Champions of Agriculture Announced at Fly-In

Two “Champions” for agriculture were announced at AAW’s Fly-In to Washington, D.C. in June. House Agriculture Committee chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) was feted at the AAW Congressional Reception where several of his colleagues congratulated Senator Inhofe

Senator Jim Inhofe (R-OK) also was honored as a “champion”, particularly on the climate change issue on which he has worked tirelessly to balance the global warming extremism. Senator Inhofe has served as chairman and ranking minority member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. His philosophy is summed up in his statement, “I am committed to continuing the environmental progress we have made over the years. As we proceed, we must use the best science available, consider the costs associated with the policies we institute and constantly remind the bureaucracy that it is here to serve the people of this country – not rule over them.”

In addition, Chairman Peterson is a great friend to American Agri-Women and Minnesota Agri-Women. He makes time in his schedule for us when we are in D.C. and provides his committee room (the most sought after on the Hill due to its beautiful balcony overlooking the capitol) for our Fly-In receptions.

Chairman Peterson (D-MN) is a staunch advocate for agriculture. He has stood strong on many issues, including cap and trade legislation, where he demanded that his committee have a say in the development of the House legislation and advocated for changes that would benefit agriculture. He also protected agriculture from legislation that would expand the federal regulation of water from “navigable” to include all “waters of the U.S.”

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Chris Wilson presents “Champion of Agriculture” award to Rep. Collin Peterson

Chris Wilson presents “Champion of Agriculture” award to Rep. Collin Peterson

From the House of Representatives came to show their support.

first woman Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman. This year, according to AAW president Chris Wilson, “We chose to present appreciation plaques to a Senator and a Representative in recognition of their prizewinning efforts defending our industry. Both men worked in a bipartisan way to ensure that whatever legislation was passed would not be detrimental to agriculture.”

With agriculture being attacked on many fronts, the Past Presidents Council chose as

its symposium theme “Animal Agriculture Under Siege – How to be a Force for Truth”.

L-R: Jody Elrod, Karen Yost, Kelli Yost, Chris Wilson, Marcie Williams, and Kathy Reavis congratulate Senator Inhofe

L-R: Jody Elrod, Karen Yost, Kelli Yost, Chris Wilson, Marcie Williams, and Kathy Reavis congratulate Senator Inhofe

L-R: Marcie Williams, moderator; Steve Kopperud; Chelsea Redalen; David Martosko at Fly-In Symposium
President’s Report

Dear AAW Members,

This issue of the Voice is again chock full of news of American Agri-Women and upcoming events. I hope it finds each of you and your families in good health and your farms, ranches and agribusinesses doing well.

AAW has had many opportunities for growth and for making a difference this summer. Through the AAW television show, we have had opportunities to reach women in all areas of the country with good information to help them in their farming and ranching operations, and that is leading to more opportunities for AAW in areas where we have not had affiliates. The show is now being broadcast on RFD-TV, thanks to RFD founder Patrick Gottsch. The show features many AAW members who have donated their time and expertise and opened their farms and homes. Thanks to all involved!

Thanks to all those who were able to participate in the June Fly-In to Washington. We had good opportunities to meet with key Obama Administration officials and Members of Congress.

As Food Safety Chair Ruth Jenson writes in this issue, what started out as a brief visit to New York following Fly-In ended up as a major project. Special thanks and kudos to Ruth, Past AAW President Mitzi Perdue and NY Agri-Women President Cari Rincker for all their work and planning which resulted in a great visit and tour with members of New York Agri-Women! NY Agri-Women is off to a great start!

We are so proud of our new affiliate organizations and what they are accomplishing! More about them can be found in the article by First Vice-President Karen Yost. Recently, Iowa Women in Agriculture voted to affiliate with AAW also, so that is tremendous news! Thanks to Iowa Women in Ag President Elaine Gaesser, Past AAW President Sandy Greiner, and Mona Bond for their leadership. We are looking forward to welcoming IA Women in Ag at Convention in St. Louis, November 10–14.

Convention information is in this issue and on the website. Vice-President for Communications Linda Swiercinsky has planned excellent tours and events, and the program is full of excellent, inspiring speakers and workshops. You may register by returning the enclosed form or a copy of it online. Past President Marcie Williams has been working with the hotel on all arrangements and worked very hard to keep registration fees as low as possible. The registration fee covers only meals! So we are very grateful to our wonderful sponsors.

Best wishes for a great harvest season, and I hope to see you in St. Louis!

Chris

American Agri-Women Executive Committee

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CONGRESS STILL STALLS ON DEATH TAX

AAW is a member of the No Death Tax Coalition. The nodeathtax.org website includes a map listing all those congressional candidates who have taken a pledge to support repeal of the death tax.

Over 400 federal candidates have signed the American Family Business Institute's Death Tax Repeal Pledge. Click on your state to see if your candidates for U.S. Senate and Congress have signed on!

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released a report recently about the effects of the Obama tax hikes. The report broke down earned revenues in terms of individual income taxes, corporate taxes, social insurance taxes, and “other revenues”. The Federal Estate Tax, which is set to return in 2011 at a rate of 55% on assets over $1 million, was accounted for in the “other revenues” category. The report indicated that combined, “other revenues” will raise about $2.8 trillion over the next decade.

Bloggers immediately began spinning the data, suggesting that keeping full repeal of the Federal Estate Tax would double the deficit. But, if you look at the fine print, what you see is that the CBO’s “other revenues” category also includes the Federal Reserve System and new excise taxes like the tanning tax, customs duties, and miscellaneous fees and fines. In fact, the largest revenue producer is the Federal Reserve System — not the estate tax — which expects payment in full with interest for several trillion dollars of bailout packages: the auto bailout, the bank bailout, the new union bailout and a few other major bailout programs.
Fly-In  
continued from page 1
In AAW’s Call to Power, written by Sister Thomas More Bertels many years ago, she stated, “The constant pursuit of truth must lie at the heart of our purpose and actions. The manner in which we seek truth must be thorough and without prejudice. As we search for truth, we recognize other’s equally valid searches and seek to remain open to their wisdom. We are never better than the means we use.”

