The very successful AAW national conference held in November in St. Louis drew more than 300 participants and was keynoted by Dr. J. Scott Vernon, professor of Agricultural Education and Communication at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, who spoke to the group about his site ILoveFarmers.org, which is the fastest growing ag-related page on Facebook.

His target audience is 14-24 year olds, both urban and rural, using other students their age to help “celebrate choice in the market place thanks to American family farmers and ranchers.”

To help meet their goals the I Love Farmers group has created an edgy tattoo-like logo that reads “I Love Farmers They Feed My Soul” which is printed on hats and tee-shirts and other merchandise. They also have created a tee-shirt that says “WTF” in large letters on the front, and on the back reads “Where’s the food without the farmer?”

To date, more than 27,000 fans follow their agricultural advocacy Facebook page, which you may wish to view and follow.

Vernon said, “Effective leadership in agriculture requires courage, knowledge and heart. We must have the courage to speak out for our industry in a way that resonates with consumers, legislators and the world. We must continue to seek new knowledge and skills that will allow us to meet the demands of a complex global society. And, through it all, we must have the heart to remember what we do...we feed the world.”

In honor of his 50th anniversary on WGN, American Agri-Women has established a Facebook page for tributes to Orion Samuelson.

Samuelson is a longtime friend of agriculture - and of American Agri-Women. In fact, Illinois Agri-Women was founded at a meeting in Orion’s office at WGN-Chicago. A familiar voice to many AAW members, Orion has spoken at past AAW meetings.

Often referred to as the #1 ag broadcaster in America, Orion Samuelson has served as WGN Radio Agribusiness Director since 1960. Orion presents daily agricultural and business reports on WGN, in addition to co-hosting The Morning Show, WGN Radio's agriculture program, on Saturdays at 5am.

American Agri-Women’s new officer team. Left to right are Past President Marcie Williams (OH), Treasurer Carolyn Kleiber (KS), Secretary Jody Elrod (TX), President Chris Wilson (KS), First Vice President Karen Yost (MT), Vice President of Education Lisa Condon (WI), and Vice President of Communications Linda Swiercinsky (IL).

Continued on page 6.
Dear AAW Members,

The Mid-Year board of directors meeting will be April 7-10 in Phoenix, AZ. We need you at Mid-Year as we consider position updates and priorities for this year and Fly-In. We will host a special reception for women in agriculture in Arizona on Thursday, April 7, so please invite any woman you know in Arizona agriculture to attend this reception. More information and online registration for Mid-Year are available at the AAW website, as well as in this newsletter. Of course, Mid-Year also is a great time to join with other AAW members, discuss issues and get rejuvenated and refocused for Fly-In and the rest of the year.

The AAW videos from our tv show are posted online at vimeo.com, so please share this and encourage others to view them if they have not been able to see them on RFD-TV.

Syngenta Leadership At Its Best will be held April 10-13 in Phoenix, so this is a great opportunity for our Syngenta class members to attend our policy-making board of directors meeting, and we look forward to having many of them with us.

Following a great convention in St. Louis in November, AAW members turned their attention to many issues being taken up by Congress. We were involved in working for changes to the estate tax, and some relief was provided. The full brunt of the death tax was deflected when Congress passed and the President signed into law H.R. 4853, the Middle Class Tax Relief Act. This legislation temporarily lowers the estate tax from the rate of 55% to 35% while increasing the exemption from $1 million to $3.5 million. However, H.R. 4853 expires in two years, bringing the estate tax back to the rate of 55%.

Also, we worked on the food safety legislation, which was passed and signed into law. Members have mixed emotions about the food safety legislation, and Food Safety Chair Ruth Jensen has provided excellent information, available at the AAW website. As with many laws, we will have to see how it is administered through rules and regulations to know whether it is a good thing or not.

Thank you, START Committees, for your work on these and other bills during a hectic time! Thank you to all who emailed, wrote letters, and made calls. You helped get the estate tax legislation passed.

Unfortunately, just before the New Year, we lost our dear sister in agriculture Joan Jacobson, and she will be greatly missed. Joan was a great member of Wisconsin Women for Agriculture and AAW. She was very interested in and supportive of the Agri-Women tv show.

