



Volume 38

December 2015

No. 10

FAED Scholarship Opportunity

The Foundation for Agricultural Education and Development (FAED), in cooperation with Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) offers the Marilyn Spiker Memorial Scholarship and the Sheila Massey Memorial scholarship each year. The competition for 2016 will offer three (3) one-year scholarships in the amount of \$1000 each. For scholarships to be awarded, applicants must meet set guidelines/standards as described in the application form as well as below: The student may be a woman enrolling in an agricultural-related field. Examples are agronomy, agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, veterinary medicine, extension education, or a related field. Any woman who will begin her first or second year college studies is eligible. Applications are accepted where state WIFE associations are organized. Special consideration will be given to an applicant who is a member, or the daughter, granddaughter, sister, or niece of a member of FAED and/or WIFE, provided her grades and qualifications equal or exceed those of other applicants. Two (2) letters of recommendation and a current photo are required. To receive a scholarship form, contact Donna Bolz at donnab6519@windstream.net. Completed forms must be returned by March 1, 2016.



By Linda Newman
Montana

President's Report

Lace up your boots...it's time to make a difference!

I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends! We have so much to be thankful for, here in the United States, as compared to a lot of other countries...and it is so important that we celebrate and reflect on that fact each and every year!

It is so easy for most of us Americans, to take things for granted; like a roof over our heads to protect us from the elements, more than enough food to sustain us (or fatten us up in a lot of

cases), closets and drawers full of more clothes than we could possibly wear out, several vehicles in our driveway (probably one for each member of the family that has a driver's license), and the list goes on and on.

Basically, we are truly blessed in this country and should start acting like it! Our political arena is a disaster, our moral compass is out of whack, drugs are running rampant, the "family unit" and values are being skewed, we are becoming a nation of instant gratification with no patience to wait for anything, radical groups are challenging our personal property—the "what's mine is mine and what's yours is mine" attitude is quite apparent—and once again, the list goes on and on!

We all have a tough job to do to help get this country back on track before it is too late. As members of WIFE, we have a great opportunity to do just that by standing up for what we know to be true and, by joining forces with other Ag

groups, we can suggest and influence legislation for the betterment of agriculture and rural America, which, in turn, will be beneficial to our urban neighbors as well.

So, Ladies of WIFE, we need get our big girl panties on, lace up our boots, saddle up, put on our blinders, and forge ahead doing our part to help get some common sense back in this nation as, I am sure, was envisioned by our forefathers. So, expect a busy 2016 for WIFE... we have a lot of work to do!

I would also like to thank North Dakota WIFE for hosting the 2015 National WIFE Convention in Bismarck, ND last month. It was a great meeting and we have implemented some new ideas to be more expedient in getting on top of issues as they happen and methods of responding to them. Please see several articles included in this issue on other events and speakers that we enjoyed in Bismarck.

Thanks again, ND WIFE Ladies—a job well done!

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Energy

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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

Klodette Stroh

Trade

Pam Pothoff

Transportation

Pat Torgerson



By Donna Bolz
Nebraska

Feed Grains Report

Corn holds important place in history, just as it does today

Researchers believe that corn was developed by the Olmec and Mayans who lived in Central America at least 7,000 years ago. There was no corn in Europe prior to Christopher Columbus' voyages to the new world. While in the West Indies, Columbus traded with the natives and brought corn back to Europe. Native Americans in North America introduced corn to early settlers, and saved them from starvation by trading with them. The Native Americans also taught the settlers how to plant and cultivate corn using fish for fertilizer.

Below are some corny facts you may not have heard before:

- According to the USDA, one acre of corn removes about 8 tons of carbon dioxide from the air, and produces enough oxygen to supply a year's needs for 131 people.
- Corn is the number one crop in the U.S. Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska and Minnesota account for over 50 percent of the corn grown in the U.S.
- As of 2012, the United States produces 40 percent of the world's total harvest, making it the biggest corn producer in the world.
- The top five countries for corn production are: the United States, China, Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.
- The only place in the world where corn isn't grown is

Antarctica.

