It was a fast-paced four days at AAW Fly-In

By Ruth Jensen, California Women for Agriculture

The 18th annual American Agri-Women Fly-In was, as usual, a fast-paced, whirlwind four-day experience for almost 60 members from 16 different states, starting with a comprehensive orientation followed by an evening tour of historic Washington, DC, sights.

Because there were so many issues to review, orientation time was limited to reviewing issues and updates on hot button bills status. We did not have special guest speakers, as usual.

On Monday morning AAW hosted the Annual Symposium: “Regulate or Legislate, Which is Best for Agriculture?” at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The entire symposium was recorded and streamed live on the Internet.

Our speakers included representatives from American Farm Bureau, EPA, US Chamber of Commerce, and Kansas Corn Growers. Messages varied from “How to regulate when you can’t legislate,” to “Recognizing and countering over-regulation.” After the symposium, some members participated in a private lunch with the lobbyists for Agricultural Coalition for Immigration Reform (ACIR) and the National Association of Agricultural Employers (NCAE) and got a comprehensive update on Ag Labor legislation and discuss strategies for when we make the rounds and fine-tune our messages. Other members were hosted by Larry Quinn, recently retired USDA Director of Communications under thirteen administrations, at a luncheon event featuring Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack at the National Press Club, while another group enjoyed a luncheon sponsored by the American Council of Life Insurers.

After lunch the group went to the Department of Interior where we met with officials from BLM and discussed water issues; timber; acquisition of land and several other hot issues. This was a lively discussion and illustrated the many issues, problems and over-regulations affecting the American farmer and rancher.

After this round of meetings we were ready for our next stop — the home of the Portuguese Ambassador Nuno Bruti for some wine and cheese. This event was lovely and his home on Embassy Row was beautiful.

On Tuesday we loaded the bus and headed to the Department of Interior to meet with officials from BLM and discussed water issues; timber; acquisition of land and several other hot issues. This was a lively discussion and illustrated the many issues, problems and over-regulations affecting the American farmer and rancher.

AAW introduces 2011 “Champions of Agriculture”

American Agri-Women recognized Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS) and Congressman Dennis Cardoza (D-CA) as Champions of Agriculture during AAW’s annual Fly-In to Washington, D.C. recently.

“For more than 30 years Senator Pat Roberts has been a Champion of Agriculture,” said AAW president Chris Wilson of Manhattan, KS. He was first elected to Kansas’ “Big First District,” which encompasses 69 counties in the western and central part of the state, in 1980. He was chairman of the House Agriculture Committee from 1995-97, when he was elected to his first term in the U.S. Senate, and is now ranking member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Nutrition.

Over the years Senator Roberts has been closely involved in amending the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). He recently praised passage of a pesticide bill in the House of Representatives and urged the Senate to join in lessening regulatory burdens

Continued on page 11.
Dear AAW Members,

We had a wonderful Fly-In, with a record number of participants. Thanks to those who helped with the planning and coordination of events. The Federation of Women in Timber combined their DC Fly-In with AAW’s this year, and it made for a great team effort. We had excellent response from the Hill and from agency officials. The Portugal connection was especially fun, as CWA’s Barbara LeVake arranged for us to visit their ambassador’s residence, where we enjoyed visiting with Ambassador Nuno Bruti. The next day, he joined us on the Hill for the presentation to Rep. Dennis Cardoza, who is of Portuguese descent and represents many farmers of Portuguese descent.

Since Fly-In, members have been involved in many fairs and efforts to educate about agriculture. We have been challenged by floods and drought and an exceptionally hot summer.

The 2011 Convention is on the horizon, and the Kansas Agri-Women have lots in store for you in Wichita! Their goal has been to host a convention that would be remembered and talked about for years to come, and I’m sure it will be. From speakers to decorations and special treats, you will enjoy what this creative group of women has planned for you. So be sure to make plans to be in Wichita, Kansas, in November.

We were saddened this month by the passing of Past AAW President Trenna Grabowski and Maine Agri-Women’s first president Peggy Niblett. Their leadership has meant a great deal to AAW. Many of us have been mentored by Trenna, and all of us benefitted from her tax and finance expertise and leadership and service to AAW and the AAW Resource Center. Trenna was a tireless advocate for AAW, and we will miss her greatly.

When my daughter Joanna, now 19, was one year old, we were attending the Syngenta Leadership class. I hadn’t signed Joanna up as an AAW member, so Trenna took up a collection to pay Joanna’s dues. Joanna has been a loyal member since.

I wish you all successful harvests and look forward to seeing many of you in Wichita.

