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Cultivate Spring/Summer 2015

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cultivate

CONNECTIONS • MINDS • INNOVATIONS



Swiss Cheese
American Dream Page 10



LETTER FROM THE DEAN

According to the standard Gregorian calendar,

the year ends on December 31. But for those of us whose lives are measured by the academic calendar, the year seems to end in the spring. We celebrate with commencement, which really means the beginning of something. It marks big changes for our graduates and a different rhythm on campus, but work continues for all of us.

Our students have tremendous opportunities to learn and experience new things at Utah State University, often due to the generosity of donors who make scholarships possible. Many students work side-by-side with faculty who show them what it is like to search for solutions to problems and the importance of finding work they can feel passionate about.

Dreaming big, passion for doing something well, continually learning, taking risks, being resilient, working hard and sharing success with others are all traits we hope our students learn and value. They are traits exemplified in the lives of many people, and particularly in the story of one friend of the college and his lasting legacy (see *the story on page 10*).

In this issue of Cultivate, we also salute the work of an alumnus who has devoted his career to teaching others about the importance of agriculture and teaching them to develop their skills. Jim Summers has gone about his job without much fanfare, but his work with high school students and mentoring student teachers has impacted the lives of thousands of people (see *the story on page 16*).

Even if your personal calendar doesn't reset around this time of year, now is a great time to reflect and renew. Happy New Year!

Kenneth L. White

Dean, College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Vice President, Extension and Agriculture

LETTER FROM THE CAAS ALUMNI COUNCIL PRESIDENT

THIS SPRING, parents, grandparents, siblings, teachers and members of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Alumni Council celebrated with recent graduates. We met with them at the Senior Luncheon, co-sponsored by Utah Farm Bureau and CAAS, and we celebrated with them at graduation itself. Our graduates are impressive and prepared to meet their opportunities and responsibilities to provide resources and services our growing population will need to survive and prosper. Many have benefited from the generosity of individuals and

businesses who have provided scholarships and other incentives to make the goal of graduation a reality. An impressive number of CAAS graduates already have interesting jobs in careers that will reward them again and again.

Lucky CAAS graduates are now alumni members of our college. We want to involve you, learn with you, serve together and consider opportunities for advancing the mission of our college. To achieve an optimal balance in our Alumni Council, we invite graduates to serve with us, regardless of age or

gender. Please contact Jean Edwards in the Dean's Office at 797-2205, or a member of the Alumni Council, and get involved as an alumnus.

Sincere congratulations to our graduates and best wishes for much success in your developing careers!



Clark Israelsen, '76 & '79

CAAS Alumni Council President

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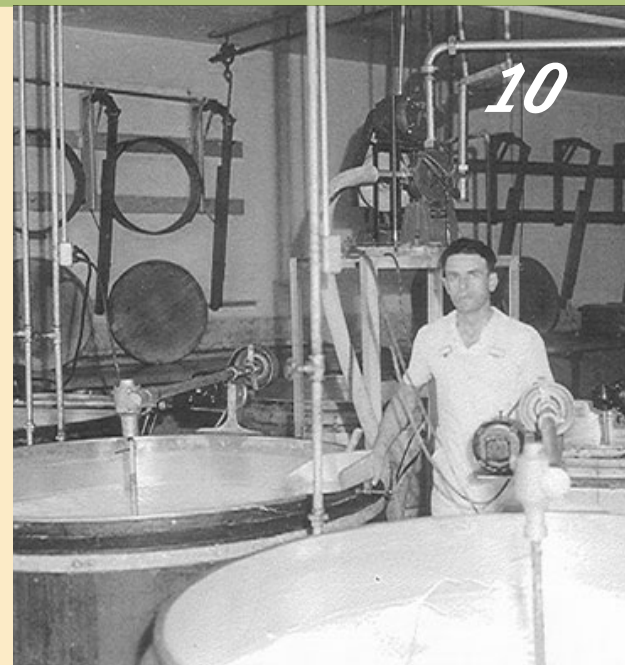
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Contributors

DEAN:

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**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT:**

Brandon Monson

**DIRECTOR OF
MARKETING:**

Mike Whitesides

EDITOR:

Lynnette Harris

DESIGNER:

Elizabeth Lord

COPY EDITORS:

Donna Falkenborg

Tammy Firth

Julene Reese

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Gary Neuenswander

Dennis Hinkamp

Todd Reese

Elizabeth Lord

Additional photos provided by:

Our Lady of the Holy Trinity

Robert and Joann Adams

Brad and Lisa Allen

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by the numbers

CAAS GRADUATING CLASS OF 2015

Graduate

DEGREES AWARDED:



