Immigration reform is topic of AAW’s 14th Annual Symposium

Carol Chandler, AAW Agricultural Labor Chair

“Hands for the Harvest” was the timely topic chosen for the annual agricultural issues symposium held on June 11, at the USDA Jamie Whitten Building, as part of the AAW Fly-In to Washington, DC.

Past Presidents Carol Marx and Alice Dettwyler invited a host of experts on immigration reform who sparked questions and commentary from the audience. Also, for the first time, Communications Vice President Chris Wilson arranged for streaming audio to those who were unable to attend in person.

Craig Regelbrugge, co-chair of the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform, was the keynote speaker who gave an excellent overview of the topic that causes much heated debate in the country. He stressed that “ag labor shortages are the canary in the coal mine” for all US labor needs. Native workers are not going into ag labor, he noted, and currently it is estimated that 70% of ag workers are illegal.

Regelbrugge discussed the AgJOBS agreement forged in 2003 which is now a part of Senate Bill 1348. Comprehensive reform is needed, he said, with provisions for ag labor needs. “All the pieces have to move together; if not, chaos will result” and he urged us to push for reform this year with “no excuses.” He stated that the current condition in the US is like “prohibition,” with unrealistic laws fostering criminal activity. We need to reconcile laws with reality.

Regelbrugge’s final statement was a quote from President Reagan: “No law or regulation should be allowed if it results in crops rotting in the field for lack of harvesters.”

Gerri Ratliff, Chief of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Verification Division, spoke to us about Employee Eligibility Verification (EEV). It is the best automated tool currently available, but it is on a voluntary basis. It involves matching photographs on driver’s licenses with those on employee cards.

Brooke Roberts, Legislative Director for Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), spoke about the bombardment the Senate offices have received by the electorate against comprehensive reform. She stressed that “amnesty” has been touted by the conservative groups, although it is not a part of the Senate bill. The term is “earned adjustment,” requiring many steps to be taken on the path to legalization, not blanket amnesty. Her message was that “the labor crisis will not fix itself.”

Finally, Karen Williams, Legislative Counsel to Rep. Adam Putnam (R-FL), gave the audience key messages to take to legislators during the Capitol Hill visits. She urged targeting the leadership in the Senate and the House to stress that “amnesty is the status quo.” We need a more comprehensive approach to the immigration issue, she stated.

Questions, answers, and much commentary followed each speaker. The topic gave AAW members valuable information to present to legislators and to hopefully make headway toward meaningful immigration reform that benefits the ag industry.

Texas Agri-Women members Linda Gilleland, Shirley Wilde, and Merlynn Verstuyft visit with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns after briefings with Sec. Johanns and others at the United States Department of Agriculture at the Fly-In in Washington, DC.
President’s Column

By Yvonne Erickson
AAW President

Necessity is the mother of invention, or so the saying goes. The first Americans created a country to grant them their freedom. John Deere developed a tool to advance agriculture. And in her own way, “Betty Crocker” changed the way we all cook. There is a creative bit in all of us. Part of the American dream is to reach our goals. What a wonderful place and time to surge forward with creative, innovative thinking and actions to seek new solutions for our world of agriculture.

Farming has adapted with the times and will continue to do so. We have moved from an agricultural society of subsistence farming for each family to one farmer providing food for 144 people in our country and beyond. When looking at corn, yields have increased from 10 bushels per acre to up to 347 in some parts of our country. Even the purpose of corn is being altered from a feed source to fuels and even medications. It’s amazing!

Our creative thinking and ways to express our views was highlighted at the Washington, DC, Fly-In. Because we are grassroots and grew out of the necessity of sharing our position statements, we have the ability to uniquely impact our policy makers. If we do not share our facts, there will certainly be information for the agricultural stance on the immigration reform issue. We thank the past presidents’ committee, chaired by Carol Marx who was assisted by our Ag Labor Chair Carol Chandler.

We now turn to making plans and formulating ideas for our next organizational gathering—the annual convention. Each convention is as unique as the host affiliate. I invite you all to come to my home state and visit our capital city of St. Paul on the shores of the Mississippi. We will be "Redefining Agriculture: Advancing in New Directions."

Creativity in agriculture never ceases. We will continue to be amazed at our innovations, our thinking and our abilities to make things happen.

Yvonne

NEXT DEADLINE IS 8/15/07

Affiliates:
• New Mexico Wool Growers Aux.
• Oregon Women in Timber
• Wisconsin Women for Agriculture
• Women of Nat’l Ag Aviation Assn
• Kansas Cattlemen
• Phoenix Cotton Wives
• Idaho Women for Agriculture
• ND Cattlemen
• Penn’s Agri-Women
• Michigan Women for Agriculture
• Lake States Women in Timber
• Kansas Sheep Auxiliary
• Iowa Agri-Women

Committees:
• Ag Business Committees: Legal Concerns, Estate Taxes, Rural Health/Insurance, Trade & Marketing, Rural Economic Dev.
• Anyone who hasn’t sent a report yet!

