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## American Agri-Women Experiences Oregon Agriculture

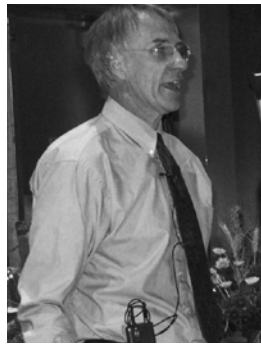
One-hundred eighty-two members and guests gathered in Salem, Oregon for the 35th annual AAW convention hosted by Oregon Women for Agriculture. The program showcased Oregon agriculture through speakers, tours and workshops. In addition, nationally known speakers in economics, risk management and tax reform brought learning opportunities to attendees. Brenda Lammens, Denise Zaborowski and Susan Fitzgerald brought news from Canadian women in agriculture.

Jeanne Carver, rancher and entrepreneur, keynoted the Thursday program. Jeanne and her husband, Dan, are owners of the historic Imperial Stock Ranch in north central Oregon where they raise beef and sheep. About 10 years ago when markets began drying up, she became creative, marketing her lamb and beef to high-end restaurants and eventually venturing into wool apparel and fashion. From what she calls sunlight energy wool products, Jeanne has successfully entered global fashion and competes in high couture runway shows.



**Jeanne Carver**

Economics professor emeritus Dr. David Kohl, from Virginia Tech University, addressed the convention on the topic, "The Pulse of the Economy & What To Do About It." Dr. Kohl likened the economic environment planning forecast to the song, "Crazy," by Patsy Cline. He then detailed what that means: an extended period of economic moderation worldwide, volatility of input costs,



**Dr. David Kohl**

and income resulting in reprioritization of business, personal and family decisions. Cash will be king. We will all need to be innovative and selective in managing risk and resources.

### *What are the views from the road in agriculture?*

Economic stress and activist attacks in the livestock/protein industries, volatility in grain, dependency on real estate by farmers/ranchers. (87% of U.S. farm balance sheet is in farmland, and elderly women own 60% of farmland.) Farmers are facing third party or counter party risk, regulators and government oversight, rationing of credit by lenders, an imbalance of input costs and commodity prices, changes in export markets, technology and the economy.

### *What can women in agribusinesses do?*

Dr. Kohl suggests these strategies:

- Have access to financial records—know who, what, why and how of ownership and debts
- Be involved in business meetings, set business goals, family goals, and personal goals
- Seek ways to diversify investments
- Minimize tax strategy
- Don't expect to treat all kids equal, but determine what is fair and equitable
- Strategic planning is not a "men only" job, family needs to be involved.

Part of planning is finding a balance between business and life style

- Plan for long-term health care
- Develop complimentary advisor teams/partners to create more formality of the business

Other speakers included Tom Wright, spokesperson for the FairTax that would replace all the other federal taxes with a federal retail sales tax; Jo Lynne Seuffer, risk management specialist, USDA; and Barry Bushue, vice-president, American Farm Bureau Federation. Seuffer presented an overview of the Risk Management Agency including outreach/education services and funding. One of the newer programs is the AGR/AGR-Lite program that insures loss of revenue from the sale of ag commodities produced during the insurance year due to unavoidable natural disasters and/or market fluctuations on a whole farm basis during the insurance year. For more information on this and other programs go to RMA's home page: [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov).

Vice president Bushue noted major issues facing the agriculture industry: climate change, estate tax, health care, interim elections, and animal welfare. He urged AAW members to be proactive telling our personal stories, engaging in the larger community, building trust and being a leader. He concluded by saying, "We need to tell our story; if someone else tells it, you probably won't like it."

Other programs included Ag in the Classroom and fundraising workshops and tours to area agricultural enterprises.

It was an extremely interesting and educational experience! Our hats are off to the Oregon Women in Agriculture who did a superb job of organizing and conducting a very memorable convention!

## President's Report ▶▶



**Chris Wilson**  
AAW President

Dear AAW Members,  
It's a great privilege to serve as AAW president for the coming two years! We had a wonderful convention in Oregon, thanks to the efforts of many members of Oregon Women for Agriculture. Thank you, OWA members, President Tricia Chastain, and convention chairs Alice Dettwyler and Judy McClaughry!

I was installed as president 35 years to the day after AAW was formed, and I have thought much about those who founded this organization and all who have worked over those 35 years to bring us to where we are today. Kansas Agri-Women held a reception at our December meeting, and some old friends of our organization came, including former legislators and other agriculture organization representatives we'd worked with over the past 35 years. One of them remarked, "You know the times now are not unlike those that got this organization started." I thought that was a wise observation. Women in agriculture came together to start our affiliate organizations and AAW in times when agriculture was besieged with concerns.

