



## SAGA has Postponed the 2021 Reunion Banquet

### President's Pen

As I write this, Saskatoon is getting the first real snow of winter 2020, and not just some light flurries; a record setting Saskatchewan blizzard. I certainly won't complain about the moisture we're getting, but I was not looking forward to the digging out part. In a way the November storm is just one more thing that 2020 is throwing at us all.

Certainly COVID is the main thing that we have been dealing with this year, with last few weeks seeing active cases climbing in our province. But the rest of the year has had its challenges. Talking with people these last few months and watching the news, I sense we are all getting a bit tired of the 2020 experience.

The pandemic has had its effect on SAGA's 2020 planning and activities, leading off with the postponement of the Reunion Banquet. But we will conduct an online 2021 AGM. This will be the first time since 1936 that SAGA will not hold any other activities such as speeches, tours, hockey, and the Mixer, and I have mixed feelings about this happening while I have been president.

In fairness, 2020 wasn't all bad; there have been some positives. Saskatchewan farmers and agribusiness adapted to the pandemic and got the crop in. A few timely rains and a pleasantly early harvest means a decent Saskatchewan crop in now in the bin.

Also, we were pleased to see that the U of S completed the search for the new Dean – College of Agriculture and Bio-Resources. Congratulations to Angela K. Bedard-Haughn in accepting this position. Angela took the time to meet with

the SAGA executive at our September Zoom meeting which was much appreciated. You all know that SAGA had a great relationship with the College through Dean Mary Buhr (see the June 2020 newsletter "Something about Mary") and we are looking forward to continuing that tradition with Angela.

So, even though we won't have a reunion to look forward to this winter, SAGA will find a way to present our 2021 Honoray Life Members, and we will hold the 86th SAGA AGM on January 9th, 7:00 pm via ZOOM. ZOOM connection information is on Pg. 3. Please register to attend. We will send a reminder to SAGA members prior to the AGM via the webpage, Facebook and Twitter.

Our SAGA executive is looking at other methods, maybe virtual, for grads to connect and there have been a few suggestions that classes may want to meet on-line this winter, just to say hello. Maybe the reunion years would be interested in setting up ZOOM meetings with their groups so people can see what they are up to? And be assured, we are hoping for a return to reunions in 2022. TCU Place is tentatively booked for January 8th, 2022. TCU will work with us to ensure we can accommodate the classes that would have normally been gathering in 2021 and add them to 2022 Reunion Banquet.

Finally, if you have any ideas of virtual or other ways to connect with SAGA or ASA members, drop us an email, we would appreciate any advice at this time. Stay safe.

**Jason Fradette '84 C**

*Best of the Season*  
*Be Friends of All*                      *Be Caring of All*  
*the SAGA Executive*

# 2021 Chairpersons

Hi all, As 2020 comes to a close, I hope you are staying well. I am a '79 C grad and started my career with Sask Ag, then Ag Canada and since 2001, working for Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). Hubbie and I moved from Regina to Saskatoon right after the Jan. '07 Blizzard. The Nov. blizzard sure brought back memories! It was a genuine pleasure to see so many grads at the 2019 and '20 reunions, and I was reminded how lucky I am to be part of this flourishing Ag Grad community from the youngest grads to the oldest and wisest.

We will attempt to double our fun in 2022, with two reunion years being held together (fingers crossed). It is not easy to build spirit and maintain community without face-to-face events, but we sure are trying!

Besides better use of social media, we are pioneering the use of Zoom for our meetings. If you are an Ag Grad of the yrs. ending in '2', and want to get involved planning your reunion, please contact me. I will be handling both 2021 and 2022 reunion years.

**Deanne Belisle '79 C**                      **306-221-8321**    **deanne.belisle@canada.ca**

This season I am counting my present and past blessings. Take care of yourselves, and be safe.

Ag grads specifically of 1941 and 1946, plus any and all Grads before 1951, please contact Deanne at information above.

1951 S - <b>Bill Cooper</b>	306-370-9107	bgcooper@sasktel.net
1951 C - <b>Deanne Belisle</b>	306-221-8321	deanne.belisle@canada.ca
1956 S - <b>Peter Sunquist</b>	306 946-2362	p.oescape@icloud.com
1956 C - <b>Stu Whitney</b>	250-477-5546	stuwhitney@shaw.ca
1961 S - <b>Marcel Dubois</b>	306-882-2258	marcel.dubois41@gmail.com
1961 C - <b>Bob Baker</b>	306-374-7986	rjbaker@sasktel.net
1966 S - <b>Lorne McConaghy</b>	306-921-9920	norma@mconaghyfarms.com
Co-Chair - <b>Neal Moyse</b>	306-533-2520	
1966 C - <b>Bill Turner</b>	306-726-7772	turners@sasktel.net
1971 S - <b>Ken Granberg</b>	306-929-4583	kengranberg1@gmail.com
1971 C - <b>Jim Spiers</b>	780-914-3860	jimspiers@telusplanet.net
Co-Chair <b>Ray Ryland</b>	403-652-8705	rayandmarg@shaw.ca
1981 S - <b>Dave Marshall</b>	306-746-7602	dgm@sasktel.net
1981 C - <b>Adrian Johnston</b>	306-716-4115	please use > adrianjohnston59@gmail.com
1991 S - We require a Chairperson Volunteer		
1991 C - <b>Tim Hammond</b>	306-948-5052	tim.hammond@sasktel.net
2001 S - <b>Curtis Sambrook</b>	306-270-4640	csambrook@mail.com
2001 C - <b>Camile Baillargeon</b>	306-441-9772	camilebaillargeon@gmail.com
2011 - <b>Katie MacMillan</b>	306-741-4172	katie.macmillan@outlook.com
	(leave message or text)	katie.carefoot@outlook.com
2016 - <b>Shayla Hertz</b>	306-537-8313	hertzshayla@gmail.com
& <b>Kerry Gerein</b>		kerry.gerein@hotmail.com

# 2021 Annual General Meeting

I hope everyone is keeping safe and healthy during this "second wave". The decision to cancel the Reunion Banquet was not an easy one, but it was definitely the right decision considering the recent surge in Covid cases.