American Agri-Women

Executive Committee

President Yvonne Erickson
34115 County Hwy 74
Battle Lake, MN 56515
Phone: 218-495-2907
Fax: 218-495-2059
president@americanagriwomen.org

1st Vice Marcie Williams
President 11404 Appleton Rd
Resolutions, Croton, OH 43013
Vital Issues Phone: 740-893-4300
Fax: 740-893-4003
resolutions@americanagriwomen.org

Vice Pres. Chris Wilson
Communications 2103 Zeandale Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone: 785-539-7899
communications@americanagriwomen.org

Vice Pres. Pat Yeagle
Education 4975 W. Winslow Rd
Winslow, IL 61089
H/F: 815-789-4581
Cell Phone: 815-291-4581
education@americanagriwomen.org

Secretary Lynn Figone-Gallagher
PO Box 260
Middleton, CA 95461
Phone: 707-987-3634
Cell Phone: 707-324-9354
secretary@americanagriwomen.org

Treasurer Kathy Rhoads
26660 Kingston Pike
Circleville, OH 43113
Home: (740) 474-6469
Office: (740) 474-2028
Fax: (740) 474-3939
treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

Past Pres. Carol Marx
4150 Oak Grove Rd.
Ricklell, OR 97371
(503) 362-6225
Fax: (503) 362-2253
pastpresident@americanagriwomen.org

AAW Web Site: www.americanagriwomen.org
E-mail Address: info@americanagriwomen.org

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Arlene Kovash, Page Craft
11425 Pedee Creek Rd
Monmouth, OR 97361
Ph: (503) 898-3512 • Fax (503) 898-6851
E-mail: ak Kovash@earthlink.net

Please send address changes to:
Carolyn Kleiber, Membership Chair
PO Box 111
Hillsboro, KS 67063
Ph: (620) 947-3094 • Fax: (620) 947-2476
carolyn@agpowerinc.net

2 The VOICE of the American Agri-Woman
**USDA Lock-Up was a unique Fly-In experience**

*By Arlene Novak, ND, Gail McPherson Fly-In Scholarship Winner*

Due to an inside trading scandal in 1905, the Agricultural Statistical Board was created. Today data security and confidentiality are top priority on collected information provided by America’s farmers.

All survey data and summaries are controlled on a strict need-to-know basis and secured when not in use. Information is gathered at the 46 field offices and sent encrypted to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). During the few hours before the data release, it is then compiled into the reports to be released at the designated time. Once anyone enters the locked site, they cannot leave until after the release of the information. Not even the Secretary of Agriculture or an undersecretary will know a report’s contents until entering the lockup area to sign it just before the release.

The NASS reports are available electronically and otherwise immediately after the designated release time. There are about 425 statistical reports issued from its Headquarters each year, but not all reports are released through this process. The reports released during this lock-up were wheat, sugar beets and sugar cane, apricots, sweet cherries, papayas, peaches, pears, prunes, maple syrup, citrus fruits, sweet potatoes and hops. (To find the yearly data release times, check the web site www.nass.usday.gov.)

Arrangements were made for interested AAW members to attend the June 11 crop production release at the USDA building. The day began even earlier for several USDA employees as they began their day shortly after midnight compiling information they had just received. The information compiled in the Crop Production and the World Agricultural Supply and Demand estimates are received from various entities including farmers completing the USDA crop questionnaires.

Upon arriving, we went through the customary screening and were ushered into a meeting room where we were asked to leave any electronic device in their custody. We were briefed on the procedures and protocol of the Lock Up. We were advised that the release of the supply and demand of crop production is on or before the 12th of each month. Clocks are set for the atomic time prior to the release and all clocks are synchronized so all are the same time.

Media personal are allowed only into the media room with no outside access until data release time. They are not allowed into the data release area where all information on the reports are released at the same time—precisely 8:29 a.m. via computers to the media and a verbal presentation at 8:30 to the Secretary of Ag.

After a brief tour of the facility and an opportunity to ask questions of the staff, we were seated and given printed copies of the reports. For this release of the report, the Secretary of Ag was absent as was the second in command, so it went to the third in command, Keith Collins, USDA Chief Economist. Mr. Collins greeted and welcomed the Agri-Women in attendance and prepared to hear the verbal report. We were given a printed report in order to follow along with the verbal presentation. Although the verbal report was not completed by the time we had to leave, they halted the presentation and Mr. Collins and the staff thanked the Agri-Women for attending. I now realize the importance of the accurate completion of the USDA questionnaires.