- The U.S. also grows almost all of the world's popcorn.
- Corn and its byproducts are found in many non-food items such as fireworks, rust preventatives, glue, paint, dyes, laundry detergent, soap, aspirin, antibiotics, paint, shoe polish, ink, cosmetics, the manufacturing of photographic film, and in the production of plastics.
- Farmers today grow five times as much corn as they did in the 1930s and on 20 percent less land.
- The root system of healthy corn can grow 5-1/2 feet into the ground.
- The long threads on top of an ear of corn are called silks. There is one silk strand for each kernel of corn.
- Corn sweeteners supply more than 56 percent of the U.S. nutritive sweetener market. A bushel of corn can sweeten 400 cans of soft drink.
- Most ears of corn have about 800 kernels in 16 rows. Corn will always have an even number of rows on each cob.
- Exports of corn are critical to the well being of American agriculture. Nearly one third of our nation's corn crop is targeted for exports.
- 40 percent of corn is used in ethanol production.
- Only 14 percent of corn grown in the U.S. is irrigated.

- Cornflakes are only about 8 percent corn.
- Sometimes a white/gray glob develops on the corn. It's a fungus and won't hurt the corn. In Mexico it's considered a delicacy and they call it a Mexican Truffle.

There is a new way to think of cover crops. Many farmers in Iowa who plant cover crops do so after harvest, or at the end of the growing season when corn or soybeans have started changing color. This timing lets more light reach the cover crop seeds but it comes at a cost and carries the risk of poor establishment due to limited daylight hours and heat. One of the challenges is cover crops are typically done at the end of growing season because they don't have sunlight down at the soil earlier.

When cover crops are planted later in the season, aerial application is a common way of doing it. It has been found that a lot of times when you aerial-seed, it costs as much to put it on as the seed itself and it's not really accurate. Another option is seeding cover crops into their corn much earlier, when it is only 6-8 inches tall.

Seeding cover crops into standing corn is pretty new. One thought is that if the cover crop is seeded earlier in the season when corn is small, it will sit dormant under the corn canopy. Then, when the corn starts to drop and die back, the cover crop is already established and growing. Growers are working to see how to get the method to work, and make it fast and cost-effective.



By Klodette Stroh
Wyoming

Sugar Report

Benefits of sugar policy continue to pile up

Agriculture has been a faithful and loyal industry to the U.S. economy. To keep our country independent and strong we have to support every producer in this country.

The importance of maintaining a strong sugar policy is part of keeping our agriculture alive that helps feed the country. But sometimes, national figures bypass the facts regarding how important farmers are and how vital their contributions can be to our country's economy.

The sugar industry has been benefiting hundreds of communities in 22 states, supports 142,000 jobs, and has added \$20 billion a year into rural America.

Sugar policy works for taxpayers. Sugar farmers don't receive subsidy checks; current U.S. sugar policy is working well and operating as designed. It is the least expensive commodity program in the Farm Bill, and it is the only viable safety net available to sugar farm families. It provides loans that producers repay with interest.

The sugar program cost taxpayers \$0 from 2003 to 2012, ran at no cost again in 2014, and will remain zero- or low-cost in the future, unless altered. The only year in the past decade it carried a cost, 2013, was the direct result of Mexico dumping subsidized sugar into the U.S. market.

U.S. producers are among the world's most efficient and are championing a new "zero-for-zero" sugar

proposal that would eliminate U.S. policy in exchange for other countries dropping their subsidies and letting a free market form. But unilateral disarmament should not be an option because it would fail to achieve free-market goals, would reward the world's biggest subsidizers, and would punish an important U.S. industry.

On October 20, 2015, the U.S. International Trade Commission affirmed that Mexico's sugar industry had harmed American producers by selling subsidized sugar in the U.S. at below market prices--a practice known as "dumping."

The 6-0 ruling means that an agreement signed by the U.S. and Mexican governments to establish a trading structure that caps Mexican imports and stops Mexico's abuses will remain in effect for at least five years, the American Sugar Alliance said in a release.

Sugar policy works for grocery shoppers: Consumers in the rest of the world pay, on average, 14 percent more for sugar than Americans, and U.S. food manufacturers today pay the same for sugar as they did back in the 1980s.

Sugar policy works for the U.S. economy: Domestic sugar producers support \$20 billion in economic activity and 142,000 jobs in 22 states.

Sugar policy works for foreign allies: America provides market access to 41 countries and is the world's biggest importer, which explains why so many developing countries support the current U.S. sugar policy.