Despite the Reunion cancellation, we will still be holding our

## 86th Annual General Meeting virtually on Sat. Jan. 9, 2021 @ 7 p.m.

Please attend the AGM using the information below. It will also be posted @ [www.saskaggrads.com](http://www.saskaggrads.com) and on our Facebook and Twitter feeds.

Unfortunately, so many other activities that the College organizes have been cancelled as well, which means President Jason and Vice-President Deanne will miss out on a number of fun activities including; Bean Feed, Graduation, Convocations, and of course, the Reunion. Thus, we need to inform you of a proposal to be tabled at the upcoming AGM.

**"Be it resolved that the Vice-President, President, and Past-President positions remain filled with the current incumbents in 2021."**

## SAGA 86th Annual AGM Sat. January 9th, 2021 – 7 P.M.

To Join the AGM Zoom Meeting, you must Register.

To ensure you receive meeting documentation and reports, please register by Jan. 4th. Registering after this date you might not receive them.

{[Watch for email titled - SAGA AGM Reports](#)}

Copy and paste the line below OR Go to the [www.saskaggrads.com](http://www.saskaggrads.com) and click the Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88026937296?pwd=U25Za1c4Nkd1NWJGZW9mWW5rYXpldz09>

Meeting ID: 880 2693 7296      Passcode: 020026

If joining us by phone, use one of the following numbers:

+1 204 272 7920 Canada    +1 438 809 7799  
Canada    +1 587 328 1099 Canada

Raelene Petracek  
SAGA Secretary '86 C

Jason, Deanne, and I have agreed to remain in these positions, although the membership will have to approve this. You could, of course, vote us out, but be prepared for contested results, accusations of election fraud, and legal action!! Not really...

This will be a new step for SAGA to take, but circumstances being what they are, but not without some precedent; in 2014, Blair Cummins became SAGA's first 2 time President.

I hope that you are able to celebrate a safe and joyous Christmas season. For many of us, it will be much more of a low-key affair due to Covid restrictions.

Remember, there appears to be some light in the end of the tunnel as we move into 2021, with the hope of returning to social interaction and group celebrations. To that end, I want to give a shout out to my '82 college and school classmates as we look forward to our 40 year reunion in January, 2022!!

Past President Report  
Eric Johnson '82 C

### The Stylish '65 School Guys



Standing: Dale Strudwick – Richard Nagle  
Seated: Barry Good – Murray Coolidge

## 2021 Honorary Life Members

**John Hickie '56 S -'59 C**, was born on the family homestead near Loon Lake, SK in 1935. Began school there, then his family moved to Waldron, SK, near Melville, where he completed elementary and high school. John initially majored in Crop Science but switched to Farm Management (Ag Econ), graduating with great distinction. Then a MSc. at the University of Guelph in Ag Econ. John returned to SK and worked for the Sask Ministry of Agriculture for 27 years as a farm Management specialist. In this role he influenced hundreds of farmers over the years with his practical, common sense approach to the business of farming. He was also a farmer himself, farming 1700 acres near where he grew up. He farmed this land full time on his retirement from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food until he fully retired. John had a strong sense of giving back to the community and institutions which influenced his life and in this spirit donated his land to the University of Saskatchewan.

**Dave Christensen '58 C** has spent most of his career in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at the University of Saskatchewan, starting in 1965 as Assistant Professor and actively continuing today as Distinguished Professor Emeritus. Dave's career has demonstrated excellence in teaching, research and administration and he is particularly known for his expertise in dairy nutrition. Dave has been recognized nationally and internationally for his work and has received numerous awards including being named a Member of the Order of Canada and the SAHF and being awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. But most importantly,

Dave has been recognized and respected by the thousands of students that had passed through his classroom doors for 50 plus years. Be it the very first class of a green farm kid, or the final dissertation of a PhD scholar. An outstanding man and Professor!

## Honorary Life Members – 2020 Banquet



**B:** Marcel Dubois '61 S & '65 C (2014), Jim Hafford '63 C (2019), Les Henry '64 C (2008), Grattan O'Grady '69 S 2016, Fred Fulton '50 C (1993), Blair Cummins '77 S (2019)

**M:** Lorence Peterson '65 C (2018), Barbara Stefanyshyn-Cote '87 C (2017), Elaine Moats '77 C (2016), Bryan Harvey '60 C (2015), Art Delahey '52 C (2018), Bill Copeland '60 C (2012), Dave Thompson '54 S (1996), Murray Westby '53 S (1995), Irene Ahner '65 S (2011), Bob McKercher '54 C (1988)

**F:** Keith Downey '50 C (2000), Harold Chapman '43 C (2020), Ewald Lammerding '88 S (2020), Charlene Racz - For husband Vern Racz '68 C (2020), Mary Buhr - Dean of AgBio (2017), Glen Hass '60 C (2002)



## Dean Speak (A New Era Begins)

Well, it's 2020, so greetings from my home office!

For those of you that don't know me, I'm the new dean of AgBio, I took over the virtual reins from Mary Buhr on August 15. I want to start this message by thanking Mary for her years of service to the college and wish her the very best in this next chapter in her career!

A bit about me: I was born and raised here in Saskatchewan, on a mixed farm north of St. Brieux. By the time I was a teen, my dad was mostly renting the land and working in town, but that connection to the land remained strong. My fascination with landscapes drew me into my first degree in Physical Geography here at USask, but in my fourth year, I took my first class in Soil Science from Dan Pennock and my trajectory became clear.

I went on to do a Master's degree in Soil Science with Dan followed by a PhD at University of California at Davis and was lucky enough to be able to return home with that parchment in hand and join the USask AgBio faculty in 2006. My teaching and research in soils has always been very field-focused, exploring the interactions between landscapes, management practices and environment, with a focus on carbon storage, greenhouse gas emissions, and nutrient dynamics – particularly in wetland soils.