★★★★★

**Legislative priorities taken to Congress**

Several AAW issues were highlighted when we visited our congressional delegates this year at the Fly-In. Please use them when talking to your own delegates.

**Immigration Reform:**

We need comprehensive immigration reform! A stable, legal workforce is vital to agricultural production and food security in our country. Without the passage of a bill this year, we face a workforce crisis in agriculture.

**Renewable Fuels:**

American Agri-Women supports efforts to encourage and expand the production and use of renewable fuels. We support the 25x25 Vision: By 2025, America’s farms, forests and ranches will provide 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States, while continuing to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed and fiber.

**Climate Change:**

American Agri-Women is a strong supporter of making environmental decisions based on sound science. We believe that policy decisions should be made taking into account sound science and weighing the environmental benefits with the economic cost.

**Superfund:**

AAW supports S. 807 and H.R. 1398. Livestock and poultry operations are threatened by potential liability for emissions or discharges from manure produced or used in their operations. AAW urges Congress to clarify that it never intended to regulate manure under the Comprehensive Environmental Recovery, Compensation & Liability Act (CERCLA) or the Environmental Protection & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA, commonly referred to as Superfund).

**Animal Welfare:**

In the 110th Congress, legislation has been introduced in the House (H.R. 503) and Senate (S. 311) to make illegal the processing of horses for human consumption and the export of horses for slaughter. Legislation (H.R. 661/S.394) has also been introduced to ban all non-ambulatory livestock from the human food supply. During consideration of the 2007 Farm Bill, there will be an attempt by animal rights groups to include these and other legislative and administrative animal rights initiatives.

We support the right of farmers to raise livestock in accordance with commonly accepted agricultural practices. We support vigorous enforcement fines and/or reimbursement for animal research lost and all costs and damage incurred, when farms or research facilities are willfully damaged. We oppose legislation and regulations which would prohibit or unduly restrict the use of animals in research.

**Secure Retirement:**

AAW supports the Retirement Security for Life Act, S. 1010 and H.R.

Continued on page 9.
American Agri-Women
2007 Annual Meeting and Convention
November 8-10, 2007
with pre-convention and post-convention activities
Crowne Plaza St. Paul, Minnesota

Wednesday, November 7, 2007
9:30 AM-4:30 PM  Optional Food, Land and People Training for those specially registered
                    Executive Committee meeting
1 PM  Registration Open
                    Silent Auction/Poster Session Set-up
Evening  Optional Evening Activity
                    Hospitality Suite Open

Thursday, November 8, 2007
7:00 AM  Registration Opens
                    Silent Auction, trade show area set-up,
                    Poster session set-up, Festival set-up
8:30-10:30 AM  AAW Resource Center Board of Directors Meeting
10:30-11:30 AM  Joint AAWRC and AAW Executive Meeting
11:45 AM-12:45 PM  Standing Committee Planning Sessions or Presentations
                    Membership, Education, Finance & START
                    Coordinators and Chairpersons Mtg
1:00-2:30 PM  Board of Directors Meeting
2:30-5:00 PM  U.S./ Canada Agriculture Mini-Summit
5:15-5:45 PM  First Timers/Mentoring Meeting
6:30-9:30 PM  Welcome to Minnesota
                    Redefining Agriculture Festival
                    Food, Music, Fun, Interactive Activities
                    Welcome by Commissioner of Agriculture
                    Gene Hugoson
9:30 PM  Hospitality Suite Open

Friday, November 10, 2006
7:00-8:00 AM  Registration and Silent Auction Opens
7:30-8:45 AM  Breakfast and Town Hall Meeting
9:00-11:45 AM  Formal Opening General Membership Mtg
                    Presentation of Flags
                    Minnesota Lt. Governor Carol Molnau
                    Speaker: Nancy Pellet – Chair of the Board
                    & CEO Farm Credit Administration
12:30 PM  Tours Leave
6-7:30 PM  Making Connections General Reception
6-7:30 PM  Young Professionals Reception/Networking
                    Dinner On Your Own
9 PM  Hospitality Suite Open

Saturday, November 10, 2007
8:00 AM  Registration and Silent Auction Opens

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
A block of rooms has been reserved under American Agri-Women at the Crowne Plaza in St. Paul, MN. Rates are $119 for 1-2 persons with 2 double beds. Executive floor rates are $139.
Reservations must be made prior to October 7, 2007. Call the hotel directly at 651-292-1900 or go to www.crowneplaza.com/stpaul to book your room.
American Agri-Women 32nd Annual Meeting

Name: __________________________________________________  Affiliate: _______________________________________
Guest: _____________________________________________________ Phone:  ____________________________________
Address:  ________________________________________________________  Fax:  _________________________________
Email: __________________________________________ Are you a voting member of AAW? ________________