Sugar policy even works for its

opponents: Since the current policy took hold, large confectioners have increased production and boasted impressive profit margins.

American consumers benefit from sugar policy because they have been paying the same price for sugar for the past 20 years. Other developed countries pay 30 percent above the U.S., which is 43 cents per one pound of sugar.

WIFE Supporting Members

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- Bayer CropScience

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- Renewable Fuels Association

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- American Bankers Association
- American Council of Life Insurers
- Monsanto
- Florida, Texas, and Hawaii Sugarcane Growers
- U.S. Beet Sugar Association

Contributor Membership

- American Sugarbeet Grower's Association
- North Bridge Communications
- Western Skies Strategies
- AT&T

In-Kind Contributors

- Miller/Coors
- Rauner & Associates

Natural Resources Report



By Alice Parker
Washington

UPDATE: WATERS OF THE U.S.

The debate continues regarding Water of the U.S. (WOTUS) regulations being imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Although the USACE was a part of the development of the regulations, we find out they have argued the economic analysis and technical support document which was prepared by EPA is flawed in many respects. The USACE data has been used out of context and has mixed terminology and data. The Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is also saying that EPA and the USACE failed to comply with the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) and acted improperly when they certified the proposed WOTUS Rule.

In the Ohio-based 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, a federal court granted an injunction on October 9, which temporarily blocked the WOTUS rule from taking effect in all 50 states. It was a 2 to 1 vote with Judges McKeague and Richard Griffin voting for the temporary block and the dissenting vote from Judge Damon Keith. Earlier, a federal district judge in North Dakota had ruled that the regulations in the 13 states who had filed lawsuits against EPA would not be implemented while in litigation. Comments made were, “you can’t have 13 states where it doesn’t apply

Listed species play havoc for natural resources sector

and 37 where it does,” and “we are the United States of America, not parceled up.” As usual, several environmental groups are asking the court to let the rule stand.

States opposing the regulations argued the EPA’s new definition of the Waters of the U.S. overextends the intent of the Clean Water Act and interferes with collaboration between the states and federal agencies in protecting waters. It is a concern of farm organizations that it is only a temporary reprieve and will take years to resolve and with great costs to those involved before a final court ruling decision is made. Farm groups are urging all to not let up on the phone calls and emails to legislators telling them it is important that the rule be killed.

In 2001 and in 2006 the United Supreme Court (SCOTUS), with a plurality of the Court, ruled against EPA’s interpretation of the rule.

Legislation, H.R. 1732, passed the House to address this issue last May. The Legislation gave EPA and the USACE 30 days to withdraw the current rule and to develop a new rule with a definition of Waters of the U.S. Also in May, the House passed H.R. 2028, The 2016 Energy and Water Appropriations Act, which prevents the spending of funds to implement the rule. It now sits in the Senate, waiting action there.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The Endangered Species Act continues to play havoc in the natural resource industry, as it does for farmers and ranchers. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency has decided

not to list the Sage Grouse as endangered. It was good news as farmers and ranchers are making sure that the Sage Grouse’s habitat is part of their conservation practices. Farmers and ranchers know what the best practices are for protecting the environment and the species.

The west is still being hit with listed animals, plants and birds that impact the ability to stay productive and profitable. The gray wolf is killing livestock, which cuts into the farmers’ and ranchers’ bottom line. Livestock owners are fighting the Fish and Wildlife Agencies (both state and federal) to be able to protect their animals and keep the losses to a minimum. Fish took priority this year when it came to the water supply shortages due to the drought in the west. Farmers had to curtail water usage on their crops so water would stay in the streams and rivers to protect fish.

The timber industry is still trying to recover from the spotted owl listing several years ago. Science has found the spotted owl and the barn owl is crossbreeding and those species will become extinct in the future in spite of all the efforts and sacrifices man makes. Now there is a spotted frog in Oregon that environmentalists want listed. So many efforts have been made over the years to amend the ESA but all efforts continue to fail. It is hard to say what it will take to ever get anything changed—maybe a shortage of food and long lines to be able to purchase it will turn the tide (*Ways and Means, September 24, 2015*).

This article was written in October of 2015 and has not been updated since.