In the last several years, I've added a significant emphasis on soil information management. Some of you may have seen me present on SKSIS (Saskatchewan Soil Information System), an online platform developed by my team to enhance both access to and quality of soil information for our province.

Coming into the role of dean, my preference to look at things across the landscape has continued, and my goals for my term reflect that. First, I want to continue to grow our research "ecosystem"; in this context, that ecosystem refers to both the physical infrastructure (from lands to labs) and the collaborative network (both on- and off-campus). We already have wonderful industry connections – due in no small part to the successes and activities of our alumni! – and we will nurture those while continuing to explore new opportunities. Our network is growing to reflect the breadth and diversity of the AgBio faculty: from international collaborations to characterize the wheat genome to restoration efforts on the tundra, from partnering with some of the gi-

ants in the ag industry to working with individual First Nations to support their land management efforts – it is all part of what we do and who we are. The broader our network, the better we become, because fresh perspective from diverse backgrounds leads to co-creation of novel ideas and solutions.

Second, building on some of the work we have done over the past couple of years surveying the "landscape" of our curriculum and the knowledge and skills our students need in this rapidly changing world, we are reviewing our curriculum, identifying what's working well, what could be done better, and where there are gaps, and coming up with ways to better serve our students and our society.

Third, we want to be sure that the work we do serves our society – in a way that reflects our values around reconciliation, equity, diversity, and inclusion. This lens will be applied across the research ecosystem and curriculum renewal aspirations, and indeed, across everything we do. Finally, we want to elevate how we tell our AgBio stories. While those of us on the "inside" have a solid understanding of how our production systems work and the threads of sustainability that run through everything we do, social and popular media sometimes misrepresent or outright misinform the broader public. We have a responsibility to help separate the wheat from the chaff, and provide folks an accessible, science-based understanding of how the agriculture and bioresource industries work and how we are important part of the solution to global challenges to food, water, and climate security.

While these aspirations are ambitious – and made even more challenging given the current global pandemic – I remain optimistic. Optimistic because we are steeped in resilience – this has been demonstrated in abundance this year as everyone has risen to the challenges of working and studying remotely and continue to strive towards our shared vision. Optimistic because we are well-supported by our AgBio family of alumni, students, faculty and staff, here at home and around the world. Optimistic because now, more than ever, the world needs AgBio. Thank you to all of you for supporting our mission – and I look forward to working with all of you in the months and years to come!

**Angela Bedard-Haughn – Dean of AgBio**

## SAGA Hockey

The Waldheim Rec Centre has been most accommodating over our cancellation of the Jan. 9, 2021 tournament. We certainly plan to host a Jan. 8, 2022 day, and hope any and all Ag Grads and team reps will be sure to get in touch with me if you have any questions concerning the '22 tournament.

Please contact **Chay Anderson '14 C** chayanderson92@hotmail.com

306-640-7087.

## COVID-19 Challenges the College and its Donors

My contributions to this newsletter typically highlight a fundraising success story or new initiative but I felt it was more important this time to acknowledge the challenges created by the pandemic.

The philanthropic history in this college is deeply rooted. From our undergrad student activities like the Bed Push to the building campaign in the late 1980s and early 1990s, AgBio's community has earned a reputation for generosity. This generous spirit has certainly made my job much easier over the years. In the decade since I started in this role, AgBio has consistently been a leader among the university's colleges in funds raised. However, the pandemic has reduced donations across campus and to the college as well. This isn't unique to USask and many charitable organizations are facing similar challenges arising from the pandemic.

With promising vaccines on the horizon and an end in sight, I feel confident the college's donors will return in full force, however, the current need persists. To those who have steadfastly supported the college in spite of this environment, I am immensely grateful. I also understand those who have not been able to support the college this year - these are not normal times. However, for those who are considering

a donation for the first time (or in a long time), there may never be a more pressing occasion to take that step. Students are still attending classes, bursaries and scholarships are still being awarded, and the college is still advancing in its mission to provide the very best educational experience possible. All of which benefit from donor support so I urge those who can to consider a donation now.

I make this request in full recognition of our environment, but also with the belief that facing our challenges is far better than turning away from them. Two areas that may be of particular interest to SAGA members include the SAGA Undergraduate Award and the Vern Racz Memorial Scholarship. **Donations can be made online at: <https://donate.usask.ca/online/agbio.php>**

Alternatively, contact me directly to discuss other ways to contribute to the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

**Hamish Tulloch – BSA '91**  
**Director of Development**  
**[hamish.tulloch@usask.ca](mailto:hamish.tulloch@usask.ca)**  
**(306) 966-8893**

## 2020 Canadian Hall of Fame Ag Grads

Soil conservation champion **James Halford '63 C**, 2019 HLM pioneered zero tillage farming in Saskatchewan and across the Prairies. When he began his career as a farm management specialist with Sask Ag, he also took over the family farm and saw the need for soil conservation practices.

An agricultural economist, farmer and entrepreneur, Jim's Vale Farms invented, manufactured and marketed the ConservaPak® zero tillage equipment [now John Deere]. Jim shared his farm with researchers to study the effect of long-term zero tillage on soil properties and crop yield. He invented/co-invented more than 20 patents related to farm equipment has been recognized with numerous soil conservation awards. James Halford lives in Indian Head, SK.

### Other Ag Grad Accomplishments

**Dr. Daniel M. Beveridge, '61 C**, BA'62, MA'65, (PhD) of Regina, Saskatchewan has just edited a book, *The Red Road and Other Narratives of the Dakota Sioux*, published by the University of Nebraska Press.

**Oliver O. Green, '62 C**, '63C MSc, of Outlook, SK, has self-published his first book entitled *Honk as You Enter. The*

Renowned plant breeder **Dr. Bryan Harvey '60 C** 2015 HLM developed more than 60 varieties of barley throughout his prolific 50-year research career. At the University of Saskatchewan, his ground-breaking research developed two-row malting barley varieties that would deliver tremendous returns to Canadian agriculture and the malting industry.