How many conventions have you attended? __________ Are you a 1st time conference attendee? ________________

Please list any dietary requirements: _______________________________________________________________________

Conference Registration

Early Registration (Postmarked by September 15, 2007) $250.00 ________ ________
Late Registration (Postmarked after September 15, 2007) $300.00 ________ ________
Early Student Registration (Postmarked by September 15, 2007) $150.00 ________ ________
Late Student Registration (Postmarked by September 15, 2007) $200.00 ________ ________

Day-Only Registration - Please mark the days attending:

_____Thursday _____Friday _____ Saturday $100.00 per day ________ ________

Student Day-Only Registration - Please mark the days attending:

_____Thursday _____Friday _____ Saturday $50.00 per day ________ ________

❑ I am a collegiate student and would be interested in a homestay for lodging.

Pre-Conference Activities - Wed, November 7, 2007 (Limited Space Available)
Food, Land & People Training – Includes training, lunch, & materials $50.00
Optional Wednesday evening activity will be available, more details to follow.

Optional Events (Please indicate if attending and how many)

Thursday Spouse Tour Comp ________
Saturday Spouse Tour Comp ________
Friday ‘Making Connections’ Reception Comp ________
Friday Young Professionals Reception Comp ________
Sunday Tour – Red Wing, MN $50.00 ________ ________

Total Enclosed ________

Registration Fees
The early registration fee for the 2007 convention is $250.00 and must be postmarked by September 15, 2007. After that date, the registration fee is $300.00. The early student registration fee is $150.00 if postmarked by September 15, 2007, after that date, the registration fee is $200.00. For those that cannot attend the whole conference but still would like to participate, there is a daily registration fee of $100.00 and $50.00 for students.

Cancellation Policy
Cancellations made in writing before October 15, 2007 will receive a full refund. No refund will be given to cancellations made after October 15, 2007.

Payment & Inquiries
Make checks payable to 2007 AAW Convention and mail with registration form to: Sarah Tesmer, 320 VoTech Bldg., 1954 Buford Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108. Any inquiries contact Sarah Tesmer at 612-624-6256 or tesm0010@umn.edu.
Affiliate Reports

Heads or Tails? at OWA’s 21st Auction!
By Tricia Chastain, OWA 1st Vice President and Auction Chair

Twenty one years ago, Oregon Women for Agriculture members Gwen Mulkey and Deanna Dyksterhuis put their heads together and came up with the idea of an OWA auction. That first year was a challenge and a success by raising $7000.

This year, nearly 1,000 people attended the auction at the Linn County Fair and Expo. With a combination of $35 dinner tickets, cash donations, and over 675 donated items, the evening grossed more than $97,000.

The theme “Farming Keeps Oregon Green” was positive and educational. We raised $4,200 earmarked for printing up more of our fantastic road signs which say just that to be placed throughout the state.

A new addition to the annual auction this year was a heads or tails game. Yamhill County Women for Ag sold Flashing Buttons for $10. (290 buttons were sold!). At the beginning of the oral auction, all those with flashing buttons were asked to stand. They were asked to choose heads or tails by placing their hands there. The auctioneer and Shireen Malpass, Mistress of Ceremonies, tossed a coin and called heads or tails. Whoever lost the toss sat down. This continued until there were about 10-20 individuals left standing. They were called to the front and the game continued until the end, when one winner was left. Yamhill County OWA member Roellie Goddik won the $500 cash prize on the spot. This proved to be an exciting point of the auction, raising more funds!

The winner of the $750 travel voucher awarded at the end of the evening was Jim Malpass, Shireen’s husband. Shireen is OWA’s corresponding secretary and L/B member. The travel voucher has been given for many years and donated by Northwest Farm Credit Services. Throughout the evening we heard wonderful comments on the appetizers, the beautiful decorations, the friendliness and social atmosphere, the upbeat musicians, the diverse auction items, the delicious dinner and the warm, inviting quality of the entire evening. It truly was an enjoyable fundraiser. We are a quality organization filled with terrific members and our commitment to Oregon agriculture is making a difference.

We extend a “pat on the back” for all those involved in the auction. This event would not have been possible without the volunteers, including OWA members, their spouses, friends and families. We also appreciated the assistance of Sigma Alpha and the Collegiate FFA volunteers on Friday and Saturday.

If any other AAW affiliate is interested in how to put on their own money-raising auction, please contact Oregon Women for Agriculture and we will be glad to help you!

MN Agri-Women busy
By Deb Whalen, President

Throughout Minnesota, Agri-Women have been active. We have held legislative forums, leadership conferences and have had our annual meeting. During Ag Week our chapters were active educating not only our children but the communities as well. We partake in Farmers’ Share Breakfasts, Farmer-Merchant mixers, Farmer Appreciations, and create window displays in business communities.

