

Summer 2010

Roots

Your Ridgetown Campus Connection



Record Student Enrolment Drives Reek Building Rejuvenation

Administrators and educators are gearing up for record enrolment this fall at Ridgetown, with more than 650 full-time students expected to be in attendance. That's a 10% increase over 2009. This increase is attributed to the addition of new academic programs, and extensive career options in the areas of food, agriculture, and environment.

This number of students is great and has several positive benefits but also puts pressure on some campus facilities. With this many students, and some very large classes, particularly in the agriculture diploma program, the campus needs more large classrooms and is making plans for a \$2.5 million Reek Building Rejuvenation project. It will bring two new classrooms and several other needed enhancements to student services.

"We want to consolidate several student services into one area, making it easier for future, new or current students to find what they need. We also need improved meeting space for alumni and community organizations who use our campus. A large new boardroom is in the renovation plans," says Art Schaafsma, Campus Director.

"First impressions count and the first impression of a potential future student is critical. We need to enhance our welcoming and program information area for interested students and their parents/

guardians when they arrive on campus," notes Liz Meidlinger, Communication Manager. The new plans include this needed recruitment space.

The proposed plans call for the demolition of the old Reek gym and the building of a new east wing attached to the current Reek Administration building. "We've been working with a local architect for over a year and are excited about the additions, improvements and efficiencies that the Reek plans will provide the campus, particularly to students, industry and alumni," says John Brooks, Campus Executive Officer.

The next important phase of the project will be securing funding and the campus will be working closely with the Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation to gain support from all stakeholders. "We're excited about the growth of the campus and ready to help out any way we can," says Dave Baute, Foundation Chair.

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RIDGETOWN CAMPUS

CHANGING LIVES
IMPROVING LIFE

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New Look for OAC and Ridgetown Campus – Same Solid Campus Priorities

Colours and names often change but OAC's new branding strategy fits perfectly with what Ridgetown Campus is all about. This Summer 2010 issue of the ROOTS newsletter reflects this new look.

OAC identifies **Food, Agriculture, Communities and Environment** as the four pillars of its research and education programs and services. As a proud campus of OAC, we at Ridgetown have the same priorities. Our campus mandate has not changed in decades, but our activities have evolved significantly as society and agriculture have developed.

OAC and Ridgetown Campus are global leaders in these four pillars and our strategic objective is to grow and expand each of these pillars to better serve our local, regional, and global partners, making the planet a better place to live.

Building on a long history of excellence, food, agriculture, communities and the environment are the cornerstones of Ridgetown Campus. **These pictures exemplify the importance of these pillars in the past and today.**

Decades Ago

Today



Food

We're teaching students about high quality food production to feed a growing world.



Agriculture

We're doing applied crop research to benefit growers, agribusiness and the health of global consumers.



Communities

We're conducting applied and adaptive research and sharing our knowledge with our rural community.



Environment

We're working to develop new environmentally responsible technologies for farmers.



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Your on-going support and strategic partnerships with us are critical to our continued success. We want to thank everyone who has made contributions of time, expertise, leadership, funding, and other gifts to our programs and services in 2009 – 2010. We encourage you to continue to be involved in the development and delivery of our programs and services.

Kindest Regards,

Rob Gordon,
Dean, OAC

Art Schaafsma,
Director, Ridgetown Campus

Campus Receives \$3.13 Million for Anaerobic Digester

Ridgetown Campus has received more than \$2.6 million from the federal government and an additional \$500,000 from the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario for biofuel research and development. The money will be used to construct an anaerobic digester, which uses organic waste to create energy through the burning of methane, and a demonstration laboratory.

“The University of Guelph’s Ridgetown Campus has always been a leader in agriculture research and development,” said Dave Van Kesteren, MP for Chatham-Kent-Essex, who was in Ridgetown in April to make the announcement. “With this investment, we are ensuring they will continue to lead in the growing renewable energy sector.”

Art Schaafsma, Ridgetown Campus director, said the investment is a huge boost in stimulating the emerging bioeconomy and will provide commercialization, development, research and training opportunities. The anaerobic digester will be one of only a few such renewable energy source facilities in Ontario. It recovers methane from organic waste through anaerobic (airless) digestion. The technology processes the waste to produce electricity, waste heat and fertilizer, among other things.

This is the second major federal investment in the Centre for Agricultural Renewable Energy and Sustainability (CARES). Based at Ridgetown, CARES is a hub for applied and adaptive research, training and education, technology transfer, and rural community development in bioenergy and the bioeconomy.

The money comes from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario through the Community Adjustment Fund. The two-year, \$1-billion national program is intended to meet the short-term economic needs of communities hit hardest by the global economic recession.

About fifty industry partners and staff gathered for the funding announcement. Initial construction of the digester began in August.



Guests Celebrating the Funding Announcement

L-R: Matt McLean, Executive Director, SOBIN; Dave Van Kesteren, MP for Chatham-Kent-Essex; Rob Gordon, Dean, OAC; Art Schaafsma, Director, Ridgetown Campus; Greg Devries, General Manager, Cedarline Greenhouses



CARES Board of Directors

The CARES Board is comprised of a diversified group of researchers, community stakeholders and agricultural leaders.

CARES Board of Directors (photo above)

*Front Row (Left to Right): Gabrielle Ferguson, Michael Toombs, Krista Gladstone, Seyed Goosheh,
Middle Row (Left to Right): Mark Uher, Kim Cooper, Matt McLean, Rob Nicol
Back Row (Left to Right): Don Hewson, Greg Devries, Art Schaafsma, Khurshid Saharan
Absent from Picture: Mike Bouk, Rob Gordon, Claude Faucher, Abimbola Abiola*



Agricultural Engineer

Ron Fleming

Retires After **34 Year** Distinguished Career

After thirty-four years in agriculture, sixteen of them at Ridgetown Campus, a popular researcher, teacher and co-ordinator of the Environmental Management diploma and Bachelor of Bio-Resource Management programs has retired.

Keenly Focused On Agricultural Advancements

Ron is known as one of the province's experts on anaerobic digesters. He is standing by a small scale model that was part of a recent research program. With recently announced new funding, the campus is building a larger version.



Recently Honoured with the Dr. Ron Pitblado Award for Teaching Excellence at Ridgetown

At the 2010 graduation celebration, Ron was the recipient of the new Dr. Ron Pitblado memorial award for teaching excellence. Ron is joined by Kayla Bishop, 2010 class valedictorian.

