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**Farm & Ranch
Monthly Magazine**
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December 2012



**All Natural
Wreaths**

See page 2

Iversen Uses Nature at Christmas Time

By Ashley Harris

All the things in nature have more than one use, whether it's for food, products, or even for decoration. Patti Iversen has been donating to the Parade of Trees Auction for 4 or 5 years now, and she always uses natural elements. "It's my own version of recycling," she stated. She started using all-natural elements when she saw some of the store windows using them for decorations. She thought it was a great idea so she started doing that also.

She spends half her summer looking for the elements she will be using for that year's donation. She said, "It's a multi-faceted project. I'm glad to help the community and I get exercise while I'm collecting the materials."

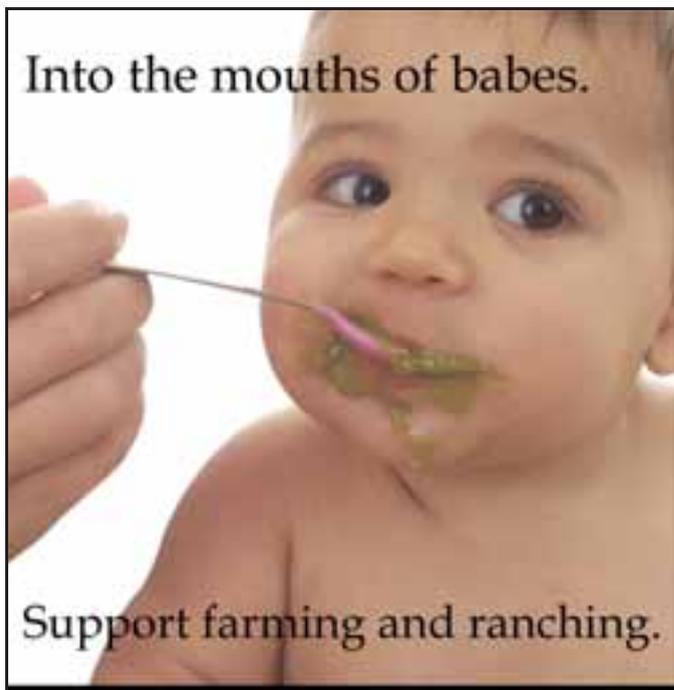
The last few years Iversen has donated a wreath. She spends numerous hours collecting the materials and about 3 hours actually assembling the wreaths. "It's fun to go out and find the materials," she stated. One of her favorite materials to use is lilac seed pods after the lilacs bloom.

Iversen has also donated a wreath to the Wine & Food Festival the last 2 years as well. "It's a way to be helpful to organizations and the community," she stated.

Look for her creations at the next Wine & Food Festival and Parade of Trees.



Iversen's 2012 donation, made with dried berries was a hit at the Parade of Trees.



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Iversen's 2010 donation was made out of local grasses and plants.

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Was \$7,450 Now \$5,000



7720 Combine
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Case 2010 Platform
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Vermeer 605L Baler
Was \$11,500 Now \$7,500



Vermeer 605K Baler
Was \$7,950 Now \$5,000



Hesston 8100 Windrower
Was \$16,500 Now \$12,000



Red River Beet Harvester
Was \$12,500 Now \$5,000



Agco Ultra Mulcher
Was \$16,500 Now \$12,500

Vermeer 605M Baler
Was \$21,500 Now \$17,000

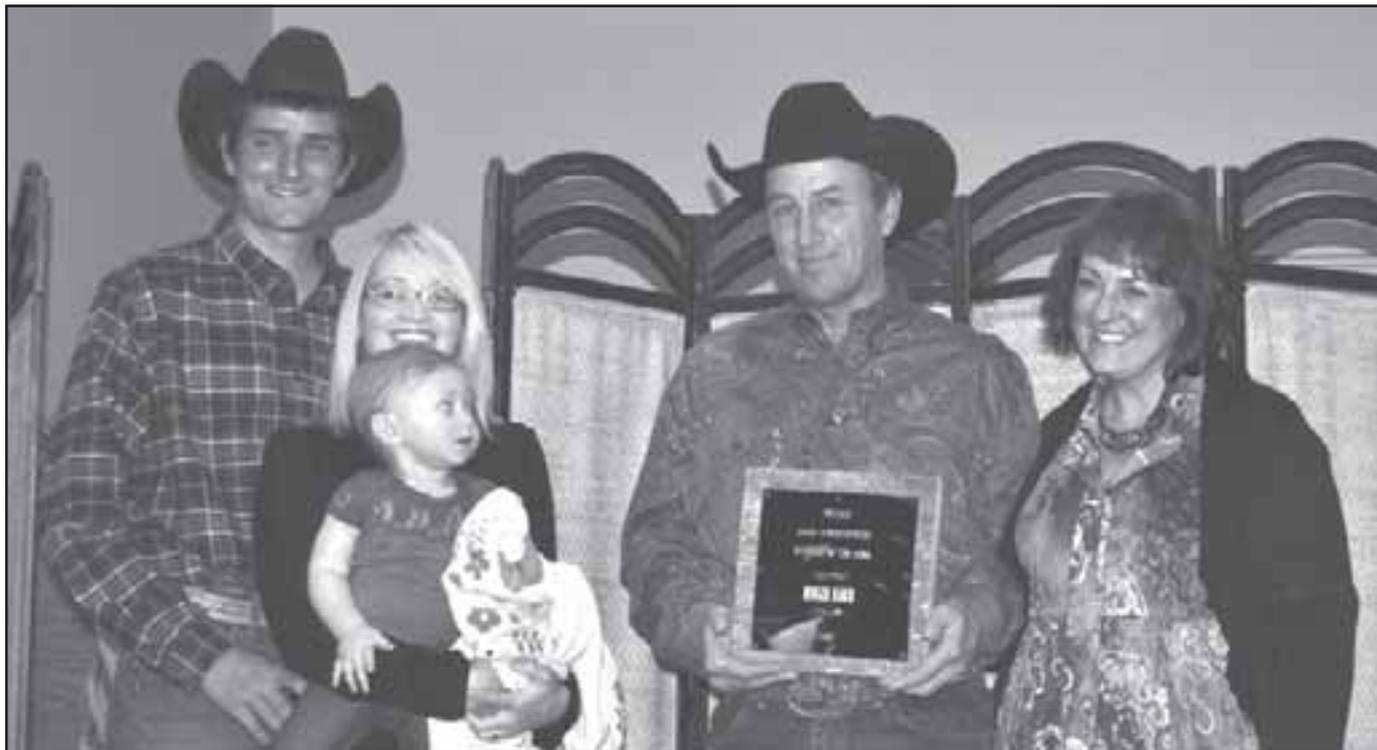
NH BR780 Baler
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2007 Brandt Auger
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MonDak Stockgrower's Association Annual Meeting Held Nov. 19



Above: The Haugen Ranch received the Ranch of the Year Award. Pictured are (L to R) Lane, Kristan & Henri Haugen, Les & Shirley Haugen.

By Ashley Harris

The MonDak Stockgrower's Association held their meeting Monday, November 19th. They discussed many issues in the industry and had two main guest speakers, Dr. Jude Capper and Julie Ellingson.

Following dinner, Errol Rice, Executive Vice President of the Montana Stockgrowers Association spoke briefly on the advancements in the organization. He also spoke about the new book, *Big Sky Boots*, the first in the five-part Montana Family Ranching Series: a photographic story-telling project of the Montana Stockgrowers Association. In "Big Sky Boots" readers can journey through the ranching years and learn about the great people that take care of the land, livestock and their families. This first book focuses on the cowboys themselves; the men and the seasons. Books can be purchased on their website at www.mtbeef.org.

Julie Ellingson, the executive vice president for the ND Stockmen's Association spoke on Measure 5. She explained what it was and how it would affect the beef industry.

Jude Capper, independent Sustainability Consultant, spoke on the myths that the social media is portraying about the beef industry and the scientific facts that have been discovered. She compared the two and showed that the



Left: The Business of the Year Award went to High Plains Vet Clinic. Accepting the award were (L to R) Gary Schieber and JJ Hovde.

calculations were not even close. Capper has done a few studies, one of which found that "Cattle born on Montana ranches supply 12.2 million people with safe, affordable, nutritious beef every single year."

Following the speakers, the annual awards were handed out. The Ranch of the Year went to the Haugen Ranch, while the Business of the Year went to High Plains Vet Clinic.

MonDak Ag Days Planned Events

By Ashley Harris

The annual MonDak Ag Days are coming up next month, January 10-12 at the Richland County Fair Event Center. Ag Days will be offering educational sessions, trade show displays, and Ag in the Classroom, with something to interest everyone.

Starting out on Thursday, there will be a family program from 8:30am until noon providing different gardening topics.

From 12:45 until 1:45 pm, a representative from Seitz insurance will be speaking about insurance for the farm. Thursday evening beginning at 5pm, there will be a social prior to the banquet at 6pm. This year's banquet will feature popular entertainer Ken Overcast.