Homeland Security Report



By Marlene Kouba
North Dakota

Lawmakers respond to U.S. security threats

Unprecedented numbers of immigrants have been pouring into the United States since the former Senator Ted Kennedy rewrote the nation's immigration laws with the landmark Immigration Act of 1965. The immigrant population swelled to a record 42.4 million in July of 2013, an increase of 2.4 million since July of 2010. This is double the number in 1990 and quadruple the number in 1970. The president isn't elected by popular vote, but instead wins if the majority of the 538 Electoral College votes, which are designated by a state's population, are obtained.

Immigrants, both legal and illegal, generally vote for Democrats but even as non-voters, they count toward a state's population. The Electoral College includes the number of illegal immigrants in each state. Since this spring, ISIS has used two types of chemical weapons in Iraq and Syria multiple times, joining Syria's government as a party in the conflict that has used chemical weapons. The weapons have included improvised bombs containing chlorine, a toxic industrial chemical that Sunni militants in Iraq have crudely weaponized in vehicle and roadside bombs for roughly a decade and artillery or mortar projectiles containing a blister agent that appeared this summer after being fired from Islamic State battlefield positions. These projectiles have delivered sulfur mustard, an internationally banned chemical warfare agent, according to American officials familiar with the analysis of soil samples, ordinance and victims' clothing collected after several attacks. Contamination can blister or kill anyone who comes into contact with the gas. Attempts to wash it off makes the pain worse and it can last for months.

After a record low turnout in last year's election, Governor Jerry Brown of California signed legislation on October

10, designed to increase participation by automatically registering eligible state voters when they obtain a driver's license but allows them to opt out of registering at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Less than one-third of the eligible population voted in November but 6.6 million people who are eligible to vote are not registered. California is the second state to adopt an automatic voter registration system, following Oregon, which passed a similar measure earlier this year. The new law will automatically register everyone who obtains or renews a driver's license and who is legally eligible to vote, unless he or she specifically opts out. This measure takes effect in January, 2016.

In a report from a year ago, members in the House of Representatives suspected terrorists had infiltrated the U.S.-Mexico border and 10 jihadists were captured. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at the time denied the claims. Numerous U.S. lawmakers have repeatedly warned about ISIS teaming up with drug cartels based in Mexico who have clearly shown they're willing to expand outside the drug trade into human trafficking and potentially even terrorism. They could attack us anywhere. Drug cartels use the same operational plan as terrorist groups do. They behead and kill their opponents, brag about it and have operational control of many portions of the southern border of the United States.

ISIS is the most lavishly funded terror organization in the history of the world with a treasury that grows daily. ISIS black market oil sales bring in average revenues between \$1.5 and \$3.6 million each day. They use this money to establish a government that currently controls large swaths of territory in the Middle East and rules more than 6 million people. ISIS receives another estimated \$12 million each month from Mafia-style protection, extortion, and smuggling rackets run out of Mosul. ISIS already controls a great deal of Syria and Iraq and has established its capital in the sixth largest city in Syria. ISIS is using its incredible cash flow to build weapons of

mass destruction. The threat in the West is so great the Pentagon has advised U.S. military personnel to take extreme precautions. ISIS has proclaimed the universal caliphate while our president says ISIS is controlled.

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory signed a bill into law on October 28 that bans any policy that interferes with the enforcement of federal immigration laws. The Protect North Carolina Workers Act, HB 318, reins in local and municipal policies that disregarded federal law by providing sanctuary or "safe" cities, and public benefits like food stamps, for individuals illegally in the U.S. The law also requires public contractors to verify a job applicant's right to work in the country through the Internet-based E-Verify program. The Federation for American Immigration Reform wrote that this provision will make it harder for illegal aliens to find employment, which would discourage illegal immigration and protect citizens' jobs.

The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) said that many of the nation's airport security staffers may come from overseas locations and are hired through the same process used to employ farm workers. They're not subjected to background checks that could alert to terror ties.