Ron Fleming started his career with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food in 1976 as an Extension Engineer in Huron County. Based in Clinton, he worked to help farmers solve their problems; with the many livestock farmers in the area, those problems often involved manure management issues.

In the 1980s, Ron's supervisor encouraged him to develop a specialty – a topic in which he could become the provincial expert. Because of his previous experience, he chose manure management. He became the “go-to” guy in Ontario and developed several fact sheets for farmers. “A lot of my work focused on reducing risks of livestock manure reaching surface water or groundwater,” he says. “I sometimes told people my specialty was ‘water quality’ because it sounded better at a party than ‘manure management’.”



Key Player in Development of Environmental Management Programs at Ridgetown

As Ron judges students' Spring Expo static displays focused on environmental issues, we are reminded of his leadership support in developing and co-ordinating two environmental programs at Ridgetown.

A Respected Teacher

Along with a great sense of humour, Ron brought his expertise to hundreds of students in the classroom and to college and university students employed in his research program during the summer months.



Another part of his job, starting in the mid 1980's, was teaching at Centralia College two days per week. In 1989, he began working there full time doing research and teaching.

When Centralia closed in 1994, Ron transferred to Ridgetown to continue his research. Jack Underwood had recently retired, so Ron moved into his position. Coincidentally, it was Jack's move from Centralia to Ridgetown in 1989 that created the vacancy that Ron had earlier filled in Centralia. "Jack just moved to Elmira this summer, so I'm wondering if I eventually have to follow him there too!" Ron jokes.

Throughout his career, Ron has enjoyed his contact with students, both in the classroom and as summer research technicians. "Over the years the students were great," he says. "Graduation is one my favourite times of the year because it is a chance to pat the deserving students on the back and look back on all that they have accomplished as they prepare for the next part of their journey."

Ron hired many students to work for him on research projects, often selecting students who he felt would benefit from the experience later in their careers. "I liked to make the summer job an extension of their education," he says. He must have treated his employees well – he was even asked to sing at one summer student's wedding.

Ron has never regretted choosing manure management as his specialization. "The environmental challenges changed constantly and made the research fun," he says. Most of his projects involved at least one of: odour reduction, pathogen destruction, renewable energy production, movement of nutrients and/or production of greenhouse gases.

"Ron has been a valued member of the Ridgetown Campus team and his talents will be missed. Ron provided steadfast leadership in every aspect of his celebrated career; in research, teaching, extension and administration. His work resulted in many advances for industry, and his quiet, conscientious nature made him popular with students and everyone who worked with him."

Art Schaafsma, Campus Director

He also notes that the Walkerton water crisis in 2000 didn't change the focus of his work. "We were doing water quality studies before Walkerton, so we were already dealing with the issue. The difference it made to our work was that it brought more focus to the issue and ultimately made more research funding available."

Behind every great researcher is a great technician, and Ron is quick to thank the people who have supported his work. Mac MacAlpine, a 1976 Ridgetown grad, has been Ron's technician since 1994; at Centralia, he worked with Sam Bradshaw, a 1969 OAC grad. "I consider myself lucky to have worked with these two great guys," he says.

As for retirement plans, Ron was hoping to play golf, but he has been far too busy to get out on the course. "My daughter is getting married in October and I have a huge "honey-do" list to complete before then. I'm also helping my son renovate his house in London," he says. In addition, he is a member of a local theatre group, an active church choir member, and a newly appointed board member of the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance. To top it all off, he wants to spend some time in his woodworking shop completing a few wedding gifts. He certainly won't be bored for the foreseeable future!

Congratulations on your retirement Ron.



Celebrating Graduation – 2010

Ron is congratulated on his teaching award by Dr. Irene Moore, Associate Director, Academics.

Retirement Party Celebration

Research Technician Mac MacAlpine played a key role in countless research initiatives.

Farm Credit Canada and Ridgetown Campus Agri-Food Foundation Recognize Westag Alumnus Peter Twynstra with First Lifetime Achievement Award



Recognizing agricultural innovation and outstanding community leadership, the first Westag Alumnus of Honour – Lifetime Achievement Award has been presented to Peter Twynstra. The 1960 Ridgetown graduate received the honour as part of the 58th graduation celebrations at Ridgetown Campus on Friday, June 4th, 2010.

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) District Manager, Gary Paling, made the presentation and noted that Peter's lifetime achievements are an inspiration to farmers at home, across Canada, and abroad. "His success, achieved through innovation, hard work and a strong business model, has enabled him to contribute greatly to the Canadian Agri-Food industry."

"Peter is a perfect example of how steadfast determination can develop a successful farm business and build international agricultural markets for local producers. He also made time to volunteer in his local and broader rural community and to provide humanitarian support to those less fortunate in other corners of the world. He is an outstanding selection for this alumni honour," says Garnet Snobelen, Chair, Alumni Development, Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation.

Back in his days at Ridgetown Campus in 1959 and 1960, Peter recalls he was excited about learning and studied hard. He had been out of school for five years before starting at Ridgetown and found he grew personally from the leadership of individuals such as Dr. Reg Doidge and residence deans Ma and Pa Willson. Upon graduating from Ridgetown, Peter was employed as a regional service representative with International Harvester in London. His farming journey began two years later with the purchase of his father's 300 acre home farm. In 1967, an expanded Twilight Acre Farms was incorporated.

In 1978, Peter formed the Great Canadian Bean Company to market edible beans from his farm and a few of his neighbours' farms. He recently noted that in his agricultural career he has spent 25 years of his life in an airplane as he travelled Canada and countless other countries developing

diversified markets for edible beans. This business eventually grew to providing markets for over four hundred contract growers across Canada and the U.S. The success of his farm and the Great Canadian Bean Company of Ailsa Craig were the cumulative effort of Peter, his wife Dinie, their three children; Steve, Sharon and Linda, and their many employees. The bean company was sold in 2003 and is currently owned by Hensall District Co-op. Twilight Acres is now operated by his son Steve.