Starting out on Friday from 7am until 9am, there will be the Chamber sponsored breakfast. Following the breakfast, from 9am until 10am, a representative from a grazing association in Phillips County will discuss the potential impacts with Bison. Then, from 10:30am to 11:30am, there will be a virtual tour of the Pust feedlot presented by Doug Pust.

From 1:15pm to 2:15pm, Jim Miller, the new local Game Warden, will speak on Dealing with Predators. He will speak on the issues seen with them and the legalities of how to deal with them.

From 2:30pm to 3:30pm, Bill Pelton will speak on Beef Quality Assurance, including how to get certified and stay certified.

There are still more things to be added, so keep an eye on the paper for more additions.



Larry Denowh, Advanced Communications, chats with customers at the MonDak Ag Days Trade Show.

A Little Bit Country

Wheat Show Speakers Announced

Warren Froelich

NDSU Extension Agent, Williams County

The 60th National Hard Spring Wheat Show scheduled to be held in Williston, February 4, 5, 6 will feature several exciting topics and well known experts.

One of the featured speakers will be Jolene Brown. Ms. Brown is a farmer, author and an award winning communicator from West Branch, Iowa who has made numerous appearances on television and radio broadcasts. Her work has been featured in several major agricultural publications. As a founder of the Business-First Family Institute, she knows the unique challenges facing parents, siblings, and in-laws who work together.

During the Wheat Show, Ms. Brown will make two presentations. The first, "The Top Ten Mistakes That Break up a Family Business", will focus on many daily aggravations and family business catastrophes which can be avoided. In addition, she will explore questions that must be answered before someone is allowed to join or work for a business; identify the hidden areas of business arguments which often start as a conversation but must end in written documentation; discuss the egos, emotions, and decisions involved in estate and management transfer planning; recognize the value and impact of in-laws, off site family, and employees and understand the need for courtesy and celebration.

Ms. Brown's second presentation, "It's a Jungle Out There! Blazing New Trails for Agriculture", will revolve around learning the value of what we do is in the eye of the purchaser, not the producer. She believes the pace, the people, the process and the products for agriculture have all changed and urges food producers to do the same.

Ms. Brown has had the luxury of sitting at lots of kitchen tables and family business meeting rooms. She has learned what works and what doesn't. Whether you are a beginning farmer or nearing retirement her presentations are packed

with ideas which will help make any farm business more successful.

Another featured speaker will be Jeffrey Tranel, Agricultural and Business Management Economist at Colorado State University. He will discuss how the North Dakota farm businesses can take advantage of whatever the future may bring. One of his assumptions considered the current and relative high prices of ag commodities with expectations that profitability will shrink as prices and costs converge. He also addresses the issue of good farm succession plans. He acknowledges that many farm businesses in this area are blessed with the infusion of energy monies. He recognized this new revenue often makes the lack of agreement within the family more tragic.

Several crop production and marketing issues are also included in the education program. One of the speakers, Rick Bieber, a farmer near Pierre, S.D. will share how he has substantially improved crop yields and profitability on his farm through farming practices which have been directed toward improving soil health. Through cooperative research projects with South Dakota State University, Mr. Bieber has many years of data showing the impact of promoting plant root growth beyond that of annual crops grown in the western Dakotas and eastern Montana.

In addition to the above, the Wheat Show will include activity reports from several commodity groups, discussions relating to the impact of the reorganized Canadian Wheat Board and expected competition of railroad service.

The Wheat Show also includes a Bread Fair when area 5th grade students learn how to make bread, a Photo Contest organized by ag students of Williston State College and a trade show featuring ag businesses who assist area farm producers who produce food not only for U.S. consumers but for people around the world.

For more information about the Wheat Show, contact the NDSU Extension Service – Williams County (701-577-4595) or any area county extension office.

Crop and Pest Management School set for Jan. 2-4 at MSU

Submitted by MSU News Service

A Crop and Pest Management School on small grain crops will be held from Jan. 2 to 4 at the Burns Technology Center at Montana State University. Enrollment is limited so those who wish to attend are asked to register now.

Guest speaker for the 2 ½-day workshop will be Tim Murray, professor and chair of the Department of Plant Pathology at Washington State University. Murray, who will speak about cereal diseases, has 20 years of experience researching small cereal grain pathology and an extensive publication record.

Also speaking will be Hector Carcamo, research scientist with Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge Alberta. He will discuss the use of trap crops in Integrated Pest Manage-

ment. Brett Allen, a USDA research agronomist from Sidney, will talk about dryland cropping systems. Twelve staff members from four MSU departments will discuss weed, disease, insect and nutrient management, as well as wheat breeding.

A registration fee of \$195 will cover workshop supplies, morning and afternoon refreshments, parking and the traditional pizza dinner at Colombo's. Crop consulting (CCA), private pesticide applicator and commercial/government pesticide applicator credits will be available.

For the schedule of events and registration details, visit <http://plantsciences.montana.edu/mtproducerinfo.html> and click on "Crop Pest Management School 2013."

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1990 Hesston 560 Round Baler	\$5,500
John Deere 530 round baler	\$5,500
CIH RBX 563 baler, mesh, wide pickup	Just Traded
2008 CaseIH RB564 round baler, 8700 bales, mesh wrap, wide pickup, endless belts, hydraulic pickup lift, central lube	\$29,900
2005 Frontier 18 wheel high capacity rake	\$16,000
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2001 JD 4890 Windrower, 18' auger head	\$39,000
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Ken Overcast Entertainer for 2013 MonDak Ag Days

By Ashley Harris

Ken Overcast, singing and writing Montana cowboy, is slated to be the entertainer at this year's MonDak Ag Days. He will be performing the evening of January 10th, 2013.

When talking with Overcast about his upcoming performance he stated, "We try to have a variety. We try to keep things rolling. I'll tell stories, play music, a lot of music, and read some poetry. It doesn't matter what you do, if it's the same the whole time people are going to start yawning and fall asleep."

Overcast mentioned he has a few fiddle-playing granddaughters that he occasionally brings along. Sometimes just one comes with, but no matter how many, they steal the show. "One of them was a state champion when she was 8 or 9," he said about his granddaughters. "It's a lot of fun traveling with the kids." Overcast said their mom used to travel with him, until he offered her up on stage and some big tall Norwegian guy took him up on it. Now they are expecting baby number 8, with the eldest being 14 now. Luckily for him, all of them are musicians.

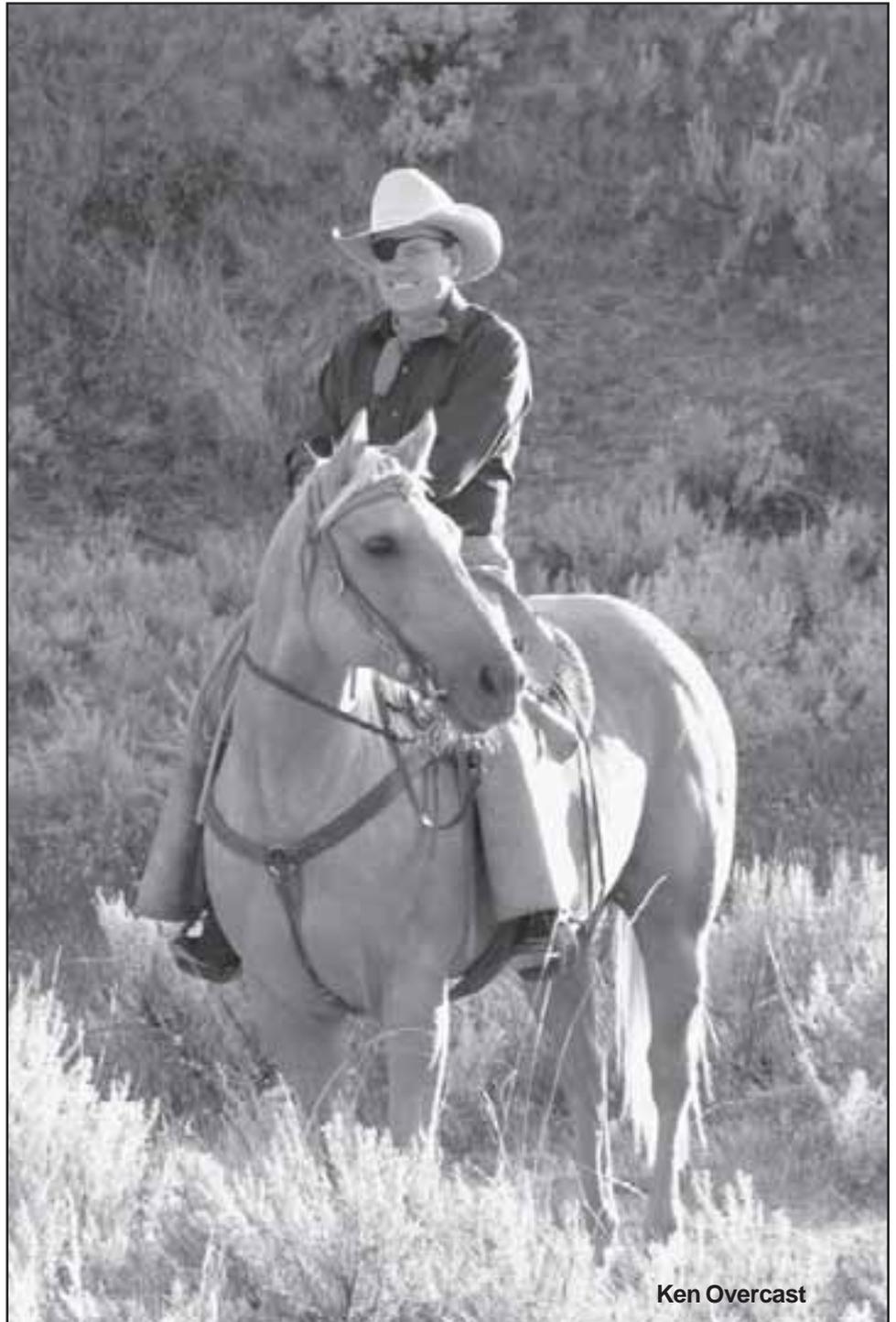
Overcast is excited to be coming to Sidney. He stated, "I've been blessed to play in a lot of places in the Midwest, but small communities are the best. I can relate to the small, rural audiences."