96

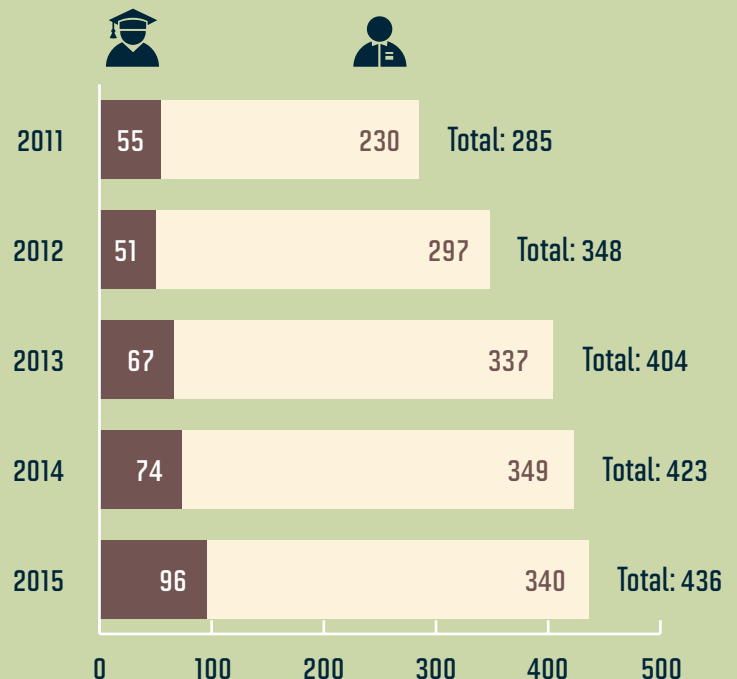
Undergraduate

DEGREES AWARDED:



340

Then and Now



in pictures



College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences' 2015 Valedictorian, Allison Osborn, shared her reflections on experiences at USU during the college's commencement ceremony, telling the graduates, "Remember that you have made a difference in your fellow students' lives."

USU Students Present Options for Huntsville Monastery's Transition

BY ELAINE TAYLOR



Monks from Our Lady of the Holy Trinity Trappist Monastery are faced with an important decision in the coming years: how to transfer ownership and use of the monastery and surrounding land in Ogden Valley. Representatives of the monastery and the Salt Lake City Diocese met with graduate students in Utah State University's Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning (LAEP) to discuss possible options.

The monastery plans to transfer ownership of 1,800 acres of land that has been largely used for agriculture, and a team of five USU students including Chris Binder, Nick Tanner, Graydon Bascom, Stephen Peaden and Grant Hardy, led by Practitioner in Residence Todd Johnson, hopes to guide the monks in their quest to find a suitable plan for the future of the Huntsville monastery. The project grew out of last year's senior capstone project in LAEP when teams of students and faculty worked with people in communities in Ogden Valley to assess land use goals and plans for the future.

"Our students were invited to explore alternative possibilities and future scenarios for this beautiful part of the valley and provide the monks with ideas to guide their next steps," said LAEP Assistant Professor Carlos Licon.

The monastery has played an integral role in the local community since its establishment in 1947; however, as the monks age, it has been decided that a new role should be found for the land. Superior of the abbey, Father Brendan Freeman, attended the meeting in Logan and said the average age of the monastery's monks is now 80-years-old. The monastery has not added any new monks in more than 30 years.

"The last one to persevere was in 1980," Freeman said. "That was quite a few years ago. It's not a monetary question. There's no vocations coming in and there's no way you can make that happen. Can't buy it. We call it a call from God and it's just not out there right now."

The land on which the monastery resides is valuable, and the area is under increasing pressure from developers, Licon said. Citizens from surrounding towns and cities, and representatives from various groups, including the Ogden Valley Land Trust, attended the meeting at USU hoping to express their opinions on the land's future to the monks.

What to do with the land isn't just debated among Ogden Valley's residents, but also among the monks themselves, said Freeman. The LAEP presentation served as a way for the monks to see the costs and benefits of various options, from leaving the land to agriculture to turning it over for development. However, the crux of the presentation was the design the graduate students have spent the semester developing.

"After meeting the monks and spending time in the abbey, our students realized their analysis needed to integrate the spiritual dimension of the monks' legacy in this place," Licon said.

The team worked to preserve that legacy by upholding the principles of education, inspiration and healing during their design process.

"These values were translated into the design recommended for the property through various mechanisms including conservation easements, continuing the agricultural tradition of the land, preserving key historical elements and ensuring public access [to the area]," team member Binder said.

USU Department Head Wins National Award

BY SHELBY RUUD

Sean Michael, head of Utah State University's Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning (LAEP), was honored at the recent Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture's Annual Conference with the 2015 Outstanding Administrator Award, recognizing his long-term accomplishments as an administrator.

This competitive award is given to administrators who "investigate, support or inspire improvement in the education and experience of students."

Michael compared his work in academic administration to a landscape planning project.

"There are many variables to consider, and a diverse team of stakeholders and co-designers, and yet we have a central purpose," he said. "That challenge has proven to be fascinating to me, and one that employs the problem-solving and systems thinking that landscape architecture teaches."

Michael joined the USU Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning faculty in 2008. He helped the program become one of the leading landscape architecture programs in the Intermountain West. He was also instrumental in the department's transition from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to its current home in the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences.

