

for a break! We had to taste the famous Purple Pride ice cream. It's actually a blueberry flavor and was great!

"We process about 10 to 15 percent of the milk we produce in our dairy right here in Call Hall," explained a proud Dr. Brouk. "We make ice cream, cheese and a small amount of butter, in addition to the fluid milk. Most of our product is sold here in the Dairy Bar, but we do some retail and wholesale and we provide all the milk used in the K-State dorms. We also sell some meats, all processed through our laboratory, and some flour and other grain products (processed at K-State) here at the Dairy Bar."

**FOOD SAFETY**

After our ice cream break it was on to the Call Hall office of Dr. Randy Phebus, Professor of Food Science, the department that does research on E. coli and other pathogens.



Dr. Phebus and the Editor. Dr. Phebus in the lab with three of his students, Nick Baumann, Kristin Wirth and Minto Michael (he is wearing the K-State purple gloves.)

"My expertise is in food safety," Dr. Phebus began. "We do a huge amount of research here, some funded by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and some funded by trade associations or private companies. For example, we study how to control E. coli and Salmonella, and methods of detecting pathogens in food production. The Introduction to Food Science course that I teach is the first Food Science course our undergraduate students take. I love it because I get to work with young people and I get to train the next generation!"

"Right now," he continued, "We have a huge grant, funded by the Dept. of Defense, a group called NATICK, where we are trying to learn more about protecting the food system for military use. You can imagine you wouldn't want a bunch of sick soldiers fighting a war! What's really neat about this research is that

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it is also very important to the general food processing industry. "Also, because this is such a big beef producing and processing state, much of our food safety research focuses on beef. We are looking at how to best sample the huge boxes (combos) of beef trimmings. We buy the trimmings in 2,000 pound boxes and we put our own contaminate in that and then find out how best to sample these big boxes of beef to find it. Next, we do face to face meetings with interested parties and then publish journal articles explaining the process.

"We want people to know that our Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) is currently the only place in the world where this research can be conducted at such a large scale to mimic commercial manufacturing. Here we have the ability to go all the way from the live animal to a family consumed food product. Our level three facility is already built here on campus, and we will also work some with the new level four (National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility: NBAF) which will replace

Plum Island) facility now being built by the federal government on the K-State campus."

Phebus said that he sees himself as, "someone who can improve and protect public health. Everyone has to eat so food safety is critically important!"

### LEVEL 3 SECURITY

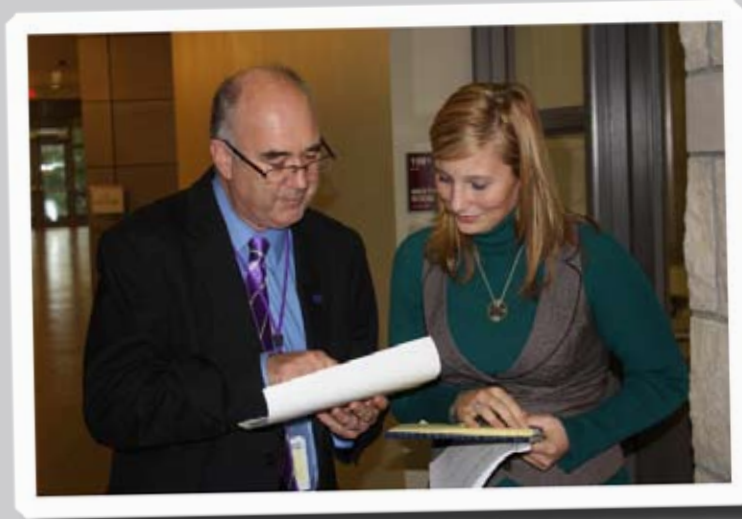
Now we were all interested in seeing and learning more about the new Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) in Pat Roberts Hall, which is located on the northern part of K-State's main campus.

After passing through the security check, we are met by a gracious Scott Rusk, Director of Pat Roberts Hall, who is there to give us a brief tour of the public parts of BRI.

This is a brand new facility named for U.S. senator from Kansas Pat Roberts.

"The building construction began in 2004," Rusk

explained, "and it took four years to complete the 113,000 square



Sarah and Dr. Higgs.

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foot facility. Right now, K-State is a world leader in food safety and food security research. Here we are improving our ability to detect and prevent diseases. Large animals (domestic livestock) are our specialty,” Rusk told us. “This building is designed and constructed with Biosafety Level 3 and Biosafety Level 3-Agriculture capabilities including the latest technology and approaches for biocontainment operations, waste management and biosafety procedures.” Rusk continued. “Our facility gives K-State scientists and their collaborators a safe and secure location to study high-consequence pathogens. We do research to ensure a safe food supply, and to help prevent major economic losses to the agriculture and food industries. We want to be the best!”

We are soon joined in the BRI conference room by Dr. Stephen Higgs who is the Associate Vice President for Research at K-State. Higgs is also Research Director of the BRI. (My granddaughter, Sarah Jane, who will be a K-State student next fall thinks she might like to work in the BRI laboratory, and she did a special interview with Dr. Higgs. (See her “Sarah’s World” column in this issue.)