In December, the first issue of the AAW E-News was published and I hope you noticed it in your email. This newsletter is being sponsored by Hertz Farm Management and published and distributed through Warren Clark’s AgPR. The first issue focused on the estate tax issue; animal rights; and the I Love Farmers...They Feed My Soul keynote at the AAW Convention. Thanks to Warren Clark and Hertz Farm Management for working with Vice President of Communications Linda Swiercinsky to produce this great new information product for AAW. We also have a daily newsletter, the Agri-Women Daily, on Twitter, incorporating several of the day’s news stories related to agriculture. If we don’t have your email address, please provide it to Carolyn Kleiber (address to the right) so we can get you on the E-News list.

AAW affiliate meetings are keeping AAW executive committee members on the go. Linda Swiercinsky attended the California Women for Agriculture meeting in January, and First Vice President Karen Yost attended the Colorado Agri-Women meeting. I’m looking forward to speaking with New York Agri-Women at their first annual meeting — via Skype. Let us know if there’s an opportunity to visit your affiliate — either in person or via conference call or the web!

Sincerely,

Chris
We met in St. Louis . . .

American Agri-Women’s 2010 Convention in November was truly exceptional this year — how can you beat a stay at the St. Louis Ritz-Carlton, exciting speakers, interesting and informational tours, workshops on several useful topics including how agriculture can get the most out of the social media, and scrumptious food and good company in the hospitality room? Here is what Social Media Chair Arwen McGilvra tells us about the convention:

The theme of this year’s annual American Agri-Women conference was “Gateway to Agriculture in the 21st Century.” To focus on this theme, many sessions and speakers covered the use of social media to tell our stories of agriculture. There were sessions for both beginners and advanced users of Facebook and Twitter. All the speakers emphasized engaging the public. Michele Payn-Knoper of Cause Matter Corps puts it this way, “Listen, Engage, Educate.”

Michele spoke to participants about using social media to be an advocate, or voice for agriculture. She helped many people start Facebook and Twitter accounts during the conference and get their feet wet in social media. Food is a hot button issue right now, and Michele says “It’s time for agriculture to leverage… through social media leadership to influence the public option, rather than react to rhetoric.” Her handout shows how many followers anti-ag groups like HSUS (32,000 followers on Twitter) and PETA (754,000 Facebook fans) have and emphasizes that we have to be connected through social media or those groups will form the face of agriculture for us.

Michele suggests that you start by dedicating 15 minutes a day to using Twitter and Facebook to update your status with what you’re doing on the farm, post links, and join the discussion on Ag pages that you support.

I spoke on a panel about working with the media, giving suggestions on how to use social media to grow your message, and answering questions about online reputation management. Also on the marketing panel was AAW member Sara Wyant of Agri-Pulse Communications who spoke about building relationships with the traditional media. Larry Stoller of Fastline Publications spoke about using the new technologies of Internet TV, and JoAnn Alumbaugh of McCormick Company spoke about being ready to give an interview.

Again and again this panel of media professionals said you must develop relationships with journalists, reporters, and editors. Don’t treat the media like an enemy. If you have a good relationship and have been reliable, trustworthy, and truthful you may become a source they go to when they need coverage on a story or an insider’s observation on an issue.

Also speaking were Pamela Bartholomew of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, who spoke about how agriculture can use business pages on Facebook to leverage interest and promote agri-tourism as part of their business strategy.

Laura Nielson spoke about findourcommonground.com where she started sharing her farm story with videos on Youtube and turned into an Internet phenomenon. Now part of Common Ground, she spoke about how this new marketing campaign in collaboration with corn and soybean growers associations will help women in agriculture connect with women in the marketplace.

During the President’s Reception on the last night of the conference I was both pleased and surprised to receive the President’s award from Chris Wilson. Chris gave me the award recognizing my contribution to growing the presence and influence of American-Agri Women through social media. During my year as AAW’s social media chair the Facebook page grew from 400 fans to 1,100 and had more than 700 interactions including comments, mentions, and likes. During that time the page received more than 12,000 views with 2,200 being unique.
Networking is a large part of what a convention is about . . .