Overcast has released 8 CDs and 5 books to date, with his 6th book slated to print within the next month or so. It is in the final stages of production. He is hoping that it is done so he can bring it with him in January.

Overcast has had appearances in the area with performances in Lambert for their 4th of July celebration in 2007, The Roosevelt County Fair in 2007, and The MonDak Ag Days back in 2002.

He stated, "I'm really looking forward to it. It's always better to leave them wanting more."

For further information about Overcast and a sample of his music, visit the website at www.kenovercast.com.



Ken Overcast



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COMMON GROUND

3rd Annual WSC Carcass Challenge

By Tie Shank

The Williston State College is accepting steer donations through December 10th from area livestock producers for their 3rd Annual Carcass Challenge. Donated steers will be used to raise funds for establishing and maintaining an Ag Ambassador program to help recruit and maintain enrollment for the WSC agriculture program and advocate for agriculture.

By donating a steer at weaning time and you'll be providing educational opportunities for students which include:

- * Brand inspection process
- * Brand release process
- * Processing change of ownership
- * Health inspection process
- * Feed selection & cost comparison

- * Building rations
- * Calculating cost of gain
- * Livestock evaluation and selection
- * Public relations and communications
- * Financial, economic, and marketing training
- * Back grounding enterprise analysis
- * Vaccination program selection, maintenance, and record keeping

- * Carcass evaluation, quality, and yield grading

A representative from WSC will pick up the steer and deliver it to the Hovde feedlot in Arnegard, ND, where it will be weighed, fed and monitored to collect accurate growth data. It will then be processed.

Awards will be given for the highest daily gain and the highest carcass value based on quality and yield data (as sold on the grid).

Donating producers will receive an honorary personalized jacket, advertising in college publications and press releases, recognition at WSC of Agriculture sponsored events, an official receipt for a tax deductible donation, an enjoyable evening in their honor on December 8th at WSC's Cowboy Christmas and the satisfaction of knowing they supported their local agriculture students and agriculture education at WSC.

If you're considering donating a steer, please keep in mind – All animals must be part of an acceptable vaccination program.

Receiving dates for steers will be October 22 – December 10th.

Cowboy Christmas will be held December 8th at the WELL at WSC. There will be several fun events taking place from 10AM to 9PM. All proceeds go towards the WSC Agriculture Club/Ambassadors. For more information call Kim Murphy at 701-774-6226

For more information on the Carcass Challenge or Cowboy Christmas – Text the word "COWBOY" to 55958 or visit www.Willistonstate.edu

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Montana Farm Bureau Federation Urges Immediate Estate Tax Reform

As the December 31 deadline for tax reform looms, the Montana Farm Bureau is expressing urgency in solving the estate tax issue. The current rate, 35 percent with a \$5 million exemption, will revert to 55 percent and a \$1 million exemption at midnight on Dec. 31, which will strike a real blow to farm and ranch families.

"It is imperative we get this tax issue resolved immediately in Congress," says MFBF Executive Vice President Jake Cummins. "Ideally, there would be no inheritance tax at all, since that property has already been taxed. However, at this moment in time, it's critical to have the rate remain as it is and not drop back to the \$1 million deduction and 55 percent. That would put many, many farms and ranches at risk."

A USDA survey shows that in Montana at 2012 values, farms and ranches larger than 1,316 acres would exceed the \$1 million exemption level. If the exemption is reduced to \$1 million, it could affect approximately 9,260 Montana farmers and ranchers based on the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture. The appreciation in farm and ranch real estate values has increased the number of farmers and ranchers that could be affected by the lower exemption level.

"If the estate tax exemption were to shrink to \$1 million in 2013, over four times as many farmers and ranchers could be subject to the tax," says Cummins. "One of Farm Bureau's greatest missions is to see family farms and ranches stay in the family for generations, and continue to be productive. Having the exemption lowered to \$1 million will lead to a sharp loss of family farms and ranches. Sadly, the only fate for many of these places will be subdivisions or selling for non-ag purposes. Most people who own any acreage at all in Montana realize how the price of acreage has rapidly increased over the past 20 years."

Cummins praises Senator Max Baucus for his strong stand on the issue. "Senator Baucus,

who comes from a ranching family, understands how essential it is to keep the exemption at \$5 million and 35 percent," says Cummins. "People don't realize how land and equipment might be worth millions on paper, yet the last thing that family wants to do is have to sell out when someone dies."

Between 2002 and 2012, the exemption and tax rate have changed nine times. "Farmers and ranchers need the certainty of a low rate and high exemption on Death Taxes to protect family farms. That is the only way they can effectively prepare for the future and pass along their farms and ranches from one generation to the next," Cummins concludes.



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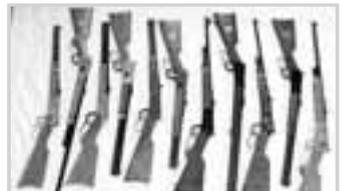
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- John Wayne Commemorative 32-40 Carbine, model 94
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- Little Bighorn Commemorative 1976, 44, model 94
- Lonestar Commemorative 1970, 30-30 Rifle, model 94
- Lonestar Commemorative 1970, 30-30 Carbine, model 94

- Nebraskan Centennial 30-30, model 94
 - NRA 1971 Commemorative 30-30 Rifle, model 94
 - NRA Musket 1971 Commemorative 30-30 Musket, model 94
 - Oklahoman Diamond Jubilee 1907-1982, 32-40 Rifle, model 94
 - Oliver F. Winchester 1980, 38-55 Rifle, model 94
 - Pre-1964, 30-30, model 94
 - RCMP Commemorative 1873-1973, 30-30 Musket, model 94
 - Saskatchewan Diamond Jubilee 38-55 Carbine, model 94
 - Sioux Commemorative 1976, 30-30, model 94
 - Teddy Roosevelt Commemorative 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Teddy Roosevelt Commemorative 30-30 Rifle, model 94
 - Texas Ranger 1973 Commemorative 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Trapper 30-30, model 94
 - US Border Patrol 1981, 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Wells Fargo 1977 Commemorative 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Winchester 375 Carbine, model 94XTR
 - Winchester 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Winchester 18" barrel 30-30, model 94
 - Winchester Classic 30-30 Carbine, model 94
 - Wrangler Winchester 32 Special, model 94
 - Wyoming Diamond Jubilee 30-30, model 94
 - Winchester 30 WCF, model 94
- The following have matching serial #'s.**
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 - Winchester WCF 30-30, model 94

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- To The Moon Collection (Ohio Quarter, Susan B Anthony Dollar, Bicentennial Eisenhower Dollar)
- Many Faces of Jefferson Set (2-\$2.00 bills, 2- Nickels)
- Indian Head Penny Collector Panels (Postal Commemorative)
- Indian Head Penny Set (2)
- 1898 Gold Racketeer Nickel & 1905 Silver Penny Set
- Nickels Set of 4 (Jefferson, Liberty Head, Buffalo & Peace Metal)
- Liberty Nickel
- Westward Silver Nickel Set (4)
- Buffalo Nickel Mint Set (San Francisco, Denver, Philadelphia)
- Ultimate Silver Dime Set (1916 Barber, 1945 Mercury, 1964 Roosevelt)
- 1938, 39, 40 Dime
- Barber Dime
- 1/2 Dime
- Statehood Quarter Collection
- 1917 Walking Liberty Silver 1/2 Dollar
- 1041 Walking Liberty Silver 1/2 Dollar
- 1960's Kennedy Silver 1/2 Dollar Set (2)
- US Bicentennial Dollar, 1/2 Dollar & Quarter
- Sacagawea Golden Uncirculated Dollars (4)
- Susan B Anthony Dollars
- Susan B Anthony Mint Mark Set
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RK
Rick Kniepkamp

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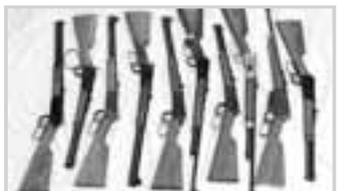
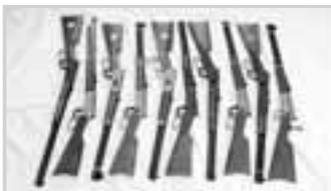
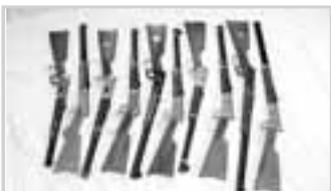
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USDA 150th Birthday Celebration Held

Bill Brenner, of Sidney, who is a distant cousin to Abraham Lincoln, was one of the booth presenters at the USDA Celebration Thursday evening. Pictured here are students from Sidney's 5th Grade class looking at some of Brenner's Lincoln memorabilia and hearing about the family history.