Gifted at time management, Peter's volunteer commitments to local farm organizations included leading 4-H Clubs and memberships in the Middlesex Soil and Crop Improvement Association, the Conservation Authority and many other local organizations. Peter's leadership skills were quickly spotted by former provincial Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Bill Stewart, who asked him to lead the organization of the

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The award was presented by Farm Credit Canada representative, Gary Paling. In the photo L-R are Ken Monteith, Past Foundation Board Chair; Garnet Snobelen, Chair, Alumni Development Committee; Art Schaafsma, Campus Director; Peter Twynstra, Class of 1960; Dinie Twynstra, Peter's wife; and Gary Paling, District Manager, Farm Credit Canada.

first Ontario Farm Safety Board. As the founding President of the Ontario Farm Safety Association in 1973, Peter worked hard to ensure all the key agricultural stakeholders had a spot at the board table.

Looking for the opportunity to influence agriculture and rural policy, Peter was the first Junior President of the National Farmers Union and has travelled the far corners and diversified agricultural landscape of Canada. He has been on council and reeve in his municipality and served on Middlesex County Council.

As the Chairman of the 2002 International Plowing Match in Middlesex County, he worked with forty-two committees and over eleven hundred volunteers to stage a successful, well-attended agricultural showcase. This success allowed for substantial financial contributions to be made to health care and seniors facilities in the community.

The Rotary International motto 'Service Above Self' suits Peter very well. Along with being an active member in the Grand Bend Rotary Club, he helped with the charter of Rotary clubs in both Strathroy and Grand Bend, and has attended Rotary meetings all over the world.

During the operation of the bean company, Peter traveled to South Africa many times for business and developed a love for the country and its people. Since his retirement he has led six tour groups there, showcasing the landscape, wildlife and agriculture. Seeing the need for humanitarian support, he is currently engaged in efforts to ship books, chalkboards, sports equipment and desks from closing rural Ontario schools to teachers and students in this struggling country.

Peter has been a supportive alumnus to Ridgetown Campus and was one of the first donors to the Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre. This fall, he will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his graduation.

Driving a tractor and spreading fertilizer on an open field at 5:00 AM remains one of the greatest joys of a man who has been farming for over 50 years. He also remains optimistic about the industry. "I see a great future for agriculture in this country. I came as an immigrant to Canada and found a land of opportunity. We have a great climate, great soil and farmers whose expertise is second to none. We need to be bold in our thinking and strategic in our directions and our agricultural possibilities are endless. Despite certain foreign difficulties, farmers in Canada are among the most efficient in the world and are a real benefit to Canada," he says.

In honour of Peter's tremendous commitment to agriculture and his community, at home and abroad, Farm Credit Canada made a \$5,000.00 contribution to the Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation's top capital priority.

Peter – congratulations from all your fellow Westag alumni.



Peter and Dinie show off the gift from FCC that they will display in their home.

“Peter is a perfect example of how steadfast determination can develop a successful farm business and build international agricultural markets for local producers. He also made time to volunteer in his local and broader rural community and to provide humanitarian support to those less fortunate in other corners of the world. He is an outstanding selection for this alumni honour.”

Garnet Snobelen,
Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation



New Vegetable Pest Management Researcher at Ridgetown

Growing up on a dairy and wild blueberry farm operation in New Brunswick gave Cheryl Trueman, Ridgetown's new Vegetable Pathology and Entomology researcher, a love of agriculture. When it was time to choose a university, Cheryl decided to pursue her interest by attending the University of Guelph.

"I was looking for adventure and I knew that even if I decided the agriculture program wasn't for me, Guelph offered many other great options," she says. She excelled in her agriculture education, graduating with a B.Sc. in Agriculture in 2004 and a M.Sc. in Horticulture in 2006.

Cheryl's masters thesis involved research on the management of septoria late blight in celery, which gave her an introduction to working with vegetable crops. She also coordinated a crop scouting program on muck crops (onions, carrots, celery, and lettuce) while completing her graduate degree. Her work with vegetables continued after graduation in her job as research co-ordinator for the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers. She joined the staff at Ridgetown in July, 2009 to get back to the applied research she had enjoyed as a student.

Cheryl's research focus is on integrated management of insect and disease pests in vegetable crops. "I am interested in research that can be adopted by growers in Ontario to improve pest management, reduce yield and quality losses, reduce grower costs, and delay the development of pesticide resistance," she says. In her first year, she has already started projects with tomatoes, sugar beets, peppers, sweet corn, snap peas, and vine crops.

When asked what has surprised her about her work this year, Cheryl replies that she is amazed how much she has learned. "Being a researcher doesn't mean you aren't still learning," she says. "It is almost overwhelming at first because there are so many vegetable crops and each has its own set of pest problems."

Another aspect of the job Cheryl has enjoyed is the opportunity to teach. The courses she teaches include Insect and Disease Management, Ornamental Plant Protection, and Vegetable Crop Pest Management. "It is very fulfilling when you see the students start to understand the concepts we've been studying. That is a great part of the job," she notes.



"Our vegetable pest management research program is in very capable hands," says campus director Art Schaafsma. "Cheryl has an excellent knowledge of the vegetable industry and its priorities."

Cheryl is glad that her education and experience have led her to Ridgetown. She knows that many people, from large scale field producers to backyard gardeners, look to Ridgetown for answers to their insect and disease questions. "I like being able to discuss pest problems with people," she says. "I think they really appreciate it, and as a researcher, it keeps you in touch with what is going on 'out there' in the real world."



Cheryl Trueman

New Vegetable Pathology and Entomology Researcher



Impact Of Giving

2009 Donor Report

Your gifts have a big impact.
They change lives. They improve life.

Dear Donor

We work well together – the Ridgetown Campus and you! Having your support makes all the difference. Together we work to support a better food supply system, better production options, better environmental practices and better economic models for agriculture and agri-food. We aim high in our work and we want you to aim high in your philanthropic giving.

Our campus vision, from our 2009 Strategic Plan, reads ‘Advancing society through agri-food research and science-based learning.’ Your gifts help us reach this vision and a few recent examples are highlighted in this report.

Thank you for your shared vision and support. If you have any questions about making a gift to Ridgetown Campus feel free to call me at 519-674-1587. I welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

With Warm Regards,

Liz Meidlinger

Manager, Communications and Advancement

Your gifts of awards and scholarships change the lives of students, helping them reach their full potential.

The new Ron Pitblado Memorial Scholarship supports a student furthering his/her education in an agricultural degree.

Ian Nichols of the Weather Innovations Network made the presentation to Danny Inksetter at the 2010 graduation. Danny will be furthering his studies in the B.Sc. (Agr.) program at the Guelph campus. ■



Your gifts of volunteer leadership help us set campus priorities.



