



NUTS & BOLTS

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John Hest, Editor



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OLD BUSINESS

Pat Harrington, our newly elected vice-president, sent his history sheet just a couple days after the August 1 newsletter left our kitchen table. At that time I promised that we'd publish it in this issue. So here it is:

PAT HARRINGTON - Pat is a native of Post Falls, Idaho where he grew up on a small dairy farm. His college degrees include a B. S. degree in Philosophy from Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA and a M. S. degree in International Agricultural Development from the U. of California, Davis.

He did a stint in Zambia, Africa where he was head of the Crops department at the Zambia College of Agriculture. While in that country he also managed a 500 acre farm owned by the college. Upon returning to the states he signed on as coordinator of the Native American Agriculture Program at the Gila River Career Center in Sacaton, AZ. In 1981 he headed up the new Farm Business Management department at Central Arizona College in Coolidge.

Pat and his wife Ellen, have two children, Amanda, two years and Kyle, six months. His hobbies include operating a 2.3 acre irrigated farm and if he has any time left over, works with stained glass. The family is involved in their church and work at neighborhood development.

As anyone who has heard at the annual management conferences, Pat also works at collecting and telling Irish stories. The stories are told even better when a libation of Irish whiskey is at hand.

RESULTS AT LINCOLN

At least one of you who heard my plea for articles for NUTS & BOLTS responded and this article is the result. Here's the first by our association secretary:

If I Had It To Do Over

Dennis Lehto
St. Cloud Vo-Tech
St. Cloud, MN

I concur with the commonly used adage "hindsight always has 20-20 vision", in that it is easy to look back and reflect on how things could have been different. Experience, in itself is of little value unless you can recognize the successes and errors of this experience and use that information to achieve greater successes in the future. This is what I will try to do in this article.

There should be some qualifications before one would assume the responsibility of making recommendations to other people (I often wonder about Ann Landers); so here are mine:

I'm completing my 35th year of teaching agriculture (10 years at the secondary level and 25 working with adults). I began my career at Evansville, a small town in west central MN., in an area of diversified agriculture made up of dairy, cash crops and other livestock. After 10 years of teaching high school agriculture, along with advising an FFA chapter and conducting evening classes for young farmers and adults, we expanded the department to include the farm management program, which became my responsibility.

In 1964 I felt I could make more money elsewhere so I moved 50 miles north to Perham, MN. where I also began a farm management program. In the spring of 1965 the superintendent of schools at Evansville contacted me with an offer to return, prompted by a petition the farmers in the program had circulated and presented to the board of education. I have had a number of bright spots in my professional career, but that still rates at the top!

Needless to say, I returned to Evansville where I spent another satisfying ten years, until the urge to move (or my financial greed prompted by a higher salary offer) hit me again and I moved to St. Cloud, MN. I've

been there for 13 years. We have three instructors serving 96 farm families, plus conducting an intensive beginning farmer class of 20 young people.

During my career I have held a number of offices in professional organizations, including the presidency of our state vo-ag association and our state vocational association. So those activities, plus my 35 years experience, probably give me license to express the following ideas as to how I may have done it better.

1. Still prioritize individual contact with my clientele on the farm. This affords a desirable laboratory environment with an atmosphere conducive to a sound learning experience.
2. Do a better job of making more effective use of my time. First of all, to enable me to make even more individual contacts with the farmers in my program; Second, to allow more time to spend with my family. (Since I've done such a poor job of that I'm going to try to make up for a part of that with my grand children).
3. Spend as much time, or more, on professional activities and personal improvement. Conferences and workshops, similar to the excellent conference we attended this past summer in Lincoln, NE., can give one the insight and knowledge to stay on top of the job, as well as give a "shot in the arm" to help retain enthusiasm. Graduate study should be a part of the enrichment of one's expertise. Taking an active part in professional activities can give strength to the profession and give a broader outlook of agricultural education in general.
4. Read more professional and technical publications. The rapidly changing technology in agriculture and educational methods dictates this.
5. Make public relations a larger part of what I do, not only through the media, but by being a visible part of the school and community. This is more of an effort in a larger community, of course. One is easily visible in a small town, but when the program includes many communities, the job becomes more difficult. It's easier to get lost in the shuffle.
6. Hone my communications skills. Pay more attention to the many ways of presenting information to people.
7. Be more creative in my teaching. Use more imagination in making the learning of facts and concepts more enjoyable for the whole farm family.
8. Quit trying to be everything to everybody. Prioritize my activities and move away from activities that are more oriented toward service, rather than education.
9. Make better use of resource people. There is a wealth of specialists in various agricultural agencies, i.e. extension, soil conservation and also private industry. Besides that we have the expertise of other ag instructors, both high school and adult, that we can lean on. Utilizing all of these can make the adult instructor more efficient. Besides, the education of our families will be more enriched.