The convention was a great time to network with AAW members and guests, and our Networking Chair Doris Mold (MN), provided exciting opportunities to do this.

After Doris introduced mentors to their designated first-timer at a meeting, the room was buzzing with women getting to know each other, many becoming instant friends who will look forward to seeing each other at future conventions.

Can’t beat Celeste Settrini’s smile! She’s president of California Women for Agriculture.

Tracy Fitzsimmons (WV) and Katie Yost (MT) get to know each other.

And so do new member Madeline Schultz (IA) and long-time member Betty Jo Smith (OR).

Below are Danell Kalcevic, Heidi Kathrens, Becky Ravenkamp, and Janell Reid, all officers of our new Colorado affiliate.

Wendy Popelka (KS), Janelle Swiercinsky (IL), and Sara Hartung (KS) reminisce about their days in the Munden, KS, 4-H club.
Minnesota Agri-Women member Sarah Tesmer Dornink is the face of can-do AAW members. The original 17-year-old “Rosie the Riveter” who posed for a photographer in an Ann Arbor factory during World War II, died recently in Lansing, MI. Her name was Geraldine Doyle and she didn’t know for 40 years that the photo with her likeness was used for the popular “We Can Do It!” poster.

Idaho Women in Timber member Dolly Lillis stands by the life-sized statue of the tallest man in the world, Robert Wadlow, who grew up in Alton, Illinois. He died in 1940 at almost 9 feet tall.

A pallet of horseradish at the Heepke Farm, where we toured the farm, then had a surprisingly delicious lunch of horseradish dishes, and a demo on how to prepare it from “scratch.”

Past presidents Trenna Grabowski (IL) and Yvonne Erickson (MN) in front; and Alice Dettwyler (OR), Kathy Reavis (TX), Ardath DeWall (IL), and Marcie Williams (OH) in back. Not pictured is Sandy Greiner (IA).

Vicky Maaske, Country Store chair, shows a vest and shirt with AAW logos.

Dr. Janet Talcott, Mid-Continent Association for Agriculture and Biomedical Research, and her husband, Dr. Michael Talcott, Washington University, who both spoke at the St. Louis Zoo dinner.
New officers are ready to go

Lisa Condon, VP Education

In 1998, my husband Robert and I were contestants in the local Jaycees Outstanding Young Farmer Competition. We competed against five well-deserving farm operations; we won the competition and were chosen to compete at the state level. Included in the prize package was a year's membership to our local Rock River Chapter, Wisconsin Women for Agriculture.

I started attending meetings and I was very interested in what WWA and American Agri-Women had to offer. I was looking for an organization where the women were advocates for agriculture. My mentors Vicki Coughlin and Diane Qualmann were very upbeat, fun to be with and encouraged me to take a more active role in our local chapter. The rest, they say, is history. Many thanks go out to Vicki and Diane for sorting through the confusion of my first national convention and supporting me along the way to my national position, Vice President of Education for American Agri-Women.

This year I would like to see every woman involved in agriculture using social media as a way to communicate with consumers and unite with people in all areas of agriculture.

With the help of National Corn Growers Association, I have set up our first social media session this January. Social media is an easy way to educate consumers about modern agriculture practices. I would also like to be able to answer Humane Society's negative ads with posting positive videos of agricultural operations everyday activities in and around our communities. (A work in progress).

With the help of Karen Yost and Chris Wilson, we will be redesigning our American Agri-Women booth incorporating our new logo. I will then attend the Ag in the Classroom National Conference in June and also the FFA National Convention in October.

Jody Elrod, Secretary

My goal, first and foremost, is to promote agriculture — then Texas Agri-Women and American Agri-Women! I am also privileged to work in an industry I care so much about. It's the only industry that each and every one of us depends on... remember without agriculture we are hungry and naked.

I am excited, with my new role as secretary, to learn about American Agri-Women on the national level. Also, I am thrilled beyond words to work with and learn from the wonderful and talented board members.

Donors help make our convention a success!