"Sean has a great vision and boundless energy to support that vision," said David Anderson, associate professor in LAEP. "He is working hard to advance the LAEP department so we can develop relevant, on-point and effective students who are prepared to make a difference in the world, because issues of land use planning and the ways people interact with their environments will only become more important in the coming years."

Michael said that the most important part of his work is giving others the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

"At times that means organizing vital resources," he said. "The most critical is visioning and planning for those activities that allow the program to grow and flourish in a changing future."



Sean Michael



The students have proposed putting the property into a conservation easement that would allow the monks to put constraints on how the land could be used and developed by future owners. The design calls for small areas of development in places that would have minimal impact on the overall spiritual feeling of the land surrounding the monastery. The students proposed maintaining a system of trails and retreat buildings on the land that could continue to serve people seeking a place for meditation and reflection. Another issue that the students said could be addressed with a conservation easement is water. A natural spring on the monks' property currently provides the city of Huntsville with a majority of its water, and any changes to property ownership would have an effect on the city's drinking water. Hardy said that what the monks decide to do with the monastery has the potential to define the future of development in the Ogden Valley.

"Our contribution was to help the monks find voices to their desires for their legacy on the monastery site," Hardy said. "I think that our presentation will help the monks and the valley come together under a unified vision and goal for the future of the site and the valley as a whole."

The monks do hope to make some money from the sale of the land that they can contribute to charity and to support other monasteries. It may be a few years before the monks make a final decision, but the USU students say they are willing and ready to develop a more detailed land plan for the monks if they are called upon for more help.

Nutrition Professor Receives National Award

BY SHELBY RUUD

Heidi Wengreen, associate professor of nutrition at Utah State University, recently received the 2015 Outstanding Dietetics Educator Award from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

The purpose of the award is “to recognize the teaching, mentoring and leadership activities” of a faculty member in a dietetics education program.

“A lot of my work involves research projects,” Wengreen said. “Providing research and learning opportunities for dietetics students is important to me.”

Wengreen completed her doctorate in Nutrition and Food Sciences with an emphasis in nutritional epidemiology from USU in 2002. She joined the faculty in 2003. Her research interests include examining links between nutrition and disease across the lifespan.

Wengreen is a co-investigator of the Cache County Study on Memory, Health and Aging, a large study of

genetic and environmental factors associated with risk of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

She has also collaborated on the development of the Viva Vegetables! curriculum, a sensory-based, food-focused curriculum used in the Cache County School district to teach children about the benefits of eating vegetables through hands-on learning experiences.

“Many kids struggle with eating healthy, because they don’t know better or they don’t have access to healthy food,” Wengreen said. “Anytime we can influence what they eat, we can better support their health. That’s why my work is important to me.”



Heidi Wengreen

Veterinary Medicine Students Offer Help to Grieving Pet Owners

BY ELAINE TAYLOR

For many people, pets are members of the family. When these furry, feathered or scaled animals pass away owners may feel tremendous grief, but finding someone to talk with about these feelings can be difficult. That’s where organizers of the Utah State University School of Veterinary Medicine’s new Pet Loss Hotline hope to help.

The new bereavement hotline, modeled on partner-school Washington State University’s program, is staffed by first and second year veterinary medicine students, with support from psychologist Steven Lucero, the program’s director of wellness. Lucero said the telephone hotline and email service is a good way to provide hands-on patient experience to veterinary students.

“This was the best opportunity to be able to both meet the needs of people who have lost pets as well as our students who don’t always have time or opportunity to have regular times to work at a walk-in clinic,” Lucero said.

While the program offers students a chance to hone their skills at building trusting relationships with clients, the hotline will also benefit local veterinarians.

“It can be difficult for veterinarians to allocate the time to really talk with some of their clients about these very difficult issues,” Lucero said. “Hopefully, this will be a good resource for them and they can still support their clients.”

Veterinary clinics throughout the state were notified about the new hotline in February, and Lucero said students received calls and emails from pet owners during the program’s first week in operation.

Instead of sitting by a landline waiting for a call, students carry hotline cell phones with them. Lucero said this will enable the students to talk with grieving owners from wherever feels most comfortable to them. People are also invited to use email to express their feelings about losing their pets.

“It is so heartbreaking to say goodbye to our beloved pets who bring so much to our lives,” said first-year vet student Shayla Zeal. “Sometimes, it helps to have someone to talk to or just have someone to listen. I hope to be there for those who need it.”

This summer, though vet students are not in classes, the Pet Loss Hotline service is still available. Callers may leave voice messages and calls will be returned each evening. The number is 435-757-4540. Help is also offered via email at petloss@usu.edu.

See more about the Pet Loss Hotline in this KSL news story: <https://tinyurl.com/vethotline>





Changes at the Skaggs Family Equine Education Center

BY ELAINE TAYLOR AND DENNIS HINKAMP

In January, students and faculty in the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences' equine programs gained new classroom space at the Sam Skaggs Family Equine Education Center in Wellsville and the complex's Matt Hillyard Animal, Teaching and Research Center began receiving electricity from a new array of 264 solar panels.