Our Ag in the Classroom consists of donating books to presenting Special Assignment Pizza to fourth graders in local schools. Knowledge is empowering!

Mid-Year was held in Kansas City, Missouri, with Minnesota being very well represented. It was a very successful meeting and as always a learning experience as we acquire knowledge of the many diverse areas of the country and how the issues affect each of them in a different way.

Congratulations to Arlene Novak, one of our co-treasurers and National Grains Chair, who was the recipient of the Gail McPherson scholarship to the Fly-In. The Fly-In is an experience in itself.

This year Minnesota hosts the National Convention of AAW, November 8-10 in St. Paul. Come and see us in November and you will learn what Minnesota Nice is all about.

Resolutions due by August 15

All resolutions to be considered at the annual meeting are due August 15.

Resolutions originating with individual members or affiliates shall be signed by at least 10 members and be accompanied by support data and rationale. Send them to the resolutions committee by August 15 so it can prepare them for consideration and publication in the VOICE.

Send your resolutions to Marcie Williams, Vice President of Resolutions and Vital Issues, fax 740-893-4003 and e-mail resolutions@americanagriwomen.org.
AAW Membership Survey

The Strategic Planning Committee requests your response to this membership survey by August 10. Please help AAW by mailing the completed survey to Marcie Williams, AAW 1st Vice President, 11404 Appleton Road, Croton OH 43013. Thank you!

1. How long have you been a member of American Agri-Women? __________

2. Are you a member of a state or commodity affiliate of AAW? (Please circle which one)

3. Why did you originally join AAW (Please circle all that apply.)
   A. Friends  
   B. Programs offered  
   C. Friend recommended  
   D. My job  
   E. Networking  
   F. My family is involved in agriculture

4. How active have you been as a member of AAW? (Please circle all that apply.)
   A. Member of the Board of Directors  
   B. Member of the Executive Board  
   C. Committee Chair  
   D. Committee member  
   E. Attended at least one convention  
   F. Attended at least one Mid Year meeting  
   G. Attended at least one Fly-In

5. If you have been unable to be active in AAW, why? (Please circle all that apply.)
   A. Time constraints  
   B. Financial constraints  
   C. Have not been asked to participate  
   D. Other – please explain

6. Please list the importance of the following services which AAW provides. Use the following scale:
   1–very important  2–somewhat important  3–little importance  4–not needed
   ___Newsletter  
   ___Committees  
   ___Action Alerts  
   ___Networking  
   ___Mid Year Meeting  
   ___Fly In  
   ___Annual Meeting  
   ___Information resources  
   ___Web page  
   ___Partnersing with other ag groups  
   ___Media training  
   ___Leadership skills

7. What other member benefits would you like to see AAW offer?
   Discounts for:  ___car rentals  ___internet services  
   ___home supplies  ___publications  
   ___office supplies  ___hotels
   Other? ________________________________________________________________

8. For each of the following items, indicate your level of satisfaction with AAW’s performance. Use the following scale: 1–very satisfied  2–somewhat satisfied  3–somewhat dissatisfied  4–very dissatisfied  5–don’t know
   ___Opportunities to serve AAW leadership  
   ___Timeliness of the Voice  
   ___Communications from officers  
   ___Number of meetings a year  
   ___Communications from Committee Chairs  
   ___Location of meetings  
   ___Fairness of dues structure  
   ___Accomplishments of AAW  
   ___Webpage updates  
   ___Meeting structure  
   ___Like it as it is

9. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about AAW. Use the following scale: 1–strongly agree  2–agree  3–neutral  4–disagree  5–strongly disagree
   ___AAW maintains a leadership role in the agricultural industry.  
   ___AAW provides an adequate forum for information pertaining to my interests.  
   ___There is opportunity for members to participate in AAW’s decision-making processes.  
   ___AAW does a good job in serving my needs.  
   ___AAW is a major player in the agricultural industry.  
   ___The Voice is a good method of informing members of important issues.
10. What would you like to see in the Voice? (Please circle all that apply.)
   A. More articles on current issues of interest
   B. Committee reports
   C. Article from outside journalists
   D. Like it as it is

11. Should consideration be given to accepting advertisements in the Voice newsletter?
   ___Yes ___No

12. Have you attended a Mid Year Meeting? ___Yes ___No

13. What importance is our Mid Year meeting to you?
   ___Very important ___Important ___Not very important ___Least important

14. What would you like to see more of at our Mid Year meeting? (Mark all that apply)
   ___Tours ___Leadership training ___Parliamentary training ___Internet training
   ___Other Please list ___________________________________________________________