His most notable variety, Harrington, became the gold standard for two-row malting barley and the dominant variety across the Prairies for more than 20 years. An esteemed academic, Bryan's commitment to germplasm conservation is evident in his numerous awards and honours including the Order of Canada. Bryan lives in Saskatoon, SK.

*Story of Honeywood* (Dr. A. J. Porter) Heritage Nursery and how it became the only heritage nursery in the province.

**Curtis Pozniak '99 C** will be taking the position of Director of the Crop Development Centre, effective July 1, 2020 for an initial appointment of five years, til June 30, 2025

## SAGA Scholarship Award

This is the second year that *SAGA* has awarded two \$3,000 scholarships. The 2020/21 recipients are:

**Baylie Yasieniuk** - 2nd and final year of an Ag-Business Diploma.

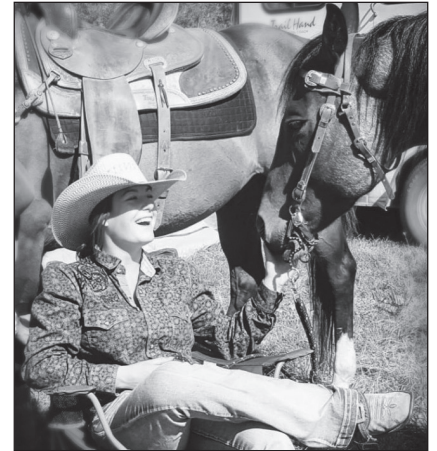
**Jourdyn Sammons** - 4th year BSA majoring in Animal Science with a minor in Range Resources.

The scholarships are open to continuing degree and diploma students in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and are a fundamental way for *SAGA* to support these students. They increase the *SAGA* footprint and encourages the students to make us a part of their post-graduate and professional lives. As well as scholastic standing, involvement within the local community, the college and university, and the wider agricultural industry is an important selection criterion.

The Award is funded completely by ongoing annual donations from Ag grads and other supportive individuals. The response to the Award has been quite positive. The committee would like to thank *SAGA* members for their generous support. Contributions to date are approximately \$12,500. Our near-term goal is to raise an additional \$6000 to ensure two more recipients next year. Details on how to contribute to the Scholarship fund can be found on the *SAGA* homepage, [www.saskaggrads.com](http://www.saskaggrads.com)



**Jourdyn Sammons**



**Bailey Yasieniuk**

*SAGA* Scholarship Committee

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## The Impact of COVID-19 on the Carruthers Family

*Neil Carruthers '85 S, '91 C & Gail (nee Priest) '90 C, (M. 1992), raised 2 daughters on their farm near Frenchman Butte, SK. Amy '20 C, began her Masters this fall. Laura '22 C is 3rd yr. Crop Science.*

### Neil

While attending the Western Canadian Dairy Seminar in Red Deer, an announcement over the intercom informed us that the Alberta government was limiting the size of crowds due to Coronavirus. Within minutes, the 600 plus attendees dispersed and the Convention Center was empty.

Earlier that day, I was performing year end reviews with my team. As a Regional Business Manager with Merck Animal Health, it is a lot of fun to sit down with your field force to go over the highlights of 2019. After the reviews, the plan was to have a team supper to celebrate the retirement of Dr. Roy Lewis. The night promised to be full of laughs as we all told our favourite Dr. Lewis stories.

Two weeks prior, when trying to book a restaurant for a party of 20, I was getting a lot of “we are very busy that night and can’t accommodate you.” As fate would have it, we were the only group in the restaurant on the night of March 12.

The next day, I drove from Red Deer through Edmonton, back to our farm near Frenchman Butte, SK. I have driven this same route hundreds of times in my 30 years in the animal health business, but the drive on Friday the 13th of March will be one I will never forget. Usually the Queen E II is very busy, but on this day, it was eerily quiet. I wondered to myself - “Where is everyone?” and the answer became obvious as I crested a hill at Sherwood Park and saw a massive lineup ... Everyone was at Costco!

As I write this on Friday, the 13th of November, nine months have passed and boy has my schedule changed! Typically flying 40 flights per year from Saskatoon or Edmonton to Montreal or New York, I have had four flights this year, with none since March. While it is great to be home most nights, I can tell you the Hilton took great care of me. One morning, I explained to my wife that the Hilton shells my hard boiled eggs, and that she should up her game! The comment led to an eye-roll from Gail; but as yet, no peeled eggs. My day to day work from home now consists of virtual meeting after virtual meeting. While I do miss the old way of doing business, we need to embrace our new reality. My wish is that in the future we can find some middle ground of in-person and virtual meetings to drive business forward.

Often, I ask people I meet to list three of their best life decisions. One of my best decisions was being an Agro. My education has led me to work for great companies like Federated Co-op, Pfizer, and Merck. My career choice has also allowed Gail and I and our two daughters Amy and Laura to build up our farming/ranching operation in Frenchman Butte and Biggar, SK.

### Gail

The last two public gatherings I attended were the *SAGA* Reunion weekend and the College of Agriculture & Bioresources 2020 Grad banquet. Socializing activities were obviously hit hard by the restrictions, so in the evenings Neil and I pulled out some old games like cribbage and Scrabble. If anyone knows how to play two-person Kaiser, please let me know because Neil really hates cribbage! Pandemic living is manageable on the farm. We go outside without anyone caring that we aren’t wearing a mask, unlike city dwellers who can’t even walk their dog without being judged. On the downside, however, the Skip the Dishes fellow we called three weeks ago still hasn’t shown up! We are also so thankful that our parents are living in their own homes and not in a seniors lodge under lockdown.

In terms of our farming activities, we bought grass cattle in February, but we were concerned beef prices might drop due to all the spring restaurant closures. So when the feeder market took a bit of a jump in May, we sold our grassers and rented out the pasture. In hindsight, there would have been some profit with them, but we chose to cut our risk. Amy’s summer job was delayed due to Covid, so we put her to work fencing, repairing equipment, and seeding. I also tried to fit in a long overdue basement renovation when Amy was home, but sadly couldn’t convince Neil it was needed.