The center is home to a program that has seen its enrollment more than double over the past four years and is host to a number of USU Extension, 4-H and community events.

The new solar array, which is nestled between the Equine Center and Highway 89, will reduce the cost of utilities at the Hillyard building, while increasing the visibility of renewable energy in the community.

During the celebration of the new additions to the Equine Center, George Humbert, Rocky Mountain Power's community relations manager, said the array produces between 90,000-92,000 kilowatt-hours annually, equivalent to the amount of energy 10 typical Utah homes use in one year.

Students in the equine science program immediately began benefiting from the new classroom during spring semester.

"The building essentially ties all of our equine facilities into a single cohesive unit," said Dirk Vanderwall, professor and head of the Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences. "After attending class in the new building, the students can walk outside and turn left into the horse barn or turn right into the arena for their hands-on horse activities."

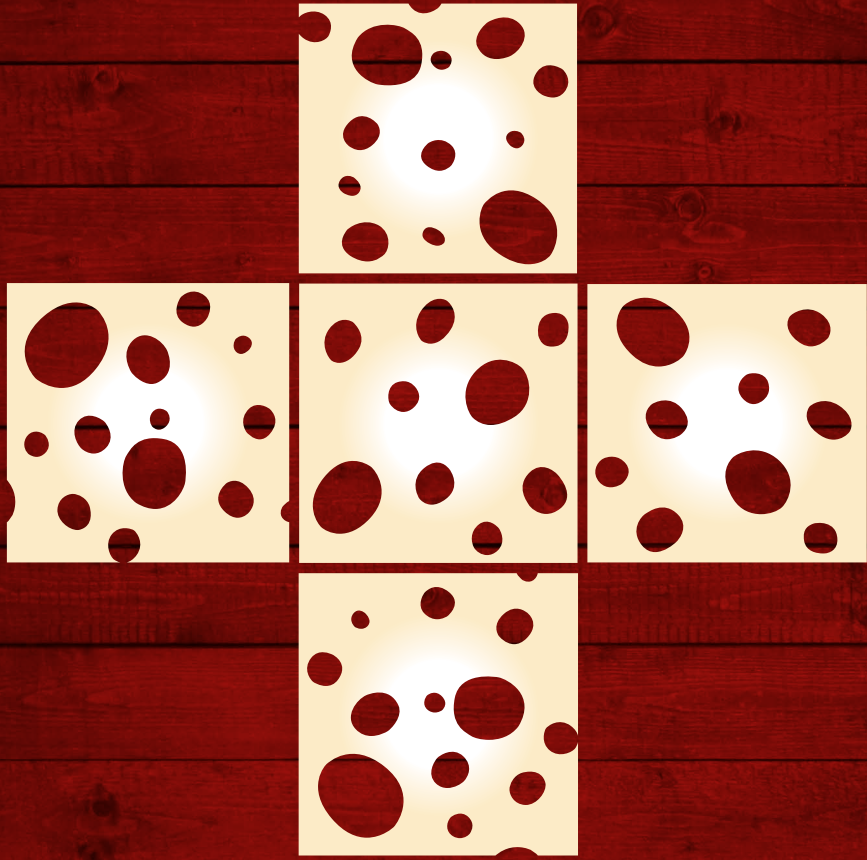
The new facility is outfitted with the latest teaching technologies, but as USU Provost Noelle Cockett said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, the rooms have been built for the sometimes dirty work that comes with the equine program.

"You will notice that these classrooms are not as luxurious as some of those up on the main campus, but for an equine center, this is perfect," Cockett said. "It allows our students to come in and out from whatever they are doing around the center with whatever they have on the bottom of their boots."

Get a bird's-eye view of the solar array at:

<http://tinyurl.com/USUsolarpower>





SWISS
CHEESE
AMERICAN
DREAM

BY LYNNETTE HARRIS

EDWIN GOSSNER BUILT A COMPANY ON HARD WORK AND GREAT SWISS CHEESE, LIKE THE HALF WHEEL HE HEFTS HERE (RIGHT, THEN CLOCKWISE). ENTRANCE TO THE STORE AT THE GOSSNER FOODS PLANT IN LOGAN, UT. EDWIN GOSSNER IN THE EARLY DAYS OF HIS CAREER. DOLORES GOSSNER WHEELER NOW HEADS THE COMPANY HER FATHER FOUNDED.



YOU GOOD FAITHFUL FARMERS,
HOW ARE YOU VALUED BY YOUR COUNTRY?
IF GOD DOES NOT BLESS
AND THE FARMER DOES NOT WORK,
I ASK, WHO HAS SOMETHING TO EAT?
-SWISS PROVERB

Those words, painted in a prominent spot on the façade of the Gossner Foods plant in Logan, aren't just decorative. They remind employees and the customers who flock to the plant's on-site store of an important truth about our food supply. And they remind Gossner Foods President and CEO Dolores Gossner Wheeler of the philosophy that drove her father's business and life's work. Gossner Foods appears to be in the dairy products business, but at the core it's a people business made of dairy farmers, milk haulers, cheesemakers, packagers and others.

