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NO MINOR MATTER

I just spent most of the past two weeks at three conferences: the New England Dairy Nutrition Conference in New Hampshire, the Ruminant Health and Nutrition Conference in Syracuse, and the Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana (yeah, it was as much fun as it sounds). There were about 100 nutritionists, consultants, and feed industry leaders at the first two and nearly 500 in Fort Wayne. The reason for me telling you about these conferences is not to bore you, but to let you know the high profile that Miner Institute had at these three premier industry meetings.

At the northeastern conferences, every speaker made at least one reference to research conducted at Miner Institute, from the amino acid work being lead by Sarah to Pete's stocking density work and how it might affect mastitis outbreaks, to the use of low-starch diets for transition cows being done by Heather Dann. At the Tri-State Conference which is one of the largest in the country, speakers referred to the Z-Box and the forage

digestibility work that Kurt leads in the Forage Lab and the milk fat depression work we had done a few years ago with Adam Lock when he was still at UVM. During breaks, folks peppered me with questions on the latest research we are doing and how the dairy herd is doing – word is out about the high performance of our cows. The common denominator is that the industry respects what we are doing and looks to Miner for cutting-edge, applied research in nutrition, cattle management, and forage quality.

I know that most of you do not have the opportunity to hear these comments, so I wanted you to know how very important our work is to the dairy industry – not only regionally, but across the US and truly globally. Every single one of you at Miner plays a critical role in our continued success and importance to agriculture. Industry leaders across the country realize that work conducted at Miner Institute is truly no minor matter!

— Rick Grant

POINTS OF INTEREST:

April 11 marked Shawn Bechard's five-year anniversary with the Institute. Congratulations, Shawn! See story Page 4.

Wanda Emerich receives the John C. Finley Memorial Award in 2010. See more Page 2.

THE WESTERN EXPERIENCE & EDUCATION

During our staff meeting, I reviewed the ADM Program at Miner Institute touching on several areas of the program. In this article, I hope to provide more details regarding the Western trip and the knowledge and experience this trip provides to our students and Miner staff.

One of the single largest hurdles in education is to help students and employees develop new perspectives and insights to apply to their own work setting. The Institute's educational model is based largely upon experiential learning — an approach in which students engage in an activity, reflect on the activity critically, and as a result obtain useful insight and learning.

Our field trip to California fits well with this learning model — we travel as a group to visit a variety of dairy farms and related businesses, discuss what we experienced at each location in the bus after the tour, and when we return home we seek more information to add to what we learned and apply what we learned to new situations. Miner staff and dairy farmers, who request to join us on the trip, play a major role in leading these discussions which allows students to get the most out of their time on the farms.

One of the places we visited that has been discussed the most by students since we returned is a calf ranch with 7,000 calves in wooden hutches in addition to another 2,000 to 3,000 calves after weaning. The owners were trying to decide if they should allow tours of the farm; they had reservations due to the frequency of negative news stories about the dairy industry. Our group of students, Miner staff and farmers gained a first-hand exposure to one of the current and ongoing "hot topics" in dairy agriculture and had the opportunity to reach their own

conclusions regarding this important part of our industry. When we returned to Chazy, we also visited B&R Farm — a custom heifer growing operation that raises 1,500 heifers for area dairy producers.

Another dairy that we visited was a 500-cow seasonal organic dairy grazing in a grass-based 420-acre system. According to the owner, the system is based on a New Zealand template where the pasture policy is one acre/cow and is irrigated every day in the summer. This management system was very different than the freestall system the students and staff are familiar with at Miner Institute, but may be beneficial to those interested in a pasture-based management approach.

We also toured Fiscalini Farms where 10% of the milk is made into cheese on-site at the farm, totaling 400,000 lbs of cheese each year. One of the marketing concepts for the cheese is that it is produced using a renewable energy resource and results in a reduced carbon footprint. At this stop the students learned about marketing cheese through a website and engaged in a discussion regarding the importance of being animal welfare and environmentally certified. Another interesting feature of this farm was the methane digester that processes manure and the cows were bedded with solids from the methane digester.