By Ashley Harris

"The People's Celebration" for the 150th Birthday of the USDA was held the evening of Thursday, Nov. 8th. The celebration included informational booths, speakers, a dinner, and an award presentation.

The evening started off with Sidney's 5th Grade students exploring the booths and getting a brief presentation at each one. Booths covered numerous topics including: invasive species, national grasslands, grain products, healthy food choices, and information about Abe Lincoln from his "cousin".

Following that the speakers gave their presentations, which were all very informative.

First up was Gary Adams with the USDA out of Helena, who spoke on the Emerald Ash Borer. The Emerald Ash Borer is an invasive species that can kill

Left: Steve and Marilyn Pust, Cooperator of the Year recipients, received their award Thursday evening at the 150th Celebration for the USDA. They are recognized for their efforts towards irrigation conservation and water quality issues. Steve and Marilyn received a plaque, an embroidered coat from Stockman Bank, and a cap from the Richland County Conservation District.



an ash tree within 3 years time. Adams' presentation showed ways of noticing if a tree is infested.

Next up was Mark Henning with the USDA out of Miles City, who demonstrated the importance of 'no tillage' for soil. Henning explained that the more you till your soil, the more you break up the main components of it.

After him was Tony Preite with the USDA Rural Development, who spoke about what they are implementing and hoping for the area.

At this time, there was a break for a cake cutting with Abe's cousin, Bill Brenner, of Sidney, who has traced his family heritage back to Nancy Hanks Lincoln, President Lincoln's mother.

Following the cake was a representative from the Forest Service, speaking on the history of the Forest Service and Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

After him was Tatyana Rand with the USDA out of Sidney, who spoke about the Wheat Stem Sawfly and its effects throughout the MonDak region. Rand explained the Sawfly is an invasive species and what studies they are doing to control it.

The final speaker was Benjamin Clark with the MonDak Heritage Center in Sidney. Clark showed a number of local photos from the early 1900's, while explaining the Homestead Act and how it affected our region.

Following the speakers, there was a social which led into dinner.

After dinner, the Cooperator of the Year Award was presented to Steve and Marilyn Pust, of Savage. Pust was chosen following consideration of all of his efforts towards irrigation conservation and water quality issues. Pust received a plaque, an embroidered coat from Stockman Bank, and a new cap from the Richland County Conservation District.

To wrap up the evening, Montana Historian and Storyteller Hal Stearns spoke on "Homestead Dreams: From High Hopes to Lingering Legacy." He spoke on the homesteading days of Montana, displayed some great historic photos and some personal historic facts.

Overall, the evening was a success and very informative to all. Congratulations to the USDA on 150 years.

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Maximize Your Pivot \$\$\$ Irrigation Workshop

This past growing season came with several issues for growers from getting the crop planted in dry conditions, to quality issues, to recurring dry conditions. Crop rotation and diversity are considerations producers must think about while managing their farm operation. One of the biggest question marks in irrigation is how to achieve consistency

in crop management and yields along with maintaining quality. To address some of these questions, an irrigation workshop has been developed emphasizing research taking place in the region and specific management practices. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, December 18th, at the Williston Research Extension Center (Ernie French Center) starting at 9:30 a.m. (CST).

The workshop will start with a talk on soil health issues of salinity and alkaline from Chris Augustin, NCREC Soil Health Area Extension Specialist. Then discussion will switch to weed herbicide resistance and how rotating mode of actions will slow the resistant race with weeds by Jeff Stachler, NDSU Weed Scientist. Tom Scherer, NDSU Extension Ag Engineer, will present on how to measure and calibrate flow pressure on pivots so they are set up correctly to wrap up the morning session.

Following lunch, Chet Hill, Area Extension Ag Diversification Specialist, will review sprinkler uniformity and an overall spotlight of irrigation in the region. Mike Hove with the ND State Water Commission will give an update on the water permitting process and the real time metering monitoring systems being tested in the state. And finally, Tyler Tjelde, WREC Irrigation Agronomist will provide an update on the NessonValley irrigation research site and highlight a couple research projects on water management.

There will be a noon lunch sponsored by Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative. Mon-Kota will be sponsoring the breaks during the workshop.

If you have any further questions, please call Chet Hill, NDSU Extension Area Ag Diversification Specialist, at (701)774-4315.

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Tiny 'Headless' Insect Turns Out To Be Rarest Ladybug In The United States

By Evelyn Boswell

A former Montana State University student has discovered the rarest ladybug in the United States, according to MSU entomologist Michael Ivie.

Described in the journal "Systemic Entomology," the new ladybug was crawling across a sand dune in southwest Montana when it dropped into a trap set by entomology grad student Ross Winton.

The ladybug was so small that Winton said he originally thought he had found the body part of an ant. Then he thought the insect was missing its head. He wasn't even sure at first that he had found a ladybug because the insect was tan instead of red and didn't have the spots normally associated with ladybugs.

Closer inspection proved the insect was a male Ladybird Beetle, and its head was attached after all, Winton said. It was just tucked inside a tube in its thorax, much like a turtle pulls its head back into its shell.

Since Winton didn't recognize the ladybug, he took it to Ivie who realized he had once seen a female of that type from Idaho, about 90 miles away from Winton's discovery. Ivie also knew that one of his Australian colleagues was revising the group, so he mailed Winton's ladybug to Canberra.

Winton soon learned that his ladybug — now in pieces and still in Australia — belongs to a group of beetles that's both familiar and well-known in this country. Known as Ladybird Beetles, the group contains some of the most bizarre, smallest and least recognizable ladybugs in existence, according to Hermes Escalona and Adam Slipinski who published the "Systemic Entomology" article.

Winton said, "This species and some of its sister species are some of the rarest mostly due to their size, collection frequency, techniques required to collect them and the fact that we know almost nothing about their biology (life cycle, where it lives, what it eats, etc)."

Ivie said Winton's discovery turned out to be the only male of a new species, otherwise known from a single female from just south of the Centennial Valley in Idaho. Since, in an interesting twist, males are required for the description of a new species of Ladybird Beetles, Ross' specimen became the unique single specimen upon which a species is based.

"Without that male specimen, the species could not have been described," Ivie said.

He added that, "The tiny species is known from only two individuals, one male and one female, making it qualify for the rarest species in the USA."

"The species is very unusual not only because of its small size, unique habitat and rarity, but the fact that its head is pulled back into a tube in its thorax makes its biology quite a mystery," Ivie said. "It was so unique that it was placed, along with another new species known from Baja California, in a new genus. While discovery of a new species of beetle in the USA is not an everyday event, a completely new genus is quite rare."

Ivie said he requested that his colleagues name the new ladybug "wintoni" after Winton, but Escalona and Slipinski eventually named it "Allenius iviei." Ivie, who was Winton's adviser when Winton was studying for his master's degree, proposes that the common name be "Winton's Ladybird Beetle." He said Winton deserved the honor and noted that the find was a "stun-

ning example of the contributions and discoveries made by student researchers at MSU.

"This was totally Ross' discovery," Ivie said. "He is the one who designed the study, placed the traps, sorted the materials and recognized that it was not sand — no small accomplishment when you consider the animal is the size and color of a grain of sand.

"Further, he is the one who recognized it as something unusual," Ivie said.

Ivie's colleague — University of Idaho entomologist James B. "Ding" Johnson — said Winton's discovery is significant because, "Each new species discovered gives us more knowledge on the real biodiversity of the region, nation and world. They also fill in voids in our knowledge of the evolutionary tree of life. Gaps in the data inevitably lead to errors in our understanding. At the minimum, understanding the results of evolution gives us a better idea of the processes, and any discovery may open doors to novel insights.

"Beyond the intrinsic scientific merit of such an increase in knowledge, ladybugs have been used extensively in biological control of insect pests, and any improved understanding of their taxonomic and biological diversity may allow us to use them more effectively and safely," Johnson added.

