Flinchbaugh is 2011 Veritas Award Winner

Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh is this year’s winner of American Agri-Women’s prestigious Veritas Award.

Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh is one of those rare individuals who has made a positive impact on the lives of students, the agriculture industry and the United States Congress. He is well known in political circles as an expert on agricultural policy, actively advising Congressional members and agriculture commodity and organization leaders. Flinchbaugh served as chairman of the Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill and has long proclaimed the desire of agricultural producers to attain value from the marketplace for their production.

Dr. Flinchbaugh, professor of agriculture economics at Kansas State University, has had a long and distinguished career in academia, and is the author of 100 plus publications, including an agricultural policy textbook. He has lectured and given speeches throughout the nation on public policy topics and political economy.

Along with one of his former Kansas State agriculture economic students, Dr. Mark Edelman, Iowa State University, Flinchbaugh wrote regular columns for the Farm Journal magazine from 1998 to 2001, entitled “Eye to Eye.”

Flinchbaugh is a member of Rotary International, serves on the Board of Directors of the Kansas City Board of Trade, the Farm Foundation, and the Kansas Agricultural and Rural Leadership, Inc. (KARL). He has served as host and leader for the People to People exchange program, visiting countries in Europe, the former Soviet Union, the South Pacific, the Peoples’ Republic of China and Africa, advising them on agriculture economic policy.

Flinchbaugh has received the Hildreth Award for career achievement in public policy education, the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award from the American Agricultural Editors Association, and the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award from both the Kansas and American Farm Bureau Federations. Throughout his long career, Dr. Flinchbaugh has exemplified the “Pursuit of Truth” ideal.

AAW presents the Veritas Award annually to a person who has given public witness to “the pursuit of truth” in accordance with the principles in the AAW Statement of Philosophy, The Call to Power.

Two outstanding AAW members receive LEAVEN Awards

This year, Carol Chandler of Selma, California, and Julie Tesch of St. Paul, Minnesota, received American Agri-Women’s LEAVEN awards.

Carol Chandler was nominated by California Women for Agriculture (CWA). Carol is a partner at Chandler Farms with her husband Bill and handles the business administration for the operation. They grow grapes for raisins and wine, as well as almonds, peaches, plums and nectarines. Carol was raised as a “city girl” in the San Francisco Bay area and has grown into a dedicated advocate for agriculture. Daily, Carol can be found actively advocating for ag labor, and endangered species, education and water supply reform, as well as underscoring the need for a domestic food supply and a healthy agricultural economy as a matter of national security.

Carol is currently serving on the California State University Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor. She also serves on California Grape and Tree Fruit League Board of Directors, as well as their Labor committee; the California Women for Agriculture Board of Directors as the Federal Tax Force Director; and American Agri-Women’s Board of Directors as the Ag Business and Economics Chair. In 2006, Common Threads bestowed upon Carol the first Tapestry Award to recognize her commitment to education and to improving the health of the agricultural industry in California. Carol has served on many other boards as well, including the
Dear AAW Members,

Many of us have recently returned home after attending the 2011 AAW Convention held in Wichita, Kansas. What a great meeting it was! “Thank You” to the warm, welcoming and efficient members of Kansas Agri-Women; for the exemplary hospitality, tours and speakers; for the opportunities to meet and greet new friends; and for providing us with the opportunity to join together for encouragement, support and new learning experiences. It was wonderful!

Abby Amick, newly installed VP of Communications, emailed each attendee a convention news release and also posted it on the AAW website. I encourage you to personalize it and distribute it to your state and local news stations. The more we send, the better chance for other women in agriculture to know about us and to get involved. Contact Abby if you have any questions about getting yours sent.

Arwen McGilvra has posted convention photos on the website for you to attach to the press release...or to use as you need within your state organization. She has also developed our first ever QR (Quick Response) scan that you will find in this issue of the Voice. Download a reader app to your phone, scan the code, and viola! you will be directed to the photos.

The Dept. of Labor comment period on proposed child labor regulations ended December 1st so we will keep you informed of the outcome. Many of you took the time to submit your comments on behalf of agriculture, as did AAW. Thank you, Carol Chandler for helping format our letter. This is a situation that has all of agriculture concerned.