God bless you,

Chris

President’s Report

American Agri-Women
Executive Committee

President
Chris Wilson
2103 Zeandale Road
Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone: 785-844-0274
president@americanagriwomen.org

1st Vice
Karen Yost
2343 Shiloh Road
Phone: 406-652-9678

President
Billings, MT 59106

Resolutions
Phone: 708-334-4030

& Vital
communications@americanagriwomen.org

Issues
firstvp@americanagriwomen.org

Vice
Linda Swiercinsky
President
1739 State Route 8
Maquon, IL 61458
Phone: 608-334-4030

Education
education@americanagriwomen.org

Secretary
Jody Elrod
PO Box 295
Robstown, TX 78380
Phone: 920-485-4329
Fax: 361-387-1137
secretary@americanagriwomen.org

Treasurer
Carolyn Kleiber
PO Box 111
Hillsboro, KS 67063
Phone: 620-947-3094
Fax: 620-947-2476
treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

Past
Marcie Williams
President
11404 Appleton Road
Croton, OH 43013
Home Phone: 740-893-4300
Fax: 740-893-4003
pastpresident@americanagriwomen.org

AAW Web Site: www.americanagriwomen.org
AAW Email: info@americanagriwomen.org

The Voice is published in January, March, May, July and October by American Agri-Women as a service to members. Deadline is the 15th of the month before each issue is published. Articles and suggestions are always welcomed by:

Arlene Kovash, Editor
503-838-3512
akovash@earthlink.net

or

Linda Swiercinsky, VP Communications
Information Above

Please send address changes to:
Carolyn Kleiber, Membership Database Chair
(contact info listed above)
carolyn@agpowerinc.net
Meet smart, innovative ag women from across the country at the American Agri-Women national convention (AAW), set for November 9-13 in Wichita, Kansas. Registration is now open for “Sharing America’s Harvest,” AAW’s 36th annual convention. Download the registration form here, http://americanagriwomen.org or complete and mail in the form in this newsletter.

Learn and share with women facing the same challenges you are – preserving their family’s legacies, building profitable operations, raising families and more. Watch for details soon regarding speakers and programs.

And, we’ll have lots of fun, too. How about a “Taste of Kansas” reception at the Mid-America All Indian Center on Thursday evening? Weekend tours include the Kansas Cosmosphere, Maxwell Wildlife Refuge and Kansas Underground Salt Museum, where we’ll share dinner 650 feet below the surface. Spouse and guest trips include Kansas Heritage, Tallgrass Treasures and Harvest of Energy tours. The AAW web site has more details.

The convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency Wichita (www.wichita.hyatt.com). The hotel is located on the Arkansas River and is just minutes from Wichita’s Old Town shopping and restaurant district.

Are you a first-time convention attendee? Check out the Helen Whitmore Memorial Fund for convention scholarships – $400 each. Deadline is September 15. Download the form here: http://www.americanagriwomen.org/helen-whitmore-memorial-scholarship.

Annual convention auction and sponsorship opportunities

Help us make this year’s annual convention extra special by helping with or telling others about our auction and sponsorship opportunities. Go here for details on the many levels of sponsorship, which start at just $100, www.ksagriwomen.org.

Please contact Jodi Ternine if you have ideas for sponsors or would like to be a sponsor: jodit@kspork.org or 321-508-0319.

Each year, AAW holds a silent auction at the convention. The funds raised help support the organization’s mission. Kansas is challenging each affiliate to contribute an item, basket, or prize package that represents its state or product. Other donations are welcome, too. Please contact Rosy Hansen-Cruble to make arrangements for your items: rosyhansen@yahoo.com or 785-243-4914.

Questions regarding the conference? Please contact convention chairs Abby Amick, 620-271-2953, or Carolyn Kleiber, 620-877-7204, for more information.

Up-cycle Style Review

The AAW convention will have a new event this year: a twist on the county fair style review as part of the Saturday evening County Fair Banquet.

AAW members are invited to participate in the “Up-cycled Style Review.” Up-cycling means you take an item of clothing that is: vintage; purchased at a thrift store; outdated in your closet; or handed-down in need of repair. You then repurpose, reuse, restore, or recycle the clothing item.

To participate in the Up-cycled Style Review, you need to up-cycle a garment/outfit and be willing to model it during the banquet. The thriftier, the better, and heirlooms are welcome. Once you have selected a garment/outfit to up-cycle, then 1) write up your (very brief) story of how/where you found your entry 2) explain what you did to up-cycle the item for current use/wear, and 3) provide a description of the entry (as you would for a 4-H entry at a style review).

Please e-mail these to Jean Goslin (dbrokenbar@msn.com) by October 15. All submissions will be accepted.

Exchanging on the Range

Participants at the 2011 AAW Convention in Wichita will be sure to have some “take home” value.

One activity planned for the convention’s opening night is a t-shirt and mug exchange. The t-shirt exchange is geared toward collegiate members. However, all young adult/professionals who are 30 years old or younger are encouraged to bring a t-shirt depicting their home state.

The mug exchange is for all participants over 30 years of age. These individuals are encouraged to bring a coffee mug depicting either their home state or something related to agriculture.