I have shared with you some of my personal observations gained from the last 25 years that I've spent in farm management education. Hopefully, others, especially younger teachers, will consider them as guidelines toward a happier and more rewarding teaching career.

Eventually, when I retire, these memories will become a part of my "pension." Although not measurable in dollars, this pension is unequalled in its value to me.

GENE'S REPORT

Gene Francis, adult farm management instructor in Blooming Prairie, MN., who represents our association on the National Council for Vo-Tech Education in Agriculture, sent me a report of that group's activities the other day.

The Council is currently trying to identify issues that are important to the teaching of vocational agriculture in all phases, from high school to all types of adult programs.

Our adult farm and ranch education programs, of course, are a part of the whole picture, and have been discussed at their meetings. From their

discussion they discovered that there was limited knowledge of the types of programs operating by each state. They found too that several committee members were unsure of the status of the adult and post secondary programs operating in their states.

According to Gene, plans are underway to contact officials of each of the agriculture professional organizations, teacher trainers and supervisory staff in each of the states, asking them to report back to the council. Post secondary administrators are also on their list so if all of these people cooperate they will be in a situation to sort out the results and improve communications between all of the segments of agricultural education.

I'm sure that many of our NUTS & BOLTS readers will be getting these questionnaires and will be in a position to further the cause of farm and ranch management education when they send their reports to the council. Then they will be in a position to address the issues brought up from the survey. According to Gene this survey is planned annually so that issues will be addressed on a current basis.

Incidentally, Dr. Larry Case, who spoke at our Lincoln conference, is chairman of the National Council for Vocational and Technical Education.

BACK TO THE BASICS

Every once in awhile we get to thinking that we have some new ideas that are going to revolutionize education and we begin to feel cocky. And we give others the impression that we're "experts."

Well, the other day I read a piece that could deflate anyone's ego and one wonders the value of all those years of grade school, high school and college. I thought it was so great that I decided to copy it onto my First Choice data disk with the idea of using it as a NUTS & BOLTS article some time.

ALL I EVER REALLY NEEDED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

(author unknown to ye editor but thanks from all of us)

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the grade school mountain, but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned. Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt someone. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup... they all die. So do we.

And remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all; "LOOK" Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk about 3:00 every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and clean up our own messes. And it is till true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

DOWN ON MY KNEES

Thanks to Dennis Lehto who came through with an article for YOUR publication. Now here's where I get down on my knees. We need a whole lot more than one article and as of the time when we send out this issue, I'm scraping the bottom of the barrel. So, please sit down at your computer and get going now. I know there are scads of ideas screaming to be heard. *NP*

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A COWMAN (MINNESOTA STYLE)
(with tongue in cheek)

1. A wide-brimmed hat, one pair of tight pants and \$30 boots from a discount store.
2. At least two head of livestock, preferably cattle - one male, one female.
3. A new air-conditioned pickup with automatic transmission, power steering and trailer hitch.
4. A gun rack for the rear window of the pickup, big enough to hold a walking stick and rope.
5. Two dogs to ride in the bed of the pickup truck.
6. A \$40 horse and a \$300 saddle.
7. A gooseneck trailer small enough to park in front of a cafe.
8. A little place to keep the cows on land too poor to grow crops.
9. A spool of barbed wire, three cedar posts and a bale of prairie hay to haul around in the truck all day.
10. Credit at the bank.
11. Credit at the feed store.
12. Credit from your father-in-law.
13. A good neighbor to feed the dogs and cattle whenever the owner is out in Colorado fishing and hunting.
14. A pair of silver spurs to wear to barbecues.
15. A rubber cushion to sit on for four hours at the auction ring every week.
16. A secondhand car for going out to feed the cows when your son-in-law borrows the pickup.
17. A good pocketknife suitable for whittling to pass away the time at the auction ring.
18. A good wife who won't get mad when you walk across the living room floor with manure on your boots.
19. A good wife who will believe you when you come in at 11 p.m. saying, "I've been fixing the fence."
20. A good wife with a full time job at the courthouse.

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