In 1932 or '33, my sister Joy and I got the brilliant idea of putting on a play. We chose Tarzan. Probably because a comic strip of that name was running in the newspaper, and *Tarzan*

"In 1932 or 1933, my sister and I got the brilliant idea of putting on a play. We chose Tarzan."

Quite naturally, I was Tarzan; Joy was the narrator. Jean Dunham was the queen. Other campus kids played the parts of the great apes and the Waziri warriors. Nocky Dunham was supposed to be the queen's attendant, but I fired her when she didn't show up for rehearsal. She was off riding in the manure wagon with one of the farm hands. A couple of burlap sacks filled with hay and mounted to sticks represented the lion that I killed after a struggle and the deer, which I shot with an arrow. The queen of Opar's palace was a platform I constructed on top of our chicken coup.

We had a "full house." The play went off without many hitches, although I was distracted while swinging through the "middle terrace" and missed one branch when Mr. McCall shouted "Don't break any of the trees." He had been responsible for landscaping and planting the schools bushes and trees. ♦

*the Apeman* starring Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan had come to the Grand Theater. Our entire family went downtown to see the epic.

The setting for our production of *Tarzan* and the *Queen of Opar* was the windbreak behind our house. Chairs were set up on the edge of Dad's potato patch. We made fliers and distributed them to all the houses. I think admission was a nickel since we were in the midst of the great depression.

## Class Notes

### Anita (Mindermann) Tollefson '41

Crookston, MN

This photo was submitted to the alumni office.

The photo is Karl and Luise Mindermann with 2 year-old daughter, Anita. The photo was taken in Heidesheim Germany in 1924. The Mindermanns came to Crookston in 1925.



### Glen Torkelson '47

Crookston, MN

Glen Torkelson '47, Crookston MN and his wife, Lucile celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on November 14, 2004 with an

open house that was hosted by their six children and their families.



### Rodney Lindstrom '33

Rodney Lindstrom '33 is pictured with his two granddaughters and four great-granddaughters. He is doing just fine after a fall in early February that cracked his hip. He will be going home to live in mid April.

### Dorothy Bergh '48

Hallock, MN

Dorothy (Finkenbinder) Bergh '48 was the recipient of the Caregiver of the Year award at the annual Minnesota Health and Housing Alliance exhibition on February 2nd in Minneapolis. She was also recognized for her award at a reception at the Kittson Memorial Healthcare Center on February 15th. Dorothy is a certified nursing assistant and restorative aide at Kittson Memorial Healthcare Center.



Dorothy Bergh (left) is presented the Caregiver of the Year award. Presenting the award is Minnesota Department of Health Commissioner Dianne Mandernach.

## In Memory

### Clara (Ness) LaVoi '28

Fosston, MN

January 3, 2005

### Marion (Valor) Gray *attended '28-'31*

Grand Forks, ND

October 7, 2004

### Edna (Ross) Hanson '29

Alexandria, MN

September 29, 2004

### Arnold L. Hanson '30

Alexandria, MN

August 10, 2004

### Esther (Torgerson) Petsch '32

Minnetonka, MN

November 20, 2004

### Clarence W. Skaren '34

Drayton, ND

September 20, 2004

### Elfay Riopelle *attended '34-'36*

Argyle, MN

December 21, 2004

### Allan Merdink *attended '35-'36*

Stephen, MN

January 19, 2005

### Elmore Bergh '39

Hallock, MN

December 14, 2004

### Eileen (Ross) Kiel '38

Crookston, MN

January 18, 2005

### Nalton "Bud" Hubert Bucholz '39

Gary, MN

February 5, 2005

### Myra (Johannesen) Jensen '39

LaHabra, CA

November 6, 2003

### Phillip Lambert '39

Hallock, MN

December 15, 2004

### Dean Younggren '39

Hallock, MN

November 19, 2004

### Robert Boucher '41

Crookston, MN

January 21, 2005

### Oliver "Sonny" Sorenson '44

Fisher, MN

February 3, 2005

### Agnes Urbaniak '48

Stephen, MN

June 26, 2004

### Duane Swenson '48 Adv

Hawley, MN

### Allan "Buddy" Magnusson '49

Roseau, MN

February 6, 2005

### Donald Audette '57

Red Lake Falls, MN

March 9, 2005

### Gifts in Memory

Esther (Torgerson) Petsch  
by Linda Solheim

# Centennial Logo Unveiled!

The Centennial Celebration recognizing 100 years of education and research excellence on the Crookston campus was jumpstarted with the unveiling of the Centennial logo at the spring convocation in Kiehle Auditorium on March 30.

The new logo was announced to much fanfare with a short video history of the campus from the beginning of the NWSA school days through the technical school years to the present and then ending with the logos of both UMC and the NWSA merging into the Centennial logo. Everyone in attendance was given a pin of the new logo attached to a bookmark featuring highlights of the past 100 years.

"Our goal was to honor our roots and recognize the history of the Northwest School of Agriculture, acknowledge our close tie with the University of



Minnesota, and show that we are the University of Minnesota, Crookston and will be for the next 100 years. I think through the use of the imagery from the NWSA logo, the traditional maroon and gold colors and our featured logo in the middle we have accomplished a logo that will accomplish all of those goals as well as be easy to reproduce and recognizable as we move through the Centennial," Mike Meyer, Director of Development & Alumni Relations said.

The logo was designed in house by the University Relations and Development staff. Several outstanding design ideas had been submitted by alumni and friends but most were too elaborate to be translated into all of the media that will be featuring the Centennial logo. The Development & Alumni Relations office thanks everyone for their ideas. ❖

## 2005 All-Class Reunion Schedule June 24 & 25 The Kickoff to the Centennial Celebration!

### Friday, June 24

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Registration                           | 4:00 p.m.              |
| Fish Fry                               | 5:30 p.m.              |
| Dedication of Bede Ballroom            | 7:00 p.m.              |
| Social and Dance<br>"Evening in Paris" | 7:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. |

### Saturday, June 25

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Breakfast with Hersch                      | 8:30 p.m. |
| Registration<br>Muffins, rolls, and coffee | 9:00 a.m. |

Dedication of Centennial Park and Gardens 10:00 a.m.  
*Walking tours of gardens following dedication*

Bus tours with stops at various campus buildings 11:00 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Class photos followed by class meetings 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Top Aggie photos 5:00 p.m.

Top Aggie Buffet Dinner 5:30 p.m.

Top Aggie Awards Program 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

And lots more!

Watch your mail for further  reunion information!

# We are plowing ahead on the reunion!



Join us June 24 & 25!

NWSA Alumni Association  
University of Minnesota, Crookston  
2900 University Avenue  
Crookston, MN 56716-5001

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