This year, the Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation helped identify the need for more classrooms and student services facilities as the campus' top capital priority. ■

Your gifts of research funding and in-kind donations make a lasting difference in agricultural research.



Dr. Laura Van Eerd Making a Research Presentation to Industry Leaders

This year, support from several funding agencies made it possible for Dr. Laura Van Eerd to continue her research in optimizing recoverable white sugar in sugarbeets. ■

Because you value the same things we do...



You share our interest in research innovation.



You share our interest in teaching excellence.



You share our interest in student leadership development.



You share our interest in rural development.

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These people share the same values as you and are making a difference.

The Thompson family of Blenheim has been supporting students at Ridgetown since the first graduation in 1953 and they are still supporting our students today!



Ann Fisher (Thompson) presents the Best All Round Student Award to Steven Haverkamp at graduation.



A keen group of alumni and sheep producers helped develop and implement two new experiential learning courses in Sheep Flock Management. They provided curriculum input, guest lectures, penning and animal feed for the new program.

2009 Giving to Ridgetown Campus

In 2009, more than 350 alumni, friends, corporations and associations made gifts to Ridgetown Campus.

Annual Donors

The following list acknowledges alumni and community friends for generous donations received from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009.

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Gary* and Jane Ablett
Bruce and Candice Howson
Murray Lobb
Art and Susan Schaafsma

\$500 - \$999

Paul Apers
Gus Donkers
John Donkers
Doug Eagleson
Donald auline Hendrick
Karl and Liz Meidlinger
Ken and Luella Monteith
Larry Pajot
Art Schickedanz
Marilyn Wilkinson
Karen Wilkinson

\$50 - 499

Clark Aitken and Susan Kelner
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James Verstraete
Gary Watt
Matthew Weber
Donald Weir
Greg Wildeboer
Wayne Williams
George Winkel
Kenneth Woods
Kyle Woolley

Projects You Supported		2009
Ridgetown Learning Trust (Endowment Fund)		17,897.00
Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Center Capital Project		21,404.26
Westag Building Priority Fund		16,655.00
Memorial Donations		3,845.00
Unrestricted Giving to Top Priority		850.00
Student Awards and Scholarships		39,415.00
THANK YOU		
FISCAL YEAR TOTAL		\$100,066.26

Lifetime Donors

Lifetime giving councils recognize cumulative donations to Ridgetown Campus. These individuals have provided visionary leadership through their contributions.

President's Legacy Council (\$100,000 - \$499,000)

C. Stuart Parsons Estate
Don and Hanna Pestell
Wesley and Pat Thompson

Dean's Legacy Council (\$50,000 - \$99,999)

Vander Pol Family

Director's Legacy Council (\$25,000 - \$49,999)

Gary† and Jane Ablett
Barry and Carolyn Fraser
Ron† and Dianne Pitblado
Dave and Donna Van Segbrook

Foundation's Legacy Council (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Kathryn Biondi	Phil and Mark Richards
Bob and Pat† Down	Art Roder
Donald and Anne McGugan	Peter and Angie Sikkema
Matt and Marsha Menich	Charles Tomecek and Mary Lou Downs
Jim and June Morris	Peter and Dinie Twynstra
Bill and Diane Parks	

† donor now deceased

Corporate Donors

We appreciate and acknowledge the following companies and organizations that donated \$250 or more to Ridgetown Campus from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009:

Bayer CropScience	Sun-Brite Foods Inc.
Kent Cattlemen's Association	Syngenta Canada Inc.
Maizex Seeds Inc.	Thompsons Limited
Rotary Club of Ridgetown	United Communities Credit Union



Consider Making a Difference with A Legacy Gift

Something to think about.

To learn more about legacy giving, please call Liz at 519-674-1587.

Research Partners

Ridgetown Campus deeply values the research ideas, in-kind contributions and funding support of our research partners:

Advanced Compost Corporation	Norac Concepts Ltd.
Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC)	NuFarm Agriculture Inc.
Agricultural Management Institute (AMI)	Nutri-Ag
Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO)	Oat and Barley Council
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Ontario Apple Growers
Agriculture Environmental Renewal Canada Inc.	Ontario Berry Growers Association
Agromony Company of Canada Ltd.	Ontario Cattlemens Association
Alpine	Ontario Coloured Bean Growers Association
Axter Agrosiences	Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Baird & Associates	Ontario Food Processors Association
BASF	Ontario Fruit Testing Association
Bayer CropScience	Ontario Garlic Growers Association
BDO Dunwoody	Ontario Highbush Blueberry Growers' Association
BrettYoung Seeds	Ontario Innovation Trust
Brotherton	Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
C & M Seeds	Ontario Oil & Protein Seed Crop Committee
CABRI Supplies	Ontario Pork Industry Council
Canadian Cattlemens Association	Ontario Pork
Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI)	Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers
CanGro Foods Inc.	Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Crites-Moscow Growers Inc.	Ontario Sugarbeet Growers Association
Dow AgroSciences	Ontario Tomato Research Institute
Dupont Canada Inc	Ontario Veal Association
Engage Agro Corporation	Ontario White Bean Producers
Environment Canada	Parrish and Heimbecker
Farm Innovation Program	Pelee Island Winery
FMC Corporation	Pioneer Hi-Bred Ltd
Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Ontario	Plant Products
General Mills	PRO Seeds Ltd.
Gowan Canada	Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Association
Grain Farmers of Ontario	SeCan
GreenField Ethanol Inc	Seed Corn Growers of Ontario
Hayhoe Mills	Seminis
Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC)	Syngenta Crop Protection Canada
Hyland Seeds – Thompsons Limited	Syngenta Seeds
Interprovincial Cooperative Limited (IPCO)	TKI NovaSource
John Deere	United Agri Products
Kent County Pork Producers	Valent Canada Inc
Kumiai America Chemical Company	Weather INnovations Incorporated
Lima Grain	Winfield Solutions LLC
Manitoba Pulse Growers Association	
Michigan Sugar Company	
Monsanto Canada Inc	

A Final Word

Your support to Ridgetown Campus makes an invaluable difference. Whether gifts of advice, expertise, volunteer time, in-kind items or financial support, we need and appreciate your giving.

Every gift has an impact. Thank you for making a difference in 2009.