Participants will exchange their t-shirt or mug for a new one brought by another attendee. T-shirts and mugs do not need to be wrapped or packaged — simply bring them with you to Wichita!

Famous People from Kansas:

President Dwight Eisenhower, Vice President Charles Curtis, aviatrix Amelia Earhardt, actress Kirstie Alley, running back Barry Sanders, Bob Dole, Kentucky basketball coach Adolph Rupp, Oklahoma basketball coach Lon Kruger.
Main Convention Tours – Friday, November 11th

Option #1 – Explore the Heavens
Tour the Kansas Cosmosphere including a show in the IMAX Theatre, a planetarium Show, a visit to Dr. Goddard's Lab and a self guided tour of the Hall of Space Museum! The Kansas Cosmosphere is one of the largest collections of US and Russian space artifacts! It is a Smithsonian-affiliated Museum.

There is a universe full of fun and education to discover! Visit the galleries in the museum: Apollo Gallery, Mollett Early Spaceflight Gallery, German Gallery, and Cold War Gallery, and view rockets, lunar modules, blackbird spy plane, moon rocks and much more…! Shop the Cargo Bay Gift Store.

Option #2 – Maxwell Wildlife Refuge
The tour to Maxwell Wildlife Refuge will begin with a buffalo burger lunch, followed by a guided prairie tour aboard a tram (our modern day covered wagon). Maxwell definitely offers beautiful views of the prairie and its inhabitants each season of the year. Fall brings the changing colors of the trees to gold, the sumac to red and the grasses to beige and rust. The elk are sporting their full grown antlers and are seen out in the open for winter tours. The buffalo are in their full winter coats. Groups will also have opportunities for educational presentations inside the visitor center/gift shop.

Option #3 – Kansas Skyscrapers & Top Crops in Kansas
This Ag-site-ing tour will introduce you to the Skyscrapers of the plains -- grain elevators. In addition, you will visit a cattle feeding operation, and get some insights into the many uses of Kansas grains, including ethanol.

Evening Tour - Underground Salt Museum – All three tours will meet at the Underground Salt Museum to conclude the day’s activities.
Kansas Underground Salt Museum Gallery Tour and Dark Ride! You will travel 650 feet under the Kansas Prairie, surrounded by salt deposits formed 275 Million years ago! This tour provides the only opportunity of its kind in the western hemisphere. The geological and cultural story of salt comes to life with dramatic displays. This is still a working salt mine.

We will have our evening meal underground, with special entertainment and a live auction! Come prepared to bid and support AAW!

Spouse/Guest Tour – Thursday, November 10th
Sharing Kansas Heritage
Guests and Spouses will start the morning in Yoder for homemade cinnamon rolls and coffee. During breakfast, they will get the history of this authentic Amish community from the local Blacksmith. Tour the Stafford County Flour Mill, maker of Hudson Flour products, and eat lunch at Wheatland Café.

There will be a driving tour of the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge for viewing the migrating birds with a step on presentation by Wildlife and Parks. On the way back to Wichita, you will stop at the Haw Ranch Feedlot, LLC to see their 35,000 head of cattle in a confined feeding operation.

Spouse/Guest Tour – Saturday, November 12th
Tall Grass Treasures
Guests and spouses will travel to the Tall Grass Prairie National Preserve where they will have the chance to tour the historic 1881 ranch house and take a short hike through the last standing tall grass prairie. Tallgrass prairie once covered more than 140 million acres of the United States, from Indiana to Kansas and from Canada to Texas. Nearly all of it is gone, plowed under for agriculture or urban development. An ancient past survives in the irreplaceable Flint Hills tall grass. The group will finish the tour by traveling to the Flying W Ranch for lunch and a local culture and ranching presentation.

Youth/Children's Tour – Saturday, November 12th
Harvest of Imagination!
This will be a trial run tour, encouraging families to participate and attend AAW events. Youth of all ages are invited to attend this tour! The group will spend the morning at Exploration Place -- discovering the hands-on exhibits, interactive features, learning and expanding their imaginations. They will have lunch in Old Town Wichita, and continue on their journey through time, visiting the Museum of World Treasures -- Dinosaurs, mummies…. amazing. City Arts - Art classes, galleries, gift shop, and Beadazzled - Glass art studio, jewelry, gifts and classes, make your own jewelry!