On March 16th my employer, the local RM, directed me to work from home. Neil’s work requires him to be a bit of an internet hog, so it was great that most of my communication was via email and telephone, with only one or two virtual meetings per week. I found that my work efficiency increased due to reduced interruptions compared to when working in the office. It is sometimes challenging to share our land line (no cell service here), but we have managed.

On July 6th I returned to the office with precautions and social distancing. Many of the restrictions were lifted by then, and Neil and I were able to pack away the scrabble and cribbage boards. Summer passed without much change, and only one of our Saskatoon relatives testing positive for Covid—luckily with very mild symptoms. Now, with masks mandatory across the province, I sure hope we don’t have to endure another strict lock-down this winter like we did in the early spring—but only time and our behaviour will tell. So in preparation for long evenings, I pulled out the cribbage board from its cupboard. Neil took one look at it and headed down to the basement and started knocking out walls. And so the renovation begins!

*continued on Page 9*



## Amy

*continued from Page 8*

March 12th, Covid eve, was just another Thursday Ag Night with 200 of my closest friends. Little did I know it would be the last Ag Night I would attend. As an Agro, we all go through the sad realization that our Ag Nights are limited (my sister claims this news hits us extroverts a little harder - but I don't understand how this isn't heartbreaking news for everyone).

This spring, 4th year students like me faced that sad realization far too early. Now as the snow falls and we settle in for the winter, we see that Covid-19 has hunkered down and is here to stay. For how long? Your guess is as good as mine. As a first year Ag Ec Masters student, Covid-19 has not impacted my life as much as many of my peers.

When I committed to this degree, I was prepped to forfeit my social life for the next eight months regardless of the situation. Therefore, the global pandemic did not alter my life outside of school too dearly. For many of my fellow classmates, however, that was not the case. With classes being moved entirely online, my international peers are taking part in classes from their home countries.

I sure miss getting to know my classmates and seeing them every day in class. For me, the absence of meeting new people, one of the most important parts of a post-secondary education, has been the most devastating part of the global pandemic. My Covid-19 experience has definitely had its challenges but it has also brought joy to my life in new ways. I am grateful for the extra time I had to spend on the farm with my family this spring when the start of my summer job was delayed.

My friend group, who may otherwise have drifted over time, has become closer because of this pandemic. Weekly Facetime allows us to stay in touch as we are now all living in different areas of SK and AB. As our days get shorter and the nights colder, I am aware of the impact that a limited social life and the stress of this pandemic could have on us all. As I am sure those reading are aware, the Agro community is always there for its fellow members. If this winter is a little tougher than normal, know that there is a fellow Agro just a Facetime, Zoom or phone call away.

## Laura

As a 3rd year Crop Science student, I was excited last March that I didn't have to write any lab finals. By October, however, I was longing to be back on campus. Over the last nine months, even we introverts realized how important social interaction can be. Many aspects of my life have changed over the last months; no Thursday nights out with friends, no daily trips to campus, and no warm holiday escape in the winter. But as with all change, we adapt; and even in difficult times I hope that most people choose to see the positive side.

For me, this new world means the freedom to schedule my days however I would like. Spending my mornings at the gym is the highlight of my day and something I couldn't do with regularly scheduled morning classes on campus. What we are living through

has undoubtedly had a significant effect on our mental health, which is why exercise has been the most important part of every day for me.

Online school also gives us the freedom to study from anywhere we would like. While we would all love to be on a beach chair in Mexico, that isn't quite possible yet. I had been planning to travel abroad this summer and while I am disappointed that didn't take place I have been able to find new ways to have a bit of an adventure.

I am hoping to spend the spring and summer of 2022 in BC working on fruit farms while taking classes. While we can't quite do whatever we would like during a pandemic, I always like to focus on the things that I can control.

And when things get tough as they inevitably do, Thursday night Zoom calls with your friends and early mornings at the gym can sure work wonders for your mental health. I hope that this article finds all who are reading it doing well, finding ways to see loved ones, being kind to one another, and learning to look on the bright side.

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## Letter From a Prairie Chicken - Part 2 (continued from June)

*(Background: Irene Ahner came across the 1944, '45 & '46 Greystone books, the history books of graduates of the U of S. With the help of other sources she found a legacy left by these women.)*

**Roberta Irene Phillips, '44 S**, Herschel, SK, was the School of Agriculture Sheaf Rep. that year. I have not found her in any other references.

**Kathleen Joyce Hodson, '44 S**, Rosthern, was the School of Agriculture Executive secretary. In the 1998 Alumni directory she is listed as Joyce Alexander, retired farmer, Olds, AB. with two children.

**Beatrice Estella Murray, '45 C**, Young, SK, had the following bio quote: "Hard-working, conscientious Bea in basketball, politics and is an authority on Flax. She is a staunch member of the ASA, being 1st Year Rep and frosh banquet convenor. She was Agro Rep. in the PKD and this year managed the Agro girls basket ball team and was women's editor of the handbook. It is believed that Bea would rather be a man than be with one." I was really taken aback by that last remark in print!!! Bea obtained her MSC in 1947 and a PHD in 1955. She is listed as Dr. Beatrice Murray, P. AG., of Watrous in the AIC Directory, 1992. I hope someone will let us know more about her

**Olive Marion Churchill, '46 S**, Regina, is mentioned in the 1998 Alumni Directory as Olive Erb, retired in Victoria, B.C. with husband, John. They had three children.

**Muriel Joyce Fredeen, '47 C**, came from Macrorie. I found her in the Alumni Directory in 1998 as Muriel Welling, retired at Macrorie, with five children listed.