As so often happens in science, Winton said his discovery was "totally random." He came across the ladybug in 2009 while researching the role of grazing and fire on the community dynamics of insects that live in the sand dunes on the north shore of Red Rocks Lake in Montana's Centennial Valley. Winton believes the one millimeter-long ladybug normally lived in plants, but happened to fall on the sand where it was caught.

Winton earned his bachelor's degree in wildlife management from MSU in 2005 and his master's degree in entomology in 2010. Now a senior wildlife technician with Idaho Fish and Game, Winton said he mostly works with big game and wildlife habitat these days, but he still remembers what it took to trap the rare ladybug.

He started by diving into recycling bins around Bozeman and visiting Lehrkind's Coca-Cola Bottling Company to collect enough two-liter plastic bottles for his study. He then cut the bottles off at the shoulder and placed the resulting funnel into the bottom piece, creating traps that would funnel insects into preservative at the bottom. Ross then hauled the traps to Beaverhead County where he buried them up to their edge in the sand dunes, creating a pitfall that trapped insects as they crawled across the sand.

Winton returned every week or so, camping gear in tow, to empty and rebury the traps. If he was in a hurry or happened to be there during a full moon, he could work all night and finish his work in 1 ½ to two days, Winton said.

The traps worked well, but animals and fire sometimes interfered, Winton said. Coyote pups would dig up the bottles and play with them like chew toys. An unexpected controlled burn to remove unwanted vegetation from the sand dunes once caused half the bottles to curl in on themselves. Fortunately, the bottles became like plastic balloons around the insects.

"It was pretty handy," Winton said.



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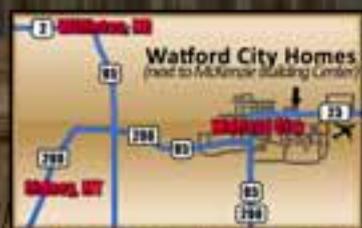


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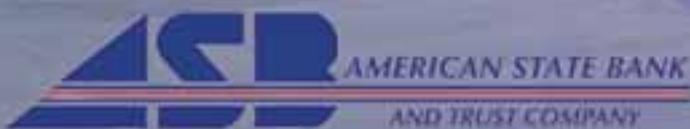
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MSU Fights Wheat Disease As Part Of Six-State Collaboration

By Evelyn Boswell

A microscopic mite and the disease it carries, wheat streak mosaic, are destroying wheat fields throughout the western Great Plains.

Now Montana State University faculty and students are fighting back through a new collaboration that involves the Agricultural Research Service and six universities in Montana, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture recently awarded a five-year, \$3.4 million grant to be shared by the seven institutions, starting in January 2013. MSU's portion is \$800,000, but an additional \$200,000 grant raises that to \$1 million.

Members of MSU's team said they will use their funds to build on research that has been conducted over 80 years and, here at MSU, over the past six years. One major goal is developing an accurate forecasting model to give farmers additional tools to fight wheat streak mosaic. States in the western Great Plains grow more than 1 billion bushels of wheat a year, approximately half of the wheat produced in the United States. But wheat streak mosaic destroys about 20 million bushels a year.

The MSU team will conduct research, develop educational materials and hold outreach events. They will share their findings and materials with growers, scientists, tribal college students, K-12 students and the general public throughout the six-state region.

Among other things, the MSU researchers said they will test pesticides this winter to see if they can find anything new that might be economical and effective against the vector of the virus, the wheat curl mite. They also want to help figure out why the severity of wheat streak mosaic varies by state. Texas routinely has epidemics of the disease, and wheat grows there continuously, which likely contributes to the problem. Weather, particularly hail events, also plays a role in perpetuating the disease.

Wheat streak mosaic is the most common wheat virus and the most serious wheat viral disease in the Great Plains, according to the MSU team led by associate professor and Extension plant pathologist Mary Burrows. It might also be the hardest to manage because there are no varieties of wheat that can completely resist it and no pesticides that work against it. Wheat curl mite, the mite that transmits the disease, is so small that it can only be seen under a microscope. Farmers might suspect they have a problem only when they see fields of curling, yellow streaked leaves.

Unfortunately, growers who think they are planting re-

sistant varieties or applying effective pesticides are mistaken, Burrows said. Not only are they wasting their money, but they might make matters worse if they apply the insecticide "imidacloprid." This chemical compound kills insects it directly contacts, but often increases mite populations by destroying natural enemies. The result is greater spread of wheat streak mosaic.

Zach Miller, an MSU postdoctoral researcher in plant sciences and plant pathology, said the forecasting model that the group plans to develop will encourage more farmers to use Integrated Pest Management. The model will incorporate factors that farmers can manage, such as planting dates, when and how to fertilize, and decisions about wheat varieties and weed management. It will also incorporate factors that are out of farmers' control, such as weather and biology.

Weed management is important because mites and viruses don't just hide in wheat, but in weeds and native grasses, said Extension Croplands Weeds Specialist Fabian Menalled, associate professor in MSU's Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences. Menalled has been working to understand how environmental and biological factors affect wheat streak mosaic. At the same time, he has studied the relationship between non-crop plants and the virus.

Burrows, Menalled and Miller are all members of MSU's wheat streak mosaic team. A fourth member is Irene Grimberg, research associate professor in MSU's Science Math Resource Center. Grimberg's job will be to develop educational materials that Extension agents and others can distribute throughout the six-state region. Classroom materials will include learning modules based on wheat streak mosaic. They will be aimed at K-12 students in the STEM areas of science, technology, engineering and math.

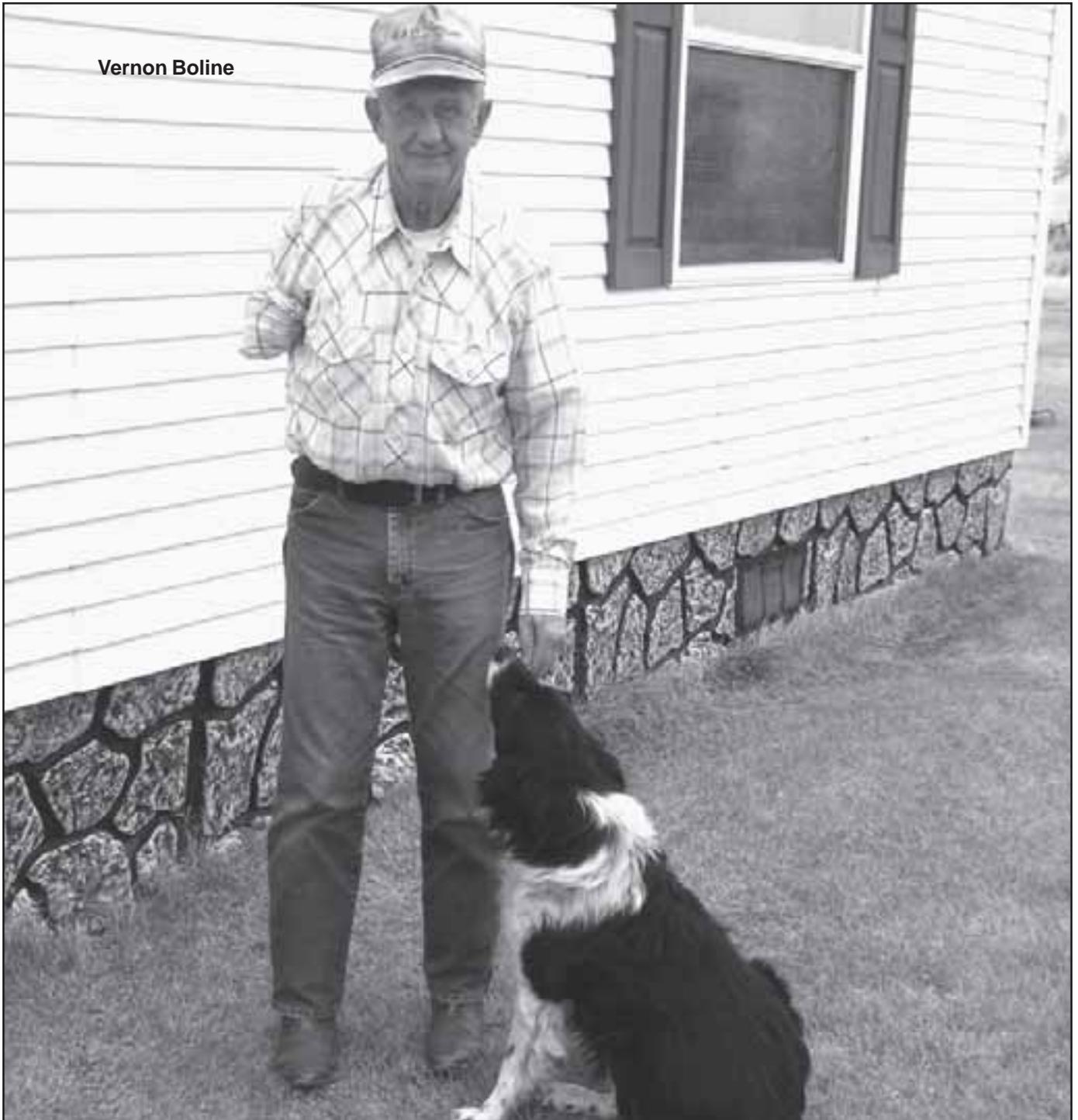
The four team members will be assisted by M S U postdoctoral students, graduate students and undergraduates.