Post Convention Tour – Sunday, November 13th
Harvest of Energy
The Sunday tour will begin at AAW member, Bobbi Shrum’s family operation and Outlaw Arena in Harper, KS. Bobbi will share some information about the facility and her new venture with Natural Gas conversion kits. The group will enjoy lunch while listening to a presentation by BTI John Deere, located in Greensburg Kansas, as they share their story of tornado devastation, rebuilding and the advent of green construction and wind energy. Following lunch the group will travel to an ICM facility to tour a biomass gasifier located at a county landfill and learn about the new technologies available in that field. The tour is expected to arrive back at the Hyatt in Wichita by 4:30 pm.
# 2011 American Agri-Women Convention Registration Form

## November 9-13, 2011 • Wichita, KS

**Name:** ________________________________________________  **Affiliate:** __________________________________________

**Address:** ______________________________________________  **City/State/Zip:** _____________________________________

**Phone:** ___________________________  **Email:** __________________________________________________________________

**Spouse/Guest:** ______________________________________  **Phone:** ___________________________________________

Voting Member of AAW?  □ Yes  □ No  Are you a first time attendee?  □ Yes  □ No

What date and time do you plan to arrive in Wichita?  ____________________________________________________________

## Registration

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>□ Early Registration (Postmarked by October 7, 2011)</td>
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**Optional Events (please indicate if attending and how many)**

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<td>□ Wednesday, Nov 9th - Leadership Session</td>
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<td>□ Thursday, Nov 10th – Reception <em>Mid-America All-Indian Center</em></td>
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<td>□ Friday, Nov 11th - Option #1 Tour &amp; Dinner – <em>Heaven and Earth</em></td>
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<td>□ Friday, Nov 11th - Option #2 Tour &amp; Dinner – <em>Maxwell Wildlife</em></td>
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<td>□ Friday, Nov 11th - Option #3 Tour &amp; Dinner – <em>Kansas Skyscrapers &amp; Top Crops in KS</em></td>
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<td>□ Saturday, Nov 12th - Spouse/Guest Tour – <em>Tall Grass Treasures</em></td>
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<td>□ Saturday, Nov 12th – Youth/Children’s Tour – <em>Harvest of Imagination!</em></td>
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<td>□ Sunday, Nov 13th - Post Convention Tour – <em>Harvest of Energy</em></td>
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**Grand Total**  _______

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**Hotel Accommodations:** A block of rooms are reserved under American Agri-Women at the Hyatt Regency in Wichita, KS. If reservations are made prior to September 15, 2011, you will receive free internet and parking at the hotel. Call the hotel directly at (888) 421-1442. Group rates will be offered for November 9-13.

**Cancellation Policy:** Cancellations need to be made in writing and sent before October 1, 2011, for a full refund.

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**Payment & Inquiries:** Make checks payable to: AAW 2011 Convention. Mail registration form and check to: Carolyn Kleiber, PO Box 111, Hillsboro KS 67063. Inquiries, contact Carolyn at 620-877-7204.

**Student Scholarship:** Write a one page essay explaining your perspective on the future of agriculture. After receiving your essay with completed registration form and payment by October 7, 2011, a $50 reimbursement will be sent to you.
Attention all shutterbugs! The AAW Resource Center is looking for your photographs portraying American agriculture to compete in their sixth annual photography contest. Along with agriculture pictures, we are also seeking winter and/or Christmas holiday pictures within agriculture. Selected photographs will be featured on note cards and Christmas cards being sold at the National AAW Convention in Kansas. All proceeds will go toward the AAW Resource Center to help support scholarships.

GUIDELINES & RULES
The primary theme of the photographs must be “agriculturally related”, whether it is a photo of scenery, a close-up, a record or pictorial photo. Judging points are based on composition and content.

• Photos must be submitted by October 1, 2011. Photographs do not have to be shot during this time period. They can be from the past or present.

• Primary theme of photo may be scenery of a farm/ranch in the different seasons, stages of production of different agricultural commodities, close-up of a particular agricultural product, portrait, or collage, etc.

• Contestant must be an AAW member.

• Photos submitted must be the original work of the contestant.

• No more than three photos may be entered by each contestant.

• Photos may be taken with any type of camera: digital, 35 mm, etc.

• Each photo may be submitted in an electronic tif. Or jpg. file format. Electronic photographs are preferred.

• Each photo entered must be labeled with the contestant’s name, address, and description of the photograph

• Each photo must not have a date or number on the front

• All photographs become the property of the AAW Resource Center for any and all uses determined by the entity. Photos will not be returned.

• Each photo must be submitted to:
  Julie Tesch
  1994 Buford Avenue
  146 Ruttan Hall
  St. Paul, MN  55108
  e-mail:  jtesch@umn.edu

Champions of Ag, continued from page 1.

on producers. He followed up with Risk Management Agency officials to guarantee farmers that losses due to flooding would be covered by crop insurance even if due to a levee breach. He also has worked to reform outdated farm policies and successfully led the effort to bring a National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, a new federal laboratory to replace the aging research facility at Plum Island, to Kansas.

Congressman Dennis Cardoza (D-CA) represents the Central Valley of California and four of the five counties in his district rank in the top ten agricultural-producing counties in the state, based on the market value of products sold. Ranking member of the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry subcommittee, Rep. Cardoza also has been active in supporting specialty crop growers.

