

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

COMMEMORATIVE TRIBUTES COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM

Friday, February 13, 2015

ITEM: A15-0213-CT01

TITLE: **PROPOSAL FOR NAMING THE OFFICE BUILDING LOCATED AT THE NORTHERN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER**

SPONSOR: College of Agriculture
Dr. Charles Boyer, Vice President and Dean, College of Agriculture

ACTION: By majority vote or consensus, the Commemorative Tributes Committee provides the University President with affirmation that the office building at the Northern Agricultural Research Center in Havre, MT be named *The Gregg R. Carlson Agriculture Science Center*, in honor of Mr. Gregg R. Carlson.

EXPLANATION: WHEREAS, Mr. Gregg Carlson is a recognized MSU alumnus, a leader in the field of agriculture and served at the Northern Agriculture Research Center for 30 years;

WHEREAS, his contributions in the development and operation of the Northern Agricultural Research Center positively contributed to the economic growth of the agriculture industry in Montana and the northwestern region;

WHEREAS, Mr. Carlson was an Associate Professor of Agronomy at Montana State University where he served for over 42 years and is known for his exceptional agronomic research, outreach and mentoring of doctoral, master's and undergraduate students alike;

WHEREAS, the Northern Agricultural Research Center Advisory Council has provided overwhelming majority support to seek this honor for Mr. Carlson in recognition of his significant contributions as an Agronomist and Superintendent of the NARC. (*ref.* attached letter of support);

THEREFORE the College of Agriculture and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station requests that the Commemorative Tributes Committee provide the University President with an affirming statement that the naming of the office building at the Northern Agriculture Research Center in Havre, MT be renamed the *Gregg R. Carlson Agriculture Science Center*, in honor of Mr. Gregg R. Carlson is commensurate with the Commemorative Tributes Policy, without modification and/or alteration.

Christopher D. Murray
Commemorative Tributes Committee, Chair

Date

Waded Cruzado
President

Date

February 12, 2015

Dr. Charles Boyer, Vice President for Agriculture
Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and Montana Agriculture Experiment Station
Montana State University
P.O. Box 172860
Bozeman, MT 59717-2860

Dear Dean Boyer:

We are writing to you to begin the very important process within the Montana University System of formally naming the current office building at the Northern Agricultural Research Center in Hill County the Gregg R. Carlson Agriculture Science Center.

Gregg was a great inspiration to many in the agriculture, research and business communities of our region, and to even more from the public at large with no particular tie to NARC. Gregg's influence goes far beyond the reach of Montana's Golden Triangle, where he lives and works, but really includes the entire state, as well as Canada, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington. And even Russia! As the former Superintendent of NARC, he was highly respected by federal, state and local government officials and his top-notch research was valued by farmers, ranchers, researchers, entrepreneurs and agricultural instructors.

Gregg Carlson came to the Havre area in 1973 after stops in Sanders and Liberty Counties as the County Extension Agent for those areas. He started his tenure in Hill County as an Extension Agent, and was responsible for the founding of the Hill County Weed District and Hill County Seed Growers Association (HCSGA). Weed control and prevention were very important to Gregg, and he was a strong, early supporter of certified seed, which led to the organization of the HCSGA. This group, under Gregg's leadership, held educational tours, provided seed, and learned about chemicals and methods of farming, including crop rotation and plant variety.

Gregg is an exceedingly hard working individual and excelled at his job not just because he was passionate about agriculture in our state, but because he thought far beyond his test plots at NARC. He thought about every field in Montana as though it were his own. If you asked Gregg a question about agronomy, you would get a reply with not only the correct answer, but why it was the correct answer. He was always teaching. But not only that; Gregg made you want to learn more. There's an old saying about "Even though you're not in school, you're still learning." This is precisely how everyone in Gregg's orbit felt when he spoke so passionately about what he was interested in most – maximizing the influence of Montana agriculture on our state's economy and the pocketbook of our ranchers and farmers. One of Gregg's largest contributions in this regard, if not the largest, is the wide acceptance of no-till farming in the area of northern Montana served by NARC. This concept supported and practiced

in Gregg's and NARC's research plots made it the epicenter of this movement, which has since spread far and wide, well beyond the confines of NARC's regional boundary. The result of no-till farming is presently having no tillage erosion issues in a broad area of northern Montana.