Convention Sponsors

Farm Credit
Monsanto
Novus
Dr. Gary & Roberta Minish, Makanda, IL

Silent Auction Items

Vicky Maaske
Ann Fitzpatrick Jones
Texas Agri-Women
Illinois Agri-Women
Minnesota Agri-Women District 11
North Dakota Agri-Women
Oregon Women for Agriculture
Minnesota Agri-Women
Jane Marshall
Carolyn Kleiber
Montana Agri-Women
Sue McClun
Rosemary Eckardt
Eunice Guell
Pamela Sweeten
Henry State Bank
Colorado Agri-Women
U. of Minnesota Collegiate Agri-Women
Betty Jo Smith
Wisconsin Women for Agriculture
Alice Dettwyler
Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau
Stone Hill Winery

Orion Samuelson, continued

Orion is also heard daily on 32 radio stations with his syndicated National Farm Report and on 12 stations with his syndicated Samuelson Sez. Orion and Max Armstrong are seen weekly on rural channel RFD-TV, carried on Dish TV and DirecTV on This Week in Agribusiness.

His life-long commitment to agriculture has been recognized by organizations in all segments of agribusiness. Thanks to Warren Clark of CCI Marketing/AgPR, AAW was given the use of the domain name orionsamuelson.com for this purpose. Our Social Media Chair Arwen McGilvra has established the Facebook page – So please go there and take a few moments to leave a message for Orion.

Live Auction Items

Oregon Women for Ag Pendleton blanket
Novus: Haiti art print
Fur Commission USA: mink teddy bears
Roger DeWitt: pen and ink print “Traditions”
Ellen Way: Big Sky vacation on her ranch
Barbara LeVake: condo vacation in Mexico

We made $1677 in the silent auction and $3695 in the live auction!

Other Convention Donations

Hospitality Room:

Jerry Robinson
Susan Wall
Mary Meinhart
Janelle Swiercinsky
Linda Swiercinsky
Prairie Farms
Ardath DeWall
Marcoot Jersey Creamery
Grey Eagle Distributors, Maryland Heights, MO
Flamm Orchards, Cobden, IL
HyVee grocery, Galesburg, IL
Several AAW affiliates sent reports to the convention with excellent information for us all. Here are highlights . . .

**California Women for Ag**

We have partnered with the “I Love Farmers . . . They Feed My Soul” campaign, which has enabled us to take the message of the importance of ag and its future to a broader audience.

**Colorado Agri-Women**

Colorado Agri-Women is a coalition of women from all walks of agriculture who have decided to come together to do three main things. First, we want to educate ourselves so we can be a better and stronger force for truth about agriculture. It is our hope that we can learn from each other and all commodity groups. One of our main studies this year has been to learn about the Constitution and our legislative process.

Second, we want to help educate others around us by working with local organizations and supporting them with outreach and donations. We hope to do this by working with FFA and 4-H chapters to spread the news about different happenings in the ag community.

Third, we hope to find places and ways that we can volunteer and work with others to better our communities.

**Kansas Agri-Women**

KAW has continued to sponsor and participate in the ‘Women Managing the Farm Conference’ in February. This conference is an opportunity for women involved in every aspect of agriculture, from new farm wives to full-time operators to network and share experiences.

**Illinois Agri-Women**

In September members gathered as guests of Henry State Bank for our fall board meeting and opportunity to meet Midland FFA officers and potential members from the area. Raffle tickets for an ag quilt and a quilted bag were sold to raise money for the IAW scholarship fund for members to attend AAW events. Britney Cowan, a senior at the U of I, received the $1000 scholarship for students studying to become agricultural instructors. We established a 2012 Farm Bill Task Force to review information and establish positions on the bill.

**Michigan Agri-Women**

MAW members attended a three day Farm Women’s Symposium in Bay City. We also worked with State Rep. John Proos to get a bill titled Cottage Kitchen Bill, where pre-baked pies could be baked in non-licensed kitchen for sale at farmer’s markets. We worked with Berrien County Farm Bureau Young Farmers to sponsor a National Lawn Mower Race. The money raised was put into an agricultural grant that teachers at local schools can apply for, to teach about agriculture.

**Minnesota Agri-Women**

Members participated in Women’s Ag Night dinners that were rotated around the state. These dinners give women the opportunity to network with other women in the ag industry. Another new activity is the book club, which gives members an opportunity to educate themselves about what the general public is learning about agriculture. Members read books or view movies and discuss them with other members.