“Rep. Cardoza also has been a champion for regulatory reform,” continued Wilson. He has been vocal in taking on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made headlines in March 2011 when he grilled EPA administrator Lisa Jackson on the agency’s lack of concern about the impact of its regulations on agricultural producers. Comparing the agency’s zeal to “judicial activism,” Congressman Cardoza called EPA’s activism a burden on farmers with extreme regulations which seriously impede their ability to produce food for the nation.

“I believe your agency is the most unpopular agency in farm country, from sea to shining sea, bar none.” said Rep. Cardoza.

“Farmers and ranchers know that a champion in the show ring refers to an animal that is close to perfect in breed character, appearance and desirable traits. In humans, however, the definition extends beyond physical characteristics to ‘an ardent defender or supporter of a cause.’ The 2011 winners are great advocates for agriculture and we appreciate their efforts very much,” Wilson concluded.

They join Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) and Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), who were 2010 champions.

Look at your county on this Census map: Go to this website and glide your cursor over the map – it displays every county:

In Passing

By Linda Swiercinsky,
Vice President of Communications

Trenna Rae Grabowski
1945-2011

Trenna was a devout Catholic and I have to grin when I think back to 2006 when she was late for an IAW retreat at my Sister House Bed and Breakfast. We finally got her call explaining that she could not find the convent in Maquon (population 350)... where was it located and where were we? We teased her but Trenna always had a smile and could laugh at herself.

Trenna was survived by her husband, Ron, and son, Paul, P.O. Box 38, DuBois, IL 62831, and daughter Elizabeth Rodgers, Woodstock, Illinois. Many readers will remember that she brought Liz and Tammy Yung, her office secretary, to Fly-Ins and AAW business meetings at her own expense.

Her grandchildren, Austin and Aniston Grabowski of DuBois, were the first “Legacy Kids,” a project Trenna initiated in 2007. Anyone who wants to enroll a child or grandchild can contact the AAW Resource Center for more information.

Annette Sweeney, currently a member of the Iowa Women in Agriculture’s board of directors and serving her first term in the Iowa House of Representatives, recently received the Herbert Hoover Uncommon Public Service Award. Rep. Sweeney was nominated for the award by the students at Ellsworth Community College and members of the Iowa House of Representatives for her continued support and dedication for Iowa’s community colleges and rural Iowa. Sweeney’s address is: 21547 Hwy. S27, Alden, IA 5000

As many of you know, I am a huge supporter of 4-H and feel that it shaped my life from a timid schoolgirl to a teenage leader. Because of this, I continue to be involved in 4-H and hope that my three-year-old grandson will have the opportunity that both his mother and father had.

I noted recently that JCPenney stores are raising money for youth programs like 4-H, Boys and Girls Club of America, YMCA, etc., through a program called “Pennies from Heaven,” which will be used to help improve after-school programs. According to JCPenney, compelling data has revealed that one out of every four students in the U.S. is unsupervised after school every day.

Well, we bought Hereford cows from Penney’s Emmadine Farms in 1953 and I have studied the man over the years. He was the son of a preacher and founded his

continued on page 9.
**Affiliate News**

**California women take issues packets to legislators**

*By Carol Chandler, California Women for Agriculture*

An impressive contingent of California Women for Agriculture members joined American Agri-Women at the annual Fly-In and Symposium in Washington, DC, from June 12-15. A full schedule included a symposium on Environmental Protection Agency regulations at USDA, briefings by USDA officials and farm labor experts, as well as meetings at the Department of Interior and the EPA. After the symposium, AAW members were treated to a reception at the Portuguese Embassy. Ambassador Nuno Brito was very gracious to host us and give a tour of his embassy. At the legislative reception, he joined us in honoring Rep. Dennis Cardoza when he received the AAW Champion of Agriculture Award for 2011.

Barbara LeVake, Hylon Kaufmann, Rose Tryon, Ruth Jensen, Lisa Bodrogi, Pam Sweeten, Katharine Rosser, Julie Claussen (Women in Timber), Carol Chandler, and representatives from the United Agribusiness League were on hand to meet with legislators, ask questions of agency personnel, and present issues and concerns. Each legislator we visited received a packet containing a description of pertinent issues affecting our industry including immigration reform, environmental regulations, the 2012 Farm Bill, estate taxes, international trade, and water needs.

Appointments with legislators and staff were arranged prior to the trip by Barbara, Ruth, and Carol. Meetings were held with Reps. McCarthy, Gallegly, Farr, Herger, Nunes, Capps, Issa, Lungren, Lofgren, Cardoza, and Costa, as well as several elected members from other states. Staff members from Sen. Feinstein and Boxer’s offices met with us as well. A highlight of the day was a meeting in Rep. Kevin McCarthy’s Majority Whip office in the Capitol.

Everyone appreciated the opportunity to interact with AAW members from all over the country and learn that we have many common concerns and frustrations with over-regulation and punitive legislation. Our common goals and message carry strength and a unified voice for agriculture to our nation’s Capitol.