David Martosko, director of the Center for Consumer Freedom, has founded a website –www.humanewatch.org – which shadows the Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS) and other animal rights groups. While polls show 83% of Americans approve of HSUS, Martosko believes people mistakenly think that the money they donate to HSUS will go to local animal shelters. The website proves otherwise.

In reality the overwhelming majority of funds goes to salaries, advertising, and other administrative costs. HSUS is promoting conflict between urban and rural cultures with the end goal being to eliminate meat from the diet.

Martosko and Steve Kopperud of Policy Directions, Inc., agreed that animal rights organizations are coalition building and animal agriculture should do the same. Kopperud suggested that agriculture should develop alliances that may not have been utilized before, such as unions, churches, educators, and less radical humane groups. “Talk to people you’ve never talked to before,” he urged.

Chelsea Redalen, director of government relations for the National Pork Producers Council, cautioned about current legislation on the use of antibiotics in livestock production. They use scare tactics or twist the facts, such as the ads on metro trains in the D.C. area last year, which headlined, “Up to 70% of U.S. antibiotics go to farm animals that aren’t sick.” This statistic came from an incredible source, she reported.

Kay Johnson Smith, executive vice president of the Animal Agriculture Alliance, cited data that 45% of the people get news from their emails and almost two billion people use the internet. She also pointed out that pictures help tell a story. For example, a cow rubbing her back on a back scratcher illustrates the owner cares about her by providing the equipment.

Congressman Steve King (R-IA) encouraged the women to go on the offensive. “Tell the truth and put the opposition on the spot”, he said. Sister Thomas More would have agreed.

HOMELAND SECURITY
By Arlene Kovash
Todd Repass, director of Homeland Security and Emergency Coordination at USDA, gave an overview of the programs he coordinates, which include continuity planning, emergency programs, executive protection operations, as well as document, radiation, and physical plant security. Food terrorism is a main area of concern.

A few little known facts he shared: the Secretary of Agriculture is 9th in line to be President; USDA has 24,000 buildings around the United States; Homeland Security covers disaster response for hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, and flooding.

Interestingly, this subject was heavy on my mind following the talk on Sunday night by Kamal Saleem, a former Muslim from Lebanon, who spoke about the dangers of a growing Muslim influence in Europe and America. I had purchased his book, The Blood of Lambs, and had started reading it before coming to D.C.

Saleem told us about his early years of training, starting at age seven, and continuing until his conversion to Christianity after he had moved to the U.S. to organize jihadist groups here. His riveting story is a wake-up call to all Americans on how jihadists have so completely infiltrated our government.

AAW Connects With Policy Makers
During the week 45 women from 12 states met with officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency. They also were updated by Dick Patton on estate tax issues, Craig Regelbrugge on Ag Jobs, and took a list of AAW priorities to their own members of Congress.

Priority issues (varying in order depending on their states) included Ag Jobs, Argentina debt, use of antibiotics in animal agriculture, the Atrazine review, broadband availability, Clean Water Act, energy and climate change legislation, Endangered Species Act reform, Open Equal Access to Justice Act, estate tax reform, food safety, wilderness area expansion, and horse slaughter. AAW members often inserted their own pet projects when visiting their legislators.

Chris Wilson, left, meets Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, one of our speakers at USDA who leads the “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” (KYF2) Initiative. Merrigan has been a major advocate for local and organic foods, and she has assembled a team to bring it into all the agencies and reflect it in the grants and services from USDA.
Fly-In continued from page 3

The Blood of Lambs is available at Amazon.com for approximately $17 or through Koome Ministries, 15954 Jackson Creek Parkway, Ste B PMB 282, Monument, CO, 80132, for $25. It is not for the faint of heart!

CFTC
By Jenny Inman

I know I echo all the other articles in this issue about the Fly-In “when I say what a wonderful event!” It was a great networking and educational opportunity. As your Commodity Marketing Chair I was asked to write an article about our visit to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). Personally this was the highlight of my visit to Fly-In.

The session was given by Commissioner Michael V. Dunn who is also the Chairman and Designated Federal Official of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Commissioner Dunn gave an excellent overview of the CFTC. Their mission statement is “To Protect Market Users and the Public from Fraud, Manipulation, and Abusive Practices Related to the Sale of Commodity Futures and Options, and to Foster Open, Competitive, and Financially Sound Commodity Futures and Option Markets.”

Basically they are the governing body over agricultural futures and options markets as well as other commodities. Even though agricultural markets have dropped from a high of 90% of all trade volumes to 8.9% it is very important that we follow legislation that affects the CFTC. Trading has changed so much in the last 10 years from mostly open outcry to now mostly electronic trade. (Meaning most trading takes place at a desk from a computer rather than physical bodies on the floor in Chicago.)

Commodity Markets are essential to agriculture as a means of managing price risk. The overview given that day helped better explain all that falls under the CFTC umbrella. If you have row crops, livestock, or use various forms of energy you should be knowledgeable about the CFTC. Commissioner Dunn took several questions from the group and helped everyone better understand the CFTC. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions on Commodity Markets.

jennysinman@yahoo.com

INTERIOR
By Carol Chandler

First speaker at the Department of Interior was Martha Balis-Larsen, chief, Fish & Wildlife Office of Program Support, who is in charge of budget, administration and policy of the Endangered Species program. She discussed the listing of endangered species briefly and then explained how property owners can work with her agency to minimize the effects of the ESA.

Safe harbor allows fencing off of protected area. If species don’t return or multiply, the owners can return to the baseline after 5, 10, or 20 years.

Candidate species are often on private lands. Owners can work with Natural Resources to see what can be done to prevent the NEED to list and work to be proactive.

There is a Farm Bill tax credit for recovery actions such as putting up fences, improving water quality, etc.

Currently there are 239 candidates for de-listing. It seemed to be a surprise to some in our group that anyone can petition Fish & Wildlife to de-list or add to the list of endangered species. No credentials are needed to petition. Bald eagles and Peregrine falcons are two species that have been moved from “endangered” to “threatened”.