**North Dakota Agri-Women**

The North Valley Chapter members visited a class of enthusiastic fourth-graders with “What Do You Know About Agriculture?” activities. The Lake Region Chapter held its annual spring fling at which an area young woman who is now a reporter and producer with Prairie Public Broadcasting was the guest speaker. The chapter’s Farm Woman of the Year was presented at the conclusion.

**Ohio Agri-Women**

Our best report is our recent growth in membership. We have recently added ten new members, which is a 33% increase. But the numbers are just one factor—they brought their enthusiasm! We are looking forward to fresh faces, fresh ideas, and fresh spirit. We have joined the Ohio Farm Women Consortium and will be participating in a pilot study of Ohio women farmers.

**Oregon Women in Timber**

OWIT’s forest education program, Talk About Trees, taught 141,802 people about Oregon trees and forests over the 2009/2010 school year. We currently have 17 program facilitators teaching our programs. Since 1991 we have educated over 2 million participants throughout Oregon. For more information about Talk About Trees, go to http://tat.orwit.org.

**Oregon Women for Agriculture**

OWA had a two-day retreat to focus on strategic planning, focusing on membership, education, and legislation. Two items which came out of the meeting were that we set up an OWA Facebook page and established a membership committee to focus on welcoming new members with a mentor and recruiting members.

**Sigma Alpha Sorority**

We were able to send three women to the AAW Fly-In, Katherine Rosser, Johanna Wilkes, and Kendall Eisele. They obtained the tools to assist Sigma Alpha members to better understand the importance of AAW and to develop a stronger fellowship of women in agriculture.

**Texas Agri Women**

We rang in 2010 by celebrating our 25th Anniversary. TAW was established in 1985 by a group of very committed women with a love and passion for agriculture and its importance to our existence.

**Wisconsin Women for Ag**

Fourteen types of seeds and grains were presented for identification at the WWA booth at Farm Technology Days. It was a fun and challenging activity for people of all ages.
STARS FELL ON SOUTHERN NEVADA
– The Summit of the Horse –

By Linda Swiercinsky, Vice President of Communications

I only attended one day of the Summit of the Horse in Las Vegas, Jan. 3-6, but I was impressed with the star-studded lineup of speakers. Among the speakers: former Congressman Charlie Stenholm (D-TX); BLM Director Bob Abbey (who a week later announced that a wild horse roundup east of Reno would be cancelled because an aerial survey in December showed the number of horses isn’t as high as previously thought); Cheyenne attorney Karen Budd-Falen, who will be sending an article to the Voice for our next issue; Dr. Temple Grandin, Colorado State University animal scientist whose life was the subject of an HBO movie and won a Golden Globe best actress award for Claire Danes’ portrayal of Dr. Grandin; and Trent Loos, who facilitated questions from the audience after each speaker.

I’d seen a news story on local TV about PETA protestors and decided to drop in myself. At that point hotel security was not allowing outsiders in, but Montana Agri-Woman Jody Lamp, vouched for me and allowed me to come in without credentials. There were about 200 people in the room and an estimated 1,000 more watching on the web. Later I saw Mindy Patterson, who had been on our animal welfare panel at the St. Louis Zoo, representing MO Federation of Animal Owners (MOFED).

A dozen Indian tribes were represented, plus horse rescue owners, ranchers and land managers, horse breeders, trainers and “just plain concerned citizens,” according to Sue Wallis, one of the organizers as well as a Wyoming legislator. She and former Montana legislator Ed Butcher, who successfully sponsored 2009 legislation to allow horse slaughter facilities to be built in Montana, were on a panel with Jason Smith of the Northwest Horse Coalition talking about solutions. Butcher said the most stable potential markets for horsemeat are in China and the Far East.

Dr. Grandin described three types of horse slaughter facilities in Mexico and commented that she was concerned about horses being sent to the lowest Mexican slaughter plants where treatment did not meet our standards.

