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LONG-TIME NEBRASKA MEMBER CELEBRATES 104 YEARS, STILL BELIEVES IN THE WORK OF WIFE

by Donna Bolz

Someone with a positive attitude, a great sense of humor and a desire to keep learning is how I would best describe Dorothy (Dot) McKay. Dot recently celebrated her 104th birthday. She lives at home on the family farm in Eastern Nebraska she shared with her husband, George, until his death.

Dot is a long-time member of Nebraska WIFE Chapter 6, which is where I first met her. She is always eager to visit about what is going on in WIFE both on the State and National level. When Nebraska hosted the 25th anniversary convention in Sidney, Dot was not able to attend. I had mentioned to her that they were looking for someone to make cookies for the hospitality room. I asked her if she would make a couple dozen. She just kept baking and by the time she was done she had made 25 dozen. She made cookies for me when I came to visit until recently.

Dot truly believes "What is, is" and tells me that on a regular basis. One day she told me she looked like the north end of a donkey headed south. I had to think about that for a bit. I enjoy going to see her and listening to her stories about how farming was done years ago. She also shared that when she married George, they had 50 cents. She was very unhappy when Nebraska moved the State Fair to Grand Island. Dot would go to the State Fair each year when it was in Lincoln and spend many long days watching the judging and checking out the exhibits. She told me stories about her family going to the fair in a horse and buggy.

When I recently went to see her, I asked if she wanted to join WIFE again this year. She didn't hesitate. She said, "Yes!" She believes in the work of Women Involved in Farm Economics and wants to support it. She knows she is no longer able to be active and believes the money she pays in dues will help keep the organization going. She also joined FAED. Dot is a special lady. It would be great if everyone had a Dot in their life.

Dot enjoys getting pictures, post cards and greeting cards. Her mailing address is: Dot McKay, 5811 202nd Street, Alvo, NE 68304



Dot McKay, right, visits with Norma Hall, long-time Nebraska WIFE member

President's Report



By Linda Newman
Montana

Technology makes it easy to get, stay involved in legislative activities

Wow--January flew by! As the saying goes, "Time flies when you are having fun!" So, I guess you could say that National WIFE has been "overjoyed" this last month as we plan our annual legislative conference in Washington, D.C., March 3-5, 2015.

A huge "thank you" goes out to all of the executive committee members who have stepped up to the plate and agreed to help with scheduling speakers, corporate visits, reserving meeting rooms, and coming up with some creative ideas! I hope many of you can join us in D.C. as we visit with legislators and discuss topics of concern affecting Agriculture.

It is also a very important time for our state legislatures. Montana WIFE held our state legislative conference and reception in Helena last week. It is so very important to be part of the legislative process from the local level, up--we need to make our voices heard before laws are enacted, not just after they become law!

Sometimes, I think we get somewhat complacent and so busy with everyday life, that we don't take the time to write that email or pick up the phone and leave a message for our legislators! Technology has made it so easy for anyone to search a bill, read all about it, and even listen in on hearings via video--it's all there with a click of the mouse. And, of course, there is an app for that! I just downloaded the Montana Legislative Directory app on my iPhone last week so give it a whirl, it can actually be fun.

Continuing on with some other fun

episodes this month--the weather. We had at least a foot or more of snow, blizzard conditions, and a 30-40 below zero wind chill, at the beginning of January; now at the end of the month we have flooding, 65 to 70 degrees above, and dust blowing on the gravel roads. Farmers and ranchers are really having fun!

On my travels last week, I noticed some baby calves laying on the only bare ground around--supplied by the rancher plowing paths with 2-foot berms of snow on each side--we are a resilient bunch!

In my reading this week, I ran across some interesting predictions for the next 15 years made by Bill and Melinda Gates in their 2015 Annual Letter. Some of the highlights from this piece were quite interesting and led me to think about how these predictions might affect Ag producers here in the U.S. They are predicting that over the next 15 years there will be major breakthroughs for most people who inhabit the poorer countries around the world.

Here is a look at some other predictions:

Prediction 1: Health--Child deaths will go down, and more diseases will be wiped out. In a study in 1990, 10 percent of children in poor, underdeveloped countries died before they reached age five, as compared to one percent in developed countries. They think the death rate could be cut in half in the next 15 years.