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Over a Century of Farming



Vernon Boline

By Tie Shank

Vernon Boline is no stranger to hard work and manual labor. His family homesteaded the land he grew up on in Oliver Township over a century ago and he never left. While Vernon worked for neighbors on their farms, his brother farmed the family land until he had a stroke and could no longer work. Vernon then stepped up to the plate, took care of his brother and ran the farm. At the time, they had 40 to 50 head of cattle, grew wheat, barley and some oats. There's

more to the story though.

In 1948, Vernon was baling for an elderly couple who lived down the road. He had just purchased a new belt for the baler. He was told it was the right belt, but it didn't seem to fit correctly. It would continuously clog up with weeds and then stop. With all of the starting and stopping, Vernon was getting disgusted. He jumped down and began pulling the weeds out of the belt. As he loosened the weeds, the belt began to move, catching the button on his sleeve and

pulling his arm in to the rubber roller all the way up to his shoulder. He remembered seeing a piece of angle iron and he grabbed it and held on for dear life while trying to pull his arm out. With all the strength he could muster, he pulled his arm out to his elbow and continued fighting to hold himself back. Finally, the rubber roller burnt off and burnt his arm off with it. His arm never bled.

When asked what his thought was at that point Vernon replied, "I looked down and my arm wasn't even bleeding, but right then, I didn't care about that arm at all. I was alive."

He then walked over, shut the machine off and walked to the farmer's house. The man was out in the field working but thankfully, his wife was home. Vernon went to the door and told her what happened. The lady couldn't see well enough to dial the ambulance so she began walking away from him. Vernon asked, "Where are you going?"

The lady let Vernon know her husband had once told her if she ever needed help while he was working the field, to open the garage door and he'd see it and come in. She then commented she could probably dial her brother in law and he would call the ambulance for her. The Ray ambulance was there within minutes and took Vernon to the hospital.

For Vernon, the entire incident happened so quickly that much of it seemed unclear. Many things ran through his mind in those few minutes his arm was being pulled in to the baler. In a matter of seconds, his entire life changed. He now had to learn to do everything with one arm, including run the farm. If anybody could do it, Vernon could. He was determined and focused and he knew the farm couldn't run itself.

He married late in life to a wonderful woman who already had three amazing daughters. He couldn't have asked for better daughters. They were as close as if they'd been his biological children.

He began raising Quarter horses nearly fifty years after his farming accident. He'd halter break them and sell them as yearlings. This is the part of farming he loved the most, but unfortunately he had to give it up last year. With the help of his Border Collie, Schep, Vernon continues to board horses for his neighbor and dear friend, but is no longer farming.

When asked what he thought of the economy, the oil boom and what it's done to his community, his response was, "In my opinion, we need a lot more smaller farmers. This country would be a lot better off. There aren't many cattle farmers anymore and we see it in the meat prices. People would be surprised at how things would change if we had more farmers." Vernon is not impressed by the oil boom. He feels it's nice for some people because they get some money out of it, but he also thinks its more misery than it's worth. It seems to be a constant battle over mineral rights. He states, "This used to be nice country, but the oil business has really changed it." He did, however, make sure I knew what great neighbors he has. They've helped him out many times throughout the years and they keep him stocked with homemade baked goods.

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“Make It With Sugar” Contest Winners



Doris Galleske
1st Place cookies

Apricot Pinwheel Cookies

- ½ cup butter, softened
- ¾ cup sugar, divided
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 ½ cups finely chopped dried apricots or dates
- 2/3 cup water
- 1 Tbsp. hazelnut liqueur, optional
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, ½ cup sugar and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. In another bowl, mix the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Divide dough in half. Shape each half into a thick rectangle; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm or overnight.

2. In a small saucepan, combine the apricots, water, remaining sugar and, if desired, liqueur, bring to boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium; cook until liquid is almost evaporated, about 5 minutes. Stir in pecans if desired; cool completely.

3. On a floured surface, roll each portion of dough into a 12-in x 9-in. rectangle. Evenly spread half of the apricot mixture over each rectangle to within ½ in. of edges. Roll up jellyroll style, starting with a long side; wrap in plastic wrap. *Refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm.

4. Unwrap and cut into ¼-in. slices. Place 1 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 9-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.

* To freeze: After wrapping in plastic wrap, place rolls in a resealable freezer bag. Freeze up to 3 months. Cut frozen roll into slices; bake frozen slices as directed, increasing baking time by 1-2 minutes.



Sandy Jerde
1st place cake

Frosted Banana cake

- 1 ½ cups banana, mashed, ripe
- 2 tsp. lemon juice
- 3 cups flour
- 1 ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¾ cup butter, softened
- 2 1/8 cups sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- Frosting
- ¼ butter, softened
- 1-8 oz. package cream cheese, softened
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 ½ cups powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 275° (yes 275° is correct... not a typo). Grease and flour a 9x13 pan. In a small bowl, mix mashed banana with the lemon juice; set aside. In a medium bowl, mix flour, baking soda and salt; set aside. In a large bowl, cream ¾ cup butter and 2 1/8 cups sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time, then stir in 2 tsp. vanilla. Beat in the flour mixture alternately with buttermilk. Stir in banana mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake in preheated oven for one hour or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean (it takes me 1 ¼ hours). Remove from oven and place directly into the freezer for 45 minutes. This will make the cake very moist. For the frosting, cream the butter and cream cheese until smooth. Beat in 1 tsp vanilla. Add icing sugar and beat on low speed until combined, then on high speed until frosting is smooth. Spread on cooled cake. Sprinkle chopped walnuts over top of the frosting, if desired.



Jennifer Morken
1st place pie

Strawberry- Rhubarb Pie

- 2 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil
- 6 tbsp. cold milk
- 1 ¼ cups sugar
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- 3 cups halved strawberries
- 2 cups rhubarb
- 2 tbsp. butter, cut up
- 2 tsp. milk

Preheat oven to 400° to make crust. Mix flour and salt. Measure oil and milk together- don't stir. Add to flour. Make crust on wax paper.

To make filling, mix sugar, flour, and cinnamon. Add fruit, stirring to coat.

Fill crust with filling. Scatter butter. Add top crust. Pinch edges and ventilate the top. Brush with milk. Sprinkle sugar on top. Bake on cookie sheet for 50 minutes. Can cover edge with tinfoil if cooking too fast.

Allow to cool 1 hour before serving.

Jennifer Morken
1st place candy & People's Choice

Pumpkin Spice Fudge

- 1cup walnuts
- 3 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 1 (5 ounce) can evaporated milk
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 tbsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 2 cups white chocolate chips
- 1 (7 ounce) jar marshmallow crème
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Butter a 9x13 inch pan and set aside.

In a heavy saucepan, combine sugar, butter, milk, pumpkin, and spice; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Continue boiling over medium heat until mixture reaches 234 degrees F (118 degrees C) on a candy thermometer, about 10 minutes.

Remove from heat. Stir in white chips. When chips are melted, add marshmallow cream, nuts, and vanilla. Mix.

Immediately pour mixture into prepared pan. Spread evenly. Cool at room temperature. Cut into squares, and store in the refrigerator in an air-tight container.



Joyce Sifers
1st place breads

Chocolate Hazelnut Banana Bread

- 5 tbsp. nutella
 - 3 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. canola oil (divided)
 - 3 tbsp. butter (softened)
 - ½ cup brown sugar
 - 3 or 4 medium ripe bananas (mashed)
 - 2 large eggs
 - 1 ½ cups flour
 - ¾ tsp baking soda
 - ½ tsp baking powder
 - ½ tsp salt
 - 2/3 cup buttermilk
 - 1 cup butterscotch chips
- Preheat oven to 350°

Combine nutella with 1 tsp oil, microwave for 30 seconds or until melted. Combine oil, butter, brown sugar and bananas in a large bowl, beat on med-high-speed until well blended. Add eggs, beat, and then add flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and buttermilk. Spread ½ mixture into 9x5 loaf pan coated with cooking spray and lightly dusted with flour. Top with nutella and butterscotch chips (coated chips in flour prevent them from sinking to the bottom of pan). Pour remaining batter on top & swirl together. Bake 350° for 55 minutes or until tooth pick comes out clean. (Check at 45 to 50 minute ovens vary).

Joyce Sifers
1st place other

Apple Sauce

- Wash & peel enough apples to fill a 6 quart crock pot
- Add 2-3 cups of water

Cook until soft

Stir in ½ to 1 ½ cups sugar depending on sweetness of apples.