When developing a list of endangered species, they cannot take into consideration the economic impact on our agriculture.
industry. Moreover, indigenous species like the Striped Bass can be removed so that endangered species like the Delta smelt can survive.

Bob Wolf, director of program and budget, and James Hess, director of operations, spoke for the Bureau of Reclamation. Their total appropriation is $1 billion. Of that $400 million goes for operation and maintenance and the $600 million left has a huge emphasis on water conservation.

Wolf said $33 million is used for Water Smart grants. Districts can apply to conserve energy or renew, recycling waste water into parks or cemeteries.

Hess stated that they have $2 million to bring potable water supplies to farm communities. Another $10 million is to repair the aging infrastructure of rural water.

Janet H. Lin, chief of staff for the Bureau of Land Management, explained that the focus of BLM is renewable energy, tribal landscapes, and climate change. They manage 860 different units – monuments, conservation areas, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic trails – over more than 27 million acres.

Ms. Lin admitted there is a debate over combining the Forest Service (now in USDA) and BLM. She feels they could co-locate and get along very well.

One of our members from the proposed Alpine Triangle Wilderness Area in southwest Colorado asked why the government continues to take land out of multiple use and replaces it with wilderness protection. Soon there will be no places to run sheep on summer range. She also pointed out that lightning in the mountains could result in massive forest fires affecting both private and public lands near the wilderness or monument designation.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
By Barbara LeVake

A large contingency of ladies representing agricultural interests throughout the U.S. met with Larry Ellsworth, agriculture counselor with EPA. Joining us in our meeting were men and women from New York Farm Bureau. Issues discussed included the proposed ban on Atrazine, fumigant regulations, spray drift labeling, NPDES permits, and the TMDL’s impacting the Chesapeake Bay.

The EPA released a new draft (NPDES) permit on June 2nd, a couple of weeks before our meeting with Ellworth, which is designed to decrease the amount of pesticides into waterways. This permit is known as the Pesticides General Permit (PGP) and requires all operators to reduce pesticide discharges. The permit is out for comment.

The proposed ban on Atrazine by environmental groups is a major concern for growers and was one of AAW’s main topics of discussion. EPA will re-re-evaluate this herbicide, which has been the subject of more than 6,000 studies and recently was registered as safe to use by EPA. However, activists opposed to the use of agricultural chemicals have targeted Atrazine. Ellworth indicated that they wanted to make sure “to be ahead” of the science and “nail down the science early”. He referred to the Scientific Advisory Panel and new studies that will become available.

EPA has proposed guidance for new pesticide labeling to reduce off-target spray and dust drift. Ellworth stressed the importance of sitting down with stakeholders in developing the labeling requirements. In a second Federal Register notice, EPA has requested comments on a petition filed recently by environmental and farm worker organizations asking the EPA to evaluate children’s exposure to pesticide drift and to adopt “no spray” buffer zones near homes, schools, day care centers and parks.

In response to a question regarding the re-registration of fumigants and labeling requirements, Ellworth agreed it was important to get the labels completed so the growers would be able to use the fumigants in time for the growing season.
At the Black Hills Women in Timber annual meeting held June 10 at the Antelope Hills Golf Club in Bennett with an apartment overlooking Central Park in June. From diverse backgrounds, about 15 women gathered with 20 American Agri-Women to organize a new state affiliate. Cari Rincker, organizing chairman and recently-elected president of the group has her own law practice in New York City, but her roots are in rural Illinois. She is pleased to announce that New York now has 35 members led by Rincker, president-elect Rebecca Snyder, secretary Sheila Marshman, treasurer Molly Zorn, newsletter and website editor Constance Kustas, public relations and photographer Ulla Kjarval, and directors Rebecca Snyder, Kristine Rogers-Gansz, Trina Hall, Amy Kelsey, and Christine Rolando. In describing why she felt this organization was necessary, Ms. Rincker said, “New York has a strong and diverse agriculture industry along with powerful metropolitan areas that are hungry for knowledge about their food.”

Cari Rincker, president, New York, NY

Established in 1993, the mission of Women in Mining Coalition is to deliver the message to our legislators that a strong mining industry is vitally important to our nation, our communities, our families, and our livelihoods, and that today’s regulations and modern technology ensure responsible stewardship of our lands. Lynne Volpi, WMC Coordinator, says, “The more women who can communicate the importance of keeping industry in our own country, the more powerful we will become.” Volpi, of Reno, Nevada, joined WMC “to add my voice to the many women whose livelihoods depend on a healthy, safe, domestic mining industry.” Mining employs many women in positions as varied as miners, truck drivers, engineers, geologists, hydrologists, chemists, human relations reps, and even corporate vice presidents and presidents. WMC and AAW have established mutual affiliations.

Lynne Volpi, WMC Coordinator, Reno, NV

AAW Welcomes New Affiliates!

By Karen Yost

We are excited and appreciative of organizations that are continuing to encourage one another and to promote like-minded policies by affiliating with AAW. The constant theme in conversations with leaders of these organizations is that our affiliations will help to make our voices stronger to tell our stories. It is encouraging to see natural resource industries coming together for good – and for the security and well-being of our country!

Black Hills Women in Timber was organized in 1991 and joined AAW as a commodity affiliate in March. With the timber industry struggling, Druce Kellogg, of Spearfish, South Dakota, was inspired along with a friend from the Wyoming area of the Black Hills to begin a chapter of Women in Timber. “It was necessary for the preservation of the industry” said Ms. Kellogg. “Many people across our nation have little contact with natural resources and how they become the products and materials from which all wealth and all jobs are derived.” BHWIT members travel to DC annually to influence logging and natural resource legislation, present programs to the schools and the public, write letters, and meet with government officials. “I know how important it is to support what you have and what you do.”