The group's favorite farm was Yosemite Jerseys in Hilmar. This farm was very tidy with enthusiastic managers. The herd averages 102,000 SCC resulting in a \$7,000/month premium stressing the importance of proper animal care. This experience left our group with a positive impression of the dairy industry in California.

Many of the farms we visited this year were recommended by Denise Skidmore from Hilmar Cheese. Denise manages some of the internship opportunities for college students offered by Hilmar Cheese dairymen. We have had students from our program participate in these internships in the past and hope to have more in the future.

The final two days of our trip were spent at the World Ag Expo in Tulare where students, Miner staff and dairy farmers had the opportunity to investigate and learn about new technology involved in dairy and field crops operations. It's this technology that will allow U.S. farmers to provide for the growing world population and having the knowledge of these technologies is beneficial to operating a sustainable farming operation.

In the end, the California trip exposed ADM students and Miner staff to various educational opportunities through networking with professionals in the agricultural industry and viewing first-hand techniques used on high-producing Western dairies; in some cases, similar techniques are applicable in this region. In addition we had the opportunity to meet a lot of people involved in the agriculture industry who are not our competition, rather our partners who can provide information and assistance. We feel this experience is beneficial to Miner Institute as well as our ADM students. The experience broadens our dairy employees' knowledge of various aspects of the dairy industry, which can be useful when discussing potential changes in the dairy's operating procedures or when planning changes to facilities or equipment.

— Wanda Emerich

Wanda Emerich Earns Finley Award

At the 2010 Vermont Farm Show, Wanda Emerich received the 32nd John C. Finley Memorial Award. The award is named for John C. Finley, an educator and the Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture and ardent promoter of Vermont agriculture whose promising career was cut short by a tragic car accident. The award is presented annually by the Vermont Dairy Industry Association to someone whose character and dedication to Vermont agriculture and education most closely resembles those goals, ideals and achievements that were so important to Finley.

Congratulations Wanda!

UNDERSTANDING YOUR INSURANCE

Miner Institute offers health insurance benefits to full-time employees after four months of employment.

- Miner pays 80% of the premium, and the employee pays the remaining 20%.
- Miner also offers a flexible spending plan, which can be purchased in addition to medical coverage or by itself. The money can be used for medical reimbursement or for daycare costs.
- Miner also offers Aflac cancer insurance, which is paid for in full by the employee and covers additional expenses that aren't covered through the company insurance plan.

After six months, Miner employees

become eligible for life insurance.

- The cost of the life insurance policy is paid in full by Miner Institute.
- New York State requires that employers provide short-term disability coverage for an off-the-job injury or illness.
- This insurance covers up to 26 weeks of the disability and pays 50% of the employee's wage, up to \$170 per week.
 - Miner will prorate with vacation and/or sick time.
- Employees become eligible for long-term disability after six months. Benefits begin after the 26th week.
- Long-term disability insurance covers 60 percent of the employee's salary, up to \$5,000 per month.
 - The employee's health insurance

continues for 12 weeks or until their sick time is used up, whichever is greater. The employee would then be responsible for 100% of the insurance premium to continue coverage.

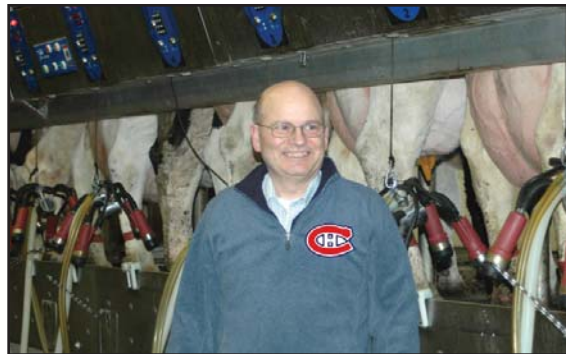
Worker's Compensation insurance covers an employee who is injured on the job.

- The insurance covers a maximum of two-thirds of the employee's weekly salary.
- The length of coverage is determined by the New York State Workers Compensation Board.

For more information, contact Kirk Beattie at 846-7121, ext. 114 or beattie@whminer.com.

DAIRY OPERATIONS – OUTPUT REMAINS GOOD

Things in the Dairy Barn are as active as ever. The staff has been especially busy with two new research studies – one is being overseen by Sarah Boucher and involves 16 cows in the tie stall area; the other is being overseen by Heather Dann and involves 40 cows using the Calan feed bins.