Add cinnamon to taste

Put in sterilized jars, hot water bath for 25 to 30 minutes or you can place in bags or containers and freeze.

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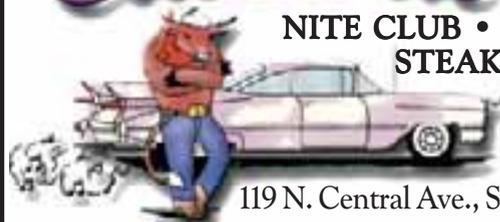
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White House Appoints Cruzado To Post

President Barack Obama has announced his intent to appoint Montana State University President Waded Cruzado to the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

Cruzado is among seven individuals the White House appointed to various posts.

"The extraordinary dedication these individuals bring to their new roles will greatly serve the American people. I am grateful they have agreed to serve in this Administration and I look forward to working with them in the months and years to come," said President Obama in a White House press release.

The Board for International Food and Agricultural Development, BIFAD, advises USAID on agriculture and higher education issues pertinent to food insecurity in developing countries. The President appoints members, who primarily represent the academic community. BIFAD was established by Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act. The Board and Title XII recognize the critical role of U.S. land-grant institutions in agricultural development, domestically and abroad, and support their representation in USAID development programs, according to the BIFAD's website.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to serve on the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development," Cruzado said. "Through this appointment, I look forward to helping advise the U.S. Agency for International Development on nutrition and global agricultural issues and projects."

Montana senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester offered their congratulations to Cruzado on her appointment.

"Waded is a tremendous educator and a talented leader. During her tenure, Montana State has grown as a leader in agriculture research and strengthened our number one industry. Her talent and hard work will help solve one of the world's greatest problems - global hunger. I know she will make all Montanans proud," Tester said.

"Waded has the kind of vision and work ethic needed to tackle one of our greatest humanitarian struggles - ensuring families around the world are fed. She is an excellent choice for this important post and has a proven track record of serving, educating and leading,"



Waded Cruzado

Baucus said.

Cruzado officially took office as MSU's 12th president on Jan. 4, 2010. An articulate and inspirational speaker on the role of the public university, Cruzado has become well-known for her understanding of the Morrill Act, which created the land-grant university system 150 years ago. She is a passionate champion of the land-grant's tripartite mission of education, research and public outreach, and the important role

higher education plays in the development of individuals and the prosperity of the nation.

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Dogs, Humans Team Up To Help Eradicate Dyer's Woad In Montana

By Evelyn Boswell

A Labrador that's trained to find cadavers, and a Border collie plucked from a Bozeman animal shelter are now helping rid Montana of noxious weeds.

Demonstrating her abilities on a frosty fall morning, Wibaux the Labrador scrambled up a Montana mountain and soon detected the scent of Dyer's woad over the smell of hikers, pets, deer, shrubs and other plants. Shaking with excitement but true to her training, Wibaux circled the weed, barked continually and finally sat down until her handler verified that she had, indeed, found Dyer's woad.

"Good dog. Good girl," Deb Tirmenstein said as she handed Wibaux a biscuit.

Tirmenstein marked the location on her GPS unit and said she would return alone later to spray the weed. It's a trip she has made many times since she, Wibaux and a Border collie named Seamus joined the Dyer's woad project in 2011.

The project grew out of research conducted at Montana State University and has multiple goals, according to weed experts at MSU, the University of Montana and Beaverhead County.

One goal is to completely eradicate Dyer's woad from Montana by using dogs and humans together. Amber Burch, assistant weed coordinator for Beaverhead County and coordinator of a statewide effort to fight Dyer's woad, said the

weed is native to southeast Russia and used to be cultivated in England as a source of blue dye and medicine. It was first identified in Montana in 1934. It is now classified as a Priority 1B Noxious Weed in Montana.

One Dyer's woad plant can grow four inches in a week and produce as many as many as 10,000 seeds, Burch said. UM Natural Areas Specialist Marilyn Marler said the roots sometimes go down for more than five feet. When blooming, the plant can grow waist high. Noxious weeds compete with native plants and can overrun pastures and wildlife habitat.

Dyer's woad experts said the weed is extremely widespread in Utah and eastern Idaho, but it is a good candidate for eradication in Montana because it is far less widespread in this state. Once found in 17 Montana counties, Dyer's woad is now active in only seven because of the Montana Dyer's Woad Cooperative Project started in 1984. The Montana counties with active Dyer's woad are Beaverhead, Silver Bow, Carbon, Flathead, Gallatin, Missoula and Park County.

Dyer's woad in Montana has decreased 87.1 percent since 2005, Burch said. At last count for 2012, the total number of plants in the state was 997. A site is considered eradicated if no Dyer's woad plants are found in eight years. If a single plant is found during that time, the site is deemed eradicated as long as the plant doesn't produce seeds.

Another goal of the weed-dog project is to spread the word that dogs and humans can find more weeds together than alone.

Kim Goodwin, a research associate in the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences in MSU's College of Agriculture, started investigating the possibility of using dogs to detect noxious weeds when she was a master's degree student at MSU. She started her master's degree in 2005 and finished in 2010. Before that, in the 1980s, former MSU Extension Noxious Weed Specialist Pete Fay researched herbicides that might be used on Dyer's



Wibaux barks to let her handler know that she has detected another Dyer's woad plant. (MSU photo by Sepp Jannotta).

Continued on next page.

woad. He had MSU students, personnel and county weed crews pulling Dyer's woad. He started the Montana Dyer's Woad Cooperative Project.

Goodwin's research showed that dogs and people complement each other when looking for noxious weeds. People are good at finding large flowering plants and large patches of noxious weeds, but they can overlook individual weeds. Dogs work best in areas of low-density, high priority weeds. They can smell Dyer's woad even when the weed is a tiny rosette hidden by other types of plants. They can smell Dyer's woad when it's underground and a mere fragment of a root.

"Through our research, we found they are able to detect twice as many small plants as the surveyors do," Goodwin said.

The third goal of the weed experts is to find more locations for their applied weed-dog research.

"We are interested in determining how to turn this discovery into something useful for land managers," Goodwin said.

The effort that involves Wibaux and Seamus is based on Mount Sentinel at the east edge of Missoula. Marler, the natural areas specialist for UM, said it has been hard to control noxious weeds there because the mountain is steep and the study area covers 200 acres. Major progress has occurred in the past 12 years, however, because of city, county and UM cooperation.

Wibaux and Seamus joined the Mount Sentinel effort in 2011 and continued in 2012. MSU provided funding the first year. Goodwin is still a collaborator on the project, which is headed by Marler.

This year on Mount Sentinel, the dogs detected about 40 locations that humans missed, Goodwin said. The researchers discovered that by having humans look for Dyer's woad first. A day or more later, the dogs covered the same area. By comparing those numbers, they measured the dogs' usefulness.

"It showed the dogs do have utility," Goodwin said.

Goodwin said she got the idea for using dogs to detect noxious weeds after reading about the federal "Beagle Brigade." In it, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) uses beagles to inspect luggage and boxes at U.S. airports and ports of entry. Since dogs also detect land mines and have been used for thousands of years to hunt, she wanted to see if dogs could detect noxious weeds, too.

Goodwin used German shepherds in her master's degree research because of their intelligence and scent-work experience. The Mount Sentinel project shows that a Labrador and Border collie can also detect noxious weeds. In this case, the weeds are Dyer's woad. Goodwin's earlier research focused on spotted knapweed.



Dyer's woad can grow four inches a week. It can be waist high when blooming. (Photo courtesy of Amber Burch).

Wibaux was already trained to find human remains when she was recruited to detect Dyer's woad, said her owner, Tirmenstein. She has searched for cadavers and has assisted law enforcement in Montana, Washington, Idaho, Arkansas and elsewhere.

Aimee Hurt, director of operations for Working Dogs for Conservation, said the Montana-based organization that uses Wibaux for noxious weeds sends dogs all over the world to detect such smells as gorilla dung, cheetahs, and emerald ash borer beetles. The training to detect cadavers, noxious weeds, narcotics and scat is all very similar, she added.

Trainers introduced Wibaux to Dyer's woad by hiding the weed inside a box with holes in the lid and placing the box next to boxes containing other weeds. When Wibaux realized she would receive a treat or get to retrieve a ball every time she detected Dyer's woad, she started honing in on it. Her training became longer and more complex until she was able to detect Dyer's woad outdoors in a larger environment without getting distracted or confused.

Seamus came to Working Dogs for Conservation from Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter in Gallatin County, Hurt said. Noting that only one or two dogs in a thousand make good detection dogs, she said Seamus stood out from the others because he was playful even when surrounded by chaos. A closer look showed that he had other qualities that could be developed to make him into a successful detection dog.

"These dogs tend to be highly energetic and easy to motivate with food or toys," Hurt explained.

They also don't mind seeking the same thing over and over. They love working with a handler. They love rewards no matter if they receive them 60 times a day or once. They aren't confused by competing scents. They aren't distracted.