Here are but a few innovative practices Gregg Carlson engaged in during his career at NARC to make a noticeable difference on Montana's agricultural economy:

- Used the MAPS program to help NARC locate off-station trial plots that he was utilizing in order to assure that they represented the greatest possible area of the Golden Triangle growing region.
- Initiated a barley sizing study to demonstrate that seed size is important.
- Worked with area growers to show that utilizing fertilizer does pay.
- Developed pioneering research to illustrate that seed and fertilizer placement is very important. This was accomplished through collaborative research with air drill manufacturers and engineers that designed the openers that place the seed and fertilizer in the soil.
- Worked with the first GPS system in Montana on harvest, seeding and fertilizer placement.
- Engaged in the development of protein for on-the-go testing.

Clearly, Gregg was visionary beyond his years. Due to this, and the incredible results of his work, Gregg had a very strong following with the agricultural producer community in our area and throughout the state.

At an early point in his career, when Gregg decided he wanted to work more intensively in the agronomic research field and ended up at NARC, he quickly found that most of the research equipment at his disposal was in very poor condition. Unfortunately, his budget to repair or replace this equipment was nonexistent. Given his resourcefulness, Gregg turned to the Hill County Seed Growers Association for assistance. Many all-night sessions developed between the Seed Growers and Gregg, helping to rebuild and repair NARC's much-needed equipment. This relationship flourished and continued when Gregg and the Association harvested off-station plots, developing crop variety books that compared how different varieties compared to each other under similar growing conditions. These books provided information on, among other things: moisture received during the growing season, soil testing before seeding, fertilizer applied, yield, seed depth and treatment, test weight and protein data.

Gregg conducted trials on every possible need that an agricultural producer may have. Montana's agriculture industry always wanted Gregg to run trials for them because his attention to detail ensured a reliable, quality research product. Farmers knew that his data was good and respected by all. Some of the trials he conducted included new chemicals being developed, air seeder points, fertilizers, new crops, grass, shrubs, trees and seed and fertilizer treatments and placements.

When Gregg became an agronomist, he never forgot his Extension roots. When he served as an Extension Agent, it was regularly possible to drive by his office between midnight and 6AM and find the lights on and Gregg working on an important project. As an agronomist, he was likely the only one in the

state that had lights installed on his seeding equipment. He always wanted to squeeze every minute out of every day and to be as productive as possible.

Gregg was always dedicated to his work, and empirical about backing up his findings with data-driven results. There is example after example of this, including a multi-year, direct comparison of test plots, where one plot had no fertilizer and the other plot had proper fertilization. He made it clear to farmers that it was more productive to properly fertilize. He also conducted an air drill boot study that is as relevant today as when it was completed more than 20 years ago. He also helped very critical sawfly research in Montana. It is because of this early realized effort that Montana is now the world leader, as per a Montana Grains Foundation literary review, in sawfly research. It should surprise no one that knows him to hear that Gregg Carlson was a driving force to make Montana a world leader. Given that sawflies are Montana's biggest economic pest to our wheat industry, causing millions of dollars of damage annually, Gregg's work in this area is not just ground breaking, but truly relevant to today's farmers.

Gregg Carlson has also been a direct conduit between Montana State University research scientists and our state's agricultural industry. His role in this regard has benefitted both academia and agriculture. While university researchers could find out directly what producers were interested in and where their time and limited budgets could have the biggest impact, producers were also able to interact with the research community and ask important questions to those who may be able to provide answers. This two-way relationship has proved to be beneficial for both parties.

During his tenure at NARC, Gregg also hosted field days both on and off the Center's plots. Gregg's field days were always very well attended and are still talked about today. He was a master of being able to attract not only local residents to NARC, but dignitaries as well. In short, Gregg never missed an opportunity to be part of the conversation when agriculture was being discussed. It provided him with a chance to both learn and teach. That is a noble quality today, because so many people with the level of expertise that Gregg possesses truly believe they know most everything associated with their field of expertise. That has never been the case with Gregg. Gregg was every bit the student as well as the teacher, and that is one reason he has been so effective in his chosen profession.