In the history of the first 20 years of AAW, Sharon Steffens and Pat Cohill wrote, "Beset with many serious problems, American Agriculture, as a fragmented industry, lacked a single voice through which to speak to bring about effective change. Many felt agriculture needed to develop a voice to speak for the entire industry. Women were to play an important role in developing a united voice for agriculture.

"In 1969, a group of women in Oregon organized as a result of government regulations banning farmers from burning fields. Oregon Women for Agriculture (OWA) stood alone, for their husbands were too busy farming to respond and fight the forces that were determining the course of American agriculture.

"Two years later, in 1971, Connie Canfield, unaware of OWA's existence, founded Women for the Survival of Agriculture in Michigan. The WSAMs realized that the problems of agriculture were national in scope and required a national organization to respond effectively."

Here in Kansas, it was the Beef Boycott that led Barbara Bausch and others to form an organization. Laura Heuser and Pat Cohill traveled the country, speaking and organizing women in agriculture. Thirty-five years later, we mourn the recent passing of Laura Heuser and celebrate what she began.

A (male) friend from college who is farming in Illinois sent a message on Facebook that I received this morning: "So now you are president of a bunch of women farmers. What is your agenda for the year? I am concerned about some of the bills that are being passed."

AAW has a great history of being a strong and effective grassroots voice for agriculture to influence policy and legislation. Our agenda includes many initiatives for informing others and ourselves about the importance of agriculture and policies that will benefit this vital industry.

We have tools we've used over the years to communicate plus many new ones via the Internet. Please visit your web site often: [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org), and make sure you're signed up under the Legislation tab, Grassroots Advocacy Center, to receive Action Alerts.

Wherever you are, you can make a difference that will benefit agriculture. I firmly believe today as when AAW was founded, "We Can Do It Together."

God bless you and may you have a productive and prosperous New Year.

Chris

### Why I Joined AAW...

I joined AAW as a staff member at the Illinois Department of Agriculture because Jean Ibendahl asked me to join and gave me a job to do. I think often people would be interested in joining if we would ask them to and if we would get them involved. I was open to a way to serve agriculture and I have always enjoyed being involved in organizations and working with other women.

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## Canadian Delegates Announce Agri-Business Symposium, Share Results of 2009 Farm Issues Study

Canadian delegates Brenda Lammens, Denise Zaborowski, and Susan Fitzgerald announced that the first Women in Agri-business Symposium will be held at the Springfield Golf and Country Club in Guelph, Ontario, on Wednesday, October 13, 2010.

Since attending AAW's recent conventions and Syngenta Leadership conference, these ladies believed that a similar program was needed to invest in leadership and business skills for Ontario women in rural, agriculture and agri-food business sections. Since women are more likely to place an emphasis on networking than their male counterparts it seemed that a symposium which brought women together to learn and network would be appropriate.

The one-day program is designed to help participants learn:

- How to build and execute effective strategies
- How to build trust, leadership and responsible management
- How to create vision in times of uncertainty
- How to balance life and work commitments.

Outstanding speakers will address qualities of an effective business leader, advocacy and policy-making, and time management. Other programs will focus on inter-generational relationships and mentoring.

AAW members are invited and encouraged to attend. For further details, email Susan Fitzgerald at [susan.tfio@sympatico.ca](mailto:susan.tfio@sympatico.ca) or call 1-519-669-3350.

### *Farm Issues Survey*

Susan Fitzgerald also shared the results of the Ontario Farm Animal Council 2009 Farm Issues Survey conducted to determine impressions of farming, animal care and sources of consumer information.



**Canadian delegates, left to right: Brenda Lammens, Denise Zaborowski, Susan Fitzgerald.**

Key findings were:

- Most Canadians maintain a positive impression of farming and are predisposed to thinking that farmers are “hard working” and “good people.”
- By far, the most top-of-mind issue mentioned by non-farming Canadians is related to financial challenges and hardships, especially on small farms.
- However, when given a list of specific issues, food safety is the most important.
- Popular media is the leading information source for consumers on topics relating to food safety, animal welfare and the environmental impact of livestock farming.

What are the implications of these findings? Consumers trust both the industry and the regulatory bodies in the area of food safety, animal care and the environment, but it is imperative that this trust be maintained through what the industry “says” in communication and what the industry “does” in production.

*Editor's Note—These findings are very positive. Would the same be true in the United States?*

## StART Sessions Address Current Concerns

StART Sessions led by Dolly Lillis, chair, focused on two topics—environmental education with a “green touch” and long-term care insurance. Holly Swanson, Operation Green Out and author of the book, “Set Up and Sold Out: Find Out What Green Really Means,” described what she terms are the negative effects of the “green” movement in school curriculum and related political ramifications.

Diane Steeves, President and Broker for Diane Steeves & Associates, Portland, Oregon, gave timely insights on the topic, “Long-Term Care and You.” Long-term care costs are a major threat to the financial health of America's farm families and a unique issue for women.