Dr. George Palmer

In the past few months, we have transitioned to a new veterinarian. Dr. George Palmer is now providing Miner with his veterinary expertise. Dr. Palmer owns Palmer Veterinary Clinic in Plattsburgh and is the father of Glenn Palmer, who spent a year here as a dairy intern and is now at veterinary school. Dr. Palmer is both an intelligent and capable veterinarian and sports

enthusiast – Dr. Palmer is a proud Montreal Canadiens fan.

Jake and his crops crew are getting prepared for planting season, but first they must endure rock picking season. This year, we will plant 268 acres of alfalfa-grass, 150 acres of grass, and 264 acres of corn.

If all goes well, the corn will be in the

ground for several weeks by the time that four farm management students arrive in late May. This year, the students are from Utah State University, Iowa State University, Virginia Tech, and Michigan State University.

On June 5, Miner Institute will host about 30 Essex and Clinton County 4H kids for a Dairy Camp.

Participants will learn about showmanship, taking professional photographs of their animals, hoof trimming, and farm safety.

Everything seems to be going well in the barn – the cows are still milking an average of 95 pounds per day and milk component levels remain good.

— Rachel Dutil

AROUND THE INSTITUTE ...



Mark Gonyo, who is extremely fond of having his photograph taken, works on the horse barn renovation.



Heather Gauthier shovels feed to be mixed for a tie-stall study that began in early April.



Ralph LaBombard shovels rotten feed from a forage pile on a cold March morning.



Rick Grant converses with students from Cornell University as well as ADM students in Miner Center Auditorium.



Steve Kramer does a dirt demonstration with high school chemistry students from Northeastern Clinton Central School.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 3: Heritage Exhibit opens for the season.

May 5: ADM students vs. Miner Institute employees basketball game at 4:30 p.m. at the dorms. Go Miner!!!

June 8 - 10: Farm Days for Fifth Graders

June 16: Dr. Burke will give a talk at 6 p.m. at CVPH on William Miner and Physicians Hospital.

July 17: Company Picnic at the Chazy Rec Park.

‘IT’S ALL GOOD’ FOR SHAWN BECHARD

Shawn Bechard can sum up his job here at Miner in just a few words – “It’s all good.”

Shawn has been working here at the Institute full time for just over five years. His father, Brian, has been at Miner for nearly 30 years. In addition to Brian and Shawn, there are several employees with another family member also employed here. Shawn says he thinks it’s a testament to the kind of place that Miner is – a place where people want to stay, and where employees encourage their children or other family members to come and work.

When Shawn first started at Miner, he

did grounds work for Steve Fessette. He later moved to the dairy barn, and now works with Jake Ashline and Henry Meseck in the crops department. “Its right where I need to be,” Shawn said of working in crops.

One of the best aspects of working at Miner, Shawn says, is that there’s a good group of people who work here. Everyone gets along. What he likes most about his specific job, he said, is that “it’s fun.”

Shawn doesn’t really cross paths with his dad all that often, but, he said, all winter they carpoled to work together. Shawn let his dad drive.

— Rachel Dutil

OUR HISTORIC BUILDINGS ADAPTING TO CHANGE

The horse Barn has been in the center and among the core buildings of this farm since 1906. Having been built by hand – in one year – and stretching 300 feet in length and 45 feet wide, its grand architecture still stops the wandering visitor to stop and stare. The basement level is accessible from both ends. The second level allows you to enter with a vehicle or piece of equipment from three ramps, one at each end, and one in the middle. The third level is a massive hay mow.



During my time on the maintenance staff, I've seen this building renovated a few times. It's had to adapt to changing times and changing programs at the Institute. In tearing out walls for construction, we found evidence of at least two fires having occurred at some point in time, one at the north end and another near the center, charring some of the rafters up and into the hay mow.