"We are asking a lot of them, but they really love it," Hurt said. "We work with dogs that need a job to be happy."



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Meadow Muffins . . . Givin' a Little Back

By Ken Overcast

Don't you just love the holidays? By this time of year most of us have pretty well given up on all the work we had planned for this fall (to be totally honest, we really didn't think we'd ever get it all done anyway), and we take a little time to kick back and relax and be thankful for what we have. A lot of the rest of the year we're just too darn busy trying to stay on top of the work that's piling up before us to even think about it, but come Thanksgiving and Christmas, we can take a little time off to sit by the fire and sort of put everything back into perspective.

We've all had a disappointment or two this last year. Maybe we've lost someone, or have gotten a bad report from the doctor, or maybe it just didn't rain on time (again). But, no matter what kind of ruts you've encountered in the trail you've just come down, the secret is in keeping it all in perspective. That's one of the things I think I've finally gotten a handle on after all these years. If a fella will just start thankin' God for the things we HAVE, all of a sudden every one of those good reasons we've figured out for feeling down in the dumps just sorta disappears. We've all got a lot more than we really need.

We can learn a lot from kids if we'll just take the time. Christmas is really all about kids, isn't it? What ever you do, don't make the mistake of spending too much money on 'em. I don't know how many times I've seen ours pull some expensive gadget out of a box and then throw it in the corner and play in the box. They would have been just as happy with a big empty box wrapped in pretty paper that needed rippin' off.

The real trick for us "long in the tooth folks" is to somehow catch a little glimpse of Christmas from a kid's point of view. That's really all it takes. True fulfillment only comes from capturing the awe and wonderment that comes so naturally to a child and translating it into doing something meaningful for someone else.

Here's a true story. Although I've got a bad reputation (somehow??) of sprinkling a liberal amount of BS in my stories, this one is exactly the way it happened ... honest. I'm just going to change the names for obvious reasons. The only way I even caught wind of this whole deal was by getting to know the guy that was on the receiving end of this little tale after it happened. This is how the story unfolded.

Earl was a simple man with a wife and a couple of kids. A few years ago they lived just down the river from us in a farm house they'd rented. He was a good hard worker and provided well for his family, but he'd lost his job, and things were getting pretty tight around that camp. Earl was quite a

hunter, so there really wasn't any danger of them starving to death, but work is awfully hard to find around here in the winter time. There sure wasn't going to be anything extra for Christmas that year.

He was also a proud man. Not the kind of a guy that went around tellin' folks his troubles and asking for a hand-out. In fact, that was totally out of the question. They'd get by somehow. He gathered scrap iron for a few bucks to pay the light bill, and although everyone was getting sort of sick of venison three times a day, they were scraping by ... barely.

The big problem for Earl was that Christmas was coming. There isn't anything that will take the wind out of a man's sails like not being able to properly provide for his family. Christmas time can be pretty tough in a deal like that.

Bob and Betty somehow got wind of their predicament. They weren't folks of enormous means, by any stretch of the imagination, but they had made a practice of trying to find a family like Earl's to bless every Christmas. Bob operated a small business, and Betty was a stay-at-home Mom and a great cook. It was just a little special something that they had been doing for quite some time, but managed to keep it entirely to themselves. It was their annual secret mission. They did it on the sly ... very few folks, except the ones that they'd helped over the years, even knew what was going on.

They'd somehow managed to find out how many kids Earl and his wife had, and their sizes, and just "showed up" one night after supper with a whole car load of goodies. I think there were new school coats for the kids, and I know there was a little toy or two. They also had in tow several boxes that contained a huge turkey with all the trimmin's, a sack of spuds and a thousand other little treats; and those little things were the most special of all. They're the kinds of things a family with a real job would just normally take for granted. Whatever money Bob and Betty spent must have seemed like peanuts compared to the looks in the eyes of Earl's family that cold snowy night so many years ago.

That's the true spirit of Christmas ... helping to light a spark of hope and childish awe in the eyes of someone who needs a little boost of encouragement. In some cases, they may be just about ready to give up entirely. This Christmas, go do something nice for someone who doesn't expect it ... and if you want a REAL blessing ... keep it a secret.

Keep Smilin'....and don't forget to check yer cinch.

Ken Overcast is a recording cowboy singer that ranches on Lodge Creek in North Central Montana where he raises and dispenses B.S. www.kenovercast.com



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Montana Farmers And Ranchers Urged To Communicate With Consumers

The theme “tell your story” was repeated in workshops and echoed by speakers during the Montana Farm Bureau Convention Nov. 12 in Billings. Whether the speaker was Dr. Frank Mitloehner of University of California/Davis, Erika Poppelreiter speaking on behalf of the U.S. Farmer and Rancher Alliance or Russell Nemetz of the Northern Ag Network, the message to the farmers and ranchers attending was clear: tell consumers what you do.

“Normally when you look at cows, you don’t think of them as a source of air pollution, but animal activists are trying to claim that cows are the main culprit for bad air,” said Mitloehner, an associate professor and air quality specialist in Cooperative Extension at UC/Davis. The scientist has generated and published research refuting old data that cows are the number-one cause of air pollution in California, not cars, trucks or planes.

“I found the state of California was using inventory from 1938 that had cows as the top polluters, and the methane number was calculated erroneously into smog-producing numbers,” Mitloehner said. He set out to prove this informa-

tion was very dated and inaccurate. Thanks to his research, the EPA now says agriculture only produces 6 percent of all greenhouse gases, with livestock only contributing 3.4 percent, not the 18 percent claimed by an earlier study.

“There is urban pressure building up against agriculture, such as people suing farmers, say at a dairy, who have their agricultural operation next to a subdivision,” noted Mitloehner. “The truth is the dairy is a lot more environmentally friendly than homeowners in a subdivision who are running lawnmowers, driving trucks, catching planes to visit relatives in other states, and obliviously spraying lawn chemicals.”

He said the best way to provide food for a growing world population, as well as be even more environmentally sensitive, is to continue to improve livestock efficiency. “Agriculture continues to advance and we are now growing more with less,” he said. “Developing countries do not have efficient livestock. For instance, it takes five cows in Mexico to produce the milk that one cow in the U.S. produces.”

The scientist noted the only way to combat unfounded negatives from anti-agricultural activists is to speak out. “Everyone in agriculture needs to tell their message and invite the public to their farms and ranches,” Mitloehner said. “When students or the general public see for themselves what you do on your farm or ranch, the propaganda falls apart.”

Poppelreiter, with the U.S. Farmer and Rancher Alliance, echoed Mitloehner’s sentiments in a morning workshop. “People want to have transparency about how their food gets from farm to fork. Farmers and ranchers need to be willing to share what they know and how they raise crops and animals,” she said. “Conversation is powerful because it can enlighten and change opinions. It’s important that people in agriculture engage the public, acknowledge the concerns of the consumer, share how they are constantly improving their farm or ranch management, and earn trust.”

Northern Ag Network’s Russell Nemetz, who provided the motivational speech to kick off the convention Monday morning, said, “We all have to be better ambassadors for agriculture. You have to tell your story,” he said. “The one thing the consumer needs to remember is that food doesn’t just magically appear. It’s grown and processed by people involved in agriculture, and it’s time farmers and ranchers have dialogue with the public about what they do best...feeding and clothing our nation.”

The MFBF Convention continued Tuesday, Nov. 13 with the Resolutions Session, luncheon speaker Dale Moore, deputy director of public policy for the American Farm Bureau and the evening Awards Banquet.



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Agriculture Census Coming Up

Once every five years across the country, the Census of Agriculture is conducted. The 2012 Census will be mailed out in the middle of December with the return deadline of February 4th. The census is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. It looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures. The results of the census are used to make important policy and business decision across the nation. All answers are kept confidential. Past results and information can be viewed at www.agcensus.usda.gov. Questions, comments or

concerns regarding the upcoming Census can be directed to Sue King (sue.king@nass.usda.gov) or Krissy Young (krissy.young@nass.usda.gov) in NASS.

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**Tuesday, December 18th, 9:30 a.m. (CST)
Ernie French Center (Williston REC)**

- Chris Augustin, NCREC Soil Health Area Extension Specialist: Soil Health Issues of Salinity and Alkaline.
- Jeff Stachler, NDSU Weed Scientist: Weed herbicide resistance and how rotating mode of actions will slow the resistance race with weeds.
- Tom Scherer, NDSU Extension Ag Engineer: How to measure and calibrate flow pressure on pivots.
- Lunch sponsored by Mountrail-Williams REC
- Chet Hill, Area Extension Ag Diversification Specialist: Sprinkler uniformity plus an overall spotlight of Irrigation in the region.
- Mike Hove, ND State Water Commission: Update on the water permitting process and the real time metering monitoring systems being tested in the state.
- Tyler Tjelde, WREC Irrigation Agronomist: Update on the Nesson Valley Irrigation Site plus highlights of research on water management.



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