Druce Kellogg, president, Spearfish, SD

Farms and ranch women from throughout the state of Colorado met in Denver to organize the 21st state affiliate, Colorado Agri-Women, in January. Danell Kalcevic, president, states, “We need to be educated so we can educate others with truth and knowledge”. The first membership meeting was held June 10 at the Antelope Hills Golf Club in Bennett with an attendance of 17. Current membership stands at 28. “We are concerned about the anti-agriculture activist groups that are gaining prominence in Colorado,” Kalcevic reported. The Colorado legislature also has removed the tax exemption on some ag products, such as pesticides and bull semen. Other issues relate to the Railroad Coalition on the eastern plains and the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. Farm Services has risen to provide sponsorship for the next members meeting on Aug 26th. Find CAW on Facebook!

Danell Kalcevic, president, Bennett, CO

New York Agri-Women were welcomed by Mitzi Perdue, past president of AAW, during a reception at her Manhattan apartment overlooking Central Park in June. From diverse backgrounds, about 15 women gathered with 20 American Agri-Women to organize a new state affiliate. Cari Rincker, organizing chairman and recently-elected president of the group has her own law practice in New York City, but her roots are in rural Illinois. She is pleased to announce that New York now has 35 members led by Rincker, president-elect Rebecca Snyder, secretary Sheila Marshman, treasurer Molly Zorn, newsletter and website editor Constance Kustas, public relations and photographer Ulla Kjarval, and directors Rebecca Snyder, Kristine Rogers-Gansz, Trina Hall, Amy Kelsey, and Christine Rolando. In describing why she felt this organization was necessary, Ms. Rincker said, “New York has a strong and diverse agriculture industry along with powerful metropolitan areas that are hungry for knowledge about their food.”

Cari Rincker, president, New York, NY

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Lynne Volpi, WMC Coordinator, Reno, NV

Kansas Federation of Animal Owners was organized in 2003 to help inform people about the activities of Animal Rights activists and others who are pushing legislation to take away our rights as animal owners. KFED uses a registered lobbyist to testify at hearings at the Kansas state capitol to present facts concerning animal husbandry and scientific wildlife management to the legislators and the media. We educate the public to proposed legislation and ballot issues concerning animals. President Sam Mosshart believes that a large group of people who have similar interests need to be proactive in sharing ideas and educating the public as well as state and federal legislators about what good animal husbandry and animal welfare actually entails.

Sam Mosshart, president, Protection, KS

Progressive Agriculture Safety Days® and the Progressive Agriculture Foundation was originally organized by Progressive Farmer magazine in 1995 as Progressive Farmer Farm Safety Day Camps. It then went on to become a stand-alone foundation in 2002. Their mission statement is to make farm and ranch life safer and healthier for children through education and training. Though its headquarters are in Birmingham, Alabama, there are volunteers throughout the U.S., the U.S. Territories and Canada with plans to franchise the program for South America. The program trains and provides the resources that local communities need to conduct one-day safety programs that are age-appropriate, hands-on, fun, and safe for children. Progressive Agriculture Safety Days trains volunteer coordinators in approximately 400 communities which reach more than 90,000 children and adults each year. Executive Director Susan Reynolds comments, “We look forward to being part of, learning from and supporting this dynamic group of farm and ranch women. Our program can provide support for AAW members and their communities in the areas of farm and ranch safety and health.”

To learn more about this great organization, go to www.progressiveag.org.

Susan J. Reynolds, executive director

Birmingham, AL
Ready for your next red-tape nightmare?

By Sara Wyant

A little-known provision tucked into the health care reform bill that President Barack Obama signed into law this spring could have costly and confusing impacts on farmers and small business owners.

The new regulations, which kick in at the start of 2012, require any taxpayer with business income to issue 1099 forms to all vendors from whom they purchased more than $600 of goods and services that year and report on forms filed in 2013. That means supplies, parts, or any of the goods that you might purchase to run your farming operation or business.

“A laundromat that buys soap each week would now have to issue a 1099 to their supplier and the IRS at the end of the year. A landscaper who buys lawn fertilizer a couple of times a month will now be forced to issue 1099s to the companies they do business with, and no one is excluded,” lamented Sen. Mike Johanns (R-NE) in a recent speech on the Senate floor where he argued for full repeal of the new regulations.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act provision would apply to businesses of all sizes, charities and other tax-exempt organizations, and probably more than 100,000 federal, state, and local government entities, according to a report released by National Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson.

The provision has nothing to do with health care, other than to help generate more tax revenue to pay for the mammoth reform package by reducing the “tax gap.”

Will Congress repeal?

Even before the new rules take effect, several lawmakers are trying to repeal this proposal altogether, and a key Senate vote is scheduled for mid-September. Both Republicans and Democrats want to change the rule, but they differ in their approaches and methods of paying for them.

For example, Johanns introduced S.3578, the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act, which would totally repeal this provision and prevent what he describes as “a massive new paperwork requirement from being imposed on businesses.” This is a companion legislation to H.R. 5141 introduced in April by Rep. Dan Lungren (R-CA).

Senate co-sponsors include: Pat Roberts (R-KS), John Thune (R-SD), Christopher Bond (R-MO), Tom Coburn (R-OK), James Inhofe (R-OK), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), John Cornyn (R-TX), Mike Enzi (R-WY), John Barrasso (R-WY), Mike Crapo (R-ID), James Risch (R-ID), Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Richard Burr (R-NC), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), John McCain (R-AZ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Richard Lugar (R-IN), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), John Ensign (R-NV), David Vitter (R-LA), George Voinovich (R-OH), and Scott Brown (R-MA). The lone Democrat to sign on thus far is the chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee: Blanche Lincoln (D-AR).

Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) plans to offer another amendment that would not repeal the record-keeping measure but would change the reporting threshold from $600 to $5,000. His alternative is paid for by changing Section 199 of the tax code, which allows the nation’s largest oil companies to deduct six percent of their income from oil and gas production from their tax liability, effective Dec. 31, 2010.

Some of the nation’s largest small business groups and the American Farm Bureau Federation are lobbying for full repeal.