We know that during the Heart's Delight farming days this building housed milking cows on the second floor and the horses and mules in the basement level. Later, from what I've been told, Ayerst ran a program on the upper level with pregnant mares, collecting urine to make the drug Premarin. I'm not sure of the time frame this happened, but it might have been in the 1970s. Back

in the 80's when Harry Randy was our president; the entire barn got a facelift to keep up with changing times. The basement level had individual horse stalls made out of wood stretching from end to end. We removed all of the stalls to make room for the open pipe pens that you now see. For a period of time heifers and dry cows were housed in the pens for our dairy. After Ayerst finished their program in the second level, stalls were removed and pens built to house goats. A goat milking parlor was built and a few pens constructed to conduct nutrition research. There was unused room on the second level, and Harry had us build individual pens for raising calves. Raising calves and housing heifers went on for a period of time until technology proved that this building was no longer efficient, both in the cost of labor and ventilation for the animals.

Presently and again, our Horse Barn



The interior of the horse barn has newly remodeled wood-paneled walls and rubber floors throughout.

has been renovated to keep up with the changing times and programs. Its name is very well suited, for now it's entire bottom and second level has become our Equine Center. Housing for horses, a phantom collecting station for stallions, a classroom for education, a newly renovated breeding lab, and newly installed rubber flooring, round out the entire use of this building to provide the nucleus for our equine programs.

Plan to stop by and see the new additions that have been added to keep this historic building functioning in a never ending cycle of change that will undoubtedly carry the structure through another 100 years.

— Steve Fessette

EQUINE PROGRAM READIES FOR SUMMER

Winter and spring is a good time to regroup and plan for the summer in the equine program. This season, the equine program hosted two educational programs at Miner Center. EquiDay – in its 24th year – was held in March. The sunny, unusually warm March day may have kept some folks away, but the turnout was pretty good and very enthusiastic. In early April, Miner hosted a two-day hoof anatomy program. The first day was primarily for farriers and professional hoof trimmers, and provided lots of useful technical information. The second day was geared for horse owners to learn

about basic care, anatomy, and overall balance of their horses' hooves.

In late May, five students will arrive at Miner to begin their Summer Experience in Equine Management. This year, the group hails from the University of Minnesota, Rutgers, Vermont Technical College, SUNY Cobleskill, and West Virginia University. Foaling season is just around the corner, so those five students will soon be spending nights in the barn watching for the two foals that are due in early June. Heart's Delight Morgan horses are named after places in Northern NY (mostly) and

we are always open to suggestions! Last year's babies are HD Mexico (aka "Maya" born on the 5th of May) and HD New York (aka "Odin").

— Karen Lassell



Odin, left, and Maya, right.

CARRIE'S LOVE OF HORSES FOSTERED IN CHILDHOOD

Equine intern Carrie Ostrowski is really looking forward to summer, though she admits it's going to fly by.

Carrie is from Sioux Falls, South Dakota – approximately 1600 miles from here. The most difficult part of her job, she says, is being so far from home. Carrie arrived here at Miner to begin her year-long appointment in September after trekking cross country in her pickup truck towing a trailer and her horse, Red Hot. The trip took about 36 hours. Without wind she was able to get about 10 or 11 miles to a gallon of gasoline. With wind, it was more like seven or eight.

Though Carrie grew up in the city, she says she has always loved horses and enjoyed reading books about horses as a child. When she was in fourth grade, she asked Santa for a horse for Christmas. Her mom explained that Santa would not be able to deliver a



Carrie Ostrowski works with a horse in the training ring.

horse. The compromise was riding lessons. She got Red Hot when she was in sixth grade. Red is now 20 years old; she's had him for 11 years.

Carrie is a graduate of Truman State University in Missouri. She has a degree in Agricultural Science, with an emphasis in equine science. Carrie was a summer experience student here in 2008. This summer, she will be working with and advising five student interns.

She hopes to someday operate a small Morgan horse breeding program for carriage driving. In the short term, however, after leaving Miner in late September (most likely), Carrie will move to Peoria, Illinois, where her boyfriend will be working with Caterpillar. There, she hopes to find a job as either a stable manager or breeding manager.

The internship here at Miner, Carrie says, has been exactly what she needed. She has gained great experience in facility management, training horses and reproduction. She is particularly proud of "her" horse, Ducky, that she has been working with and training since her summer experience here.