15. Have you ever attended a Fly-In meeting? ___Yes ___No

16. Of the three meetings a year, what importance is Fly-In to you?
   ___Very important ___Important ___Not very important ___Least important

17. Please list in order what you think the degree of importance is for Fly-In.
   ___Tours ___Symposium ___Agency visits ___USDA meetings ___Hill visits ___Reception

18. Please list in order the degree of importance the following factors have on your decision whether or not to attend
   an AAW Annual Meeting/Convention.
   ___Educational Speakers ___Time of Year ___Location
   ___Cost of Travel ___Committee Meetings ___Social Activities
   ___Registration Fee ___Total Cost ___Workshops

19. Generally, the level of educational programs at AAW Annual Meetings are: (Please check one.)
   ___About right ___Too Basic ___Too Advanced

20. Please indicate the MAXIMUM number of days you would prefer for the Annual Meeting, including travel time.
   ___Two ___Three ___Four ___Five

21. Please indicate your preference for the Annual Meeting days of the week.
   ___Wednesday – Friday ___Thursday-Friday ___Thursday – Saturday ___Thursday – Sunday

22. Please indicate in order the degree of importance the following factors have on your attendance at Annual
   Meetings. (1 being top priority)
   ___Tours ___Education sessions ___Speakers ___Workshops ___Reports ___Business meetings

23. Where would you like to see tours at the Annual Meeting?
   ___Before ___Beginning ___Middle ___End ___After

24. Would you attend an Annual Meeting if there were no tours involved? ___Yes ___No

25. Would you attend an Annual Meeting if tours were held only before the meeting? ___Yes ___No

26. Would you attend an Annual Meeting if tours were held only after the meeting? ___Yes ___No

27. Please indicate your willingness to participate in a Regional Meeting.
   ___Very Willing ___Not Willing ___Don’t Know

28. Would a Regional Meeting be preferred over an Annual Meeting? ___Yes ___No

29. What factors would determine your attendance at a Regional Meeting? (Check all that apply)
   ___Time of Year ___Location ___Program ___Financial restraints ___Other
2007 AAW priorities, continued.

2205, which would allow Americans to provide for their retirements and maintain their standard of living in a time when we are living longer and will need more savings in retirement. These bills would amend the Internal Revenue Code to encourage guaranteed lifetime income payments from annuities and similar payments of life insurance proceeds.

People in agriculture, often self-employed, need tools like lifetime annuities in order to save for retirement.

Natural Pollination:

Native bees can be an insurance policy when honeybees are scarce. AAW supports efforts in the 2007 Farm Bill to provide incentives for conserving natural pollinators. AAW supports funding pollinator research in the 2007 Farm Bill to allow identification of new crop pollinators, their habitats and management needs.

Endangered Species Act Reform:

There is need to reform the ESA. Under the current system, endangered species do not recover. AAW supports requiring the use of sound, verifiable science prior to listing a species.

AAW supports efforts to evaluate endangered species habitat credit trading as a supplemental way to preserve endangered species habitat. Through cooperative conservation efforts, agencies will explore ways to coordinate related programs and activities to assist habitat credit trading markets as way to increase the conservation of endangered or at-risk species habitat.

Habitat credit has potential to restore, protect and promote conservation of lands that are home to endangered species through allowing landowners to earn additional revenue for their conservation efforts and stewardship.

Clean Water Act:

AAW opposes H.R. 2421, the “Clean Water Authority Restoration Act”. This bill would delete the word “navigable” from the Clean Water Act. If this bill were to pass, any wet areas on our farms would become regulated under the Clean Water Act. We do not believe Congress intended the CWA to regulate ditches and farm ponds, and possibly groundwater. By removing the word “navigable” from the CWA, the bill would create an unprecedented and ineffective governmental reach to protect water.

ACIR disillusioned over Senate’s failure

From Carol Chandler, Ag Labor Chair

The Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform (ACIR) expressed its deepest disappointment at the United States Senate’s failure to pass 53-46 a crucial procedural motion to complete debate and hold a final vote on S.1639, comprehensive immigration reform.

The bill contained an urgently-needed overhaul of the broken 50-year-old H-2A agricultural worker program and a tough earned-legalization program for experienced farmworkers. It was strongly favored by American agriculture and seen by most in and beyond agriculture as the best way to accomplish the intertwined goals of border security, a credible employment eligibility verification program, and access to a legal and stable workforce.

“The border will continue to tighten, the crops to ripen, more will rot, economic and human hardship will rise, our food security and economy will suffer,” said Luawanna Hallstrom, cochair of ACIR and vine-ripe tomato producer based in southern California. She added, “The choice of the status quo over a better future is nothing short of an indictment of the politicians who voted no, and especially those who mobilized to kill this bill. They have let an historic moment pass, and Americans expect and deserve better.”