Dave Baute,
Chair, Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation

Art Schaafsma,
Director, Ridgetown Campus

Mature Students Train for New Careers at Ridgetown Campus

In September 2010, approximately 60 workers who found their lives had suddenly changed through job losses began studying at Ridgetown Campus, many in the Environmental Management diploma program. Opportunities in environmental management jobs, along with Second Career funding, offered them a valuable 'second chance' at learning. Many of the students are raising families and commute to Ridgetown from a radius of one to two hours.

Roots talked to three of these students about their educational experience and new career goals.

"It's like a full-time job with really long hours."

That's how **Jeff Dierckens**, a first-year Environmental Management diploma student from Wheatley, describes being back at school.

This is not Jeff's first college experience. He went to St. Clair College after high school and graduated with a Construction Engineering Technician diploma in 1991. He worked in that industry for 5 years and then at the Ford assembly plant in Windsor for 12 years. In August of 2008, he was laid off and decided it was time for a career change.

"I noticed that there seemed to be good job prospects for water treatment operators," he says. "I took a few industry certifications from the Walkerton Clean Water Centre and started to research what was needed to get a job in that field."

What he discovered was that in addition to his certificates, a diploma was important for getting an advantage in the job market. His choice of school was simple after that. "Ridgetown Campus offers the only academic program with water treatment courses and it is an easy commute from Wheatley."

Coming back to school after 18 years is not without challenges. Jeff found that the hardest thing is time management. "At the factory, I worked 7 am – 3 pm, then I was finished for the day. School is longer hours, plus I have assignments and studying to do at home." With two young boys at home, finding that time was not always easy. "Sometimes I just have to shut the door and not be disturbed. Thankfully, my wife is very supportive," he says.

Although Jeff's main intention when he started school was to get a secure, municipal job, the program has opened his eyes to other career possibilities. "There are many careers in private industry that my education has prepared me for. Greenhouse operations, conservation authorities, and the food processing industry are just three examples," he says. "Everything is regulated now, and as regulations become stricter, more water analysis employees are needed. In another year, I'll be fully trained and ready to tackle any job."



Tracy Plumsteel

is another mature student who was a victim of the economic downturn. She worked at the Sterling Truck plant in St. Thomas until it closed in 2009. This closure doubly affected her family; her husband Greg Alden also worked there. Both decided

to further their educations and come to Ridgetown for the Environmental Management program.

Like Jeff, Tracy finds that juggling school and family can be difficult. "I usually do all my homework late at night after the kids are in bed," she admits. On the plus side, they have built-in study partners at home. "School is much easier for Greg than me," she says "so he is great to have around."

Being back at school has made Tracy think she must have lived a very sheltered life. "Some of the things we take in class, I just sit back and wonder 'where have I been for the past few years – I didn't know that'. I have learned so much."

At the beginning of her first semester, Tracy was leaning towards a career in municipal water treatment. With one year now complete, her future goals have shifted – she is now interested more in water, forestry and natural resources.

One of the courses she finds most interesting is microbiology. "I didn't think I would like it, but our class was like little kids when we were looking at sewage sludge under the microscope. We were so excited."



Fern Caron worked for 37 years, most recently as a parts and services manager at an auto dealership, before a back injury sidelined him. His Workplace Safety and Insurance Board case worker suggested the Environmental Management program as one that might offer him good job prospects.

"My biggest challenge with school has been getting my brain back in motion," Fern admits. "It has been a hard, steep learning curve."

He comes into the program with a different perspective than students straight out of high school. "I grew up in the 1960s and saw first hand how people abused the ecosystem," he says. "Now it is time to increase awareness of the environment and not make the same mistakes."

Fern worries that his age and physical limitations may limit his job opportunities after he graduates, but he is enjoying this chance to learn new things. Two of the courses he has liked the most are Computers and Communications. "I learned a lot in both of these classes especially about doing public presentations. I've always wanted to know how to use Powerpoint and now I am able to do that."

Dr. Laura Van Helten: From Vet Tech Graduate to New Campus Lecturer



The new instructor in the Veterinary Technology diploma program didn't need a campus tour when she started work in June, 2009. Dr. Laura Van Helten (Schoonjans) was simply coming back to a place she once called home; she is a 1998 Vet Tech grad.

When Laura started school in Ridgetown in 1996, her goal wasn't to become a veterinarian - she just knew she wanted to work with animals. "I did my high school co-op work placement at the Forest Veterinary Clinic and really liked it," she says, "but I thought the responsibilities and time commitments of a veterinarian were more than I wanted and found the role of the veterinary technician more appealing."

However, when she finished her diploma, Laura wasn't ready to be done with school. She worked at the Dresden Veterinary Clinic for eight months before enrolling in the B.Sc. in animal biology program at the University of Guelph. She was accepted into the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) in 2001 and graduated in 2005. "Almost nine years of school doesn't seem too bad when you're doing something you love," she says.

Her new DVM degree led her to Chatham-Kent where she worked primarily at Ferguson Animal Hospital and the Chatham-South Animal Hospital. She loved it there, but seeing vet tech students on placements made her want to give teaching a try. "It was invigorating and the enthusiasm was contagious when students came to work in the clinics," she notes. When she saw a position available at Ridgetown for an instructor with a veterinarian designation, she knew it was the perfect opportunity for a change.

Dr. Irene Moore, the co-ordinator of the vet tech program in 1998 and now Associate Director of Academics, is happy to have Laura back in Ridgetown.

"Welcoming a student that I once taught back as an employee in our veterinary technology program was a very rewarding experience for me. Laura's industry experience and keen desire to teach were key factors in her recruitment. She is a welcome addition to the Ridgetown teaching team" she says.

Laura admits it was strange to come back to Ridgetown and be on a first name basis with her past teachers. "On my first day, I walked in and said "Hi, Miss Pont" to one of my former instructors. It was hard to get used to the fact that I was now on the same level as these instructors that I had looked up to as a student," she says.

One thing that wasn't strange to her was the high quality of the students. "Vet tech students are very keen and goal-oriented, just as we were when I was in the program," Laura says. The core curriculum is also the same. She notes that there is new technology to teach, but the basic courses are the same, "although maybe with a bit more emphasis on communicating with clients."

In addition to her diploma and now working on campus, Laura has another connection to Ridgetown - she is married to Mike Van Helten, a 1998 Agriculture graduate.



Dr. Van Helten teaching in an anatomy course. Her additional teaching areas include physiology, cytology and surgery.