Illegal non-Mexican children immigrants have been caught crossing the U.S. southern border at an alarming rate, according to recent Border Patrol statistics. With nearly 5,000 unaccompanied children caught in October and almost 3,000 caught in the first half of November, it signals how smuggling cartels and would-be illegal immigrants are paying close attention to the careless border enforcement in the U.S. Concern for the southern border is growing at a time of heightened international danger. Despite the recent apprehension of the 13 Syrians at the border, about 25,000 illegal immigrants from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have been caught since October 1. The number of Chinese, Brazilians, Indians and, strikingly, Cubans, has each

Homeland Security: Continued on Page 7



By Mary Ann Unruh
North Dakota

Rural Life Report

Maintaining active social life benefits mind, body and soul

Farmers and ranchers, as well as their husbands and wives, are growing older and the average age of farmers continues to rise. If you are part of this group, you may be missing out on important social interaction that you need to stay sharp, healthy and maybe even ward off dementia.

Research has shown that social interaction offers adults many benefits. Staying socially active and maintaining interpersonal relationships can

help maintain good physical and emotional health and cognitive function. People who continue to maintain close friendships and find other ways to interact socially, live longer than those who become isolated. Relationships and social interactions even protect against illness by boosting your immune system.

Some of the health benefits of social interaction include a reduced risk for cardiovascular problems, some cancers, osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis. There is a decreased risk of getting Alzheimer's disease and reduced risks of mental health such as depression. Social interaction may also lower blood pressure. Social isolation also carries risks of being less physically active and a greater

risk of death due to high blood pressure, as well as feeling lonely and depressed.

It is important to keep connections strong by staying in touch with friends and family and trying to visit with them regularly. Join friends and family for a meal or coffee. Another option is to volunteer in your community or join a senior center and participate in activities you enjoy, such as playing cards, Bingo or a book club. To promote better health, join a fitness center or walk with friends to engage with others. Schedule regular visits with grandkids or volunteer at a school or children's organization. Let's get busy; stay vibrant, active and social as you have always been. Let's stay healthy and enjoy life!

Homeland Security: Cont. from Page 6

surged by more than 100 percent, and the number from Pakistan has spiked from six at this point last year to 31 now. While officials were optimistic in their efforts to stop the flooding of immigrants earlier, border patrol officials have yet to comment on the recent surge.

Hamtramck, known as "Poletown" by Detroiters for its district of Polish restaurants, markets and beautiful Catholic churches since 1920 with 22,000 people, now has many of the storefronts converted to mosques. Some in neighboring communities call it "Shariahville." The bulk of the change started in the 1970s with the globalization of the auto industry and mass immigration. The sound of church bells has given way to the chant of the call to prayer in Arabic over loudspeakers five times a day. They have a Muslim city council and offer the only Bengali ballot in the nation. Michigan's governor and Detroit's mayor stand with the Muslims and wants to "rebuild" parts of Detroit by importing 5,000 more Syrian refugees and want the area to be a tourist attraction. The administration has secretly planted nearly 28,000 refugees in more than 100 southern Michigan towns since fiscal year 2008. Lansing is now home to people from 31 countries. Federal money in the form of food stamps, housing vouchers and even business grants follow refugees to a community.

Muslims in Massachusetts celebrated November 12 as Muslim Day. Minnesota's Attorney General wants to silence all those who oppose Muslims. Anyone who criticizes Islam is guilty of "Islamophobia," which is now considered a new mental disorder. A large Catholic church in Syracuse, New York has been converted into a mosque. Senator Ted Cruz, (R-TX) has introduced legislation to get the Muslim Brotherhood designated as a terrorist organization. It has already been branded a terrorist organization in Egypt, Russia and the United Arab Emirates, among other countries.

The United States issued 680,000 green cards to migrants from Muslim-majority countries between 2009 and 2013—all handpicked by the United Nations and settled into 180 cities across the nation. Our country has brought in more than 1.5 million Muslims since the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980. The FBI has said it has about 900 active ISIS investigations in all 50 states. A top Islamic preacher has come up with an idea on how Muslim immigrants can show thanks to Europe and America for taking them in—breed and conquer!

A DHS memo of an off-the-record meeting shows that President Obama is considering defying a federal judge's injunction against issuing work permits to illegal immigrants, known as an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). The president has been getting ready with one or more of four plans, each one designed to provide EADs to millions of nonimmigrants, including those lawfully present and visa over-stayers, crippling the actual employment-based visa system on the federal statute-book. The four options range from providing EADs to all individuals living in the United States, including illegal aliens, visa over-stayers, and H-1B guest-workers, to only those on certain unexpired non-immigrant visas. Giving EADs to anyone on that basis is a direct violation of our Immigration & Nationality Act, which currently cannot be done without showing lawful status, but that rule might change, too (DHS, Border Patrol, Newsmax, Houston Chronicle).