“The Summit caught the imagination of media from across the country from the Wall Street Journal to the Los Angeles Times, and became an opportunity for ordinary horse people struggling to make a living and to raise their children in what could be once again a healthy, viable, horseback culture to tell their story. The buzz on the Internet was palpable and positive,” stated Wallis.

Video documentation of the proceedings of the Summit of the Horse are now available on the United Horsemens website. Each session can be accessed individually. Go to United-Horsemen.org Summit of the Horse - Archived Webcasts.

AAW Outstanding Members

This year President Chris Wilson gave three kinds of President’s Awards at the annual convention in November. Congratulations to these outstanding AAW members!

American Agri-Women
VISION AWARD

Vision Awards were given to individuals who caught the vision of American Agri-Women and in an outstanding way provided leadership to advance the vision. These went to women who came in contact with AAW, appreciated what they saw, and worked to provide that opportunity to others and to extend AAW into new areas.

Danell Kalcevik  Cari Rincker  Elaine Gaesser
Brenda Lammens  Denise Zaborowski  Susan Fitzgerald

American Agri-Women
AFFILIATE
PRESIDENTS’ AWARD

Affiliate Presidents were given the opportunity to nominate an individual from their affiliate who has provided outstanding service to their affiliate. Presidents’ Awards were given to recognize these outstanding individuals.

JoAnn Wall  Sue Kruger  Heidi Kathrens
Brenda Sellers

American Agri-Women
PRESIDENT’S AWARD

Traditional President’s Awards were given to individual committee chairs and appointees to recognize their outstanding contributions to AAW over the past year.

Arwen McGilvra  Abby Amick  Arlene Kovash
Doris Mold  Kathy Reavis  Linda Swiercinsky
Mary Mertz  Ruth Jensen  Sue Kruger
AAW Mid-Year Meeting Registration

The 2011 American Agri-Women Mid-Year meeting will be held April 7-10 in Phoenix, Arizona.

Name ________________________________________________________
Affiliate _______________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________
City ______________________ State ___________  Zip ________________
Phone __________________________ Fax _________________________
Email _________________________________________________________
Date of Arrival _______________________
Roommate needed? ___________________

Fees

Full Registration (breakfast, breaks, and lunch on Friday and Saturday) .... $125
☐ Partial Registration (Friday or Saturday only) ..................................... $75
☐ Collegiate Full Registration ................................................................. $100
☐ Partial Collegiate Registration (Friday or Saturday only) ................. $60

Total $ _______

To Register
• Mail completed registration and payment to:
  Carolyn Kleiber American Agri-Women Treasurer
  PO Box 111 Hillsboro, KS 67063-0111
  Fax #620-947-2476
• Email treasurer@americanagriwomen.org
• Phone 620-877-7204 for credit card registration
• Register online at www.americanagriwomen.org

Hotel Information

The Crowne Plaza Phoenix Airport, 4300 East Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85034. Hotel Front Desk: 602-273-7778/Hotel Fax: 602-275-5616. Room Rates: $109. There is a 24/7 shuttle to and from airport. On-site parking $4/day. Hotel registration deadline is March 15. Please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible so we know if we will need to request a larger room block.

Silent Auction Information

Each year, at both the convention and at Mid-Year, AAW has a silent auction to benefit the AAW Resource Center’s education projects. Individuals and affiliates alike are encouraged to bring an item (representing their state, or their own farms, or not) to include in the auction. Keep in mind that winners will have to carry or ship their items home, so don’t make the item too big or bulky. Thank you!
Converse with people you don’t know

By Linda Swiercinsky, Vice President of Communications

Motivational speaker Trent Loos was a return headliner at California Women for Agriculture’s state meeting in Napa and spends about 200 days a year on the road. He frequently has strangers say to him, “You’re the first farmer I’ve ever met!”

City people can be misinformed as Trent found out when a man explained to him why buffalo (and horses) are less likely to pollute streams than cattle: “Buffalo know naturally not to deficate in the stream,” the gentleman said seriously.

Trent has a mind for retaining facts, which many of us do not. When Dr. Karen Smith, a Napa County public health official, announced to CWA members that “there are 17 teaspoons of sugar in every 20 ounce bottle of Coke” and suggested that we shouldn’t subsidize corn because it contributes to obesity, Trent interjected “Only 4% of the corn crop goes into high fructose corn syrup.”

