Dairy Learning Center Groundbreaking

Kendra Knutson
Printed by permission from UWRF
Public Affairs

Representatives from the University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, state dignitaries, dairy industry representatives, alumni, and UWRF faculty, staff, and students celebrated the groundbreaking for the new Dairy Learning Center on October 20. Nearly 150 guests attended this long-awaited event.

Dale Gallenberg, dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences introduced UWRF’s Chancellor, Don Betz, as the afternoon’s first speaker.

Betz acknowledged the contractors, UWRF project leaders, major donors, and those responsible for making the Dairy Learning Center possible. “Approximately $500,000 has been gifted by individuals, companies, and businesses to make this project possible,” said Betz. “It is very clear to me that this initiative is part of the historic mission of this institution.”

Other speakers included Jesus Salas of the UW System Board of Regents; Steve Kelm, animal and food science department chair; Dayton Hougaard, areas sales manager for Land O’ Lakes and Purina Feeds Division; and Representative Kitty Rhoades (R-Hudson) of the 30th Assembly District.

Kelm spoke of the excitement faculty and students have for the new facility. “As a faculty member and department chair, I am excited that we’ll be able to use this new tool, but mostly I am excited for our students,” he said. “A project like this required vision, perspective, and understanding of what this institution is about.”

Kelm noted the key objectives of the new facility are to serve as student-centered educational experiences; to address environmental concerns; to serve as a good citizen to the community; and to be a cow-focused enterprise.

Gallenberg also complimented the partners, who contributed to making the Center a reality. “This project has and will continue to have many strong industry friends and partners,” he said.

The complex is expected to be completed by summer 2007 and will replace the old dairy facility at Lab Farm 1, which was built in the 1950s. The new facility will include a compost bedded pack barn for approximately 100 lactating cows, with a BouMatic double-6 herringbone parlor, which will increase milking speed and efficiency. The facility plan supports a special needs barn, calf, heifer and hay barns and a feed and a machine shed.

The facility will feature a StepMetrix automated lameness detection system, research bays with Calan gates, confinement and pasture-based management systems, and two 25-student capacity classrooms which can be expanded for industry-sponsored workshops and meetings.

UW-River Falls is one of the three largest dairy science undergraduate programs in the nation with around 130 dairy science majors and more than 450 animal science majors enrolled. All students will benefit from the Center.

Representative Rhoades, a UWRF alumna, noted the facility will have a great impact on the community. “This facility will help shape the industry not only in our state, but also in our country and in the world,” Rhoades said.

Go to http://uwrf.edu and the photo archives to view photos of the groundbreaking.
Dean’s Corner

Greetings from the Dean’s Office! Let me begin by introducing myself to those of you I haven’t had the chance to meet yet. My name is Dale Gallenberg and I began as Dean of CAFES in May of this past year. I came to UW-River Falls from South Dakota State University where I was Head of the Plant Science Department for the past 10 years - prior to that I was an Extension plant pathologist. I’m originally from the Antigo area in NE Wisconsin and completed my BS degree at UW-Madison and my MS and PhD degrees at Cornell University.

CAFES has a long history of offering a quality education to students in Wisconsin and the region. It is important that we maintain the foci we have had in the past – quality programs, dedicated and personalized instruction, opportunities for involvement and engagement, and development of important skill sets. However, we must do this in the context of a changing society with evolving needs, which means our programs must change and evolve as well. Not only do we want to prepare our students for the future, we must be preparing leaders who will in fact be helping shape and determine the future.

CAFES is engaged in a strategic planning process that parallels a similar activity at the university level. The basic goal is to compile a document that will help guide the college over the next 5-10 years in making decisions about programs, resources, and facilities. The very process of engaging in discussions about the mission and vision of the college, how we define and assess our programs and activities, and how we best utilize our resources and facilities will be very healthy for us. What we want to be and what steps we need to take to get there, are some of the questions we’re asking ourselves. Our goal is to have the CAFES strategic plan completed by the end of this academic year. Will CAFES look different in the future? We will certainly maintain our emphasis on quality programs and build on our strengths – of which there are many. But we will also be positioned to take advantage of new opportunities as well as examine programs and activities whose resources may be better utilized elsewhere.

One of the unique things about CAFES is the facilities and equipment we need to offer our programs. Classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, pilot plants, and lab farms all contribute to the broad experiences of our CAFES students. The new Dairy Learning Center, the land swap at the Mann Valley Farm, and other projects will provide new opportunities. But as you know there is a cost to having and maintaining these facilities. Indeed there are costs associated with all of our programs and activities and our ability to keep them current and relevant. As we move into the future, the college needs to be aggressive in looking for new and additional funding sources to help meet our program, personnel, facility, and other resource needs. State funding is important to us but it is not likely to be a major source of growth. We will need to look at grants obtained by our faculty and staff, partnerships with other institutions, agencies, and private industry, and expanded giving by private individuals, groups, and corporations.

As I wind down my first contribution to the CAFES FencePost I wanted to speak a bit about the newsletter itself. This publication has a long history with alumni in providing news and information about the college. It provides an opportunity for some of our students to participate in the process. As we move forward I would like to look at other ways we might also use to disseminate information. Cost is a factor as we look at maintaining multiple hard copies of the FencePost annually. I have talked with the CAFES Alumni Board of Directors about exploring an electronic newsletter or utilizing smaller documents sent more regularly via e-mail. We have not reached a final decision on what we plan to try but know that we will maintain at least one hard copy mailing. More on this as things develop.