And, on the disease front, the Gates' predict that more vaccines will be delivered to poor countries and will wipe out Guinea worm, elephantiasis, river blindness and blinding trachoma. They also believe we will have vaccines in place by 2030 to eradicate malaria and to start

lessening HIV transmissions. With an increased population in these areas, we will have more people to feed.

Prediction 2: Farming--Africa will be able to feed itself. Africa currently spends \$50 billion a year on food imports from wealthier countries, yet seven out of 10 people living in sub-Saharan Africa are farmers (two out of 100 people are farmers here) and their yields are about one-fifth of what the U.S. yields. They say that Extension programs will continue to teach them more efficient methods of farming, access to better seeds, and, of course, more farmers will have access to mobile phones enabling them to receive much-needed information such as weather reports, market reports, etc. It was mentioned that Africans would still be importing some food to maintain a balanced diet, but would be exporting as well.

Prediction 3: Banking--Mobile banking will help the poor transform their lives. By 2030, 2 billion people who do not currently have any type of banking account or services will be storing money and making payments with their mobile phones!

Prediction 4: Education--Better software will revolutionize learning. More women will be empowered; the Gates' say that by the year 2030, if women's level of employment in India and Africa rise to match the men's, their GDP (Gross Domestic Product) would go up 12 percent.

This publication was quite interesting and I barely touched the surface, so if you would like to read the full letter, go to www.gatesnotes.com.

I hope you have fun in February, with whatever comes your way, and HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!

Beef Report



By Maggie Nutter
Montana

Where's the beef? Beef checkoff comments go astray

As I perused the 1,585 public comments on the proposed second Beef Checkoff available on the Federal Register, an alarming trend was apparent. 1,208 of the comments were from anti-agriculture, red meat-opposing activists. Some of the comments were of the form letter type but many were thought out and written by doctors, nurses and nutritionists. With the newly suggested changes to reduce or remove red meat from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines, we should be alarmed.

“The (Dietary Guideline) committee returned from a closed-door session, with the intent to remove lean meat from the healthy dietary pattern in the 2015 guidelines. It has been reported that the committee stated that a “dietary pattern higher in plant-based foods, such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, and lower in animal-based foods is more health promoting and is associated with lesser environmental impact than is the current average U.S. diet.”

These two processes; the proposed second Beef Checkoff comment period and the USDA/HHS Dietary Guidelines process do not appear to be connected in any way that I can find, except for the massive amount of people who believe beef is bad for their health, bad for the environment and ethically wrong to eat. It is concerning that so many people took time from their day to sit down and write a comment to the USDA stating that they don't want a Beef Checkoff and they don't want beef in the American diet.

Are you alarmed yet?

It is important to ponder, who commented and what were the commenter's goals? What does that reflect about the

change in culture of the U.S. citizens? We need to look at this thought or belief that is not science based but is being continually put out to our public. Think of the “My Plate” posters on school walls that contain bean, nuts and fish instead of red meat in the protein section. Is the purpose to teach this next generation to be vegetarians?

Our schools, mothers on WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children), military forces, prisons and any other federally fed group will be affected by the changes in the Dietary Guidelines. It is important for all meat producers and consumers to be watching for when the 2015 Dietary Guidelines comment period is printed in the Federal Register and to use facts to speak up about the importance of meat in the American diet. If we don't speak up, we know who will. Go to <http://beefnutrition.org/> and <http://facts-aboutbeef.com/category/nutrition/> to gather facts to support your comment and be prepared to share facts when you hear comments against red meat.

It is important to know and understand the concerns of those opposed to red meat in the diet. Here are a few of the comments taken from the Federal Register about the second Beef Checkoff. Be angry or amazed but more so, figure out how to engage a fast-growing disconnect between science and an emotionally-based belief system that is becoming prevalent in this world:

- “I am opposed to the creation of a new beef checkoff program. The beef checkoff program funds some of the most unhealthful food, already lacks adequate USDA oversight as found recently by the Inspector General, and directly conflicts with the USDA's own Dietary Guidelines for Americans that

recommend limiting meat consumption. The scientific and medical communities have known for years that consuming beef leads to increased risk for diabetes and various cancers. Assessments under the existing beef checkoff already exceed \$80 million annually. I encourage the USDA to consider other ways it can use industry funds to promote healthful food and stop the creation of a second beef checkoff program.”