Representative Annette Sweeney, Iowa, alerted us to a HSUS animal rights program being distributed to schools in Missouri. And Celeste Settrini, CWA president, noted in her convention report that schools in California routinely promote a vegan agenda to their students. Each of us should monitor the curriculums in our school districts to make sure that these anti-agriculture agendas are opposed.

Good news: the Senate and House passed and President Obama signed the Agriculture Spending Bill that included funding for horse processing inspections for the first time since 2007. After a September GAO report was released (requested by Senator Baucus of MT) that revealed the unintended consequences and harm done to the equine industry from the ban on slaughter, federal funding has been reinstated. Of course, Wayne Pacelle, HSUS president, threatened “controversy, litigation and...a very inhospitable environment” to plants that reopen in Oklahoma and Nebraska. The battle continues. We thank Sue Wallis and her band of ‘United Horsemen’ who continue to work tirelessly on this issue.

And, the Equal Access to Justice Act has new teeth! Thanks to efforts in no small part of Karen Budd-Falen (remember her presentation about this to us at last year’s midyear meeting in Phoenix), Wyoming Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis, and Senator John Barasso, also of Wyoming, subcommittees in both houses are moving forward with measures to stop the misappropriations of EAJA funding. Monitor S 1061 and HR 1996 to keep abreast of this important issue.

Both Nebraska and Iowa seem to be strategic areas of agricultural policy and rule-making decisions. Let me invite you now to make plans to attend the 2012 AAW Midyear meeting in Nebraska City March 29 – April 1st. It will be held at the beautiful Lied Lodge at the Arbor Day Foundation where they encourage planting and UTILIZING trees. I am looking forward to welcoming our Nebraska and Iowa Agri-Women to this event. We will have more information regarding speakers and program soon.

I welcome this opportunity to serve as your president for the next two years and hope you will feel comfortable contacting me with your ideas and concerns so that, united, we can become more effective in promoting our industry.

Have a Blessed New Year!

Karen

President’s Report

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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:

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New Officers Elected at AAW Convention

This year American Agri-Women elected a new first vice president for resolutions and vital issues, vice president of communications, and treasurer.

Sue McCrum, Mars Hill, Maine, was elected first vice president. She is a member of Maine Agri-Women and has served as president and vice president of that affiliate. She will assist the president and coordinate the work of the membership and other committees and will assume the office of president at the end of her term.

Abby Amick, Alma, Kansas, is our new vice president of communications. Abby is a member of Kansas Agri-Women and co-chaired this year’s convention. She will supervise the publishing of the Voice, website, and media relations and write news releases as needed.

Peggy Clark, Dayton, Ohio, is now our treasurer. She has been president of Ohio Agri-Women and is now secretary of that organization.

Carolyn Kleiber, Hillsboro, Kansas, will continue as membership chair.

Karen Yost, Billings, Montana is now AAW president, having been first vice president for the past two years. Lisa Condon, Horicon, Wisconsin is our current vice president of education; Jody Elrod, Sinton, Texas, is secretary; and Chris Wilson, Manhattan, Kansas, is past president.

This year’s nominating committee will be Carolyn Kleiber (KAW), Rosemary Eckardt (WWA), Alice Dettwyler (OWA), and Jody Elrod (TAW).

The Mid-Year agenda is coming soon to AAW’s website at americanagriwomen.org. You can also register online.

AAW Mid-Year Meeting

March 29 – April 1, 2012 at Lied Lodge, Nebraska City, Nebraska

Registration

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) .... $150
☑ Partial Registration (Friday or Saturday only) ........................................ $100
☑ Collegiate Full Registration .......................................................... $100
☑ Partial Collegiate Registration (Friday or Saturday only) ................. $75

Total $ _______

To Register

• Mail completed registration and payment to:
  Peggy Clark, Treasurer
  2274 E. Lytle Five Pts. Rd
  Dayton, OH 45458
  Phone: 937-885-5965
  Fax: 937-885-5942

• Email treasurer@americanagriwomen.org
• Register online at www.americanagriwomen.org

Hotel Information

We will be meeting at Lied Lodge, Nebraska City, NE, a “full service facility with guest rooms featuring work-study areas and data-ports, a fine dining restaurant, a cocktail lounge, an indoor swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna, and fitness center.” Their website is liedlodge.org, if you want to check it out. Room Rates: $93 single occupancy and $103 double occupancy. Please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible so we know if we will need to request a larger room block. Call 1-800-546-5433. Final reservation deadline is March 8.