“Despite the setback, ACIR is undaunted in the quest for lasting and bipartisan reforms” said Craig Regelbrugge, ACIR co-chair and vice president for government relations with the American Nursery & Landscape Association. “Lives, livelihoods, and economies are at stake.”

ACIR expresses its sincerest appreciation to the Senators who led the monumental effort for reform, including Feinstein and Craig, Kyl and Kennedy, McCain, Specter, Graham and Salazar, and all Senators who provided support on critical votes throughout the effort. Also, ACIR recognizes the tireless leadership of President Bush and key Administration officials, including Secretaries Gutierrez, Chertoff, and Johanns.

Guidelines and rules for Resource Center photo contest

Here are the rules for the Resource Center photography contest described on the back page of this newsletter. The primary theme of the photographs must be “agriculturally related”, whether it is a photo of scenery, a close-up, a record or pictorial photo. Judging points are based on composition and content.

• Photos must be submitted by October 1, 2007. Photographs do not have to be shot during this time period. They can be from the past or present.

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

• Contestant must be an AAW member.

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

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

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

• Each photo may be submitted in an electronic tif. Or jpg. file format.

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

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

• A panel of judges will select the winners.

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

Can’t Get High-Speed Internet Access? Agristar Is the Answer.

A high-speed connection is an absolute necessity today for families and businesses to be able to use the Internet in a meaningful way. For much of rural America, however, the only Internet access option has been frustratingly slow dial-up. Dial-up is too slow to use even basic email easily. And it doesn’t come close to handling the multimedia content now widely available on the Web (see chart at right). Furthermore, cable and DSL broadband are not options because distance limitations severely restrict their availability. So how can you get high-speed Internet access to your rural home or business? Agristar is the answer.

Agristar Global Networks uses advanced satellite technology to deliver high-speed Internet access to any location in the U.S. Agristar runs on the fastest satellite Internet network in the world, which gives it the power to provide speeds that are 35X to 100X faster than rural dial-up. Broadband is now available to every rural location that DSL and cable cannot reach. This means that Agristar can connect AAW families anywhere – today! But what’s really unique about Agristar is that it delivers more than just high-speed connectivity. Agristar is the only broadband service dedicated to agriculture and rural America. A broad spectrum of premium ag business and market information services is included with connectivity at no extra cost. Plus your calls are not answered by foreign call centers that don’t know cattle from corn, but from rural-based U.S. support that knows technology and agriculture.

Special AAW Discount: $300 in Total Savings!
In conjunction with American AgriWomen, Agristar is offering special pricing to AAW members. Take an extra $25 off Agristar’s start-up price in addition to free installation (a $175 value) and the 2007 Summer Special ($100 off). That’s $300 in total savings! Agristar’s most popular plan is shown below.

Super-Low Start-Up Price

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Installation:</th>
<th>-$175.00 - FREE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Original Equipment Price:</td>
<td>$399.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agristar Summer Special:</td>
<td>-$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra AAW Member Discount:</td>
<td>-$25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AAW Member Price</strong></td>
<td><strong>$274.00</strong></td>
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**STAR100 Plan**

Monthly Price: **$59.95**
Download Speed: up to **700 kbps**; Upload Speed: up to **128 kbps**
The STAR100 is Agristar’s most popular plan. It’s the fastest entry-level satellite service available anywhere today and a great fit for those using one computer to access the Internet. Get 1 month FREE when you pre-pay your agreement!

For additional info or to order, call Agristar: 1-888-777-0440.
**Strong support for Senate ESA tax bill**  
*From the National ESA Reform Coalition (NESARC)*

A group of diverse stakeholders sent a letter to members of the Senate Finance Committee in June expressing support for S. 700, the “Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2007.”

The letter states that, “while debate over endangered species conservation is often polarized, this bill offers a pragmatic approach to provide benefits to farmers and other private landowners who undertake measures to protect and restore endangered species habitat on their lands.”

Senate staff members have indicated that a markup of S. 700 could occur in the near future. The bill, which was originally introduced late in the 109th Congress, was reintroduced earlier this year and has since gained increased support, with 22 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. The National Endangered Species Act Reform Committee (NESARC), of which AAW is a member, recently sent its own support letter on the legislation to members of the Finance Committee.

Also, Representative Cathy McMorris-Rodgers (R-WA) recently introduced H.R. 2530, the “Endangered Species Transparency Act of 2007.”

The bill requires Power Marketing Administrations, including the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), to estimate and report the direct and indirect costs associated with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to each wholesale power customer on a monthly billing basis.