- “Please do not promote more factory-farmed, environmentally irresponsible beef production.”
- “Dear Sir/Madam: I respectfully ask that the government not support additional promotion of eating more beef. Our younger generation must learn the importance of eating a plant based diet[. . .]”
- Agribusiness is unsustainable, the #1 cause of climate change, and subjects tens of millions of sentient beings to cruelty, neglect, torture, illness, and horrific slaughter[. . .]”
- “We have always known that the USDA is not a regulatory agency and that it is much more interested in the profits to the cattlemen than the health of the nation.”
- “Beef is not what we need for dinner and it is shameful that the agricultural lobby has Congress in its hip pocket. I hope we can wake up the country to what is happening to us[. . .]”
- “What's next? Promoting cigarettes in kindergarten? The people's health shouldn't suffer to keep a few people in business.”



By Jean Wach
Nebraska

Cereal Grains Report

The word on wheat: consequences of a gluten-free diet craze

The gluten-free diet craze has been called the fad diet of this decade, comparable to the low-fat, no-fat craze of the 80s and 90s. Though losing popularity as a diet craze, there is still a lingering stigma that “gluten-free” means healthier food options.

As we’ve discussed in our Food Trends of 2015 blog post, the lack of the protein gluten usually means extra fat, sugar and sodium are added to make up for lack of taste and consistency. The misinformation about gluten has led to negative connotations about the healthfulness of wheat and wheat products.

Unfortunately, this diet craze has led to more severe consequences for those that are unable to eat gluten. For a small percentage of the population that has celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder, eating gluten can cause serious health concerns and potentially lead to a medical emergency. It is certainly a health issue that should not be taken lightly.

However, according to an article on NPR’s food blog, *The Salt*, the 30 percent of the American population “trying to avoid gluten” are creating a stigma that anyone asking for “gluten-free” meal options is simply on the fad-diet bandwagon. Those with celiac disease are finding that this diet trend is leading to servers passing judgment or not following necessary precautions when they ask for dietary menu requests. In other words, the

customers who “order gluten-free meals washed down with a gluten-filled beer” are essentially making a mockery of a serious issue.

We want to set the record straight. Here are the facts you should know about gluten:

- **Gluten is just protein!** Gluten is a protein that is made up of two natural proteins – gliadin and glutenin – found in wheat, barley, rye, and their grain relatives. Gluten is what helps bread expand while the dough is rising and hold its shape while it’s baking and after it cools. It’s also what makes bread chewy.
- **Not everyone should be on a gluten-free diet.** A gluten-free diet is necessary for those with celiac disease, but it is not a healthy diet for the general population. Only one percent of the population has celiac disease. For the remaining 99 percent of the population not suffering from celiac disease, there are risks that go with a gluten-free diet. Some of the risks and drawbacks include: reduced intake of necessary nutrients such as carbohydrates, protein, fiber, folate, iron, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin (vitamin B-3), and calcium; Increased intake of fat, carbohydrates, sodium, and calories. Fat and sugars are often used as replacements in gluten-free product; and

increased intake of wheat replacements have higher glycemic indexes and lower fiber and protein levels than wheat.

- **Gluten-free diets can lead to weight gain.** More than one-third of Americans think that going gluten-free will help them slim down, according to a Consumer Reports survey. There is no evidence to support the claim that gluten-free diets are a good weight-loss strategy, and often gluten-free can lead to weight gain. In a review of studies on nutrition and celiac disease published in the Journal of Medicinal Food, researchers said that a gluten-free diet “seems to increase the risk of overweight or obesity.” The authors attributed that to the tendency for gluten-free foods to have more calories, sugars, and fat than their regular counterparts.

It is important to understand the difference between a medical issue and a fad. Those that are able to eat wheat and gluten should remember that wheat provides essential daily nutrients. America’s wheat farmers and their families work hard 365 days a year to ensure the food product they are delivering to your kitchen table is safe. So, before you jump on the next food-craze bandwagon, think about the consequences (National Association of Wheat Growers).



By Klodette Stroh
Wyoming

Sugar Report

U.S. Congress must address financial turmoil, acknowledge sugar policy

I hope 2015 will be filled with health and prosperity to all. The 114th Congress welcomed her new lawmakers to start their duty. The power in the Senate has been shifted into the Republican Party's hands.