Silent Auction Information

Each year, 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 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!
2011 AAW Convention Sponsors & Donors

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LEAVEN Award Winners, continued.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Advisory Committee on Emerging Markets, the California Post-secondary Education Commission and served on the University of California Board of Regents. She served as State President of California Women for Agriculture and was honored as one of the California State Legislature’s Women of the Year in 1992 and 2002.

When she is not busy with the organizations mentioned, Carol enjoys playing golf, reading and traveling. She and Bill have two grown sons, a daughter-in-law and a new grandson.

Julie Tesch was nominated by Minnesota Agri-Women. Julie currently serves as the AAW Resource Center president and co-chair on the Agriculture Education committee and has served as a national committee co-chair on the College Project.

Julie serves as Executive Director of the Minnesota Agriculture Education Leadership Council (MAELC), Agricultural Education Club advisor at the University of Minnesota, and on the Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom Board of Directors. She is an avid 4-H and FFA volunteer, Minnesota State Fair Moo Booth supervisor, and international agriculture study trip leader.

Julie is known for her passion to develop the next generation of agricultural leaders and working to recruit and retain them in agricultural fields and organizations. Julie has a long history of working with youth and college students who find her enthusiasm for them and their future contagious!

Julie has served on the AAW Resource Center Board for several years and has led the AAWRC Photo Contest. Julie was able to fill in when a fellow member was no longer able to serve her term as president.

Continued on next page.
Thank you to all who donated to the Resource Center silent auction at the convention!

Colorado Agri-Women
Flint Hills Chapter, KAW
Ohio Agri-Women
Vicki Bowers, Oregon
Laurel Hill
Wisconsin Women for Agriculture
Wrangler
Polk County Chapter, Oregon
Women for Ag
Oregon Women for Agriculture
Barbara Steidinger, Rio Grande
Valley Chapter, Texas Agri-Women
Jeff Arnold, Edinburg Citrus Assn
Carolyn Kleiber, Kansas
Kentucky Women in Agriculture
Mitzi Perdue, Maryland
Alice Johnson McKinney

Kris Zillioux, ConAgra Foods
Jean Pettibone, Kansas
Kathy Reavis, Texas
Donita Whitney-Bammerlin
Michigan Agri-Women
Alice Dettwyler, Oregon
Peggy Clark, Ohio
Kansas Farm Burea
Ann Fitzpatrick Jones
Kay Towne, Kansas
AAW Resource Center
Maine Agri-Women
Jane Marshall
Kristi Miller, Oregon
Lisa Condon, Wisconsin
Oregon Women in Timber
Roberta Lampe
Ardath DeWall, Illinois

Montana Agri-Women
Laura Pearl, Kansas
Merlynn Vertsuyft, Texas
Kansas Pork Assn
Karolyn Zum
Linda Swercinskey in memory of Marilyn Matasovic
Illinois Agri-Women
Wanda Kinney, Kansas
Eunice Guell, Wisconsin
Pioneer Woman
Kansas Sampler Foundation
Ruth Jensen, California
Amanda Radke
High Plains Journal
Lois Schickau, Kansas

Top selling item at $270 was a John Deere flyer wagon full of Illinois products collected by members of Illinois Agri-Women. Donor of the wagon was George Obernagel of Waterloo, IL. Books also were popular items, including “John Wayne—There Rode a Legend” donated by Alice Johnson McKinney of Stanfield, AZ, and “I Never Bargained for This!” donated by Mitzi Perdue of Salisbury, MD.

LEAVEN Award Winners, continued.

and continues in that capacity.