This will be my last report as your Homeland Security chairman so I thank each of you for supporting me and for giving me information. We must not drop our guard and must support those who valiantly try to control our borders against its invaders.



By Barbara Broberg
Montana

Energy Report

Many resources available for energy-related topics

WIFE members discussed coal, biofuels (including ethanol), alternative energy (including wind power), and hydroelectricity during the recent Energy Caucus.

The teleconference caucus work before Convention was successful in getting the issues in mind ahead of time. (And efficiency is what successful energy use is all about!)

The following web related content was chosen based on the interest of WIFE members, and what is happening with their crops, fields, and where they obtain electricity.

The website www.bpa.gov/news/pubs/Pages/Power-of-the-River-BPA-History-Book.aspx will let you download a 289-page book (readable, with pictures, and interesting) about what a dam and hydroelectricity does for a country. This link is kind of a good follow-up if you remember a few pictures of the dam from Weekly Reader days. You can also buy the book for ten dollars.

CEIP is the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) Clean Energy Incentive Program. For more information on that sector, go to www3epa.gov/airquality/cpp/fs-cpp_ceip.pdf. This has to do with states and rural or under-privileged areas.

EPA has the controversial Clean Power Plan currently going on. An article about the Clean Power Plan can be found at www.eenews.net/energywire/2015/10/23/stories/1060026807.

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Plan Hub at www.eenews.net/interactive/clean_power_plan/states to see comments about your state, and how your governors are reacting.

The website www.eenews.net/tv/videos/2046 has DuPont Corporation Mr. Jan Koninckx discussing the sheer speed of cellulosic (in this case they are using corn stover) innovation. Farmers are mentioned. It shows how Ethanol can go into laundry detergent and hits on the worldwide usage of technologies.

For other resources, ealerts@eenews.net will get you endless topics

on energy related subjects and www.eenews.net/tv/videos/2038/ has commentary on coal, via the World Coal Association.

Here are some interesting tidbits of information: the cost of LED "fluorescent" lights has been dropping and oh my, what brilliant light--no hum, no flicker, they light up when cold! And now there is no need for rewiring. The tube can be placed right in an existing fixture. There was a caution about a certain shop light but just read the carton and it will tell you everything you need to know.

2015 Country Woman of the Year energizes convention crowd

by Mary Ellen Cammack



Annie Carlson addresses the attendees

Annie Carlson from Mercer, North Dakota energized the 2015 WIFE convention attendees with her presentation. She describes their family operation as fourth (her kids) generation and the ranch has been in the same family for 75 years. Currently they are "beyond organic" (not certified), with pastured poultry, including broilers and 140 laying hens, pastured pork and Icelandic sheep. She has developed an online buying club, including a freezer club where members receive

10 meals. For more information, view the website at morning-joyfarm.com. Annie was recognized by Farm & Ranch Guide as the 2015 Country Woman of The Year, and is a North Dakota Ag Rural Leadership alumni. She challenged us with a quote from David Allen, "You can do anything, you can't do everything."

National Convention

39TH ANNUAL CONVENTION PROVIDES ATTENDEES WITH JAM-PACKED WEEK

by Marlene Kouba

The weather was balmy and clear as North Dakota welcomed WIFE members from New York to New Mexico and states in between for their 39th annual national WIFE convention in Bismarck, North Dakota on November 4-7, 2015.

The opener was a motivational speech about her farming activities by Farm & Ranch Guide's 2015 Country Woman of the Year, Annie Carlson of North Dakota.

U.S. Representative Kevin Cramer gave a brief overall summary of what is happening in Congress and answered questions from the audience for a much longer time than usual. Some topics included Waters of the United States, country of origin labeling, GMOs in foods, energy and transportation bills and much more. He said "There are a lot more people who eat than are growing it. There is a big world out there who knows nothing of us. "North Dakota is a rectangle with the world around us," he quoted.

"The Power of Social Media in Agriculture" was demonstrated by Dana Hager of the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. She displayed words that relate to agriculture and asked us to use many of them in our conversations with social media and our friends. Whitney Klasna of Montana led a social media workshop.

