

# NACTA Yesterday

## 50 years ago Vol. II (1), 1958

President Burton W. DeVeaue convened the NACTA Curriculum Panel to discuss ag college students of the day. The panel reported that students have poor reading ability, low comprehension, and poor study habits. They have had inadequate counseling in high school and lack responsibility and leadership skills, which ought to be taught in college. They must be encouraged to participate, but not overparticipate, in campus activities. [Note: Reading this made me realize that some things never change despite 50 years of progress in higher education.]

## 40 years ago Vol. XII (1), 1968

The topic of the day was evaluation of administration. An enlightening article by George Dries, University of Arizona entitled “The departmental administrator—the man in the middle”, expounds upon the difficulties of the department head. “Who would want [the job]”? asks the author. The head must constantly straddle the fence between the faculty and the upper administration. When things go wrong, the head is blamed; when things go right, the faculty gets the credit. But it is the most gratifying job in the world to help a young faculty member to develop his or her professional abilities.

Dean Carroll Hess of the College of Agriculture at Kansas State University, looking at teaching from an administrator's point of view, reminds us that the first task of the teacher is to free students from ignorance, while the second is to prepare students for a specialized service, but the third task is to build a bridge between the past and the future. “Today's students differ notably from those of a generation ago...It is therefore difficult for most college teachers to understand, let alone respect, contemporary students' powerful search for identity, for personal freedom, and for vigorous involvement in social action.” [ Note: Yet another restatement of how some things never change.]

This issue carried a large advertisement for “Teaching Aids”, ie, slide sets available from the American Phytopathology Society for \$.21 per slide.

## 30 years ago Vol. XXII (1), 1978

Dr. Richard Baer in his article “Values in higher education—the crisis and the promise” explains Cornell University's new program in environmental values and asks “... Should Americans be willing to tolerate gas rationing when one round trip of a Grumman Gulf Stream II corporate jet between New York and Los Angeles burns enough fuel to run a Volkswagon Rabbit over 200,000 miles?” In his long article Dr. Baer reviews the three educational models; the “Graduate Seminar” model of late 19th century

German universities, the goal of which was production and transmission of new knowledge; the “British model of Oxford and Cambridge”, also of the late 19th century, the goal of which was to prepare students to become gentlemen and good citizens, and the “American pragmatic model” which sprang from the Land Grant system, which was to train students for jobs and specific careers with its “education for all” philosophy. But Dr. Baer stresses that we must not teach only facts, but values in a blend of science and humanity.

Dues-paying members (\$7.50) were preparing for the annual meeting at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, 11-14 1978.

## 20 years ago Vol. XXXII (1), 1988

Dr. Jim Knight, then of the Ohio State University and now the University of Arizona and our new NACTA Western Regional Director-Elect, provided the readership with a great article on “7 Strategies for Improving Instruction.”

## 10 years ago Vol. XXXXII (1), 1998

Dr. Jim McKenna (president 2003-2004) was instrumental in establishing the new NACTA Homepage at Virginia Tech, which debuted 10 years ago.

Diebel et al. reported that distance education techniques were not cost effective and that students did not like them, preferring classroom venues.

The 23 members of the Publications Review committee, chaired by Dr. Bob Gough, consisted of 6 NACTA presidents, including current President Banwart, and 4 other members who remain very active in NACTA. This underscores the need for new members to become active in our organization. NACTA needs you! GET INVOLVED in this fine organization!

Bob Gough  
NACTA Historian