Even if we don’t respond with facts like this, Trent urges us to “Always share your personal story.” The importance of ag women talking to consumers was repeated by Cory Lunde, “Know a California Farmer” website coordinator, and rancher Sam Dolcini from nearby Marin.

Another interesting panel, which included Dr. Smith, was called “Fascination with Food” and was comprised of a Napa County commissioner, a banker, and chef at a world renowned restaurant. The event was almost single-handedly planned by Jeri Hansen-Gill, a former CWA president from Napa.

Ruth Jensen presented a slide show on the AAW trip to New York City last June and spunky CWA president Celeste Settrini commented several times that CWA members should become more involved in AAW. She appointed Rose Tryon as CWA’s liaison with AAW.

CWA is the only state affiliate grandfathered into AAW like a commodity affiliate and paying a flat fee based on total membership. This gives the affiliate one vote at AAW board of directors meetings but only individual members who pay AAW dues can vote in general meetings. In all other states every state member is automatically a member of AAW and every member has a vote.

AAW looks to California in many areas of leadership, especially committee chairs, and participants in Mid-Year and Fly-In meetings. Two past presidents, Carolyn Leavens and Mitzi Ayala Perdue, have played significant roles in our growth. And, we all know, that what starts in California doesn’t STAY in California!

Santa Gives Ranchers a “Lump of Coal”

Santa (aka Interior Secretary Ken Salazar) announced Dec. 23 that BLM will review some 220 million acres of BLM land that is NOT currently under Wilderness protection to see which should be given a new “wild lands” designation. Congress would decide whether those lands should be designated permanent wilderness areas, according to Salazar. BLM has six months to submit a plan for the new wilderness areas.

Timing is everything. Note the announcement was made two days before Christmas when people don’t have much time to read the newspaper or watch the news. Also, this will be coming to Congress about the time we go to the Fly-In in D.C. this June.

So, to conclude, if Salazar has his way, there actually wouldn’t be any oil or gas or coal for Santa to leave in the stocking...

Pet Owners, Animal Agriculture Must Unite

The St. Louis Zoo was the backdrop for a presentation by Karen Strange, right, president, Missouri Federation of Animal Owners (www.mofed.org) who told AAW conference participants that the pet industry is part of animal agriculture and all involved in animal agriculture need to be working together to fend off attacks from radical groups that try to eliminate animal agriculture altogether. She pointed out that deceptive advertising to generate donations is one of the tactics used by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Karen’s husband Lewis is on the left, and Mindy Patterson in the center. Both work for MoFed.
In Passing

By Linda Swiercinsky, Vice President of Communications

TIMOTHY D. FINDLEY 1943-2010

Tim Findley, speaker at our 2008 AAW convention in San Antonio, died in a Reno hospital Nov. 28. He was 67.

Findley’s career was intriguing. After graduating from the University of Colorado and serving in the Marine Corps, he went to work for the San Francisco Chronicle in the late ’60s and early ’70s. He covered the Indian occupation at Alcatraz and also spent time behind bars in Soledad Prison for a series on prison issues, in addition to identifying members of the Symbionese Liberation Army who kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst.

Findley later worked in television and for Rolling Stone magazine and, for awhile, on the staff of then Speaker of the CA Assembly Willie Brown. Until his health began to fail in recent years, Findley was a prolific writer. His last piece, a supplement on wild horses in Nevada titled “Mustangs,” appeared in the winter issue of Range magazine.

Speaking of Hearst, this was just in the Las Vegas paper 1/13/11: Three zebras that escaped from the Hearst Ranch near Cambria, CA, were shot to death by neighboring ranchers who claim the exotic animals were threatening their horses and cattle. The animals are descendants of zebras brought to the San Simeon estate of William Randolph Hearst in 1923 as part of the publisher’s private zoo, once considered the largest private zoo in the world. It was dispersed beginning in 1937. The only animals left on the ranch’s 82,000 acres, according to the AP, are about 80 zebras, a few sheep and some goats.