As an American farmer, I pray for all members of Congress to take a positive path to settle their differences. American lawmakers have to establish unity. This beloved country has been a food basket, feeding the populations of many hungry countries besides ourselves. Our economy is in red; thousands of Americans are struggling to pay their bills. Members of this new Congress have to address

the U.S. financial turmoil.

Agriculture is America's first industry, the stepping-stone that our great nation was built upon. Agriculture is a renewable resource and is now operating in the black. My husband Rick and I live in Powell, Wyoming and we make our living growing dry edible beans, malting barley, corn and alfalfa hay for our Black Angus cattle.

The Shoshone irrigation project is the largest federal project in the state of Wyoming and ranks first in production of sugar beets, dry beans, and barley in the state. Sugar policy and decisions made in Congress affect Park County and my beloved town of Powell. We have to make sure new members of Congress are aware of

U.S. sugar policy.

Sugar policy operates at no cost to the taxpayers. There are no subsidy checks issued for sugar beet and sugar cane farmers in this country. The program gives authority to regulate the import quota to the Secretary of Agriculture.

U.S. sugar policy is the main reason prices have remained so affordable. The farmer's cost of production has been escalating and, as every farmer knows, the high cost of fertilizer, seed, and parts for repair will not lower anytime soon. Commodity prices have been dropping. Sugar prices have dropped almost in half since 2008, due to imported subsidized sugar from Mexico. Hopefully the U.S. and Mexican governments can finalize the unfair sugar dumping agreement.

U.S. agriculture exports reached a record \$152.5 billion in 2014, according to a report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Agriculture is a renewable industry and brings blessing and wealth to our beloved United States. Members of our U.S. Congress should set a goal to support American farmers and assure

WIFE 2015 Commodity & Topic Chairs

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Maggie Nutter

Cereal Grains

Jean Wach

Energy

Barbara Broberg

Feed Grains

Donna Bolz

Homeland Security

Marlene Kouba

Natural Resources/Private Property/Water/Endangered Species

Alice Parker

Rural Life/Farm Finance Communication/Tax/Health

Mary Ann Unruh

Sheep & Goats

Tammy Basel

Sugar

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Trade

Darcy Dressler

Transportation

Pat Torgerson

Did you know?

TODAY'S FARMERS PRODUCE 262 PERCENT MORE FOOD WITH 2 PERCENT FEWER INPUTS (LABOR, SEED, FEED, FERTILIZER, ETC.), THAN IN 1950.

www.fb.org



By Mary Ann Unruh
North Dakota

Rural Life Report

'Springing ahead' carries health risks

Those of us in agriculture-related endeavors will soon be into the busy season of planting, calving and transitioning into working many hours, from "sun-up to sun-down". The National Safety Council states that mining, farming, transportation and construction are among the most dangerous occupations-and have high rates of fatigue-related accidents. And the results can be deadly.

Soon, there will be a one hour shift to daylight savings time and as we make the one hour shift, "springing ahead" comes with some risk factors. A study published by the American Journal of Medicine reveals that a risk of heart attack increases significantly for the first three weekdays after the transition to

daylight savings time.

Another study published by the American Journal of Cardiology concluded that the shifts to and from daylight savings time might "transiently" increase the risk of "acute cardiac events." Dr. Seema Khosia, an internal medicine physician and sleep specialist, said many people already suffer from chronic sleep deprivation, which could make them more vulnerable to the abrupt change to daylight savings time. Insufficient sleep has been linked to elevated stress hormones, and increased risks of cardiovascular disease, obesity and high blood pressure.

Dr. Stephanie Hanson, a pediatrician at Sanford Health, agrees insufficient sleep can increase health risks and said the increase is well documented along with high blood pressure, mood changes and depression. The disrupt

tions in sleep patterns could also cause an increased risk of traffic accidents and in the workplace. She recommends going to bed a little early for several days ahead of the switch to ease the adjustment. Most of us need eight to eight and a half hours of sleep.

If you like to nap, you are in good company, sleep experts say. Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy, Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison and George W. Bush enjoyed afternoon naps. A short nap of 20 to 30 minutes has been shown to improve mood and alertness, enhance performance and reduce mistakes. A study at NASA on sleepy military pilots found that 40-minute naps improved performance by 34 percent and alertness by 100 percent.