*Congressman Dennis Cardoza (D-CA) with California members, as he receives his “Champion of Agriculture” award at Tuesday’s reception at the Fly-In.*

**OWA teams with John Deere and a local company to make farm safety signs**

In an effort to alert motorists in the state of Oregon to keep an eye out for farm machinery on the roadways, especially during the harvest season, Oregon Women for Agriculture got together with both John Deere and Fisher Farm & Lawn in Tangent, Oregon, to make road signs to place on roadways in farm communities.

Linn-Benton County Women for Agriculture member Linda Grell (shown above with sign), who is also employed by the Fisher Farm & Lawn, Tangent store, headed the project on behalf of OWA.

“It all started when an Albany, Oregon, farm youth, Nathan Gourley, was killed three years ago,” said Linda. “They are our good customers and it really shook us up. We wanted to do something, but it took a while to figure out what.”

Gourley, 16, was killed in 2008 while driving a hay stacker that collided with a log truck near their home. The log truck attempted to pass as Nathan started to make a left turn. The vehicles collided and Nathan was ejected. The signs are courtesy of OWA, John Deere and Fisher and are free, although people need to provide their own support posts.

Four hundred of the bright yellow signs are going up all over the state, even in sparsely settled eastern Oregon.

Grell said Fisher Farm & Lawn started the project late last year and Oregon Women for Agriculture partnered with the company this year.

OWA’s public relations committee has been working on a farm safety on the road campaign for several years now.

*Article information courtesy of Alex Paul, Albany Democrat-Herald*
More than 100 women from all parts of Iowa turned out for this year’s Iowa Women in Agriculture (IWIA) conference on August 4. IWIA president Deb Schuler stated, “With today’s volatile commodity markets and rising input costs, it’s more important than ever to fine-tune our risk management skills.”

A total of 18 breakout speakers were available for participants to choose from. Based on evaluations turned in at the end of the day, Schuler said, the top speaker was estate planning expert Paul Folkers, of Midwest Capital in Omaha. Called “a tiger” by Annette Sweeney in her introduction, he advised the women that current law was only good through 2012. Something new in the temporary law is “portability of the unused spousal exemption,” he said. Folkers commented that annual gifting remains at $13,000 but it doesn’t have to be cash or land. It could be corn or machinery.

One of the day’s highlights was a question-and-answer session focusing on the question, “How will government and environmental regulations affect how we produce our food and sustain the family farm?” The panel was comprised of Karey Claghorn, chief operating officer of the Iowa Soybean Association and former Deputy Secretary of Iowa Department of Agriculture; Ron Heck, vice chair of the Iowa Biodiesel Board; John Whitaker, head of the State Farm Service Agency; and Iowa House Rep. Annette Sweeney (R-Alden).

Sweeney currently serves as the chairman of the Iowa House Ag Committee and is herself a fellow woman farmer. “Forums like this can be very informative for women in agriculture,” Sweeney said. “The questions the women asked were very well thought out. The women involved in agriculture who attended wanted to make sure their farming operations are business-driven operations. They want to make sure they are making sound business decisions.”

“One of the reasons our conference was so successful was not only the array of first-rate presenters, but the number of young women present who were actively engaged and optimistic about their future in the ag industry,” Schuler concluded.

When asked to provide a closing remark at the Ag Forum, FSA director Whitaker said, “Six months into the year we ran out of money to loan for our Beginning Farmer Program and this makes me very optimistic for the future of agriculture, and a good problem to have.”

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced that it would reclassify farm vehicles and implements as “commercial” vehicles and require all drivers to hold a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL). Applicants for a CDL must be at least 21 years of age, submit a medical record and complete driving record, pass rigorous written and driving tests, and many more requirements that farmers and ranchers just can’t meet.

Fortunately, in a press release issued afterward, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced that it has no intention of proposing new regulations governing the transport of agricultural products. Farmers who voiced their concerns earlier this year prompted FMCSA to initiate a review to make sure states do not excessively enforce regulations on agricultural operators and to ensure consistent access to exemptions for farmers. No regulations will be proposed for any new safety requirements or changes to the rules governing the transport of agricultural products, farm machinery, or farm supplies to or from a farm.

I just thought people should know how ridiculous it would be to have all of these requirements for farm families where most of us learned to drive a tractor long before we had a driver’s license!
I received an email from friends who are farmers in South Dakota telling me that much of their area has been flooded, and where it isn’t flooding, rains have prevented planting. While crops look good in Jersey County, in a brief moment this could change with the erratic weather patterns. It has been a tragic year for farmers across the nation.

The rampage of the Missouri River and releasing of water from the reservoirs has destroyed thousands of acres of farmland and reports are not good.