“The only option to address this widely agreed upon onerous 1099 provision on small businesses is full repeal,” emphasized Susan Eckerly, senior vice president at the National Federation of Independent Business in a statement. “Congress needs to stop speaking out of both sides of their mouth. If they are truly interested in helping small businesses—whatever their size—they will pass legislation that fully repeals this burdensome new requirement.”

Columnist Sara Wyant is president of Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc. and publishes a weekly newsletter, Agri-Pulse, on food and farm policy. For more information, you can e-mail her at AgriPulse@aol.com.
To Monsanto and American Agri-Women:

I want to express my sincere thank you for voting for me to be your Southwest Regional winner of America’s Farmers Mom of the Year. Since your groups chose me for this award, having this title is very important to me. I am very honored.

I am so humbled to have so many people nation-wide vote for me for the National Title! I am thrilled to have won the first contest - an honor I will forever cherish! I knew friends and family would vote for me, but, as time goes by, I have come to realize that people all over the nation had sent in votes for me as well! Thank you to all the voters!

I give many thanks to God for allowing me to be an example for farm moms. I hope to use my background, and the talents He has provided me, to emphasize the importance of being a woman in agriculture.

I also want to thank each and every person who sent a submission to nominate their special farm mom. It is a true testament from them that there are many deserving women in the field of agriculture.

Congratulations to Caroline Luiz, Cheryl Day, Sue Roohr, and Ericka Forsbach, the four regional winners also chosen. It would be an honor to meet each and every one of them. Thank you again, for sponsoring the contest, and thank you for the generous award money. My husband and I have plans to take all our children and their spouses on a nice trip somewhere in this great nation!

Sincerely,
Carol Cowan
America’s Farmers Mom of the Year 2010 National Winner

A Gateway to Agriculture in the 21st Century

St. Louis Convention – November 10-14, 2010

The 2010 convention agenda is full of great speakers and opportunity for visiting with old friends and making new ones! The speaker lineup includes Dr. J. Scott Vernon, professor/communicator/auctioneer and founder of the “I Love Farmers, They Feed My Soul” campaign; Brett Begemann, Monsanto executive vice-president; and Sarah Muirhead, editor of Feedstuffs magazine.

Louis Zoo. At the zoo, we’ll enjoy dinner and an animal welfare panel, a surprise event and live auction, called by Dr. J. Scott Vernon.

For the first time at an AAW convention, we are planning two different tracks which members may choose to attend. One track will include individual skills and career development workshops, and the other track will include issues sessions and AAW committee meetings. You do not have to stay on one track throughout the convention but may choose between tracks for any time period.

Also, we will have early bird optional training sessions on Wednesday afternoon – Annie’s Project staff will be putting on an Annie’s Project training. This is a great opportunity for those who have not been through this educational program dedicated to strengthening women’s roles in the modern farm enterprise. This will be a fast-paced, interactive seminar. In addition, back by popular demand, for those who were unable to attend the training at Mid-Year meeting, Ron Wilson will present his Leadership Learnin’ - Lessons of a “Roads” Scholar.

Please register and book your hotel rooms as soon as possible, as we are concerned about running out of hotel rooms at the Ritz-Carlton. This is a wonderful location, convenient to the airport and interstate, with a great rate for our convention – $119 per night. All registration information is enclosed, or you may register online.

Meet me in St. Louis!
35th Annual Meeting: November 10-14, 2010
Convention Registration Form

Name ______________________________________________
Affiliate ____________________________________________

Address ________________________________________
City ________________________________ State_____ Zip ____________
Phone __________________ Fax______________
E-mail __________________________________________

Spouse/Guest____________________________________
Phone___________________________________________

Voting Member of AAW? ☐ YES ☐ NO
Are you a first time conference attendee? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Registration

☐ Early Registration (postmarked by October 15, 2010) $250.00 _______ ______
☐ Late Registration (postmarked after October 15, 2010) $300.00 _______ ______
☐ Saturday Only Registration $145.00 _______ ______
☐ Day Only Registration $100.00 _______ ______

please indicate day: ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

Optional Events (please indicate if attending and how many)

☐ Wednesday Optional Dinner
Self Pay _______ N/A

☐ Wednesday Optional Training Sessions complimentary _______ __$0__
please choose one: _____Annie's Project Training
_____Leadership Skills Development

☐ Thursday Morning Tour complimentary _______ __$0__
☐ Thursday Afternoon Spouse/Guest Tour complimentary _______ __$0__
☐ Friday All Attendees Tour & Dinner complimentary _______ __$0__

please choose one: _____Monsanto Breeding and Agronomics Technology Tour
_____Monsanto Biotechnology Tour
_____Novus Research Facilities (Limit 50)

☐ Saturday Spouse/Guest Tour complimentary _______ __$0__
☐ Illinois Post Convention Tour $50.00 _______ ______
☐ Branson Post Convention Tour Self Pay _______ N/A

Grand Total

Additional (see attached pages for descriptions of these services)

☐ I will require daycare for _______ children.
List ages here: ________________________

☐ I would like to participate in the Social Media Training
Indicate which session you would like to attend to reserve your spot
please choose one: _____Beginner
_____Advanced
Additional Convention Information

Hotel Accommodations:
A block of rooms are reserved under American Agri-Women at Ritz-Carlton in St. Louis for a special rate of $119 per night excluding taxes. Reservations must be made prior to October 10, 2010. Call the hotel directly at 1-800-960-7056. Group rates will be offered for November 10-15. Parking and internet service is complimentary during our stay there.

Payment & Inquiries:
Make checks payable to American Agri-Women and mail with registration form to: Carolyn Kleiber, P.O. Box 111, Hillsboro, KS 62033. Any inquiries contact Carolyn Kleiber at 620-877-0274 or e-mail treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

Cancellation Policy:
Cancellations need to be made in writing and sent before October 1, 2010 for a full refund.

Childcare:
Interested in childcare at the hotel? AAW will make arrangements for childcare to be provided on location during the convention sessions. The cost would be shared between those parents using the service (anticipate $5 per child per hour). Snacks and activities would be provided.