I have left the only one I knew till last. **Ann Talbot (Caton) Saville, '47 C**, Robsart, SK, was the ASA Dramatics Rep. in 46-47 as well as playing basketball. {Postscript – Nov. 2020 I recently found a section of "Forever Young" that I had missed last spring. If those of you who own this book will look at Page 50, you will find Ann Caton's reply to a toast at their Graduation Banquet in Apr. 1947. There is also a picture of her and Muriel (Freeden) Welling at their 50 year reunion.}

Ann was a very lively, vibrant person and remained that way all her life. She worked at the Lethbridge Research Station from 1947 through 1950 until marrying Bill Saville from Ravenscrag, SK. They ranched in that area till retirement, moving to Eastend in 1999. She was a community historian and a free-lance writer with a weekly column in the local papers. She edited the Ravenscrag History book, *Between and Beyond the Benches* and its sequel. Ann was a member of the U. of S. Senate from 1981 – 84. She worked as a mediator for the Farm Debt Review Board and also for the Saskatchewan Farmland Security Board. She received a SAGA Honorary Life membership in 2004, perhaps the

first woman to receive this honor. Ann passed away July 14, 2011, survived by her husband and four children. She will be long remembered in southwest Saskatchewan.

Reading the old Greystones was like going through a community history book. You can't just read one area and quit. An hour can go by while you keep turning the pages. I found mention of many familiar names that we've known either at university or later in life. These books are very elegant with special photo protector pages and contain many pictures of the campus at that time. As it was war time, there are large sections picturing officers & cadets of the Armed Forces. Among them I found Harold Chapman, Prof. Hadley Van Vliet, Dr. Wm. J. White and E.W. Griffiths, Men's Physical Director, for whom the Stadium is named. There are many pages in the 1944 and 1945 books of names on active service while at college. Each book also has a page or two of those lost in action.

Helen H. Hunt was already Dean of Household Science and L. E. Kirk was Dean of Agriculture. It was curious that in 1944 and 1946, the Diploma course was in the School of Agriculture but in the 1945 book it was called Farm School. The first year enrollment in 1946 was massive and contained no women.

Undergrads from 1944-1946 that many of you over 60 will remember are **Mark Kilcher, '49 C**, **Don Rennie, '49 C**, **Ben Blacklock, '46 C**, **Ed Docking, '48 C**, **Oral Young, '46 C** and **Jack Braidek, '51 C**. My reaction when I found **Herb Clark, '45 C** was one of disbelief. He had been in the same college as most of the women mentioned above but was the one who persuaded me not to go into Agriculture in 1st year. "What do you think a woman would be able to do with a BSA?", said the 4-H Extension Specialist. Fortunately, I decided to ignore him and join the college in 2nd year. Ten years later he behaved as though my being a grad was all his own idea.

Of course there were many more colleges in each book to study and there were more familiar names. One in particular was W.H. (Harry) Broley, '48 B. Ed., North Battleford. When I started school in 1949, he was the Superintendent for all the schools in Unity & rural areas. There have been many stories about strict superintendents from nervous young teachers but Mr. Broley was well-respected by teachers, parents and students.

Researching history has been one of my joys for most of my life and I hope you have found all this interesting. If you have further knowledge of those women mentioned above, please let us know. The SAGA website is missing a great many Empty Saddle names and obits which we would like to have for our records.

**Irene Ahner '65 C**

*EDITOR'S Addition: Irene's writing of the earliest women Ag Grads piqued our interest. So we perused the Historical Review & Forever Young books to discover the pathfinders.*

**Margaret Georgina Landes 1936 C**, Langham SK, was the first woman to graduate from the College of Agriculture.

Followed by: **Edna Malinda McConnell '38 C**, Pe-

tersfield MB, **Dorothy Wilda Lawrence '40 C**, Vera SK, **Irene Agnes Doll '43 S**, Aylsham, SK, and **Betty Carolynn Myrick '43 C**, Davidson, SK. Betty graduated with our elder statesman, Harold Chapman.

If anyone knows the history of any of these 5 graduates, such as Irene discovered in her Greystone books, we would be extremely pleased to publish it in *The SAGA*.

## Ministry of Agriculture's Current CAP Programs

While many in-person learning events aren't possible due to Covid-19, the Ministry of Agriculture remains dedicated to providing quality extension to farmers, ranchers and agribusiness across the province.

Agriculture Program Specialists (APS) have created a series of online program presentations highlighting programs and resources available under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP), a five-year, \$388-million investment by federal and provincial governments in strategic initiatives

for agriculture.

These short, fast-paced video presentations explain the program intent, applicant eligibility, eligible activities and expenses and how to apply.

There are over 20 programs under CAP for producers, agri-businesses and the research community; **for details and information visit [www.saskatchewan.ca/CAP](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/CAP) or reach out to an Agriculture Programs Specialist or our Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.**



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## ASA Report

Students' mental health has become a greater concern this year with the lack of social experiences that in-person classes and events would normally offer. The ASA recognizes this concern and has been considerably active in addressing it. In spite of the limitations of the virtual university experience, we as an ASA have been raising both funds and awareness for mental health.

We held Mental Health Awareness Week from October 4-10th where we shared numerous mental health resources in tandem with a video message from ASA on our U of S Agros Facebook page. Several of us are featured in the video describing the loneliness and anxiety that can manifest in the present uncertain times and in the absence of social connections.

In addition to our Mental Health Awareness Week, we as a college are participating in Movember. Movember is one of the leading charities in men's health, including men's mental health and suicide prevention. We have about a dozen students signed up as pledge collectors. To transition from Drag month into Movember, we held a Virtual Shave-down over Zoom which we also broadcast live to the Agros Facebook page. Ben Brooks from CJWW joined us to do some play-by-play commentary of each shaver's style and execution. Despite only having 10 shavers, we had decent viewership on the livestream and the event was a lot of fun for

### ASA Liaison Report

Like many organizations, the ASA and its affiliated clubs at the U of S have been deeply affected by the ongoing pandemic. Clubs are struggling to host events online that the students can involve themselves with.

The Stockman's Club has had a couple of speakers speak on beef cattle related topics but found much lower attendance than in-person speakers in the past. CAMA has participated in multiple online events such as a webinar about the customer experience during COVID-19, as well as an online event hosted by Cargill talking about the grain industry and the company itself.