A conservative estimated loss of $85.2 million, the blasting of the Bird’s Point levee in Southeast Missouri flood water inundating over 130,000 acres of rich farmland to save the town of Cairo, remains controversial. Pictures show huge gouges in the fields that will take years to heal. The Wetlands Initiative and other groups are anxious to see the Bird’s Point farms made into a “River Park” while SIU professors and others have advocated it become a huge wetland. Neither option is welcome by farmers who own this property. This land has been farmed for over 100 years and is known for its high productivity.

California’s San Joaquin Valley, which produces a large percent of fresh food, has been deprived irrigation by environmentalists. Texas is suffering a drought and wildfires have destroyed pasture and crops. Every state has a story to tell about the toll on food production. It reminds me of an article I wrote for News with Views.com in 2004 titled “Where will we get our food?”

Following is an excerpt from that article:

“We take for granted that all we have to do is go to the grocery store or restaurant for food. We are spoiled. Anything we want to eat at any time is available and we tend to forget where the food actually comes from.

Our bread and cereal comes from wheat, corn or grains. We eat fresh, frozen or canned fruits, vegetables and juices. Even pizza is a combination of grains, meats and vegetables. Some form of soybean is in many of our food items. Of course all dairy and meat items are produced on the land where the animals are fed grain and hay.

The American public should understand that before conservation easements, wetlands, open space, green space, heritage preservation areas, parks, refuges, floodplains and all the other land preservation programs take over, we need to ask, “What will I eat when this land is no longer producing food?”

Will we become as dependent on third world countries for food as we are for our oil? Land taken or regulated will most likely never be returned to the farmers who farmed the land. Will farmers become the next endangered species?

When land goes out of production and grazing is no longer permitted, food costs will sky rocket. If we have to import our food, will we have the same control of the safety standards that we have in America? Will our choice of food always be readily available? What will be the cost?”

When land is owned by the government and environmental groups, land use changes reduce property tax income for the county and the burden of this loss falls on those who still own property. When farmers no longer farm the land, many local farm related businesses will close their doors because there will be no need for implements, fertilizer and seed or any other purchases made by producers. This creates a domino effect for the community because the restaurants, hair dressers, grocery stores, auto dealerships and other local businesses feel the impact.

Each year thousands of acres of farmland are turned into state or federal parks, open space or other government programs. If this land is sold, who would be the buyer? A foreign nation? An 11,000 acre farm, once the largest farm in Illinois, is now a wetland owned by US Fish and Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy. Why all the interest to make a swamp out of our cornfields?

In 1971, the United States signed an agreement in Ramsar, Iran called the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Treaty. Once designated, these sites are added to the Convention’s List of Wetlands of International Importance and become known as Ramsar sites.

In 2009, the Upper Mississippi River was designated a “Wetland of International Importance.” The area extends from Wabasha, Minnesota to north of Rock Island, IL. We need to emphasize that grain is shipped by barge. Repeated efforts to update the antiquated, deteriorating lock and dam system on the Mississippi River has failed. Why? It would be interesting to know if is somehow related to the international wetlands agreement made in Ramsar, Iran.

Civil Engineer Carol LaGrasse of the Property Rights Foundation of America wrote an article entitled, “Surgically Removing the Aorta of America, The Mississippi River Corridor.” LaGrasse says, “The National Park Service is the entity in the U.S. which carries out the UN Biosphere Reserve program to restore areas to pre-human, uninhabited condition. Of the five federal agencies to oversee the Mississippi River Corridor, the prime entity is the National Park Service.” Do they want the river corridor uninhabited by humans?

We need to be very careful when we participate in “International” programs. We must remember we are the “sovereign,” United States of America and decisions about wetlands, World Heritage Areas, floodplains and even building codes should not be decided using international guidelines. The motto for global Agenda 21 is to “Think globally — Act locally.” Dangle a grant and you can get the “local communities” to participate. Jersey County, along with most communities, has adopted grant driven sustainable programs that connect to global regulations. Do you know what this will mean for you and for future generations?
Letter to an editor —

This letter was written by California Women for Agriculture President Celeste Settrini in response to a list of “Dirty Dozen” fruits and vegetables in a recent Parent magazine.

I have the most precious niece in the world! She is a total farm girl and loves to help with ranch and farm chores. On occasion, she and I will pick our own strawberries in the field or cut up apples and sit on the porch to eat our “yummies.” Imagine my horror as I read the misinformation presented as fact in your report regarding the Environmental Working Group’s recent release of its updated “Dirty Dozen” list.

While I recognize that many people have concerns about possible pesticide residues on the food they eat, this report is clearly designed to make people feel that their food is unsafe and that pesticide residue on foods is a hazard that people should be highly cautious about. This is not based on any real scientific evidence. Scientists who have reviewed the list and even the EWG itself says it is not risk-based. Further, these scientists say that this “Dirty Dozen” list is actually misleading to consumers and should not be used when making purchasing decisions about fruits and vegetables.