As we prepare for spring and "springing ahead," take time to be safe. Sleep tight!

NORTH DAKOTA WIFE SPONSORS STATEWIDE ESSAY CONTEST

by Marlene Kouba

Levi Wegh, a fifth grade student in Mott-Regent Elementary School in Mott, was the first place winner of a recent statewide essay contest, entitled "Thank a Farmer or Rancher." He is the son of Dale and Penny Wegh of rural Mott.

Michael Warsecki of Minot won second place and Kasey Bogen of New England received third place. All of the entrants received colorful personalized certificates and the winners received a check for their efforts.

"The many entries were quite varied. Some students wrote about the work a farmer does, the crops and animals raised and even the machinery used to do the work on a farm," said Marlene Kouba of Regent who chaired the contest.

The winning essay was:

"Dear Farmer,

Thank you for your hard work. Thanks for working long hours to help feed America. Thank you for the food

like wheat, sunflowers, soybeans, and more which you provided for the people of America. Thank you for the cotton and the plants for which we need to stop starvation and save our survival. Thanks for the fuel and oil for our food and our vehicles. Thank you very much, you are heroes. Thank you for using your big machines like the combine, sprayer, hopper, or seeder for getting the good harvest. Thanks again for the clothing and the food, we really appreciate it."



Levi Wegh receives the winning certificate from Marlene Kouba

Feed Grains Report



By Donna Bolz
Nebraska

Early detection of soybean aphids can reduce yield loss

Soybean aphids are nothing new. They were first identified in North America in 2000. Soybean aphids continue to be threatening to soybeans if

left alone to ravage fields. They are sap-sucking insects that have the ability to significantly impact plant growth by causing stunting and leaf yellowing. They can also cause reduced pod set, seed size and seed quality. In addition, aphids are known to transmit virus diseases.

Early detection and proper management are key to reducing yield loss when dealing with soybean aphids. Integrated pest management which includes scouting, biological control, insecticides and crop management practices are the most effective way to control the aphids.

Dr. Thomas Hunt, research and extension entomologist with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said aphids have become part of the various agro-ecozones across the north central region. "I believe Nebraska's soybean aphid colonizing events occur when summer migrants are active, so we generally start seeing them a bit later than states to the east," he said.

Mr. Hunt notes aphids can be unpredictable from year to year. When

the winter is open and cold, overwintering is difficult. The numbers found depend on summer migrations. Usually early July is when they are first seen in Nebraska.

Natural enemies and the use of various management techniques, such as resistant varieties, help to check the huge populations identified in the first "aphid years."

"They are still a significant pest and most significant soybean insect pest in the north central U.S. but we are getting better at managing them," Hunt says.

For more information on identifying and managing soybean aphids and other pests and diseases, visit the North Central Soybean Research Program's Soybean Research and Information Initiative website, www.soybeanresearchinfo.com. This website also provides the latest soybean news and topics, videos and a complete library with brochures and field guides from land-grant universities and extension services covering the issues soybean growers deal with.

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DEADLINE TO GET QUILT BLOCKS IN IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

Don't forget to send your finished quilt blocks to Linda Newman, 442 #4 Road, Roundup, MT 59072 by March 15. The blocks will be assembled into a full-sized quilt, which will be raffled off at the National WIFE convention this fall and will benefit FAED. Anyone interested is being asked to create a scene depicting agriculture on a 12-inch square block of either white or cream fabric. We can't wait to see what you come up



By Marlene Kouba
North Dakota

Homeland Security Report

Central American superhighway creates direct route to U.S. border

“U.S. citizen?” asks the agent by a stopped truck. “Yeah, but does it really matter?” “Not anymore--unfortunately. Thank you,” the agent says as he walks away.

New administration rules make the vast majority of illegal immigrants immune to arrest. The documents do not specifically order Border Patrol agents to let illegal immigrants pass freely into the United States, but the rules clearly say, “don’t waste your time because the illegal alien will not be put into detention, sent back or deported.” There will be no consequence for the undocumented immigrant. The training documents create three categories of illegal immigrants: priority one includes those who “pose a threat to national security, border security or public safety;” priority two would comprise those guilty of misdemeanors or “new immigration” violations; and priority three is simply “other immigration violators.” Border Patrol used to arrest, process, and turn the illegal immigrants over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the courts. Under this new program, the majority of illegal immigrants will be released directly from the Border Patrol, with no expectation that they ever have to show up for a hearing.