A couple CAMA members also attended a Discovery Farm Field Day that turned out to be a very educational experience. Since we cannot hold in-person events for our students, we are trying to get our students give back to communities in need through our fundraising endeavours.

**Gracie Martynook '21 - ASA Club Liaison**

### And a ... OOPS!!

We admit, the 2020 Banquet bogged down after dinner. We were trying something new with the class photos by giving the classes more options. There was the usual Grads only picture, a spouse included one, plus a 'having a great time, Mom!' photo. The odd class did each one. Combining that with the HLM presentations honouring 3 Grads, and of course, also conducting our AGM at the same time, well ... boondoggle was the only nice word politely mentioned to us. But just wait! Farmfolk always learn when things don't run just so, so we will be tweaking a number of things to ensure that the next Reunion will be a blast!

those of us involved.

As I write this, we are preparing for a similar virtual event in support of Movember. We have challenged the Aggies at Dalhousie University to a "Milk Moustache Challenge" whereby we will have a series of 2 vs. 2, 60-second milk chugging challenges for the man that dies of suicide every minute. SaskMilk, South Country Equipment, Gopher-net Highspeed and SAGA are sponsoring the event. In addition to the sponsorships, participants for the challenge must be nominated by themselves or other students in exchange for a \$20 donation to Movember on the U of S Agros behalf.

Our Movember fundraising efforts have been a huge success thus far. We are well past last year's total of \$2,495 and are currently sitting at \$4,185, with pledges still streaming in. Although our Movember fundraising stint will have elapsed by the time you have received this newsletter, we invite you to make a contribution to our March for STARS campaign. During the month of March, we will be raising funds for STARS air ambulance, likely by hosting a similar series of online events in lieu of in-person events. If you or your business would be interested in making a contribution, please email [publicrelationsuofs@gmail.com](mailto:publicrelationsuofs@gmail.com)!

**Dylan Stang C '21  
Public Relations Officer, ASA**



## A Full Weekend Enjoyed by the 1965 College

B: Doreen McNabb, Lawrence McNabb, Peter Gradauer, Alice Gradauer, Joan Petracek, Arnold Petracek, Don Dowdeswell, Doug Sword

M: Gillian McDougald, Donna Carlson-O'Keefe, Brian O'Keefe, Irene Ahner, Larence Peterson, Lynda Dubois, Faye Puckett, Sue Sword

F: Allan McDougald, Derald Ahner, Lee Bristow, Marcel Dubois, Jim Puckett, Jim & Eileen Ewart, Bob Mason, Cora Greer and Celia Baldwin attended our supper the night before.



## Big Turnout by the 1970 College



## Bigger Turnout by the 1970 School

## A Tale as Old as Time

*(Well... ever since Voc-Ags (School/Diploma) came to be on the U of S campus)*

It was a quiet week in Dec. 1952. Too quiet ... (therefore, no fun) so a slight was perceived; Engineers had looked down their schnozz one to many a-time, anyway. And so a plan materialized. Class time in the Tractor lab; the day's instruction ends, a couple of Voc-Ags jump in and hide in a combine hopper. Hours later, a back door opens, cohorts gain access to the 3rd floor engineers student lounge ... and their Xmas tree. An unexpected obstacle; trees disappear so often the engineers cemented the base of the tree in a foot of concrete. But we all know a farm boy never lacks, someone just happened to have a saw. Dead of night, the absconded (and shorter) tree makes its way to the roof of Kirk Hall, where now, of course the Voc-Ags do things in style. The Xmas tree is festooned with so many more lights it can be seen from Floral/Agars Corner, (6 mi./9.6km) SE of the city and now too, by much of Saskatoon.

Engineers make several attempts to re-acquire their tree, but Voc-Ags always plan with more plans; camping out on the Kirk Hall roof, prepared to repel invaders. Engineers being, well.. the bright idea of using ladders to scale the outer walls arose. Turns out 2nd floor Kirk Hall windows are a more than capable defence for just such an attack. Saskatoon constabulary was called in to arrest hither and yon; instead they all had a good laugh a the time of year when dreary nights are longest. The President of the U of S at the time, Walter Palmer Thompson, felt he should personally reprove the Voc-Ags, especially for hiding in the combine (apparently illegal) and opening the Tractor lab door (is that the illegal part?)

W.P. made sure that the purloined pine was returned to those hapless engineers, but it was reported that, upon leaving Kirk Hall, the U of S President was seen desperately trying to stifle his laughter over the '53-54 Voc-Ags monumental escapade.

### Friday Social

The College and Saga once again had another very good time at the 2020 Friday Night Social. Bryan Harvey led tours through the Ag Building and others which used to house AgBio. The VocAg lounge in the Kirk Hall basement and Agros up in the Crop Science (now Archaeology) attic have been filled in with walls to house offices. Was still great to visit the old haunts. Hamish Tulloch led the art tours of the Ag Building; so many beautiful items to appreciate. While Eric Johnson, Pierre Hucul and Randy Kutcher kept everyone informed with what takes place in the Phytotron, where each has some projects in play. It seemed anyone that attended went on at least 2 of the 3 tours on offer. Lots of classmates seeing each other once again after graduating a long time ago, made for lots of catching-up thru the evening. Thanks to AgBio for refreshments, Blair's Ag Teriyaki Jerky, plus the Three Farmers Lentil munchies, gathered by Louis Bossaer.

## University of Saskatchewan Crop Rotation Survey

The Crop Rotation Survey, conducted through the U of S College of Agriculture and Bioresources, benchmarks the changes and advancements made in crop production over the past 25 years. The purpose of this project is to evaluate farmers' progress towards sustainable on-farm practices. The data will be used to inform governments and the public about the improvements in crop production sustainability, and to help provide a voice for Saskatchewan farmers regarding topics such as GHG emissions and carbon sequestration.