Julie first joined AAW as a college student at the University of Minnesota. From that experience she gained an appreciation for the mentors that she had along the way. She works closely with college students, providing guidance to young professionals as they enter careers in agriculture. Annually, Julie takes students to Switzerland to study alpine agriculture. She finds it important for our future agriculturalists to study other cultures to expand the vision and knowledge of agriculture through the world.

Julie was raised on a dairy and crop farm in south central Minnesota. She was very involved in the dairy industry and was active in the 4-H dairy project.

Julie received her Bachelor of Arts in Applied Economics from the University of Minnesota, and went on to complete a Masters in Agriculture Education. After college she worked as a 4-H Extension Educator, covering two counties. Julie was then hired as the Executive Director for the Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council.

Through her leadership, Minnesota is one of the leading states in agricultural education and she is well respected in the agriculture and policy making communities.

Congratulations to Carol and Julie!

Increase your membership!

This year at the convention, Karen Yost, then AAW Vice President of Resolutions and Vital Issues (now President), presented a workshop on increasing our membership. Participants felt that we all need to make a conscious effort to work on this area of concern, so as a result, we will have a regular column in which to discuss problems and present ideas for acquiring and keeping new members.

The following are ideas presented by Celeste Settrini, President, California Women for Agriculture:

Mixer for new and old members – Serve appetizers and wine and give away door prizes donated from various spas or hair salons. Make it a girly-girl type of event. Mix in some ag facts throughout the evening.

Contests – Have a contest for members. The person that gets the most new members during the year gets a nice prize.

Social Media – Tweet, Facebook, and blog about what it is to be an AAW member and why you should be one. Discuss the benefits, etc.

Press releases – Create press releases for your local news paper, as well as various larger ag publications, partnering with like ag organizations to get cheaper or free rates. Team up with ag radio and TV stations across the country to promote AAW as well.

Booths – Have a trade show booth at large national trade shows such as American Farm Bureau, National Cattlemen’s, as well as local state association events. Provide information and giveaways. If you sign up on the spot you get a better give-away.

Face to Face – Talk about AAW wherever you might be. Ask if people have heard of AAW, are they a member and if not then why not? I once read a quote, “How can you see eye to eye if you never are face to face?” It stuck with me and made me realize in a world of technology sometimes personal interactions are best.

What do you think? Do you have something to add, or other ideas? Email Arlene Kovash at kovasha@gmail.com or Abby Amick at communications@americanagriwomen.org with your own thoughts.
Wanda Kinney made this beautiful raffle quilt to help Kansas Agri-Women meet convention expenses. The quilt was won by Rose Tyron, California Women for Ag.

Mother/daughter duo Lori Bammerlin, left, and mom Donita Whitney-Bammerlin contributed to convention in many ways.

AG am in Kansas’ Bryan Hallman interviewed several AAW members for this Kansas TV show. Here, he talks to convention co-chair Abby Amick about the intricacies of putting on a national convention.

Mathias Marshall was the amazed winner of an Annie’s Amber Ale t-shirt, presented to him by KAW member, Jean Goslin.

KSU Collegiate Agri-Women performed a skit for us at breakfast.
Dr. Neil Harl shows his book on estate planning to Rural Health and Insurance Chair Pat Yeagle. Dr. Harl, Professor of Agriculture Economics at Iowa State University, gave a workshop on “Farm Business and Estate Planning.”

Don and Barb Overlie are dressed for the tour of the Underground Salt Mines and Museum. That night we also had dinner and the first ever auction in the mine.

The official convention picture was taken on this Case IH on a very windy afternoon. The tractor was donated for the occasion by Straub International.

Several mother/daughter duos attended the convention. Here is Mary Mertz and daughter, Lisa, KAW members.

We do have to work sometime!
AAW had a very good year

A summary of the annual report by Chris Wilson, President 2009-2011

We have 250,000 new customers every day. What will they know about how their food is produced and “where it comes from?” A major focus of AAW since its beginning has been to connect with consumers and provide information about agriculture and food and fiber production. There’s never been more of a need to do that job than today, and there have never been more tools to help get that job done.