The U.S. House voted (236-191) on January 14 to overturn the President’s immigration policies that would eliminate new deportation protections for millions and expose hundreds of thousands of younger immigrants to expulsion. The vote came on a broad bill that would provide nearly \$40 billion to finance the Homeland Security Department through the rest of the budget year. The measures were amendments on the Homeland Security bill but the Senate’s vote is pending.

Texas has about 1.5 million illegal immigrants and more than half have been there for more than 10 years. President Obama hopes to change that with a reprieve from deportation and for green-card holders, which could impact up to five million immigrants. The number of foreign investors, mostly Chinese,

Mexican and Nigerian, who have applied for and received green cards through the EB-5 program has skyrocketed. Foreigners are first approved for a conditional green card, known as I-526. They receive permanent green cards after two years in an application known as I-829. Investors are building 1000-room high-rise EB-5 receiving centers. Under the President’s new executive orders, illegal immigrants will not be deported, and those with work permits would receive a Social Security number, be eligible for Social Security and Medicare benefits after 10 years. They would pay into the system through payroll taxes.

The Houston schools will be opening one of the nation’s first public Arabic immersion elementary schools to graduate more bilingual students. They opened a Mandarin Chinese school in 2012 and plan to have about 50 more schools next year. The Arabic-English school will begin in 2015 with four-and five-year-old students. Their Arabic population grew to 23,300 people in 2013 and has continued to grow.

Arizona has illegal immigrants lining up to get driver’s licenses as a final barrier that prevents them from applying for other documents. The “Dreamers” have been shielded from deportation since 2012 when Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program authorized more than 20,000 people who were brought here illegally. Arizona’s Governor Brewer had been fighting the move.

The United Nations (UN) is telling the U. S. which immigrants we should accept. The U.S. State Department announced in mid-December that the first 9,000 refugees have been hand-selected by the UN for resettlement into communities across the U.S. Syrians will make up the next big wave of Muslim refugees coming to the U.S. Once granted refugee status, they are screened by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for any ties to terrorist organizations. Last year, the U.S. resettled nearly 70,000 refugees from nearly 70 countries or about 1,000 each month. Once in the country, they are placed on a fast track to citizenship and are able to get their extended families to join them under the government’s Refugee Family Reunification program of 1980. The State Department works to place them in 180 cities across 49 states. The cost of this program could run as

high as \$10 billion per year but that does not include the potential cost of security risks; it includes running the program and issuing federal grants to the nine-resettlement agencies. The figure does not include the cost of food stamps, housing, interpreters, Medicaid, WIC, temporary assistance to needy families and educating the children, much of which falls to states and localities.

Who stands to benefit from the unbalanced number of refugees? The money flows into nine private agencies who subcontract with other agencies. These agencies lobby Congress for increases in refugees. The U.S. takes in more international refugees than all the rest of the world’s countries combined with more than 3 million resettled in American cities since 1975.

A Central American superhighway project that recently broke ground in Guatemala could increase the unaccompanied minors from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras by providing a direct, high-speed route to the U.S. border. Mexico is speeding up trains to reduce those who stowaway on the freight train known as “the Beast.” But, Mexico and Guatemala have signed an agreement that “fast-tracks” the delivery of illegal immigrants through the Mexican government’s issuance of a regional visitor card that will allow Central Americans to remain in Mexico for as long as it takes them to travel to the U.S.

But that problem will be altered with the construction of a modern, four-lane, limited-access Mesoamerican Superhighway linking El Salvador to Mexico. The construction of a superhighway network connecting Mexico to the countries south of it, all the way to the Panama Canal, has long been a Central American dream, first formalized by what was known as the Plan Puebla-Panama, or PPP, proposed by President Vicente Fox in 2001. It will run more than 2,000 miles, crossing six borders, to provide “a main logistical corridor for trade and transport in Mesoamerica.” The Pacific Corridor is considered the most important, with estimates it will be capable of transporting 95 percent of the products produced in the region. (Sources: Houston Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, Migration Policy Institute, Associated Press, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.)