So at summer's end, Carrie and Red will hit the road again, this trip will be a bit shorter, but an adventure no doubt.

— Rachel Dutil

RESEARCH TEAM PLAYS SHORT-HANDED

The last few months have been very busy for the research gang. We had to say farewell to Lindsay Perry, who left the Institute and returned to Ireland in March. There will certainly never be a leprechaun as genuine as Lindsay – who handily won the Miner Institute Halloween costume contest this past year.

Two new research projects began in early April – one using the Calan feed bins, and one in the tie-stall area of the barn. The preparation and work involved in getting two research studies up and running is always taxing, but doing it without Maggie Carter has been especially challenging. Maggie severely dislocated her shoulder when she fell in the barn several weeks ago. Maggie was alone in the barn at the time, but was able to use her cell phone to call for help.

Though most days run smoothly and without incident, it is important to always bear in mind the risks and keep both personal and animal safety in the front of our minds while at work. Clearly, keeping a cell phone in your pocket is a wise choice. We should be sure to ask Maggie who her cell phone



Lindsay Perry, dressed as a leprechaun for Halloween, poses with some of Miner Institute's Holsteins.

provider is, as I would venture to guess that barns with cell phone reception are a rarity in Clinton County!

In the wake of Maggie's injury, the rest of the research team has had to step into roles that they haven't previously, and everyone has been up to the task without complaint. Some of the ADM students have taken on a few hours of part-time work to help cover where needed. Fortunately, they are a really great group and not a lazy bunch of beer drinkers!

The students are wrapping up their semester here and finishing up their

research projects. They are also making time to hit the basketball court, as they are convinced that their challenge to the Miner staff will work out in their favor. (If any employee is even a moderately skilled basketball player, please see Wanda or Heather Dann about joining the Miner team.)

Summer experience students will make their way here at the end of May. This year, we will welcome three agricultural research students. They come from the University of Vermont, Louisiana State University, and the University of New Hampshire. One of last year's students, Justine Deming – now a graduate student at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada – will present her research from her time at Miner to the joint meeting of the American Dairy Science Association and American Society of Animal Science in Denver.

In the coming months, Steve Kramer and Eric Young will be continuing to work on tile drainage research and will get assistance in this venture from Laura Klaiber, Lisa Klaiber and Simon George.

— Rachel Dutil

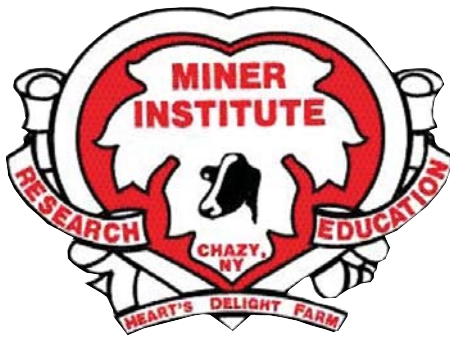
SURE SIGN OF SPRING



Laurie Jerry works on spring cleanup in the flower beds around the Farm Office.



Laura Klaiber, top, and Lisa Klaiber, bottom, collect samples from tile drain structures in the R-20 field on Ridge Road.



EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS

APRIL

Robert Fievisohn — April 2
Rick Grant — April 19
Anna Pape — April 21

MAY

Steve Fessette — May 3
David Boulерice — May 7
Jared Ashline — May 24

JUNE

Neil LaCount — June 3
Cory Nolette — June 7
Kerri Sanders — June 9
Stephen Ero — June 13
Jake Ashline — June 16
BethAnn Caston — June 17



MINER MADNESS

Cinderella Hardcourt in March, more commonly known as Heather Dann, was the humble host of the 5th Annual Miner Association of March Madness Bracketologists Bracket Challenge.

There were 14 Miner employees and friends of the Institute who participated in the 2010 madness. There were two award categories: Best Score Based on Points (seed number times round number) and Most Games Picked Correctly.

Best Score Based on Points

Champion = Kurt Cotanch with 194 points (Kurt also won this in 2007) Runner-up = Kent Henderson with 189 points.

Most Games Picked Correctly

Champion = Kurt Cotanch with 40 games (Kurt also won this in 2006 and 2007) Runner-up = Jerry Emerich with 39 games.