Communications Team: Communicating and advocating for agriculture has been the overarching theme of the past two years, and we’ve been blessed with a great communications team. With Vice President Communications Linda Swiercinsky, Voice editor Arlene Kovash, Abby Amick on the website and Arwen McGilvra on Social Media, we’ve had great outreach through these media tools.

When I became president, one goal for myself was to use Twitter and to grow our Twitter followers. We are now nearing 5,000 Twitter followers.

Our Facebook page is awesome, thanks to Arwen. She has kept the page very active. She had monthly themes and has done so much with the page. One of our initiatives was to congratulate Orion Samuelson on his 50 years in farm broadcasting with WGN radio. Illinois Agri-Women was founded in his office, and he’s been a great supporter. Arwen set up a special Facebook page for the messages to Orion, thanks to Warren Clark who provided the domain name, OrionSamuelson.com.

Speaking of Warren Clark: His company CCI Marketing offers media and marketing communications services to AAW on a pro bono basis, as he believes in us and is always incredibly thoughtful as to potential opportunities and connections for AAW. Warren this year introduced the 4-6 times annual AAW e-News Update, which he sends to his more than 1500 ag media contacts.

We have also been using communications technology to bring AAW to our members when they are unable to be with us. We have live-streamed speakers at the Symposium and at Mid-Year Meeting and then recorded them for later watching also.

Food Inc. and Advocating for Agriculture: The initiative that has generated more press, media interviews and attention than any other over the past two years is our Food Inc. response. We have a 45-page document that I compiled prior to 2010 Mid-Year, to provide accurate information so members could factually respond to Food Inc. Food Inc. continues to get play nearly two years later, and we continue to receive calls and compliments from other organizations, asking if they can use our document.

The American Agri-Women Show television program continues to run on RFD-TV. We were offered a contract for an additional year, which RFD-TV is providing to us on a complimentary basis. I’m very grateful to RFD for this wonderful support and would like to be able to produce some new episodes. The previous episodes of the show were produced through our USDA outreach grant. We now need to identify other funding in order to be able to produce new shows.

“Branding”: Not with the hot iron kind – but with our new logo kind. AAW delegates at the 2010 Annual Meeting in St. Louis adopted a new logo, similar in style to the traditional one, but without the cross on the bottom and with modified leaves. The delegate body chose an option with American Agri-Women written above the circle and with the words “A Force for Truth” on the bottom, which has never seemed more urgent.

Leadership development: We have focused on having leadership training at every Mid-Year Meeting and Convention. This was one of the work plan items for our USDA Risk Management Grant. We are very grateful for the AAW-Syngenta Leadership At Its Best program, which we are able to send 15 members to each year. It is an intensive, multi-day session.

Affiliates: I’m very happy that we have added eight new affiliates over the past two years as of this writing. Karen Yost and her committee have continued to promote affiliation opportunities. We have had four new state affiliates, with the most recent being Wyoming Agri-Women.

Sigma Alpha and collegiate members: It was an honor and a privilege to attend the Sigma Alpha Convention in October and to be initiated as an honorary member. That speaks to the strength of the relationship between Sigma Alpha and AAW. It’s been a highlight of my career in agriculture to work with and promote young women, and what a great group of young women in agriculture this is. It’s very rewarding to watch our collegiate members come through collegiate groups, then become active in AAW affiliates as alumnae, and assume state and then national leadership roles.

Meetings: We’ve had wonderful speakers at our convention, Mid-Year, and Fly-In, addressing many concerns of the ag community. At this point, we have 230 different positions that we review each year at Mid-Year.

Champions of Agriculture: This year AAW awarded two Champion of Agriculture awards to heroes on the Hill for our industry - Congressman Dennis Cardozo (D-CA) and Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS). Thanks to Barbara LeVake, we had a special embassy visit to the home of the ambassador from Portugal, who was also on hand for our presentation to Congressman Cardoza, who is Portuguese and has many farmers of Portuguese descent in his district.

Chris with Dr. Jay Lehr, science advisor of the Heartland Institute, who spoke at the convention.