**EPA, Corps issue wetlands guidance**  
*From Cheryl Day, Water Resources*

On June 5, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) issued a joint guidance to field offices to ensure America’s wetland and other water bodies are protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

EPA and Corps staff will use the issued guidance when taking enforcement actions under the CWA. The guidance clarifies those circumstances where a person may need to obtain a CWA Section 404 permit before conducting activities in wetlands, tributaries, and other waters. Individual tribal, state and local laws, regulations, or policies may further protect aquatic water resources.

The guidance supports a strong regulatory program that ensures no net loss of wetlands, which is one of three key elements to the Bush Administration wetlands policy. The other two elements include an active management program that will result in the restoration, enhancement and protection of three million acres of wetlands by 2009 and a commitment to conserve isolated wetlands such as prairie potholes.

During the first six months implementing the guidance, the agencies are inviting public comments on case studies and experiences applying the guidance.

The guidance and additional information are available at: http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/approve.html

**The government wants our water!**  
*From Linda Runbeck and Don Parmeter, American Property Coalition, St. Paul, MN*

A new federal bill entitled the Clean Water Authority Restoration Act (HR 2421) is a threat to everyone.

The bill grants the federal government for the first time ever authority over every backyard pond, wetland, ditch, culvert, pipe—essentially all wet areas in the United States—and is an extreme expansion of federal power.

The bill is in response to two U.S. Supreme Court decisions favoring landowners (SWANCC and Rapanos) which concluded that the federal government exceeded its authority under the current Clean Water Act.

The bill, submitted by Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-MN), proposes two changes to the Clean Water Act: substituting “waters of the United States” for “navigable waters,” and adding “activities affecting these waters.” If enacted, these two changes would dramatically alter the extent to which the federal government will be able to control our lives and our property.

Under the bill, “waters” include “intrastate waters” which include but are not limited to intermittent streams, mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, and natural ponds. Thus, even man-made ponds, gutters, streets, desert washes and other features could be regulated as “intrastate waters.” This language is a significant departure from the existing act.

Furthermore, the bill grants the federal government authority over all “activities affecting these waters” (private or public), regardless of whether the activity is occurring in water or whether the activity actually adds a pollutant to the water. It is hard to conceive of any human activity that does not affect water. Even the mere possibility of “affected” waters would require regulation of the activity by federal agencies.

Passage of this bill will lead to a bureaucratic enforcement nightmare and endless litigation, the only beneficiaries of which will be environmental attorneys and the multi-billion dollar environmental lobby that can afford to pay them.

That this is an ill-conceived, and perhaps unconstitutional piece of legislation, is becoming more apparent with the growing opposition that is building across the country and across the political spectrum. More and more people and interest groups are beginning to look beneath the guise and popular appeal of the term “clean water” and see this bill for what it really is.

We should resist all attempts to turn the successful 1972 Clean Water Act into a top-down centralized power grab that thwarts citizen-initiated environmental protection.
GO TO THE CARIBBEAN WITH AAW ON THE “CARNIVAL LEGEND”
FOR AS LITTLE AS $632.53 PP, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
American Agri-Women has scheduled a seven-day
AAW Fundraiser Cruise to the
Western Caribbean
Leaving January 27, 2008, from Tampa, FL. All it takes is $250.00 per person deposit to hold a cabin. Final payment will be due 11/13/07. Please call Alice Dettwyler, 503-371-1399, or Donna Mantie at Newberg Travel, 800-234-6968, for more information.

AAW RESOURCE CENTER HOSTING SECOND ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST
Get out your camera!
The AAW Resource Center is looking for your photograph's portraying American agriculture to compete in their second annual photography contest. Selected photographs will be featured on note cards and Christmas cards being sold at the National AAW Convention in St. Paul. Winning photographs will also be available to download as computer screensavers on the AAW web site.
See page 9 for contest rules. All proceeds will go to the AAW Resource Center. Submit photos to:
Julie Tesch, 1954 Buford Avenue, Room 320, St. Paul, MN 55108
E-mail: jtesch@umn.edu Phone: 612-624-6249

American Agri-Women
Calendar of Events
August 15 Resolutions for consideration at annual meeting due
October 1 Affiliate & Committee Annual Reports Due
Biennial bids due for Editor of the VOICE and Website Master
For job descriptions and bid guidelines, contact Chris Wilson, VP Communications.
Nov. 8-10 AAW Convention, St. Paul, MN

AAW Web site
www.americanagriwomen.org
AAW Phone & Fax Numbers
Phone: 218-495-2867
Fax: 218-495-2659

American Agri-Women is a national coalition of women’s farm, ranch, and agri-business organizations and individuals formed in 1974. We, as women’s agricultural organizations and individuals, unite together to communicate with one another and with other consumers to promote agriculture for the benefit of the American people and the world.