Social Media Training
Social media training sessions are an option. Michele Payn-Knoper of AgChat will be providing two sessions - one for beginners and one for more advanced social media users. Each of those sessions are limited to the first 30 participants to register. Please plan to bring a laptop if possible.

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, Nov. 10
2:00-5:00 p.m.: Optional Training Sessions
3:00-6:00 p.m.: Registration
Dinner on your own

Thursday, Nov. 11
8:00 a.m.: Orientation for First Time Attendees
9:00 a.m.: Spouse/Guest Tours Depart
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Workshops
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.: Workshops
4:00 p.m.: Board of Directors Meeting
4:00 p.m.: Mentors and First Time Attendees Meeting
5:30 p.m.: Reception and Welcome to St. Louis
Dinner on your own
6:30 p.m.: President’s Caucus Meeting
8:00 p.m.: Town Hall Meeting

Friday, Nov. 12
7:45 a.m.: Breakfast and Opening Ceremonies
9:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Workshops
12:00 p.m.: Lunch and Keynote Speech
1:30 p.m.: Networking Tours
5:00 p.m.: Dinner at St. Louis Zoo, Auction, and Special Treat

Saturday, Nov. 13
7:45 a.m.: Breakfast and Keynote Speech
9:00 a.m.: Spouse/Guest Tours Depart
9:00 a.m.: Business Meeting
12:00 p.m.: Lunch
2:00 p.m.: Workshops
6:00 p.m. Reception and Banquet

Sunday, Nov. 14
8:00 a.m.: Worship Service
9:00 a.m.: Post Convention Tours Depart
Tentative Convention Tours

Wednesday, Nov. 10:
Optional
Dinner on “the Hill”, an Italian neighborhood with outstanding restaurants, many in business for more than 50 years. You can’t go wrong with any of them – but we can recommend some favorites. We will try to get cars to take you there. Sign up if interested.

Thursday, Nov. 11
Morning 9 am-12:30 p.m.
Sign up for Soulard Market (open-air market open year-round has been serving St. Louis residents for 200 years) or The Arch downtown if you would like to be dropped off by the bus on the way to the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research plant at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. The bus will return at 11:30 picking up people where they got off at The Arch or Soulard Market and return them all to the Ritz. No charge for bus but you are responsible for your own lunch.

Afternoon 12:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Newcomers welcome for afternoon portion! We will drive to the LongView Animal Nutrition Center, about one hour west of St. Louis. Since 1926 they have been conducting nutritional studies on beef cattle, dairy cattle, horses and swine. Then go to Kemp Auto Museum near Chesterfield to see a collection of rare and vintage European automobiles from turn of the century to modern day. Back in time for the evening welcome reception!

Friday, Nov. 12:
Afternoon for all convention participants
Sign up for one of three tours which leave the hotel at 1:00 p.m.. You have a choice of two Monsanto tours and one Novus.

1) Monsanto Breeding and Agronomics Technology Tour @ Creve Coeur, MO
   Plant breeding still depends on many techniques discovered centuries ago. Tried-and-true practices, combined with the knowledge and skills learned through modern science, can develop seeds that offer the best yields for specific growing conditions. You will see “seed chippers”, the Acceleron seed treatment system, Vistive Oil, new agronomic practices, and effective weed control.

2) Monsanto Biotechnology Tour @ Chesterfield, MO
   For more than two decades, plants delivering biotech benefits have given farmers new ways to solve old problems. Since 1998 we have introduced 12 new seed traits and more will be coming in the future. You will see gene discovery, gene insertion, tissue culture, the greenhouse, growth chambers, and greenhouse test plants.

3) Novus International, Inc.‘s global headquarters, St. Charles, MO (Limited to first 50 who sign up)
   Visiting this animal health and nutrition company’s headquarters will give you a window to the company’s commitment to corporate social responsibility and sustainability. The 90,000 square foot structure consolidates Novus’s headquarters and the Novus International Research Center into a platinum certified building, that achieves over 62 points on the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) scale.
   At about 5:00 we will go to the world-renowned St. Louis Zoo for a brief behind the scenes tour, dinner and fur fashion show, followed by a panel on animal rights issues which are shared by zoos, circuses, etc., the biomedical community, and animal agriculture. There also will be a live auction on Friday night.

Saturday, Nov. 13:
Spouse/Guest Tour
Bus departs 9 am for American Grain, state of the art elevator on the river, for a drive through with step-on guide. Tour continues on to Eckert Farm Market at Belleville, IL, to see their agritourism enterprise with lunch at Eckert’s. Then back to St. Louis to Anheuser-Busch brewery including the famous Clydesdale horses. If time permits, stop at home of ragtime composer Scott Joplin, which is close to the Ritz. Return to hotel by 5 p.m..
Convention Post Tours

Sunday, Nov. 14:
Illinois Post Tour
Bus departs at 9 am for Lewis & Clark Point of Departure at Hartford, IL, where we can see a replica of the boat they used to go up the Missouri River to the Pacific Northwest. Guides will take us up an elevator at the recently completed tower, to see the landscape from several levels. Then on to the Heepke horseradish farm where they will be harvesting horseradish and demonstrate how to use horseradish in cooking. We will be served a complete meal using horseradish in various dishes.

From the Heepke farm we will travel to the National Great Rivers Museum and Melvin Price Locks and Dam at Alton. At the dam a step-on guide will meet the bus and take us on a brief tour of this historic river town, including a photo op at the statue of the world’s tallest man. Then we will drive north to Grafton where we will see the Piasa bird, subject of a Native American legend, and enjoy wine tasting and heavy hors d’oeuvres at a local winery. The bus leaves Grafton on a ferry across the river to St. Charles, MO, which is a short drive from Clayton, returning to the hotel at approximately 7:00 p.m. All of this is included in your $50 tour fee. However, if you are driving and choose to follow the bus, you may want to book lodging in Grafton overnight. They have many lovely lodges and bed and breakfasts, which we can help you evaluate.