Symposium: Both of this year’s Champions of Agriculture have criticized EPA for overreaching regulation. The topic of the Annual AAW Symposium this year was “Regulate or Legislate: Which is Better for Agriculture.” Speakers addressed the myriad of federal regulations that have been proposed. Larry Elworth, Agricultural Counselor to the EPA Administrator, provided a response from the agency. May AAW always be a Force for Truth. Thank you for your support, and God be with you every step of the way.

This was heavily edited by the Voice editor. Email her to see the full report, which includes much more detail.
New York Agri-Women Sends Member To Tokyo

By Sheila Marshman

New York Agri-Women member Erica Leubner, co-owner of Tim’s Pumpkin Patch, inspired Japanese women of all ages to find themselves and their success in agriculture during her November presentation to The Rural Women Empowerment and Life Improvement ("WELI") Association in Tokyo, Japan.

In addition to words of inspiration, Leubner served as an ambassador for American agriculture, the American family farm, and all women involved in agriculture.

The WELI Association was established in 1957 for the purpose of improving the life and status of rural women. Conference attendees included Japanese farm women from all different areas of agriculture, including dairy, apple, tomato, orange and tea farms to name just a few. Japanese government leaders, rural community workers, agri-business entrepreneurs owning farm restaurants, agri-tourism operations and processing facilities for value added products, representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries ("MAFF"), and professors from various Universities of Agriculture and Life Sciences also attended.

New York Agri-Women began its relationship with WELI at their first annual meeting at Morrisville State College when two members of WELI who were participating in the United Nations Commission on Women activities in New York attended.

Leubner was selected to represent New York Agri-Women because of her success as a female agricultural business owner. The title of her presentation was “Developing a Successful Agri-Business Using Your Strengths and Simplicity.” Leubner shared with the group her decisions and successes at achieving a higher education, marrying a dairy farmer, and raising three daughters, all while growing Tim’s Pumpkins Patch, a full service agri-tourism operation attracting thousands of visitors annually.

The heart of Leubner’s presentation focused on growing a business slowly, giving consumers what they ask for, keeping the farm authentic, and most importantly, how she created a niche for herself within the family business in which she married. Erica’s presentation was received with head nods, smiles, picture taking and insightful questions about her lifestyle and agri-business.

Erica’s presentation took her beyond her own farm, as she found herself playing the role of an ambassador for U.S. agriculture. The inquisitive audience questioned the international focus of U.S. agricultural labor, farm subsidies, the U.S. debt, corporate agriculture, and President Obama’s plans for further expansion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (“TPP”) for agricultural products. Leuber said, “like many other farm women around the world, I rise at 5 am every morning to do my share to feed the world, and support the family unit.” She also communicated that 98 percent of U.S. farms are family farms. Leuber noted that “the conference attendees soon realized that although, we lived on different continents, our roles and responsibilities as farm women were similar.”

The Japanese women also inspired Leubner herself. In Japan, the women have traditionally been the major players in agriculture. Although, this may come as a surprise, Japanese women are oftentimes left to manage the farm while the men sought higher paying jobs off the farm. For decades Japanese farm women have thrived as farm business owners. They have created markets for their products in Tokyo grocery stores, established full service restaurants on their farms, and partnered with tourism agencies to develop agricultural tourism in Japan.

The success of Japanese women as farm business owners has caught the attention of the Japanese government. The Japan Center for Regional Development ("JCRD") was established in 1985 to assist in the regional revitalization by supporting town development and regional promotion. The major effort of the JCRD is the creation and support of “antenna shops,” facilities established by local governments to increase interest and awareness about agricultural products and tourism in rural Japan. In many cases, the management of the facilities is entrusted to the private sector. Operations include selling local products, operating restaurants, holding events, providing tourism information and holding consultations with people who want to move to the region.

Leubner was amazed to see the bustling

Continued on page 11.
Oregon Women in Timber advises developing relationships with elected officials and staff

By Diann Washburn, Treasurer, Oregon Women in Timber

We have been moving faster than choker setters running up and down a steep hillside since our last report in Phoenix. [Google it!]

Three of our members attended the AAW Fly-In in June and felt that it was a great experience. The AAW format was much different than our prior trips to DC with Federated Women in Timber. We extended our stay for two more days and had additional appointments with committee staffs and agency personnel.