The proverb on the plant is the same one that is carved into a wood beam stretching the length of the Gossner ancestral home in Edliswiel-Waldkirch, Switzerland, the home Edwin Gossner left in 1930 when he immigrated to the United States. He came from five generations of Swiss farmers, but a dwindling economy and few prospects at home led him to take a chance and head for America, where he landed with "enough money to buy a few apples" Wheeler said, recounting the story her father told many times. He made his way to Wisconsin where his older brother, who had trained at a cheese making school in Switzerland, was running his own cheese factory.

Wisconsin proved an important stop for Gossner. There he learned the art and science of making Swiss cheese and met Josephine Oechlin who became his wife in 1933 and his business consultant and confidant from then on. The young couple lived above the cheese factory where Gossner took over as cheesemaker when his brother moved on to another opportunity. But in 1937, a fire started by a faulty gas generator — turned on due to a power outage — destroyed the factory and the Gossners' home with it.

"They lost all of their belongings, their home and the factory," Wheeler said.

At this stage, different proverbs seem to have engrained themselves in the Gossner psyche: Dream big. Take risks. Work hard. Never give up.

SWISS MOVES WEST

The family, now with the additions of Edwin Jr. and baby Dolores, moved to California where Gossner made cheese for the Rumiano brothers, who wanted to diversify from Monterey Jack to Swiss cheese production. But he was always looking for the right place to

start his own business and make his own mark with Swiss cheese.

Gossner found the place when the family traveled through Cache Valley on a trip to Yellowstone National Park.

“He loved it here,” Wheeler said. “He always called it ‘the little Switzerland of the Rockies’ and thought this was the greatest place in the world. My mother’s parents thought he had taken us to the wilderness.”

While Logan may have been a beautiful spot, it didn’t seem the right place to make Swiss cheese because, as Wheeler explained, “Everyone said you can’t make Swiss cheese in a place where cows are fed silage because it makes too many active bacteria in the milk and you can’t control the eyes (holes) in the cheese. Sometimes you check a round of Swiss and it has no eyes, and when it doesn’t, it’s a ‘blind’ piece of cheese and we don’t sell it.”

Gossner brought together some local dairy farmers and they went into production and proved the naysayers wrong. They started small, making one round of Swiss cheese a day, and within 10 years the factory was turning out 120 two-hundred-pound wheels of cheese a day, making it the world’s largest Swiss cheese producer. As production increased, it was difficult to sell that much cheese in the West, so Gossner became a salesman, bought trucks and hired drivers to transport it to markets in Chicago and New York.

Business continued to grow, but a falling out with the company in 1965 ended another chapter in Gossner’s career.

“They could have retired then,” Wheeler said, “But my mother knew my dad and told him, ‘You’ll never be happy if you don’t prove yourself again,’ so they started again.”

STARTING OVER. AGAIN.

They owned a ranch west of Logan and mortgaged or sold everything to buy another 40 acres and some equipment. Gossner started making cheese again, this time with milk from a dairy farm run by his daughter and son-in-law, Alan.

“I married a farmer and that’s when I learned about the hard work it takes to keep a farm running,” Wheeler said.

She has never forgotten the effort that the milk coming into the plant represents, and has carried on her father’s practice of working with farmers, not contracts.

“Dad never signed a contract with a dairy farmer, and we still don’t,” Wheeler said. “We depend on people, and they depend on us to be honest. It means they trust us and we have to toe the mark because if they’re not happy, they can leave. My dad said you have to ‘Take care of farmers. You can’t make cheese out of water.’”

The philosophy must still work. Many of Gossner’s suppliers, independent milk haulers and employees have multi-generational ties to the company.

“Farmers have to deal every day with Father Nature,” Wheeler said. “We say father because mother would never be that cruel. Farmers can’t control markets, butterfat content or protein quality. They are at the mercy of so many forces and they need a fair price from us.”

And cheesemakers also find there are forces they can’t precisely control. Swiss cheese is still the backbone of Gossner’s products, and they’ve done it very



well for decades, but that doesn't make it easy.

"Cheddar is lazy," Wheeler said. "It just lays there. But Swiss is like a naughty puppy. You never know exactly what it will do. And if we don't get it right, we don't sell it. But we've got great employees with a lot of experience making great products."

SECOND GENERATION

While Wheeler grew up loving opportunities to spend time with her busy dad when it was time to cut and wrap the cheese, she didn't dream of becoming the boss. She remembers milestones in her career, like the day her mother said, "Missy Dissy, it's time for you to come up in the office and learn to do payroll."

Wheeler didn't want to do payroll or bookkeeping, but she did it. There were about 120 employees and her family knew every one of them. When her father needed to hand over the business, it was the employees who asked her to take charge. She told them she didn't think she could. She cared deeply about the company and the people, but was terrified of speaking to more than a few people at a time or trying to fill her father's spot.