ROBERT WILLIAM ANDREW FELLER 1918-2010

Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Feller passed away Dec. 15 in Cleveland. Nicknamed “The Heater from Van Meter,” Feller grew up on a farm west of Des Moines and attributed his arm strength and ball speed to milking cows, picking corn and baling hay.

Except for serving in World War II, Feller’s entire career was with the Cleveland Indians. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1962 with 93.8% approval on the first ballot.

With the sounds of bulldozers echoing beneath him, veteran tree sitter John Quigley perched in a century-old oak near Arcadia, CA, recently, saying he won’t come down until public works officials stop felling scores of trees as part of a dam improvement project. Public works officials say the 11 acres of trees, some of them more than 100 years old, must go to ensure the integrity of a nearby dam that provides most of the drinking water to the Los Angeles suburbs of Arcadia and Sierra Madre.

As darkness fell, about 2,000 protestors and onlookers, including actress Darryl Hannah, gathered. Hannah, like other environmentalist activists, said the sediment from the dam could be placed elsewhere, including a huge gravel pit about 10 miles away.

AAW’s own celebrity, Mitzi Perdue, has written a book about the two most important men in her life, her father and her husband. The book is titled “I Didn’t Bargain for This!” and is available on Amazon.com.

JOAN NEWTON JACOBSON 1934-2010

One of the founders of the Northwoods chapter of Wisconsin Women for Agriculture, Joan Jacobson, passed away December 28. She was the first treasurer of the chapter, organized in the spring of 1998 in Eau Claire, WI.

Ruth Jensen fondly remembers meeting Joan at a political meeting after she and her new husband had moved to Wisconsin and didn’t know a soul. “Joan took me under her wing and embraced every meeting and activity as though it was a huge party, even the long hours’ deliberation-filled-teaching-moments kind of events.”

Joan grew up and lived in the Garden Valley area her whole life. She was united in marriage to Junior Jacobson in 1955 and worked with him on the farm.

Joan enjoyed her chickens, quilting, shopping, antiques, collecting baskets, traveling and going out to eat. She was a member of the Dairy Breakfast Committee, Milk Marketing Board, Wisconsin Women for Agriculture, and Alma Center School Building Committee., as well as a 4-H leader. She was a 50-year member of Jackson County Homemakers and active in Grace Lutheran Church of Alma Center.

Joan is survived by her husband, Junior, a son and two daughters. Condolences may be sent to Junior’s address, W14223 W. Sterling Rd, Alma Center, WI 54611.

USDA was supposed to issue more guidelines for school lunches Jan. 14 but at press time I haven’t seen them yet or any reaction from the dairy industry. The recommendation that jumped out at me was that skim milk should be offered instead of low fat! According to the TV report, USDA says that children consume more than half of their calories at school. (See next story on drinking fountains in school cafeterias.)

This came from an editorial in the Lodi, CA, News-Sentinel, 1/8/11: “There’s a new law mandating that free drinking water be provided in school cafeterias. The law requires school districts, such as Lodi Unified, to either provide the water by July 1 or explain why they can’t afford it. State Sen. Mark Leno says his law is meant to fight childhood obesity. If kids drink more water, the thinking goes, they won’t guzzle as much Coke or gobble as many fries. . . .

A lot of school cafeterias don’t even have drinking fountains, the senator says, so pitchers of water and Dixie cups need to be put out on tables, or “hydration stations,” sort of like drink dispensers in fast food joints, should be offered. . . .

The state is busted, local schools are broke, teachers are being laid off, and we are worried about putting Dixie cups and pitchers out on lunchroom tables?

There is not one study that proves putting out water during lunchtimes will help students lose weight, let along get more A’s and B’s. This is pure, edu-nutritional micro-management.

Meanwhile, there is plenty of hard evidence that lawmakers, left to write laws without thinking about the practical consequences, can really goof things up.

A footnote on nutrition: Wal-Mart, the nation’s largest grocer, is going to reformulate thousands of products to make them more healthful, according to an AP reporter, and push its suppliers to do the same, joining first lady Michelle Obama’s effort to curb childhood obesity.

The company plans to reduce sodium and added sugars in some items, build stores in poor areas that don’t already have grocery stores, reduce prices on produce and develop a logo for more healthy items.