

1977

Greg Greek, '77, '81, '83, '85, received a national immunization award from the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. He is a family physician for Altru Health System and is director of the Altru Family Medicine Residency Program in Grand Forks, where he and his wife, Colette, reside.

Deb (Schroeder) Syvertson, '77, '98, '02, director of the Minot State University-Bottineau Library, was appointed to the Bottineau School Board. She and her husband, Tim, reside in Willow City, N.D.

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1980s

Remember when, in 1985, the University of North Dakota was rated "one of the best education buys in the United States" by the education editor of the *New York Times*?

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1981

Todd Clausnitzer, '81, is an accomplished artist and co-owner of Image Printing. His wildlife artwork was featured on Visa's gold and platinum cards commemorating the 100th anniversary of the National Zoo. Todd and his wife, Cynthia, live in Bismarck.

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1982

Kathryn (Bradseth) Grueneich, '82, is a science teacher at North Sargent Public School in Gwinner, N.D. She lives in Valley City, N.D., with her husband, Randy.

A FARM KID AT HEART

by Jordan Buhr



When he's not flying Boeing 747s around the world for UPS, you would guess he might use his free time to relax. Instead Bill Gross, '88, spends time between international flights returning phone calls, securing donations and looking for sponsors, all in pursuit of his dream.

Flying back and forth across the Pacific Ocean, Gross says the crew on the flight deck had a lot of time to talk about the future, including retirement. When they asked him what he was going to do he told them, "I'm gonna get myself a John Deere tractor and be a random good Samaritan ... and help farmers in need plant their crops or help with the harvest free of charge."

Initially the pilots thought it was kind of a crazy idea, but they soon realized Bill was serious. They began to encourage him not to wait for retirement. "Think bigger and get going" they said. So he did and started what is known today as Farm Rescue.

Having grown up on a family farm just north of Cleveland, N.D., Gross noticed there were fewer family farms and fewer children to help out on the farm, which made it more difficult for neighbors to help each other when an injury or illness occurred. This enticed Gross to start a formal nonprofit organization to help.

Farm Rescue's mission is to "provide planting and harvesting assistance to farm families that have experienced a major illness, injury or natural disaster." A board of directors decides which farms get assistance by reviewing applications, which are available on their Web site (farmrescue.org). Farm Rescue helps as many farmers as possible each season, "but our focus is mainly small to mid-sized family farms," said Gross.

Backed by corporate sponsors, donors, over 50 core volunteer farmers, and some 500 generous people in the database ready to help, Farm Rescue has assisted 67 farms to date with seeding and harvesting. All the donations made to Farm Rescue are used to support the program's operations.

To the families they have helped, Gross and the entire Farm Rescue community are invaluable. Scott Reichus was assisted by Farm Rescue when he suffered a back injury in 2006. "They were early and efficient, and I can't say enough about the volunteer help they had," he said. The program has been featured in *People Magazine* on CNN, the *Today Show*, and in *USA Today*, just to name a few. Direct TV will also feature Farm Rescue in a documentary series this spring.

Along with managing the program, Gross spends a great deal of time encouraging farmers to ask for help when they need it. His advice for farmers is, "don't assume there is someone else in need. Fill out an application and we will make sure those who need it most get the help."

Looking back on his accomplishments, Gross has remained extremely humble; he is quick to give praise to others and is constantly encouraging everyone to do their part to give back.