That's where two more bits of wisdom became pivotal. The employees told Wheeler she didn't need to know everything because they knew their jobs, but they needed her to tie them together and carry on. Another turning point was when her father, though he offered training and advice, told her she had to make her own decisions and not always worry about how he would have done things.



All that milk doesn't just become delicious cheese. Gossner Foods also uses ultra-high-temperature packaging to produce an array of plain and flavored milks that are stable for months without refrigeration, like the ones shown here with company president and CEO Dolores Gossner Wheeler. The "milk boxes" are dear to many of the Gossner's youngest customers who love to choose their favorite flavors, and are also appreciated by the U.S. military. The store at the Logan plant displays thank-you notes and photographs sent from the Middle East of men in uniform raising a toast with milk boxes.

There are always decisions to be made and changes in equipment, technology, regulations and business practices to contend with as the company moves forward. Wheeler and the board makes their own decisions, and Edwin Gossner died more than two decades ago. But his spirit, passion for making great cheese and his vision are still central to the company, just as his desk is central to the board room where it serves as the base for the conference table.

"Dad was a dreamer and he didn't always make the right decisions," Wheeler said. "My mother had a good head for business. But they made decisions when things had to happen and dad always made things work until a better solution was found," Wheeler said. "He showed me you can't always wait for something that seems perfect. You have to make decisions and always try to be morally right."



SCHOOL IS OUT, BUT THE LESSONS LINGER

BY JULENE REESE

Visiting Jim Summers' classroom and shop is a walk down memory lane. Dozens of award plaques spanning decades hang on the walls, and there are many samples of agricultural tools, engines and equipment from the past along with a VCR and other old-school teaching materials. But these same teaching areas also include high-tech welding and metal cutting equipment and the latest in desktop computers and tablets.

Summers has taught agricultural technology education at West Side High School in Dayton, Idaho, for the last 41 years. And although it is a small school, his impact on the field of agriculture is significant as many of his former students are now teachers, veterinarians, diesel mechanics, welders, farmers and agribusiness owners and employees.



As he prepared to retire this spring and clear out more than four decades of history from his classroom and shop, he was reflective on a profession that has evolved tremendously over the years.

Summers was raised in Tremonton, Utah, where his family owned a dairy and row crop farm. He wasn't sure he wanted to be a farmer, but loved what agriculture was about and was heavily involved in Future Farmers of America (FFA) growing up. This led him to study agricultural education at USU, and he graduated in 1974 with a bachelor's degree and in 1980 with a master's degree. His wife, their two daughters, their son and two sons-in-law also have degrees from USU.

"We are truly a family of Aggies," Summers said. "And my degrees from USU in ag education have served me well."

His ties to USU have continued throughout his career as he has encouraged hundreds of students to attend USU and has supervised 36 student teachers from USU and one from the University of Idaho.

"That number of student teachers is unheard of in the profession," said Brian Warnick, associate dean for the USU College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences. "Mr. Summers has influenced not just the thousands of students in his own classroom, but has indirectly influenced countless agriculture students in the Intermountain West through his mentoring of student teachers. You would be hard pressed to find anyone in the region who has had a greater impact on agricultural education."

Summers said working with student teachers each year has

helped keep him sharp.

"I told them from the start if they were willing to put the work in, they would have a successful experience, and we would work together to make that happen," he said. "I expected them to be at all the meetings I went to. I took them to state leadership conferences, and basically they shadowed me."

Sid Thayne student-taught under Summers in 2010 and said he was extremely knowledgeable and up-to-date on the content he taught, yet he also used a chalkboard and a slide projector.

"Mr. Summers was a great teacher and a great mentor," Thayne said. "I learned a lot from him as he helped me with lesson plans, classroom management, prioritizing classroom activities and balancing teaching with personal life. He expected a lot out of his stu-



dents and student teachers, but it was never unmanageable.

“There are things he did very well that I hope to copy from him. He enjoyed teaching and interacting with his students. He ran a great FFA program. He expected his students to be good people and citizens and was a good example of that. He also provided a great learning atmosphere.”

Jordan White, who will be Summers’ teaching replacement at West Side High, also student-taught with him and said he is a great example of how an ag teacher should be.

“His model of how to run a successful FFA/ag program is unparalleled in student involvement and cooperation,” he said. “He is truly an inspiration.”

Summers taught a wide array of agricultural education classes at West Side High. His classes ranged from general agriculture to intro to ag mechanics, small engines, intro to electricity, welding, public speaking and large diesel engine overhaul. In addition, he taught concurrent enrollment classes through USU. He said West Side offers more concurrent enrollment classes than any other school in Idaho right now, and some students also earn an associate’s degree as they graduate from high school.

He also advised the FFA student organization, which has a large presence at West Side High. From the school of 187 students, 76 were involved in FFA last year.

Summers has seen many changes over the course of his career, and technology has changed most drastically. He said it has been a challenge to stay ahead of it all.

