

Views from VanDeWalle

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N-150 Celebration!

The University of Nebraska was chartered on February 15, 1869 and charged with its land-grant mission of public education and service to Nebraska. In 2019, we mark a 150-year legacy of improving the quality of life for Nebraska and beyond. Last week, you may have noticed a lot of social media posts with the hashtag #GlowBigRed. This was a fun day where everyone was encouraged to wear red, raise their Husker flags and show their Nebraska pride. If you missed it, there will be more opportunities to participate in celebrating 150 years of the University of Nebraska!

I decided to include excerpts of an article written by Meg Lauerman, Andy Schadwinkel, Ron Hull. You may recall the Morrill Act of 1862 was the start of the creation of the land-grant colleges in each state, primarily teaching agriculture, engineering and military tactics. The prologue includes the following:

Nebraska Legislator Augustus Harvey wrote the Charter of the University of Nebraska in 1869, spelling out six original colleges, a model farm, and a clear objective of affording inhabitants of the state the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science and the arts. The charter further specified that no person should be deprived of the privileges of the university because of age, sex, color or nationality. Inclusivity has remained a hallmark of our strength to this day.

Believe it or not, the bill containing this charter was passed by both houses of the state legislature (before it was a one-house unicameral legislature) and signed into law by Nebraska's first governor, David Butler, in one day—on Feb. 15, 1869. Lightning fast, we had a charter.

Since 1869, our university has opened a few million doors, inspiring both inventions and inventiveness. A few million ideas have sparked between like and unlike minds of folks who may not have otherwise ever come together in one place. The likes of Warren Buffett, Johnny Carson, Ruth Leverton, Aaron Douglas, Harold Edgerton and Loren Eiseley. Nobel laureates George W. Beadle, Alan Heeger and Donald Cram. Pulitzer Prize winners including Willa Cather, Ted Kooser and Marjie Lundstrom. Heisman trophy winners Johnny Rodgers, Mike Rozier and Eric Crouch. Perhaps you, and of course, the 26,000+ students, plus dedicated faculty and staff on campus right now, are all part of our past, present and future.

Our University of Nebraska is an audacious 1869 experiment that has turned into a \$2 billion annual economic boost for the state. And so much more is yet to come.

The next chapters in the story of our Big Red university will certainly unfold with the shaping of millions more lives and the creation of thousands of jobs, many in yet-to-be-conceived fields of interest and entrepreneurship. Guided by the 'north star' of our mission, we continue the story of empowerment and inspiration through research, teaching and outreach long into the future.



Please join us in celebrating the historic past of your University and helping us chart a bold new future. Check out our FaceBook pages at “Fillmore County Extension” or “Fillmore County 4-H” or website at fillmore.unl.edu for the latest information.

Source: University of Nebraska’s 150-year history points to the future by Meg Lauerman, Andy Schadwinkel, Ron Hull, 2019.

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