Many of us receive pages of surveys from our state's Statistics Service. Often they are thrown away and considered unimportant when they are actually very important. Many farm programs are based on the results they receive. The National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) is a well established small agency with about 900 employees that sends about 400 reports to farmers nationwide. The Farm Service Agency asks for different information than they do.

Meals were delicious and there were some unique breaks, such as a cookie break and a Make Your Own Sundae break. A Continental Breakfast offered a wide choice of foods each morning. An evening at Jack's Steakhouse took us away from our motel.

Tours one afternoon showed us a look in the olden days as well as culture in the state. The group toured the old two-story Governor's mansion that was built in 1884, with a carriage house in the rear. The present Governor's mansion is near the Capitol building. The 19-story Capitol building towered over the city just a few blocks from our meeting rooms in the Ramada Inn. After being ravished by fire the old building was replaced with the new one in 1934 at a cost of about \$2 million. It is now considered a "skyscraper on the prairies" and resides on a 132-acre complex which includes rooms for both the Senate and House members, a judicial wing and the Supreme Court as well as all of the departments in government. Nearby is the new Heritage Gallery that we toured. It displays skeletons of large turtles, buffalo, birds and other species, American Indian treasures and memorabilia, as well as artifacts and early vehicles of our homesteaders and early settlers.

As far as the housekeeping goes, officers for 2016 are President Linda Newman of Montana, Vice President Mary Ellen Cammack of South Dakota, Secretary Pam Potthoff of Nebraska, Treasurer Jenifer Felzien of Colorado and Area Directors Diane McDonald of North Dakota and Donna Bolz of Nebraska. Parliamentarian Tyler Massey declined re-appointment after serving us for the past five years. One change in the coming year include there being only four issues of our national newsletter, the WIFeline, rather than our longtime 10 issues.

The 39th convention ended on a happy note with Cowboy Poet Bill Lowman reciting some of his writings about ranching.

2015 National WIFE Convention Photos



Bill Lowman, cowboy poet, entertains the crowd with ranch stories.



Kerry Froese and Mary Ann Murray hold up the quilt which was raffled off and won by Mabel Glunt of Nebraska.



North Dakota's lone Representative Kevin Cramer answers questions from the audience



Dana Hager, ND Department of Agriculture, presents "The Power of Social Media"

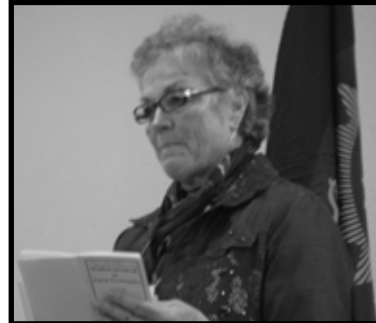


Convention workers--back row (L to R): Ariana Dressler, Diana Adam, Darcy Dressler, Deb Dressler; front row (L to R): Marlene Kouba, Mary Ann Unruh, Breeana Dressler, Diane McDonald
Not pictured: Phyllis Howatt.

2015 National WIFE Convention Photos



The Heritage Gallery of Bismarck displays a replica of a Native American tepee, made entirely of tree bark.



Mary Ann Murray, Montana, leads the WIFE delegates through resolutions.



Freda Schmidt, longtime Colorado WIFE member, enjoys the convention speakers.



Whitney Klasna, Montana WIFE president, leads a workshop on social media.



Sarah Vogel of Bismarck, former assistant Attorney General, shared her most notable experiences with conference attendees.



Marlene Kouba, past Homeland Security Chairman is the new national Energy Chairman.



Ariana Dressler of North Dakota is the new 2016 Homeland Security Chairman.



Kerry Froese, past Area II Director from Colorado, is the new Specialty Crops Chairman



Newly elected Area II Director, Donna Bolz of Nebraska.

WIFE Updates

A few items to note for 2016...

- * From now on, the WIFeline will be published quarterly (four times a year) and the next issue can be expected in February of 2016.
- * Starting in January, watch your email for "WEEKLY" WIFE news-briefs on current issues affecting Agriculture. These will be in addition to pertinent issues shared on WIFE Facebook pages.
- * Don't forget to pay your 2016 WIFE dues.
- * HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!



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