Dr. Van Helten in her surgical scrubs testing a summer Veterinary Technology diploma student.



Students Use Vet Tech Diploma Program as Stepping Stone to Becoming Veterinarians



Since the veterinary technician program moved from Centralia College back to Ridgetown Campus in 1995, Roots is aware of four other Ridgetown vet tech graduates who have completed their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) at the University of Guelph's noted Ontario Veterinary College (OVC).



Dr. Kathryn Arbic, Associate Veterinarian, Tecumseh Animal Hospital, Tecumseh, ON

Kathryn Arbic assumed her dream of being a veterinarian had died when she wasn't accepted into the University of Guelph directly out of high school. She thought being a veterinary technician could be equally satisfying, so she made the decision to

come to Ridgetown. "Even though I'm from Mississauga, I liked the country feel of Ridgetown and knew I would fit in," she remembers.

After graduating with her diploma in 2000, she worked as a vet tech for three years before re-applying to Guelph; she graduated from OVC in 2009. She is now an Associate Veterinarian at Tecumseh Animal Hospital.

Kathryn says that her job experience helps her appreciate the work of others in the clinic. "I've been a kennel attendant, receptionist, technician and now veterinarian. No one can appreciate the challenges of someone else's job unless they've been in that position."



Dr. Susan Emerson, Associate Veterinarian, Northwest Equine Performance, Oregon, USA

When Susan Emerson, a classmate of Laura Van Helten in both the vet tech program and at OVC, started her diploma, she already had her sights set on becoming a veterinarian. "I decided to become a registered veterinary technician first so I could work in the industry while going to university and gain practical experience," she says.

The main focus of her career, both as a vet tech and since becoming a vet in 2005, has been horses. She worked at the Woodbine Thoroughbred Racetrack and at an equine reproductive practice near Guelph. She is now an Associate Veterinarian at Northwest Equine Performance in Oregon, specializing in imaging and diagnosis of horse lameness.

It was her love of horses that initially attracted her to Ridgetown. "The main reason I chose Ridgetown was the large animal portion of the vet tech program, which was and still is known as the most advanced in Ontario," she says.



Dr. Michael Fife, Owner of Specialized Mobile Practice, Rockwood, ON

Michael Fife is the most recent vet tech graduate to become a veterinarian. He graduated from Ridgetown in 2004 and received his DVM in 2010. "I already knew that I wanted to continue my education when I applied for the Vet Tech program but wanted to make sure that this was the right lifelong decision. Being a technician allowed me the opportunity to see the industry from all aspects," he says.

Before choosing Ridgetown, Michael researched many of the colleges that offer the program and also contacted vet clinics for advice. "I found that Ridgetown is recognized as being the gold standard for vet tech training across Canada," he says. And he wasn't disappointed. "My time at Ridgetown was absolutely amazing and more than I expected."

Michael has completed a certification program in veterinary chiropractic and now owns a mobile practice dealing with medicine and chiropractic of companion and performance animals, including horses. He also works with companion animals at Rockwood Veterinary Clinic.



Dr. Gregg Ogilvie, Small Animal Veterinarian, Hillcrest Animal Hospital, Trenton, ON

If it weren't for bad vision, Gregg Ogilvie might be in the Canadian Armed Forces. "My original career goal was to be an officer in the air force, but I didn't meet the medical criteria because of my eyesight," he explains. His first job after high school, at the Avicare Wildbird Rehabilitation Centre, convinced him that his career path should include working with animals.

While at Ridgetown, Gregg told his instructors that his ultimate goal was to be a veterinarian. "They were very supportive and encouraging and as a result I decided to attend university much sooner than I previously thought," he says. He graduated with his diploma in 2000 and completed his DVM in 2008.

Being the only male student in a female-dominated program wasn't a problem for Gregg. He says his classmates and instructors always made him feel welcome and part of the group. The one thing that was surreal was that students in other programs seemed to know who he was just because he was in the vet tech program. "I had existed in relative obscurity at a high school with 1400 students, so it was a big change to attend a small college where everyone knew me," he says.

Gregg is working as a small animal veterinarian at Hillcrest Animal Hospital in Trenton.

Westag Alumni News And Events

facebook

Westags on Facebook

Do you want to find out about upcoming alumni events? Do you want to re-connect with your classmates and friends from college? Check out the official alumni Facebook group – Ridgetown Alumni-Westags. Over 530 people are now members and there are on-going discussions on topics ranging from “Who is your favourite teacher?” to “What are you doing now?” This is a great place to keep in touch and network with other Westags. Join now!!

Westag Alumni Survey

Tell us your opinion and **win a Ridgetown Campus sweatshirt!**



It's Easy – Ten questions in just two minutes!

Your opinion counts and we want to hear from you. To help us further develop our alumni programs and services, we've created a simple, ten question on-line survey. Complete the survey and we'll enter your name into a draw for a Ridgetown Campus sweatshirt.

We're looking for your input in three key areas:

Alumni Communications | Alumni Events | Alumni Services

To complete the survey, follow these easy steps:

1. Go to the Ridgetown Campus website at www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca
2. Click on **2010 Alumni Survey** in the right hand column
3. Answer the questions

Don't have a computer? Don't like on-line surveys? Here's an easy alternative for you.

Contact Janet Nauta, Alumni Services Co-ordinator, at 519-674-1504. She will ask you the questions and get your responses over the phone or she can fax the survey to you.

Complete your survey by **November 30, 2010**. Draw will take place on **December 1, 2010**.

Thank you for your input! We appreciate your time!

Westag Alumni Banquet

Saturday, November 20th, 2010

Graduates from years ending in a 0 or 5, this is the year for YOUR ALUMNI BANQUET!

This year's banquet will be held on Saturday, November 20th at the Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre. Call your classmates and plan to meet this fall in Ridgetown.

Full details are available at www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca and on Facebook in the Ridgetown Alumni-Westags group.

Invitations will be mailed in late September.



alumni corner

Share your news with other graduates. Send an e-mail to roots@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca or call Alumni Services at 519-674-1504.

Sean VanBilsen '02 and his wife Becky live in Glencoe. He works at Larry MacDonald Chevrolet in Strathroy and helps on the family farm.

Petra (Biondi) '02 and Steve Hathaway would like to announce the birth of their little girl, Morgan Lily Hathaway on May 9, 2009.