...Unfortunately, too many folks won’t question it because it’s “in print” and will take the information at face value. And thus, a sector of the population will unnecessarily alter their eating habits and ultimately truly jeopardize their health.

EWG is neither a farm-based group nor agricultural advocates. In fact, EWG’s list is yet another example of why 79% of toxicologists surveyed say that the EWG is guilty of over-estimating risk to consumers. EWG develops its list through manipulation of the USDA’s Pesticide Data Program results and the Federal Food and Drug Administration’s pesticide sampling data.

The EWG encourages its members to work for continued consumer access to ‘organic or low pesticide residue foods.’ Current USDA and FDA sampling data clearly shows that this is what consumers are receiving now. The government sampling data results demonstrate that farmers aren’t just meeting the safety standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency; they are significantly exceeding those safety requirements. The crops sampled by USDA are shown to have either no residue at all or residues are 10 times to 100 times below the already stringent safety limits.

CWA is the largest, all-volunteer, nonpartisan agricultural support organization in California; and our membership is primarily comprised of women who are farmers, consumers, working professionals, mothers and daughters – who share a passion to support California agriculture and advocate for the importance of ensuring a local, affordable and reliable food supply that results from a healthy and vibrant agricultural industry.

CWA, unlike EWG, promotes all agriculture and rejects reports and claims such as those that EWG has made and seductively spews. I, personally, will continue to maintain a healthy lifestyle and diet of the “dozen” fruit and vegetables tagged by EWG as dangerous, as well as other fruits, vegetables, dairy and meat.

For consumers who may still be concerned about these very low levels of pesticide residues, they can follow the simple advice from the Federal Food and Drug Administration – just wash your fruits and vegetables. The FDA states that washing under running tap water can remove and often eliminate any minute pesticide residues that may be present. And, keep in mind, organic does not mean pesticide, herbicide or fertilizer free. Whether you choose organic or conventionally grown produce, washing is a healthful practice that should be followed prior to consuming fresh produce. Eating seasonally and buying local also helps to ensure that you are eating fresh and healthy produce.

What’s important to know is that food safety is something farmers take very, very seriously. After all, our families eat this food too and we often live on our farms and ranches. It is crucial that everyone in the supply chain from farmers to consumers be aware of and take precautions to handle food properly, particularly when it comes to produce items that may be eaten raw.

Perhaps the most important advice from the government came recently with the release of the USDA’s long-awaited new food icon, MyPlate. To the applause of nutritionists and health officials, the government advises consumers to “fill your half your plate with fruits and vegetables.” Further underscoring the importance of this recommendation are two new studies that have shown a correlation between inadequate consumption of fruits and vegetables and lower IQs and a higher incident of behavioral disorders in children.

Eating a balanced diet, coupled with exercise is so important to healthy eating. And, if you care where your produce comes from, then buy from California and USA farmers and ranchers and support organizations like CWA who value the truth and are intolerant of sensationalism.

Resolutions due by September 12

As stated in the AAW bylaws, “All resolutions to be considered at the Annual Meeting, except those coming from the Board of Directors, shall be sent to the Resolutions Committee at least 60 days before the Annual Meeting. The committee shall prepare all resolutions for consideration and provide copies for publication in the newsletter. Resolutions originating with individual members or affiliated organizations shall be signed by at least 10 members and be accompanied by supporting data and rationale. Emergency resolutions may be presented by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates. The presenter must provide copies for each delegate.”

With this in mind, if you or your affiliate would like to submit a resolution about an issue, please get it to Karen Yost, resolutions@americanagriwomen.org by September 12 so that she can prepare it for the Annual Meeting at the convention on November 12.

AAW Fly-In, continued from page 1.

...and headed off to USDA for a morning of briefings on Ag Labor to Pesticide and Fumigant issues. Then off we all went on our mission to visit with as many members of Congress as our bodies would allow. Issues ranged from E-Verify-Ag Labor-Guest Worker Visa to the impact and future of Health Care Reform on agriculture.

Tuesday evening we collected at the House Agriculture Committee Room for our reception, where we invite our congressional delegates and their staff for an evening of networking and socializing. This year we were also joined by the United States Cattlemen, who all showed up in their signature cowboy hats.

This was the first time that the Federated Women In Timber joined with American Agri-Women for their annual Fly-In, even though some states have been affiliate members for over 20 years. They reported that they appreciated the quality of the speakers during the symposium and having the different agency people rotate in and out of one location. Everyone enjoyed the visit to the Portuguese Embassy, the Capital Hill reception and the ability to network.
Donita Whitney-Bammerlin, Kansas Agri-Women, is up on up-cycling and told us all about it at the AAW mid-year meeting in Phoenix. Now you, too, can do it!

Find out how to participate in the “Up-cycled Style Review” at the November AAW convention in Wichita, on page 3!