

Director's Note

August and September certainly each held a whirlwind of events and activity with County and State Fairs, along with Issue Team Discovery Webinars. I hope you all are able to settle back after what Deb Kraenow noted in a recent email to me she termed “fair decompression.” Thanks for all of your work to support this important component of our mission – that of serving the needs of counties, youth, volunteers and generally improving the lives of the residents of Nebraska.

This is an exciting time in Nebraska Extension with the formation of Issue Teams. I trust by now you have either participated directly or later viewed several of the Issue Team Discovery Webinars to help you evaluate which teams and roles you will devote

your talents to. If you have not viewed these, here’s the link once again <http://extension.unl.edu/issue-webinars>. Watch for further opportunities along our path toward full implementation of the issue team model to address critical issues identified by stakeholders, partners and from within our organization.

I’m also excited for our two-day District Fall Conference at Fort Robinson Nov. 3-4. As I outlined in the recent email, the planning committee has done a terrific job of planning objectives and events that I’m sure you will enjoy. See you there!

Have a great month!

Jack

New HPAL building dedicated as Fenster Building

The new headquarters building at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s High Plains Agricultural Lab was named for Charles R. Fenster prior to the Aug. 11 field day. The building naming recognized Fenster’s lifetime work as a pioneering UNL cropping systems specialist who worked at HPAL for many years.

About 140 people attended dinner and the building naming ceremony. UNL and HPAL officials present included Jack Whittier, director of the Panhandle Research and Extension Center; Keith

Rexroth of Sidney, chair of the building committee and HPAL advisory committee; Hector Santiago, Assistant Dean and Assistant Director of the IANR Agricultural Research Division; and Josh Egley, Director of Development at IANR for the University of Nebraska Foundation. Charlie’s daughter Kay Dubois and son Larry Fenster also added personal memories.

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Panhandle Monthly News is a newsletter for Panhandle Extension District staff. Its mission is to share information about staff members and their accomplishments, honors, awards, and employment milestones; updates on personnel changes; news about policies; and messages from Jack and the administrative team. Panhandle Monthly

News will be attached as a PDF to the Weekly Happenings once a month, and back issues are archived on the Staff Resources page of the Panhandle Extension website (http://panhandle.unl.edu/staff_resources), where lots of other information can also be found.



Staff Profile: Amir Haghverdi, Irrigation-Water Management Specialist

Spouse/Significant Other: Somayeh Ghodsi

Education/Career: I got my first Ph.D. degree in irrigation engineering in Iran. I got my second Ph.D. in biosystems engineering in the United States from University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Research and extension focus: Evaluating different irrigation scheduling techniques, including soil moisture sensors, water balance and canopy temperature sensors. Comparing overhead and subsurface irrigation system. Running deficit irrigation experiments. Studying variable rate irrigation scenarios in Nebraska Panhandle.

Hobbies/Interests: Reading, working out (i.e. running).

Grant Award Notices:

\$700 from University of Wisconsin-Institute for Public Policy and Service for a project entitled "Kettering Rural Issue Guide Research Project." Term of award: March 1, 2015, through Feb. 29, 2016. (Connie Hancock)

\$30,000 from Nebraska Corn Board for a project entitled "Decide NOW." Term of Award: July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016 (A team including Jessica Groskopf and Gary Hergert)

\$7,000 from American Malting Barley Association for a project entitled Winterhardy Barley Germplasm Project. Term of award: through June 30, 2016. (A team including Gary Hergert and Dipak Santra)

\$69,701 from Nebraska Corn Board for a project entitled High Yield Corn Foliar Analysis: Improving Interpretation and Recommendation of Supplemental Fertilization on Corn Yield. Term of award: July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016. (A team including Gary Hergert)

\$2,500 from Panhandle Public Health District for a project entitled National Diabetes Prevention Program. Term of award: April 15, 2015, through May 1, 2016. (Jamie Goffena)



Panhandle REC Director Jack Whittier presents Santosh Rajput with a mug during a gathering marking Santosh's departure from the Panhandle Center. After receiving his doctorate in August, Santosh took a position in Iowa.

Personnel Update

OPEN POSITIONS

Panhandle Center

Weeds Specialist – Interviews complete, candidate review ongoing.

NEW HIRES

Panhandle Extension

Sarah Paisley — 4-H / Youth Extension Educator in Deuel/Garden County, July 27

Leo Sierra — TEAMS program coordinator based at PREC, Sept. 9

DEPARTURES

Santosh Rajput—Received Ph.D. and took position in Iowa.



Posing with the new sign at the Charles R. Fenster Building are Charlie Fenster along with (from left) Jack Whittier, Gary Hergert, Cody Creech, Dipak Santra, Gary Peterson (retired soils specialist at Colorado State University who collaborated with Charlie on research at HPAL for many years), and Keith Rexroth of Sidney, chair of the building committee and HPAL Advisory Committee.

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Charlie also spoke, recalling how his life and career led him to work in dryland crop research in western Nebraska. He noted changes in agriculture over the decades and spoke about the importance of continuing research for the future of ag in the High Plains.

This is the text of the plaque now Hanging at HPAL Headquarters:

Charles R. Fenster, for whom this building is named, was a dryland cropping systems specialist for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln from 1956 until his retirement in 1982. In 1966 Charlie became a full professor and extension agronomist. He was faculty supervisor at the UNL High Plains Agricultural Lab from its establishment in 1970 until retiring. As a crop management specialist he conducted research into controlling wind erosion. Many of the techniques he developed are widely used throughout the world. His work on conservation tillage and ecofallow is fundamental to the environmentally sound cultural practices used in dryland farming today. His

research also established an association between optimum date of wheat seeding and elevation.

After retirement, Charlie volunteered to help the University of Nebraska Foundation and the University of Nebraska Alumni Association. Charlie and his late wife Eunice have also been major contributors to the university, including the Panhandle Dryland Crops Fund, the Panhandle Alumni Scholarship Fund, the Fenster Fund for Family and Consumer Sciences, and the Panhandle Research and Extension Center Director's Discretionary Fund. In 2005 the Fensters endowed a major gift to establish the Panhandle Center's first ever endowed professorship, the Charles R. and Eunice R. Fenster Professorship Fund. He was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement in 1983, and in 1991 was recognized as the hall's honoree. In 2000 he was recognized by the Nebraska Agribusiness Club with the Public Service to Agriculture Award. He was the 2008 winner of the UNL Outstanding Service to Panhandle Agriculture Award.