Energy Report



By Barbara Broberg
Montana

Montana and Alberta have numerous Hutterite Colonies and each colony has between 80 and 120 people. This article is being written at a location near a Hutterite Colony, which has a central boiler.

Water for the hot water heat in their row houses is piped over from the stand-alone boiler building. The man describing all of this to me was working on the place next door, for his newly widowed daughter and her children. The walls were being moved a little, exposing the pipes inside the wall, so the question came up on heating. That is when he described the safety in having no open-flame heat and quiet heat.

Similarly, a former hired man went back to college. When he had the chance to go to Soviet Moscow with his university, he went. Part of the time it was winter. The city is huge. There are nine (each quite ornate, he said) train stations. Then, when asked whether it was cold in the residences, he described a boiler system apart from the building he lived in. He maintained that being 'too hot' was even a problem at times.

These two examples are different scales of operations. On hearing about these two situations, it seemed everyone had a story about other communities that have units that were used for central heating at one time. In fact, Fort Benton, Montana was actively looking to fire theirs up a few years ago---the thought was everyone could donate a few round

Central boiler systems could make comeback

hay bales, and the school would have heat from the Central Heating. Maybe other entities would key into it as well. The efficiencies of the olden days were cited.

With electricity, stand-alone choices are possible. Choose the source of heating/cooling, as in this example. Electricity is harnessed; the chosen heat source is efficiently made to spread welcome climate control into homes and workplaces.

The central boiler concept is central to a view of the future that futurists seem to think we will arrive at, even in this lifetime.

Energy for humans to use will be produced somewhere, somehow. In some way it will be conveyed to the place of use. In some way it will eventually travel wirelessly, conveniently, quietly. (These concepts are somewhat mind-boggling.)

The thought of a central production facility was realistic, for instance, on electricity, until there started to be many sources to make electricity--the "renewables" like solar, wind and hydro, and even things not so mainstream like algae.

Now there is the DG (distributed generation), which has been discussed in my former energy articles, where the two-way movement of buying and selling on the existing electric lines becomes possible. And, like deregulation in telephone networks, it offers way more choices.

The next thing is to have backup power for devices. There is a lot of research and development coming along on ways to hold this power after it is produced somewhere, some-

how. This article is a kind of introduction to a future article showcasing some of what is going on in backup generators, batteries, and a propane fueled backup power unit.

Backing up your device in necessary so that information is not lost, settings are saved, and whatever work is happening doesn't slip away uselessly if power is absent.

Maybe you have been through a round of farm shows, farm fairs, and info sessions already this winter and are properly awed by the sheer amount of new 'stuff' to think about. Maybe you think, "Whoa, I need a back up battery to get me back to where I was when I left for that November 2014 WIFE Convention in Phoenix." Hold that thought and we'll see what the future holds in an upcoming article. In farming you are the central figure...the thinking power unit to work all of this through. Or try anyway; there is a lot!

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WIFE Updates

Everything You Need to Know: Legislative Trip to Washington, D.C.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Monday, March 2 & Tuesday, March 3

Corporate Visits

Tuesday, March 3

6:00 PM-10:00 PM: WIFE BOD Meeting

Wednesday, March 4

9:00 AM-11:00 AM: House & Senate Briefings

11:30 AM: Lunch with Kathryn Hill,
USDA Cafeteria

1:00 PM-2:30 PM: USDA Visits

3:00 PM-4:45 PM: Other Speakers

5:30 PM-7:30 PM: Pizza Party for Legislative Aides

Thursday, March 5

8:00 AM-?: State Legislative Visits

(States make their own appointment)

* WIFE will not be hosting a Legislative Reception but for the members who arrive early or leave late, we will plan something for everyone on both Monday evening and Thursday evening.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9
IS A DATE TO REMEMBER!**

By this date, you must:

- Email your registration to Linda Newman at dlnewman@itstriangle.com, as we need to get a list of everyone who will be in attendance for USDA visits (please register as your name appears on your driver's license).
- Make your reservation at the Holiday Inn Capitol to get the discounted rate of \$229+tax, per night. To make a reservation, call the hotel at (877) 572-6951 and use the group code W4F (note: this phone number has changed since last month's issue of the WIFeline was sent out).



Change Service Requested

Shana Baitsch
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