Higgs, born and raised in the U. K., has been in the U.S. since 1991, and he became a U.S. citizen in 2000.

“I’m very passionate about America,” he warned us with a smile. “My wife’s grandfather was from Oklahoma, and his six-guns were hanging over his mantle!”

I couldn’t help but wonder how someone gets interested in this field:

“I was always interested in bugs,” Higgs replied, “And when I was little my mom would always carry a matchbox with her and she’d bring me a caterpillar or something that



(left) Scott Rusk showed us all around the level 3 security Biosecurity Research Institution (BRI) facility.



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she had found. I guess that’s how I got fascinated with insects.”

Higgs, who had only been at K-State a few weeks, is very impressed with the new BRI facility.

“This is a real state-of-the-art facility, and I’m proud to be a part of it,” he said. “Besides our research work here, it will also be our job to train the approximately 350 people who will work at the new level 4 federal facility that is now being built here on campus. That facility (moved from Plum Island) will also be state-of-the-art, and will cost 700 million dollars to build. The Plum Island facility is over 50 years old, and technology has come a long way since then,” he said. “That’s what prompted the move. Having both of these new facilities here at K-State will be great. If pathogens were gold this would be a Fort Knox facility!”

Higgs is also passionate about his work: “This kind of research has to be done someplace. It’s a job,” he said, “but it’s more than just a job. It has to be a passion. Every day when I come in to work, I think maybe this is the day I’m going to make a real difference!”

I agree that it’s all about making a difference, and this top university continues to make a difference in thousands of lives. I know that what we took away from our years at K-State was indeed priceless, and it changed our lives in ways we could never have imagined. ❁





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Dr. Dale Blasi and I ran into another old friend, Dr. Miles McKee, on the K-State campus and I had the opportunity to thank



him for writing the book "Building the Legacy, a History of the Kansas State University Dept. of Animal Sciences & Industry." Dr. McKee, who has won many awards for outstanding teaching and advising, is now retired, but at the time we were attending K-State he was an assistant instructor and beef cattle herdsman for the K-State Dept. of Animal Husbandry. His book is just great, and I used it for a number of historical references. Thanks, Miles.

This article would not have been possible without the help of our friend Steven Graham, Assistant to the Dean and Director of Agriculture at K-State. Steven set up



all of my interview and tour appointments and worked with my daughter, Carol Schuetze, (in photograph) on dates and my overall schedule. Thank you Steven and Carol. You both did a fantastic job.

## LUNCH WITH DON AND JANE



When we attended K-State many years ago, my favorite "teacher" was not my teacher at all, but was my husband's teacher and adviser, Don Good. Dr. Good later became head of the K-State Animal Sciences department. Over the years I have kept up with Don through Kansas Livestock Association conventions and through his longtime support of Garden City's Beef Empire Days Live and Carcass Show.

Don retired in 1987, and he and his wife of 63 years, Jane, still live in Manhattan so I knew I couldn't go there without a visit with them.

When my daughter, Carol, called Don a few days before we were to be in Manhattan, he invited Carol and myself and Carol's daughter Sarah for lunch (at a new retirement facility where they now live).

"Will you eat beef?" he asked Carol.

"If not you can throw us out!" she replied.

"Sweetheart, that's the right answer," laughed Don, and right then I knew that lunch with Don and Jane would be the highlight of our trip.

After we arrived for lunch on Sept. 16, Don told me he and Jane had put a lot of thought into planning our special menu. They decided on steak and baked potatoes and Don asked the young man who supervises the cooking to go out and buy Black Angus beef ribeye steaks for our lunch. The chef served us himself and the steak was great! We also had salad and butter pecan ice cream for dessert, and over our long, lovely lunch Don and I had a chance to catch up.

Don, the first Beef Empire Days Live Show judge in 1969 (in Garden City), never missed a show until he stopped making the trip a few years ago due to ill health. "I remember

one year it poured down rain and I had to go and buy a raincoat and boots. We went right on with the show and I judged in the rain," he remembered. (I had announced the Beef Empire Days parade in the rain that same year and we had a good laugh.)

"I remember," Good continued, "The live steer I put in first place was also the carcass champion that year. (Good did not judge the carcass show.) The second year Earl Brookover bet me that I couldn't do it again. I guess he thought it was a fluke, but I did it again that second year and I won the bet!" he chuckled.

"You know," he reminisced, "I don't believe I ever judged better cattle, even internationally, than I saw in those early days at the Beef Empire Days Live Show."

Thanks, Don and Jane for a delicious lunch, and for a wonderful memory. We will always remember it as the highlight of our trip to K-State.



Don Good (center) joins Department head Ken Odde (left) and Jack Riley (head, 1987-2005) at the K-State Equine Education Center ground -- breaking ceremony in October 2007.



Dr. Good is in the car under the Stocker Unit sign.



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