The outcome of one of our meetings with legislative staff for Parks and Natural Resources was an invitation to give testimony at a Congressional sub-committee hearing on July 14. Casey Hammon had remembered our visit to his office and our position paper on the Renewal of County Payments. Anna Morrison, our current president, flew to DC on July 13th and was safely back at home on July 14th at 10 pm.

We can’t be afraid to call our Senators or Representatives, develop relationships with staff, and become the resource they can trust for accurate information.

Our annual meeting was held September 10th in Dallas, Oregon. Election of officers was conducted for this next year. Two goals were adopted:

1. More involvement with other Natural Resource Groups.
2. Communicate with our membership on a regular basis.

It was decided that Oregon Women in Timber would send delegates to future AAW meetings in place of our regular FWIT meetings.

Oregon Women in Timber hosted the Federated Women in Timber semi-annual meeting in Clackamas, Oregon, on October 8. We had a great turnout and handed the chair over to California Women in Timber for this next year. The morning segment of the meeting was a discussion about the AAW Fly-In.

Our annual auction planning is in full swing with a country western theme, held during the Oregon Logging Conference in February 2012. Our “Talk About Trees” forest education facilitators are back in the classrooms of Oregon teaching our young students the importance of a managed forest. Last school year our program reached 131,762 with an overall participation number now reaching a little over 2.25 million students since the program’s inception in 1991!

KAW did themselves proud on convention

This has been a very exciting year for Kansas Agri-Women. One of the highlights of the last year has been making plans to host the 2011 National Convention. Our members have come together and have been active and energized in preparation for the convention. We have been looking forward to hosting women from across the country in Kansas.

Kansas Agri-Women has continued to sponsor and participate in the Women Managing the Farm Conference in February each year. This year the conference was held in Wichita. This conference is an opportunity for women involved in every aspect of agriculture from new farm wives to full time operators to network with each other and share experiences.

Kansas Agri-Women has enjoyed working with a collegiate chapter for several years. This year the collegiate members have been very busy with activity meetings being held once a month. In the spring CAW hosted a symposium for high school girls in Kansas to introduce them to careers they can pursue in agriculture. At the all-university open house, they had a booth explaining where different products come from. A display board was used at the All-University Activities Carnival and College of Ag Watermelon Feed to recruit new members.

Kansas Agri-Women has maintained highway signs for a number of years. As signs deteriorate, the group is trying to replace them with newly painted, visually appealing signs. The grocery sack sign is the most popular; it currently states “A Kansas Farmer feeds 128 people, Plus You!” People traveling through the state as well as Kansas natives often comment on the signs. We are very proud of the visibility that this project has provided along Kansas highways!

Kansas Agri-Women partners with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Agriculture in the Classroom and several commodity groups to set up, staff and provide displays for an interactive educational display every day of the Kansas State Fair.
U.S. ag profits exceed $1 billion

Farm profitability is up as U.S. farmers are experiencing one of the best years in decades. According to USDA data, farm profit is expected to reach $100.9 billion this year, while cash-on-hand to pay farm expenditures is also expected to hit the $100 billion mark. The USDA says it will be the first time that both farm profit and expenditures have done so. Further, crop and livestock sales are expected to make history with crops predicted to exceed $200 billion in sales, while livestock sales increases are predicted to make double-digits.

“We’re just experiencing the best of times,” said Bruce Johnson, an agricultural economist at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. “It’s a story to tell.”

Illinois corn and soybean farmer Dale Hadden estimates his crops to be worth 10 percent to 15 percent more this year, allowing him to pay off a year’s worth of a seven-year tractor loan. Iowa corn and soybean farmer Jeff Reinking was able to pay on land debt and update his combine to a newer model.

But, not all farmers are having the same luck. Commodity prices were driven up because of drought in parts of the country, say some farmers.

American Sheep Industry Women sponsors “Make It With Wool” contest

The American Sheep Industry Women has a very active organization. They support their national organization, the American Sheep Industry, and sponsor a large wool contest each year, called “Make it with Wool.” The contest is open to anyone 13 years of age or older. The winners from each state head to the national convention, which will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, in January. Winners receive scholarships, sewing machines and other prizes.