“I still remember the old mimeograph we had to crank and the strong smell of the purple ink as the copies came off the machine,” he said. “Then I had one of the first Apple IIe computers in the school and we thought that was amazing. Of course, over the years, the computer has evolved and you keep trying to evolve with it. We’ve

Jim Summers shows off a gift from students and

THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCES PREPARES TEACHERS IN:

- Agricultural Education
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education
- Business Education
- Technology and Engineering Education

The courses our graduates will teach — once titled things like “shop” and “home ec” — don’t look much like their predecessors and include skills like family finance, computer-aided drafting and design, website design, precision agriculture and robotics. In short, they teach an array of subjects that directly contribute to building middle and high school students’ life and job skills.

For graduates seeking employment as teachers in these areas, the placement rate is at or near 100 percent and has been for the past 10 years (with the exception of the recently introduced Business Education program).

gone through slide sets, VHS tapes, DVDs and now everything is pretty much online. The students now have their own iPads for testing since the district’s emphasis is to convert our lessons to ‘Canvas,’ the program USU uses. The teaching part has definitely changed over the years.”

He said technology has also changed most things in the field that used to be done manually. For instance his school shop includes a CNC (computerized numeric control) plasma cutting table that can cut graphic designs out of sheet metal as though it were a piece of paper. In addition, he noted that welding has changed with technology and is much more precise. Farming has also changed and the quality and size of animals has increased immensely over the years because of genetic improvement research.

Summers said another thing that has changed is the students.

“We would strive to build a work ethic in students,” he said. “Sometimes the work ethic wasn’t there as it was years ago. Students are different than they were 40 years ago. If you get a 14-year-old who doesn’t know how to work, you

have to try to teach that skill, and that was a challenge at times.”

Summers said he has had people tell him they would like to be ag teachers because they like agriculture, and though liking agriculture is key, being passionate about the job and the students is definitely a bonus.

“I consider myself old school and because I’ve been at this a long time and I worked on a farm as a kid, I brought some of those skills with me,” he said. “There is a lot more to it than what people see. And now industry is willing to pay top dollar for college of ag graduates, so many students who graduate planning to be teachers receive a higher offer from a corporation and they jump ship and decide teaching is not their thing. I’ve had opportunities to take some of those positions over the years, but I opted to stay in the field that I’m in. I love the students.”

He said money is not everything, and he’s banked a lot of memories over the last 41 years.

“I’ve taken many students on trips through the years, and for some, it’s been their first ride in an airplane, or their first ride in a taxi or seeing a big city,” he said.

“I’ve seen students laughing and crying at the same time and I got to be part of that. I am more than a teacher. Some of my best friends are past students.”

Now at the close of his career, Summers has taught many of his students’ children and even some of their grandchildren. Summers keeps in touch with many former students and they often stop by his house or drop him an email. He also hears about their doings from their siblings.

When asked what is next for him, he said it will take him a few years just to catch up on the things he’s been putting off.

“My wife is a 4th grade teacher at Oakwood Elementary in Preston, and she is retiring this year too,” he said. We plan to spend more time with our children and grandchildren and taking care of our yard and shop.”

In 41 years of teaching, the changes Summers has seen have been tremendous as he’s gone from old school to cutting edge technology. But more important than his adaptability over those years is the impact he has made on his students that will continue for generations to come.

why I give

“45 years ago an older farmer had faith in my brother and me when he rented us his land. Giving back to these students is my small way of fulfilling the faith he had in me and my brother, by

putting my faith in these students.

I give to the college to invest in the future. These students are the future. They are our future. These are the ones we need to be in agriculture.”

– SCOTT FUHRIMAN



“We give because we are second and third generation Aggies and *have a deep connection to Utah State.* Our experiences at USU helped prepare us for our future lives. Paying it forward allows us to feel the impact on the next generation of Aggies.”

– ROBERT AND JOANN ADAMS



“Utah State University holds a very special place in our hearts in that all of our family members have graduated from this amazing institution. We value education and want to further promote the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences’ (CAAS) ambassador program,

future leaders in the agriculture industry.”

– BRAD AND LISA ALLEN

alumni corner



ALUMNI COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

David Bailey, '02

by Matt Hargreaves,
Utah Farm Bureau

David Bailey has a passion for agriculture, and he gets to spend his workdays training and encouraging others to advocate for the industry he loves. It's nice that his work at the Utah Farm Bureau Federation is closely aligned with many of the efforts in USU's College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, from which Bailey graduated in 2002.

Bailey earned a B.S. degree in Agriculture Systems Technology in 2002, and a minor in Agribusiness. He currently serves as president-elect of the CAAS Alumni Council. Bailey is as emotionally connected to USU as he is to the family dairy farm he grew up on in Liberty, Utah. His passion for agriculture has been cultivated through the many hours milking cows and tending to crops, serving on the dairy judging team for Weber High

School's FFA Chapter and participating in the Ag Club at USU.

"I love being able to apply things I've learned in college, as well as through the invaluable interactions between farmers throughout this state, in my work in advocating for farmers and ranchers," Bailey said. "There's truly no greater work in this world than raising food for the world, and for caring for God's land and creatures. It's an honor for me to represent these fine men and women – the farm families of Utah – to ensure they have a future."