Ken Richards '61 recently coordinated a Guinness Book of World Records event. He organized the World's Biggest Tractor Parade (1231 tractors) in Dresden on July 24. It raised over \$100,000 for cancer research.

Arlene (David) Desmarais '01 works at a small animal practice in Kitchener. She and her husband Steve welcomed their son Lukas in August 2007 and another son Isaac in July 2009.

Elizabeth Friedmann '77 and her family live in Port Hope, Ontario. She is retired from the workforce as an educational assistant.

Ken Elliott, '78 is living in Wisconsin where he stays busy as a dairy farmer and showing cattle.

Alumni Addresses Needed!

It's time to send out the invitations for the Westag Alumni Banquet but we are missing the contact information for a few of our grads. If you have the phone number, e-mail address or mailing address for any of the following grads, call Janet at 519-674-1504 or send an e-mail to roots@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca.



For a complete list of lost alumni from all years, visit: www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca/alumni.

1955

Clarence Cornelius
Bruce Hutchinson

1960

Robert Brown
Arnold Dixon
John Driedger
Harold Major

1965

John Bechard
Danny Coward
William Demars
Charles Illman
Paul Johnston
John Patterson
Allan Robinson
Ronald Van De Wynckel

1970

Robert Cowan
William Desmond
John Featherstone
Andrew Ryskamp

1975

Howard Acton
John Alderson
Robin Baker
Marc Cookson
Frederick Cronkite
William Fulmer
Sandra Glover
Daryl Hutton
Sjackie Joosten
Wolfgang Laush
Martin McCracken
Patricia Myers
Grant Wilson

1980

Samuel Adie
Donald Armstrong
John Bosgoed
Harold Bosma
Glenda Cadotte
Edward Cambeta
Tim Campbell
Sarah Dekergommeaux
Richard Dougall
Pedro Fernandez
Kenneth Ford
Peter Fry
Douglas Galbraith
Kenneth Gray
Glenn Hope
David Laforet
James Marshall
John Miller
Tom Mozny
Elizabeth Mulholland
Vistasp Panthaky
Leo Parent
Kenneth Smith
Valerie Stuart
Cindy Van Hyfte
Kenneth Wall
Grace Wesselink
Joanne White

1985

Ronald Bridge
Tim Cowan
Eric Dilliot
Allen Dunlop
Matthew Dunn
Mark Forbes
Laura Goff

Gordon Illes
David Kints
Bill Kinzel
Dianne Krushel
Kathryn Lehman
Peter Lindsay
Karen Mackie
David Marshall
John Neufeld
Nancy Sayer
James Smith
Stephanie Smith
Randy Thomas
Brian Thomson
David Van Trigt
Barbara Verheyen
Richard Wilkinson
Scott Young

1990

Rita Devries

1995

Charlotte Ambeau
Lisa Barry
Angela Bates
Stephen Bradish
Julie Dray
Ruth Falkins
Michael Gautreau
Christopher Hodgins
Cheryl Johnston
Lisa Murphy
Mark Reeb
Leonard Roth
Kim St. John
Staci Taggart
Deborah Tompkins
Melissa Vermeer

2000

Sherrie Bechard
Kindra Binfield
Jennifer Daniels
Melissa Genovy
Tonya Hadwin
Nancy Hogg
Kelly Lackey
Michelle Leach
Pam Long
Wendy McAlister
Wanda McNeil
Chantel Payne
Sabine Pelletier
Joy Pichette
Fatima Ragoo
Owen Rourke
Margo Salts
Melissa Sharkey-Lapointe
Robynn Smith
Shannon Smith
Heather Spencer
Crystal Steffen

2005

Melissa Brighton
Melissa Bulmer
Susan Damen
Melissa Hunt
Sean Matheson
Tara McCormick
Jason Verstraeten
Chia-Ling Wu

In Memoriam

Our sincere sympathies are extended to the family and friends of each of these special people.

Alumni

Chris Mead '85

July 18, 2004

Steven Johnson '78

December 20, 2009

Mac Fletcher '57

February 9, 2010

Lynn Wright '58

February 27, 2010

Murray Fletcher '62

May 31, 2010

Ron McLean '55

June 26, 2010

Staff

Dr. Gary Ablett

Researcher and former Campus Director
April 4, 2010

Opportunity to Honour Your Classmate with a Memorial Gift

If you would like to honour any of your classmates by making a memorial donation to Ridgetown Campus, please contact Janet Nauta, Alumni Services at 519-674-1504, or go to:

www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca/alumni

Ridgetown Campus Amazing Race Fundraiser



Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation invites you to participate in our first Amazing Race fundraiser in support of Ridgetown Campus

Why: To have some fun and support the further development of Ridgetown Campus

When: **Saturday, June 18, 2011**

Where: Around Chatham-Kent and Ridgetown Campus

Please contact:

Jamie McGrail, *Volunteer Project Chair*
519-352-9480 | C 519-360-0078

Liz Meidlinger, *Staff Project Co-ordinator*
519-674-1587

Neal Craven, *Volunteer Project Vice-Chair*
519-351-2250 | C 519-359-1655

Janet Nauta, *Staff Project Assistant*
519-674-1504

All proceeds to the Ridgetown Campus Agri-Food Foundation in support of the Reek Rejuvenation Project – New East Wing



We hope to see you at these upcoming September Alumni Receptions

Westag Alumni – You're all invited!



CANADA'S OUTDOOR FARM SHOW Aggie Alumni Reception

Wednesday, September 15, 2010
4:00 – 6:00 PM
In the Special Events Tent



INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH Aggie Alumni Reception

Saturday, September 25th
2:30 – 4:00 PM
In the Final Furrow Lounge

COMPLIMENTARY SNACKS AND DOOR PRIZES. CASH BAR.

SPONSORED BY:

OAC Alumni Association, Westag Alumni Association, Farms.com Ag Careers



Agriculture Community Loses Dedicated Soybean Researcher, Gifted Administrator and Friend

After a graceful six-month battle with brain cancer, Dr. Gary Ablett, a Ridgetown Campus esteemed soybean researcher, engaging professor, and stellar administrator, passed away peacefully on Sunday, April 4, 2010.

"Gary's outstanding leadership on both the Ridgetown and Guelph campuses helped advance agriculture in Ontario and around the world. He was a wonderful human being and we will all miss him tremendously," says Alastair Summerlee, president of the University of Guelph.