Farmers are invited to complete the survey by registering online. The survey will ask about all aspects of crop production from seeding through harvest, and will take between 3-4 hours to complete. Participants will be paid up to \$200 in compensation. For more information and to register, please visit the SAIFood website or reach out to one of the following researchers from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics:

**Stuart Smyth, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor & Research  
Chair in Agri-Food Innovations  
stuart.smyth@usask.ca

**Savannah Gleim, M.Sc.**  
Research Officer  
savannah.gleim@usask.ca

**Chelsea Sutherland, M.Sc. Candidate**  
Research Assistant  
chelsea.sutherland@usask.ca

## Empty Saddles

Arthur John Sawatsky, '47 S	Sept. 8, 2020	Thomas Homer Keeping '61 S,	June 10, 2020
Reginald Carmon Gilstorf '49 S, '52 C	July 29, 2020	Howard Glen Steinley '61 S	Apr. 20, 2020
Alan Eric Shook '49 C	June 20, 2020	Norman Monroe Hess '68 S	Oct. 30, 2020
Wilfred "Fred" Carter Langley '50 C	June 7, 2020	Joseph Henri Loiselles '75 S	June 17, 2020
Clarence Albert Collins '54 C	Nov 9, 2020	Peter Donald Valli '75 S	June 8, 2020
Marvin Peter Nyborg '55 C	Jan. 15, 2020	Harry Brian Wilson '78 C	Sept. 29, 2020
George Leslie Freeman '56 S	Apr. 30, 2020	Alan Robert Balfour '79 C	July 15, 2020
Wilfred George Riffel '57 S,	Jan. 25, 2020	Richard Ross Szwydny '91 S, '94 C	Nov. 1, 2020

### Arthur John Sawatsky '47 S – Sept. 8, 2020 1988 Distinguished Diploma Graduate & 1999 SAGA HLM

Born Jan. 3, 1921 on a farm SE of Aberdeen, SK to Henry and Mary, the 3rd of 7, Art always planned to live to be 100 years old.

He joined the RCAF in 1942 as an aeroengine mechanic. Upon honorable discharge in '45, he enrolled at the U of S. For his '46 hiatus, he worked building the University Hospital. Upon graduation Art was offered the Dairy Herd Improvement Assoc. (DHIA), position in Yorkton, milk testing on dairy farms and advising farmers of different nutrients and breeding to improve their herds, and as a Yorkton 4-H dairy club leader. Also in '47, Art had met the love of his life, Cateleen Dyck; they married in 1948 and happily produced Audrey, Barry and Glenn.

In 1956, Art transferred to Saskatoon DHIA, commuting for 2 years before moving the family closer to family, then he could help his dad with the home farm. Art was a member of & associate director with the Saskatoon Exhibition (Prairieland Park) working with the dairy show. As secretary-treasurer for the Sask Holstein Friesen Assoc. (18 yrs) he was actively involved in obtaining cattle for the annual sale. He attended 50 Sask Dairy conventions, judged

dairy shows around the province and was a Saskatoon 4-H dairy leader for many years. Art also wrote a monthly article for the Primrose Guide, titled *Along the Milky Weigh*.

In '64, Art moved to the Saskatoon Co-op as an Ag Fieldman, based out of the Builder and Farm Supply on 11th St. He stayed there until 1974 when he switched back to DHIA until his '86 retirement, then assisted in raising funds for the new Ag Building.

Art always curled with the Grasswood CC, (mostly dairy folks south of the city) and many years in the AgGrad Bonspiel, took up golfing when he joined the Golden K's (Kiwanis Club), and bowled with the local Senior's Assoc. Cathy passed away in Jan. 2017 and Art moved to Calgary to be with the kids.

Art Sawatsky was 99 years, 8 months and 5 days old on Sept 8th.

**There is much more to read about Art Sawatsky on the Website. Please go to [www.saskaggrads.com](http://www.saskaggrads.com)**

### World Wide Science

An international team led by **Curtis Pozniak '99 C**, an AgBio researcher and Director of the Crop Development Centre, has sequenced the genomes for 15 wheat varieties representing breeding programs around the world This enables scientists and breeders to much more quickly identify influential genes for improved yield, pest resistance and other important crop traits.



# Saskatchewan Crop Organizations Virtual AGMs

Registration is now open for the virtual 2021 Annual General Meetings (AGMs) for the Saskatchewan crop organizations.

## Monday, January 11, 2021

- 8:30 am to 9:30 am     Canary Seed Development Commission of Saskatchewan
- 9:45 am to 10:45 am     Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission
- 11:00 am to 12:30 pm     Saskatchewan Mustard Development Commission
- 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm     Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission
- 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm     Saskatchewan Alfalfa Seed Producers Development Commission
- 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm     Saskatchewan Leafcutters Association

## Tuesday, January 12, 2021

- 8:30 am to 9:30 am     Market outlook with Marlene Boersch and Chuck Penner: canola, wheat, and barley
- 9:30 am to 10:30 am     Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission
- 10:30 am to 11:15 am     Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission
- 11:15 am to 12:15 pm     Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission
- 12:45 pm to 1:30 pm     Market outlook: flax and oats
- 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm     Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission
- 2:15 pm to 3:00 pm     Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission
- 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm     Market outlook: pulses
- 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm     Saskatchewan Pulse Growers

## Wednesday, January 13, 2021

- 8:30 am to 12:00 pm     Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association

The **Saskatchewan Agricultural Graduates' Association (SAGA)** will be holding its 86th Annual AGM on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7:00 pm. The link to the meeting, meeting ID, and passcode will be posted on the SAGA website: [saskaggrads.com](http://saskaggrads.com)

For more information and to register, please go to  
**[saskcrops.com](http://saskcrops.com)**

**To become a member of SAGA, simply go to our web page. \$100 for Life Membership. The SAGA reaches over 2200 fellow grads, all the AgBio Faculty, and each AgBio student. Be sure to send me tales of what's happening in your neck of the woods. Next issue deadline is May 15, 2021  
Ewald Lammerding, 2014 Preston Ave. Saskatoon S7J 2E8 OR [thesaga@sasktel.net](mailto:thesaga@sasktel.net)**

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