For more information or to enter, please contact Marie Lehfelt, national chair, 406.636.2731, levi@midrivers.com. Their website is: makeitwithwool.com.

HR 2112 passes, taking restrictions off USDA, and allowing horse processing inspections

On Monday, November 14th, the Conference Committee on HR 2112, which consolidated appropriations for Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science and Transportation – Housing and Urban Development, signed a conference report resolving differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill that for the first time since 2005 does NOT contain annual riders that prohibit USDA from providing necessary inspection for horse processing facilities.

It was the underhanded exclusionary efforts of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) that coerced Congress to adopt these damaging appropriations riders in 2005, with more added in 2007, that have prevented any horse processing facilities from operating in the forty-six states that do not have state law preventing them.

Mindy Patterson, Vice President of the Missouri Equine Council and Development Director for United Horsemens, was with Wyoming Representative, Sue Wallis, Vice President of United Horsemens in Washington, D.C. lobbying for the horse industry the week of November 14th when the announcement was made that HR 2112 had passed through the conference committee without any restrictive language to prevent horse processing.

On Friday, November 18th, 2011, president Obama signed HR. 2112 into law, so for the first time in five years, the U.S. horse industry looks forward to the day when it can once again contribute more than $1.9 billion dollars in tax revenue nationwide as it once did prior to 2007 when it was a $102 billion dollar sector of animal agriculture supporting 1.4 million full-time jobs for people working with horses everyday.

“The U.S. horse industry can now begin to revitalize,” said Patterson, “and this great news from Washington, D.C. also means restoration and much-needed balance for the horse markets and horse industry while profoundly improving the state of horse welfare across America. This is excellent news for horse owners and for the horse industry nationwide.”

Senators urge DOL to cancel proposed youth labor regs

Information from American Farm Bureau

A total of 28 senators have joined 70 House members in asking Labor Secretary Hilda Solis to withdraw proposed rules related to youth under the age of 16 working on farms. Under the proposed rules, youth under the age of 16 would be banned from operating tractors, or any job with power-driven equipment on farms other than those owned by their parents. Added restrictions on youth working with livestock and outdoors during the summer are also being considered.

Farm Bureau and numerous commodity groups also are urging Solis to drop the proposed rules. They argued that DOL should make sure that it is following the intent of Congress in only addressing occupations that are “particularly hazardous.”

Tokyo Presentation, continued.

shops and restaurants located in busy shopping areas in Tokyo that were filled with local agricultural products made by Japanese woman. Erica dined at one of the antenna restaurants, where everything from the place mats to the food, to the beautifully handcrafted shot glass were all produced by Japanese women. The trip to Japan was truly a life changing experience stated Erica, “I was sent to Japan to share my knowledge with Japanese women. However, it was I, who was inspired and educated. The conference truly succeeded at bringing together and empowering women.”

Leubner will be making a presentation about her trip to Tokyo at the second annual New York Agri-Women meeting to be held in Riverhead, New York, on March 3, 2012. New York Agri-Women will have two panelists next spring at the United Nations Commission on Women discussing food security.
American Agri-Women  
PO Box 111  
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If you would like to receive The Voice via email, PLUS our new “AAW E-News,” please email Carolyn Kleiber at Carolyn@agpowerinc.net.

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To see pictures from the AAW convention in Wichita, scan this QR Code on your smart phone to go to Flickr, where a set is available. (QR is short for Quick Response and the code can be accessed using a QR Code scanning app on your phone.) Otherwise, to see the pictures, go to http://tinyurl.com/co3k2e5.

2011 AAW officers are: Past President Chris Wilson (Kansas Agri-Women), Treasurer Peggy Clark (Ohio Agri-Women), Secretary Jody Elrod (Texas Agri-Women), President Karen Yost (Montana Agri-Women), Vice President of Resolutions and Vital Issues Sue McCrum (Maine Agri-Women), Vice President of Communications Abby Amick (Kansas Agri-Women), and Vice President of Education Lisa Condon (Wisconsin Women For Agriculture).