Deeply respected by everyone who knew him, Gary began his research and teaching career at Ridgetown in 1979. He soon initiated a public soybean breeding program that would remarkably deliver more than 50 new soybean varieties for Ontario agriculture. Gary's top priority to serve Ontario's soybean producers never wavered. He developed varieties combining the high yields that farmers desired and the specialized traits that local and global customers demanded. Until 2008, Ablett's newly released varieties often held names beginning with 'RCAT' recognizing the campus' earlier history as the Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology.

"Ablett was a big picture thinker when it came to the world's demands for soybeans. His interest and commitment supported both public and private industry growth. That was demonstrated time and time again as he worked cooperatively and cohesively with breeders, processors, distributors, farmers and regulators to help advance the Canadian soybean seed sector at all levels," says Dave Sippel, President of the Canadian Seed Trade Association. "The number of high yielding, agronomically sound soybean varieties registered over the last number of years are a strong indication of Gary's skill as a breeder."

Gary was also an accomplished administrator, leading the Ridgetown campus through the pivotal amalgamation into the University of Guelph in 1997, and continued his leadership service as director of Ridgetown Campus for the following ten years. A two-year secondment to Guelph campus, acting as chair of the University's plant agriculture department, the second largest department of OAC, occurred from 2004 through 2006.

As a determined administrator, Gary truly believed that important projects often require a steadfast fortitude. His unwavering dedication to build needed athletic and education facilities to meet the demands of a growing student body culminated with the grand opening of the Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre at Ridgetown in November 2006. He celebrated the grand opening events with hundreds of alumni, donors, colleagues, and campus community friends who honoured him with a standing ovation during the celebrations.

In 2007, Gary was recognized for his achievements by his local rural community as 600 Chatham-Kent residents came together to honour him as Agriculturalist of the Year, an award traditionally reserved for producers and agri-business leaders.

In August 2009 Gary traveled to Beijing, China, one of thirty Canadian delegates, where he was co-chair and speaker at the World Soybean Conference scientific meetings.

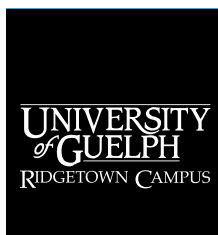
"Best known for his diplomacy and exuberance, he was well known throughout the University community and admired by all who had the privilege to work with him. The Ontario Agriculture College (OAC) has lost a talented crop scientist, a celebrated research leader, and true friend of agriculture, says Dr. Rob Gordon, dean, OAC.

Gary was active in his Blenheim community as a member of the Blenheim Community Golf Club and a former Blenheim Kinsmen. He was an avid golfer and enjoyed many golf trips with close friends. He is survived by his wife Jane and two sons, Jeff and Greg.

Tribute to Dr. Gary Ablett (1952 – 2010)

"As an alumnus, I remember and cherish the memories of a very special individual who I am proud to name as a former instructor, a dedicated friend of agriculture, and a campus and community leader and champion. Gary will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege to work with him."

Greg Devries,
Class of 1990 and former Chair,
Ontario Soybean Growers



CHANGING LIVES
IMPROVING LIFE

Memorial Gifts

Anyone wishing to make a Memorial Gift to honour Gary Ablett is invited to contact the Ridgetown Campus Agri-Food Foundation: Liz Meidlinger, 519-674-1587 or lmeidlin@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca or go to: www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca/alumni/giving_donate.cfm

Farmz On Wheelz... Ag Education Hits the Road

Sue McLarty, a 1978 Westag from the Ag Lab Technology program, is the project manager for FarmzOnWheelz, a new initiative of the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC).



FarmzOnWheelz is an interactive travelling exhibit that promotes the "cool" side of farming and agriculture. "We need to show people that farmers are not Old MacDonald," she says. "This display shows visitors that farmers are modern, innovative and adaptive."

The FarmzOnWheelz exhibit was built by scientists, engineers and designers at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto. At her first meeting with the staff at the Science Centre, Sue was impressed by the resources they had on site – graphic designers, metal shops, and a print shop – but she also had some concerns. "These people knew nothing about agriculture and I wasn't sure that having them develop an agricultural display was a good fit," she notes. She then decided to look at it as a challenge. "These are the kinds of people we wanted to educate, so if I could get them to understand agriculture, then so would our target audience."

To achieve her goal, Sue took the design team on tours of chicken, dairy, cash crop, greenhouse, livestock and vegetable operations, as well as research project sites. The designers asked a lot of questions and soon understood the importance and sophistication of modern agriculture. The result of these tours is an exhibit that employs user-friendly touch screen computers and a variety of hands-on displays to show that science and technology have a direct relation with agriculture. The entire process from initial idea to completed unit was 18 months.

The display has six kiosks featuring topics ranging from alternative energy to food choices. Visitors can also take virtual tours of farms and see some of the everyday items that come from agricultural products.

"While our primary target is teens, the exhibit is interesting for all age groups," Sue says. One of the popular stations is "Farming Fuels the Future". It uses a real biodigester to show how liquid dairy manure can be transformed and generate enough electricity to power an iPod. "We have the only poop-powered iPod in North America," she jokes.

The inaugural show for FarmzOnWheelz was the 2009 CNE. "The CNE was 18 very long, busy days," Sue admits. "It gave us the opportunity to not only showcase agriculture to thousands of people, but gave us a good test run of all the interactive components of the display." The exhibit has since been featured at the Outdoor Farm Show, the International Plowing Match, the Royal Winter Fair, Canada Blooms and several schools.

For the summer of 2010, another Ridgetown grad was hired to help staff the FarmzOnWheelz display. Alicia Scott, a 2007 graduate of the Veterinary Office Administration certificate program and a 2009 Veterinary Technology diploma grad, is now studying at the University of Guelph towards a degree in agribusiness.



Alicia Scott (left), Summer Program Employee and Sue McLarty, Project Manager

Finding the raw fuel for the biodigester is easy. Whenever it runs low, Sue goes to a local dairy farm for a manure fill-up!

The FarmzOnWheelz display fits into a customized trailer for travel, but when the kiosks and backdrop are set up, it fills 600 square feet.



If you are interested in having FarmzOnWheelz at your event, you can get booking information at www.ofac.org/farmz or by e-mail at sue@ofac.org.

Return undeliverable copies to:

**UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH**
RIDGETOWN CAMPUS

120 Main Street East
Ridgetown, ON N0P 2C0