Bailey's current responsibilities as vice president for organization at the Farm Bureau have him working in leadership development with the state's young and emerging farmers and ranchers – the leaders of agriculture's future. This includes creat-

ing collegiate chapters of the Farm Bureau at Southern Utah University, Snow College and the state's first chapter at USU.

"I like working with young people (I still consider myself one!) because they are so enthusiastic about the possibilities and excited about the future," Bailey said. "They look at the way things have been done, pay it its proper respect, and look for ways to improve it given our modern technology. It's been great for me to come back to USU often to help with the Collegiate Farm Bureau, its Discussion Meet, and to help judge State FFA competitions. There's just something special about this place."

In addition to his advocacy training, Bailey has been a professional hunting guide, a farm manager in Nevada, and a regional manager for the Utah Farm Bureau. He also seeks to serve others through numerous volunteer opportunities, including a recent trip to Ethiopia to help local farmers, and as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Oregon.

Bailey owns and operates a small farm in Liberty to "keep his kids busy." When he's not working for those who work to feed the world, Bailey also enjoys winter sports like skiing and snowmobiling, and spending time with his wife and six children.

If you are interested in being a member of the Alumni Council, contact Jean Edwards at 797-2205 or Jean.Edwards@usu.edu.

Scholarships WITH A SIDE OF BBQ

The Utah Agricultural Products Barbecue festivities are set for Oct. 3, prior to the Aggies taking on Colorado State University in USU's 2015 Homecoming football game.

Sponsored by Utah's Own, the barbecue features local agricultural products including beef, dairy products, turkey, pork, onion rings, salad, lamb, corn, apples and more, and all for a great cause: scholarships in the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences (CAAS).

Each year, participating companies and commodity groups donate, prepare and serve the wide array of food at the event, with volunteer support from CAAS students, faculty and staff. Over the years,

the event has raised \$138,550 for scholarships which supported 175 students in receiving their educations.

The event will be north of the stadium at Craig Aston Park (approximately 1350 N. 800 E., Logan) and tickets may be purchased in advance at 1-888-USTATE-1 or online at utahstateaggies.com/tickets. The price is \$10 for adults (11 and older) and \$5 for children (ages 3-10). Once inside, the food and drinks are included in the admission price. Currently, the barbecue is set for 3:30-6 p.m. The USU vs. CSU football game will be televised and kick-off time may change. The game's start time may change and the barbecue will adjust to run 3 1/2 hours prior to kickoff.



Don't Take
GRASSES
For Granted

PAUL G. JOHNSON

“Being taken for granted is an unpleasant but sincere form of praise. Ironically, the more reliable you are, and the less you complain, the more likely you are to be taken for granted.”

— GRETCHEN RUBIN, WRITER

I HAVE worked my entire scientific career on the grasses, especially the turfgrasses. Yes, those little plants under our feet when we play soccer, toss a Frisbee at the park, hit a little white ball, or that we roll around on with our kids, spouse, friend or dog. It’s an amazing plant! It puts up with trampling, tearing, squashing, but comes back for more, allows water to soak into the ground, cools the surroundings and makes our playing safer.

Do we think much about the little plants? Not usually. Often, we’re not even conscious of exactly what we are standing on. We take for granted what these little plants do for us in our crazy urban environments and how they make cities more livable and our lives healthier. But recently, turfgrasses have been given a bad name. They are labeled unnatural, bad for the environment and thought to require copious amounts of water, fertilizer and pesticides just to survive.

Among my career goals have been helping correct misconceptions peo-

ple have about the turfgrasses, and showing what they do for society and how they can be cared for sustainably. Yes, turf can be sustainable, especially in the unique environments in which we use them. Turf isn’t a “natural” plant community, but neither are cities. Turf gets mowed, needs some water in the summer and an occasional fertilizer application. Maybe a little herbicide is used too, but only for removing invasive plants. But most people apply far more water and fertilizer than lawns need. My graduate advisor’s favorite quote was, “Grass grows in spite of us.”

My yard is a mix of plants chosen for low input, practicality and personal joy. I have native woody plants and perennials, native grasses, and introduced species (my bleeding heart plants remind me of my mother’s garden). But where my family plays, picnics and socializes is on the turf—both native and introduced species.

What I hope to see in the future is not the lush turf most of us have grown accustomed to. I hope for

something a bit browner, a few more weeds here and there, mowed a bit taller and more diversity in species. Sports fields need intensive maintenance because of the extraordinary demands placed on them, but the majority of turfgrass areas don’t need that much attention.

Next time you are running around on the green grass playing games or socializing with friends, appreciate those little plants under your feet and how amazing they actually are.



Paul Johnson is a professor of turfgrass science and head of the Department of Plants, Soils and Climate. He is also affiliated with USU’s Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping.

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Purchase tickets at utahstateaggies.com/tickets or by calling 1-888-USTATE-1 • Check bit.ly/AgProductsBBQ for ticket details closer to the event.