Sunday, Nov. 14 – Wednesday, Nov. 17:
Branson Post Tour
We have reserved 10 rooms for three nights at the Lodge of the Ozarks in Branson, MO. The cost is $102 per night including tax. This hotel is centrally located on Highway 76 -- next door to Mickey Gilley’s, connected to the Hughes Brothers, across the street from Jim Stafford and Number One Hits of the ’60s, plus the Titanic Museum and several other attractions are just a couple of blocks away. Check out their website www.lodgeoftheozarks.com but make your reservation through Carolyn for our excellent rate. Also note that most motels are already sold out during this time!

Beginning November 1 each year, Branson is transformed into a festive wonderland with spectacular lighting displays, dazzling shows celebrating the true spirit of Christmas, theme parks in all their holiday glory, and numerous special events – a fabulous time to visit!

Christmas show schedules are not out yet, but you can contact the Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau at ExploreBranson.com or 1-800-BRANSON for information. They say the Branson airport has good connections to larger cities.

If you are interested in visiting Branson, you need to contact AAW treasurer Carolyn Kleiber and send her $100 deposit to hold a room. Your deposit will be refunded if you contact Carolyn before Oct. 15 or find someone to take your room. If you do not want to stay all three nights, that is permissible but Carolyn needs to know that. These rooms are first come-first served.

AAW is not in the travel business. If you are not driving to convention, you may want to join forces with other AAW members and spouses to rent a van from St. Louis to Branson and consider flying home from Branson. It is a four hour drive mostly on I-44. There are some interesting sites to see as you drive down, such as civil war battlefields, Laura Ingles Wilder’s home, and Lambert’s restaurant where the waiters throw you homemade rolls. You would have to make your own theater reservations, etc.

One last thought: If you’re going to Branson but want to try that horseradish meal before you leave, you could do that and still get to Branson in time for a Sunday night show. You would be leaving Heepkes about 1:00 and it should be about 5 hours to Branson. (Of course you would have to follow the bus to Heepkes.)
10 Ways to Lose the Animal Welfare Argument...

1. Assuming science will give us all the answers; it only gives us some of the answers. I believe strongly in science, but science doesn’t solve ethical questions. Also, the public does not trust scientists and assumes they can be bought! Watch the news and it is easy to find “scientists” on both sides of almost every issue. It has become a contest of “my science is better than your science.”

2. Using economics as the justification for all of our practices. Although it makes sense to those of us who raise animals for a living, saying “Well, of course we treat them well or we won’t make money” really hurts our efforts with the public. In other words, if this is all about making money, rather than working with animals, we would probably be in another line of work! We need to convince the public that we truly care about animals not just about dollars.

3. Assuming that you have to defend all agricultural practices, regardless of what they are. Why? I believe you defend those that are defensible. Period. Defending all practices makes no sense and causes you to lose credibility with the public.

4. Assuming we can’t do better at animal welfare. Agriculture is about evolving practices. Why can’t we continue to improve a system that is already good but will continue to change?

5. Attacking everyone who disagrees with you in a negative, critical manner. We get angry very easily and that generally means we aren’t comfortable with what we are doing, so we have to defend at the top of our lungs.

6. Not being willing to listen because we are so busy responding.

7. Assuming that the lunatic fringe is the general public. We spend way too much time focusing on lunatics and not working with the public.


9. Assuming that because someone disagrees with you they are stupid, evil or both. Good people can look at the same issue differently.

10. Not working hard enough to build coalitions that include the public (consumers). Most of our coalition efforts are focused on bringing agricultural groups together. There aren’t enough of us and we don’t represent enough votes.

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CANADIAN COWS ARE ‘HAPPY COWS’ TOO!

Vancouver, B.C. – Western Canadian beef producers have found a novel way of putting the “bar” in barbecue, according to an AP reporter. Angus cattle in British Columbia’s Okanagan wine and cattle region are being fed red wine with their grain.

The idea is the brainchild of Janice Ravndahl of Kelowna, B.C.’s Sezmu Meats, who says it gives the beef “enhanced flavor, the marbling is finer and the fat tastes like candy”. Ravndahl got the idea from a TV food program about beer-swilling pigs.

She started with one young “cow” who took to the bottle immediately and earned the nickname “Wino”. “It definitely changes their personalities. They moo a lot more with each other. They get really chatty,” Ravndahl said.

The first bovine wine tasting was in April 2009. “We just put it in a pail and said, ‘Who’s gonna drink it?’ Wine has a very strong aroma and they were curious about it right away,” Ravndahl related.

The cattle get a liter-blend of red wines every day but their preference seems to be the sweeter vintages. Ravndahl said the wine appears to make the steers more docile, which she thinks enhances the texture of the meat.

“Cattle that are relaxed taste better,” she said. “You don’t want tense beef.”

A cattle researcher at Thompson Rivers University said the wine does not appear to have any negative effects on the health of the cows. A Canadian Food Inspection Agency spokesman reported that they investigated the case and concluded there is no risk to human safety.
Soon after Chris Wilson was installed as president of American Agri-Women I called to invite her and Joanna to join me on my annual trip to New York. We talked about interest in developing an affiliate in New York. It was a pleasure to offer to lend a hand.

Chris connected me with AAW 1st vice president Karen Yost and NY agriculture attorney Cari Rincker to move forward on the effort. As Karen and Cari worked on the technical side of developing the affiliate, I worked on coordinating a “Welcome New York Agri-Women” reception and agricultural tour.

The idea of the tour was two-fold: I felt it was appropriate for AAW leaders to see some of New York’s agriculture and for potential NY Agri-Women to share backyard experiences.

After rejecting numerous reception venues due to cost, I recruited former AAW president Mitzi Perdue, who came through by hosting a fabulous reception at her apartment overlooking Central Park in New York City; Here is where all parties met for the first time.

Our agriculture tour started the next day at Hudson Pines Cattle Ranch, some 45 miles north of the city. This property is a working cattle ranch, organic farm, public park and houses a wonderful Agriculture Education Center in an old stone barn. NYAW organizer Cari Rincker recommended this place as a stop on our tour and it was awesome.