CAFES has a big year ahead in 2007 – strategic planning, facilities completion, and many other activities. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities, and I look forward to meeting and working with many more of you. I hope you will stop by the office and visit the next time you’re in River Falls. Best wishes to each of you for a productive 2007!

UWRF Students Excel on National Stage

Leah Johnson
Blue Jackets. Gold Standards. People involved in FFA or agricultural education can relate to the 75th annual National FFA Convention theme. The October event, held in Indianapolis, Ind., was attended by 50,000 FFA members, alumni, industry leaders, and agricultural educators.

Drs. Tim Buttles and Jim Graham, agricultural education department, accompanied 17 CAFES students who co-hosted the National Collegiate Agricultural Education Conference and Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave. The Conclave, held in conjunction with the National FFA Convention, allows collegiate members to enter various competitions with the ability to receive national recognition. Travis Klinkner, Cashton, Wis., Agricultural Education Society president says the National Convention provides the opportunity for UWRF students to demonstrate their communication and leadership abilities.

The Alpha Tau Alpha – Alpha Mu Chapter received the highest award issued on the national level, the A.W. Nolan Platinum Award. The Alpha Mu Chapter is the only chapter to win this award for three consecutive years. Students attended the Career Show and supported UWRF recruitment efforts by operating the CAFES promotional booth.

UWRF students competed and placed in the following Conclave events:

Quiz bowl team placed second overall among the 12 competing schools. Team members were Travis Klinker, Cashton, Wis.; Kellie Fiallfin, Osseo, Wis.; Jeanna James, Darlington, Wis.; and Chris Ritscher, Alma, Wis.

Debate team placed second place with team members Steve Boe, Taylor, Wis.; Gena Polzin, Cadott, Wis.; and Jill Hinrichsen, Abbotsford, Wis.

Program of Excellence competition had Leah Johnson, LaCrescent, Minn. representing Alpha Tau Alpha in the areas of fundraising, community service, social and professional development; and placed first in fundraising.

NEWS
Larry Baumann is Wisconsin Vet of the Year

Kendra Knutson
Printed by permission from UWRF Public Affairs

Larry Baumann, animal science department, was named Veterinarian of the Year by the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association (WVMA). The award is given to one whose contributions have been recognized in veterinary medicine, in the veterinary profession itself, and in relationships with Wisconsin veterinarians. Nominated by a group of colleagues within the Northwestern Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association (NWVMA), Baumann attended WVMA’s annual convention in Madison to accept his award.

“It was a very meaningful and humbling honor,” Baumann said.

Baumann has been active in the NWVMA for almost 20 years. He has served in leadership roles and has volunteered to complete organizational tasks. The NWVMA has a strong membership base and is one of the most active veterinary districts in the state. Baumann says he would like to see the Northwest Veterinary District remain strong, active, and vibrant. As a part of his mission, he will continue to educate and support young veterinarians.

Baumann, while a student, said he looked up to several people who served as his mentors and were recipients of the Veterinarian of the Year Award.

“It is very special to follow in their footsteps. I am very honored,” he said.

CAFES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

Name(s) _________________________________________ (please include maiden name if married since graduation)
Address/City/State/Zip _________________________________________________________ _____ check if new
Email Address ________________________________________________________________
Telephone _____________________ Year(s) of Graduation _______________________

Premier Supporter (formerly Lifetime Member):
Individual - $400 or Family - $600 .................................................................

Donations
General Fund (FencePost, Dairy Expo, Receptions, etc.) .....................
CAFES Alumni Scholarship Donation ....................................................
Other (specify) ...........................................................................................

TOTAL __________

Please make checks payable to: UWRF Foundation-CAFES Alumni Association
(Your contribution may be tax deductible to the extent allowable by law)
Please check:
_____ If you are interested in serving as a CAFES Alumni Board Member.
_____ If your company has a "matching funds" program for which you have obtained a form and included with your donation.

Contributing Writers for FencePost Fall 2006

Leah Johnson, LaCrescent, Minn.
Kendra Knutson, Almond, Wis.
Ryan Thorson, Shawano, Wis.

Corrections for FencePost, Vol. 37 No. 2 Spring 2006:
Three writers’ names were omitted from their stories printed in the Spring 2006 issue. Writers and stories are:

Margaret Groth, Winona, Minn., Splett Receives Distinguished Teacher Award
Jerome McNamara, River Falls, Wis., Keepin’ It Soggy
Bob Baker, Associate Dean, Plant and Earth Science professor, Dean’s Corner.
Ryan Thorson-Class of 2000

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines networking as the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions. One purpose of CAFES Alumni Association, as stated in our bylaws, is to facilitate the exchange of information among alumni and friends of CAFES.

Throughout 2007, many CAFES alumni receptions will be held allowing you to network with colleagues from different backgrounds and walks of life. Look for networking opportunities at the Wisconsin Fertilizer and Ag Show in January, UWRF Alumni Weekend in July, Farm Technology Days in September, and World Dairy Expo in October.

An organization is only as good as its membership and I encourage everyone to take advantage of the alumni receptions scheduled for 2007. If you have suggestions on how to make our alumni association better, know of an event to promote with a reception, or are interested in serving on the board of directors, please contact a board member or the dean’s office.

Electronic communication helps you maintain your network. Email not only saves money, but also is faster, easier, and sometimes the preferred way to communicate. If you have email access, go to www.uwrf.edu and click on Alumni Relations to update your email address and personal information.

On behalf of the CAFES Alumni Association, I would like to wish everyone a healthy and prosperous 2007. We look forward to seeing you at alumni events in 2007, which create opportunities to exchange information among alumni and CAFES’ friends and, according to the dictionary, is called networking.