Gregg was a highly sought after speaker at farm shows, seed shows and producer group meetings. His broad knowledge about all aspects of agriculture was a great asset when it came to public speaking, but also when replying to producers who had questions. It was not uncommon for a producer to send an email to Gregg asking an ag-related question, and get a reply between 2AM and 4AM, and often the reply was 2-4 pages in length.

Gregg mentored many doctoral and master's degree students while at NARC. His mentoring and guidance with these students is immeasurable and is very reflective of the value that our nation's Land Grant University Systems provide to people, industry, communities and society. The ripple effect of Gregg's influence, of course, continues to be felt all the way to the individual producer, which is the cornerstone of Montana's agricultural sector. He mentored young faculty members, worked closely

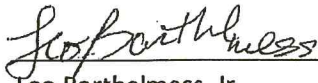
with state and federal agencies, including the Montana Hail Board and was always a very patient, thorough teacher.

The impact of the Northern Agricultural Research Center and its storied past would have been significantly different without Gregg Carlson. In fact, there are those who believe that there would be no NARC today if it weren't for the vision, leadership, determination and sheer hard work of Gregg.

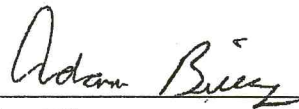
While it has been nearly three years since Gregg retired from his position as Agronomist and Superintendent of NARC, his influence is every bit as big and significant as it was when he served in that capacity. It seems abundantly appropriate and very fitting that the office building at the Northern Agricultural Research Center be named the Gregg R. Carlson Agriculture Science Center. We are hopeful this designation can coincide with the 100 year anniversary celebration that NARC will be hosting this summer.

Thank you for considering this request. Should you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.


FROM THE NORTHERN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER ADVISORY COUNCIL



Leo Barthelmess, Jr.
Malta

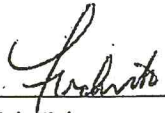


Adam Billmayer
Hogeland

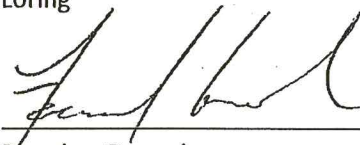


Bart Bitz
Big Sandy

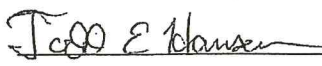
Whitney Blunt
Loring




Rick Fisher
Chinook




Brandon Gasvoda
Big Sandy




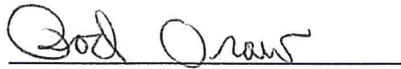
Todd Hansen
Gildford

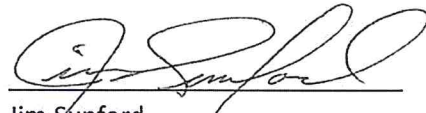



Craig Henke
Chester

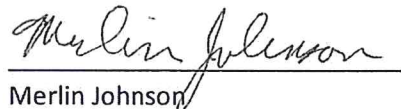

Max Hofeldt
Chinook


Danny McIntosh
Havre



Rod Oraw
Chester

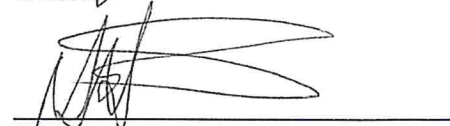

Jim Sunford
Saco


Brent Peterson
Havre



Merlin Johnson
Chinook


Kurt Kammerzell
Chester


Jeff Mattson
Chester

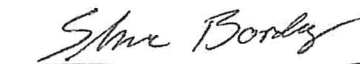

Mathew Myers
Big Sandy

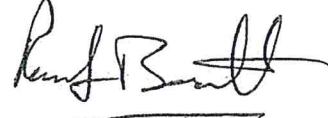

Rich Roth
Big Sandy


Ron Spicher
Hingham


Matt Veit
Malta


Steve Vielleux
Fort Benton


Shane Borlaug
Gildford



Randy Bessette
Havre