Growing up near the Brooklyn Navy Yards, and watching produce come in from around the world in the big ships, I knew this was a special place to see. In addition, as California Women for Agriculture trade director and AAW Food Safety chair, I had a keen interest in touring the inspection process.

It took many months but with help from Congresswoman Yvette Clark’s offices in Washington and Brooklyn we obtained security clearance from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency. This is where the contacts you make in Washington, D.C. during the AAW Fly-In can bring results.

Customs and Border Protection Agency folks at the port of entry were intermediaries between me and Sabato (Sal) Catucci, CEO of American Stevedoring, Inc., who runs the shipping activity at Red Hook Marine Terminal. Also helpful in persuading Sal to be our host was Bob Lewis, special assistant and director of Marketing and Communications for the New York Department of Agriculture. Both of these gentlemen were instrumental in getting us access to the innermost workings of customs inspection, a truly remarkable, once in a lifetime experience.

As time went on, I became intrigued with rooftop gardens and was able to arrange a private tour of a wonderful experiment in New York City developed by “Growing Concerns”. It is an organic, roof-top farm where local restaurants cooperate in growing fresh vegetables, herbs, chickens, and more from the ground to the fork.

A longtime friend, Rosemary, coordinated the “behind the scenes tour” of the Union Square Farmers Market, contacting the executive director and updating her about our group. It made for a smooth and educational tour amid the masses of people who frequent this amazing outdoor market in the heart of the city.

I believe every new member and supporter on the tour became a part of the history of this new affiliate. I have no doubt that NYAW members will rank among the leaders in the country when it comes to ag policy and education.
There is much emphasis today on the local food movement. At AAW Convention, we’ll be hearing more about this.

AAW and other ag-related organizations are working hard to research consumer interest, trends, desires, knowledge and to respond. United Soybean Board and National Corn Growers Association have teamed up to develop “Common Ground,” an initiative to reach urban consumers and to connect them with producers, even if they aren’t local. Women consumers and producers will be a focus of this initiative, and it will be introduced at AAW Convention.

VP Communications Linda Swiercinsky and I had the opportunity to attend Slow Food Chicago’s recent dinner event at Uncommon Ground, a restaurant in Chicago’s Edgewater District, owned by Helen and Mark Cameron. We were graciously hosted by Helen at this event and enjoyed very much getting to know her. On the rooftop of Uncommon Ground is the first certified organic “farm” on a rooftop in the country - .15 acres in containers. Helen and Mark are Slow Food Chicago’s delegates to the international Slow Food gathering, Terre Madre, this month in Turin, Italy.

What’s Slow Food? By the organization’s definition, “Slow Food is a non-profit, eco-gastronomic member-supported organization that was founded in 1989 to counteract fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how our food choices affect the rest of the world. To do that, Slow Food brings together pleasure and responsibility, and makes them inseparable.”

The Slow Food organization has over 100,000 members in 132 countries. Terra Madre is Slow Food’s project to build an international network of food communities, including food producers, cooks, educators and youth, working to “establish a system of good, clean and fair food production.” Since 2004, thousands of representatives of these communities come together in Turin, Italy, every two years in an international meeting.

In the U.S., Alice Waters, founder of Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley, CA, is considered the mother of the slow food movement. The documentary Food Fight provides more information about this history. For more information: slowfood.com; slowfoodusa.org; chezpanisse.com.

This is something we will continue to hear about and provides great opportunities – and needs – for us as women involved in agriculture to connect with consumers.
PARLIAMENTARY POINTERS
By Lois Schlickau, AAW Parliamentarian

What is parliamentary law? Is it important? Do the members of an organization need to be familiar with par-law?

Parliamentary rules are actually the “rules” of democracy. The purpose of Par-law is to expedite business, maintain order, ensure justice, and provide equal treatment for all members. In other words, the rights of the majority, minority, individuals, and of absentees must all be respected.

The answer to the importance of all members of an organization being familiar with parliamentary procedure is a resounding YES. According to the National Association of Parliamentarians, believing that only officers need to understand par-law procedure is “similar to believing that only the pitcher, catcher, and star batter need to know the finer points of baseball. Few people want to participate in any game, from baseball to bridge, without at least some knowledge of the rules. Spectators, too, receive far more enjoyment from a game when they understand what is going on and why. The same can be said of members in a meeting.”

Parliamentary rules fall into two classes – general and special. General rules are those which are commonly used in all assemblies or meetings. Special rules are those that have been written and adopted for a particular purpose or organization, such as bylaws and standing rules. Special rules always supersede any general rules with which they may conflict.

Using parliamentary procedure correctly makes the meeting a more pleasant experience for everyone attending.

NO NEED TO BAN ATRAZINE

“There’s no need to ban atrazine,” says Don L. Coursey, Economics Professor from the University of Chicago, in a Letter to the Editor of the Omaha World-Herald dated July 7, 2010.

“Calls to ban the agricultural herbicide atrazine rarely discuss the economic costs of doing so. They should. Poorly founded regulation devastates jobs for no reason.

The Environmental Protection Agency completed a 12-year review of atrazine in 2006. The EPA considered nearly 6,000 studies, including several it ordered to answer scientific questions. It found that atrazine is no threat to health when used appropriately.

The EPA set its next review for 2011. Sixty other countries use atrazine as well. Yet, in late 2009, the Obama administration unveiled an atrazine review. Anti-herbicide activists support the review to get a ban.

Banning atrazine would cost corn growers an estimated $2.3 billion–$5 billion per year. A ban also would result in the loss of an estimated 21,000–48,000 jobs related to corn production.

Prices for replacement herbicides vary, so the range of lost jobs is wide. Jobs that depend on atrazine–using sugar cane and sorghum production also would disappear. A ban essentially would tax growers. Environmentally friendly conservation tillage, which uses atrazine to reduce runoff and water pollution, would be curtailed.

Satisfying activist may be smart politics, but the bans of inputs based on anything less than compelling science would show wanton indifference to economic recovery.”

Please visit www.agsense.org and get registered to continue receiving important updates.