Her presentation defined long-term care, and long-term care insurance and gave tips on how to select the right policy. Policy costs are often a deterrent to purchasing insurance, but by asking the right questions and doing research, you can control claims and benefits.

AAW members now have access to discounted long-term care insurance from top insurance companies and the advice and services of America's leading network of long-term care insurance experts.

In the new AAW long-term care programs, you can pay for care in your own home or an assisted living facility or nursing home—you choose. You also can provide cash to help cover household expenses that might be hard to cover if you or your spouse can't work because of an accident or illness.

For more information, visit [ProtectTheFarm.com](http://ProtectTheFarm.com) or call Don Grimes at 1-866-535-0063; or contact Diane Steeves, 1841 NW Cedar Ridge Dr. Portland, OR 97229, 1-888-578-3383 web site: [www.Itcping.com](http://www.Itcping.com)

## 2009 LEAVEN Award Presented

Two outstanding American Agri-Women members were presented AAW's highest honor, the LEAVEN Award, by Committee Chair Doris Mold. LEAVEN is an acronym for Loyalty, Enthusiasm, Anticipatory, Valiant, Effectiveness, and Nurturing, which these two women personify.

Award winners were Wanda Kinney, member of Kansas Agri-Women (KAW) from Carbondale, and Vicky Maaske, Wisconsin Women for Agriculture from Horicon. Kinney has been a faithful attendee at AAW conventions, participated in fly-ins, Mid-Year meetings, and is a graduate of Syngenta Leadership and has served as AAW's Livestock Commodity Committee Chair. Kinney not only talks agriculture, she walks the talk. She is noted for developing the slogan, "If you ate a meal today, thank a farmer," which has been on grocery sacks or advertisements throughout Kansas along with special promotions in cooperation with the Topeka, KS Hy-Vee stores. Kinney is a past president of Kansas Agri-Women, and a counselor and guide for the KAW Collegiate Chapter.

Kinney and her husband, Darrell, operate a diversified farm raising wheat, corn, milo and soybeans and feeding cattle. Kinney has worked for livestock sale barns and assisted Beatty and Wishchropp Auction Company at farm sales.

Maaske is best known to AAW members as the manager of the AAW Country Store since its beginning in the early 1990s. She has been very effective in bringing new ideas and products to the country store. She is active in Wisconsin Women for Agriculture, volunteering her assistance for the Legislative Brunch at the capital and other statewide events and serving as historian. Maaske and her husband, Chuck, owned and operated the Maaske Family Dairy Farm for many years; now, due to her husband's disability, they rent out the farmland. Her agriculture interests include involvement in Farm Bureau and Associated Milk Producers Inc. Maaske is employed as a registered nurse at the Juneau Nursing Home.

## Something I didn't know until I went to convention

"It costs \$750 an hour for a helicopter to pick up felled trees in the forest and drop them into trucks at a lower elevation, which then bring them down to the processing site."

—Shirley Wilde, Texas

"I know crops are different in every state but it was interesting for me to learn that farmers in Oregon grow so many different crops on their farms. In Montana we grow two- or three-thousand acres of usually just one crop. In Minnesota I loved driving around the countryside and seeing how dark their soil is, so different from Montana. I love visiting the other states learning about their crops and land."

—Katie Yost, Montana

"I knew my favorite wine came from Oregon; however, I was surprised to learn just how many other wonderful Oregon wines are available. (FYI: I only drink wine to promote agriculture—you can count on me!) I also learned the Oregon ladies truly understand the meaning of the word hospitality!"

—Jody Elrod, Texas

"Waste from grass seed is pelletized and used for feed. They graze sheep on their wheat during the winter."

—Don Williams, Ohio

"2006 was an outstanding year for wine in Oregon."

—Linda Swiercinsky, Illinois



**LEAVEN awardees: L. Wanda Kinney (Kansas) and Vicky Maaske (Wisconsin).**

## Meteorologist Honored with 2009 Veritas Award

Oregon Meteorologist George Taylor was presented AAW's highest award, the Veritas Award, at the closing banquet of the 2009 convention. The Veritas Award is given to individuals who have been public witness to the "pursuit of truth" in accordance with the principles of importance to agriculture, or responsible media converge of agricultural issues and events.

Taylor has been working in the field of meteorology and climatology for more than 34 years. Taylor, who lives in Corvallis, served for 19 years as Oregon's climatologist and was elected president of the American Association of Climatologists in 1998. He now has his own business, Applied Climate Service.

Through his research, Taylor has shown that global warming is a natural occurrence with minimal influence by man and that by looking back further than the past few decades, the data shows that warming and cooling periods are common. Taylor continually works to keep the public informed through his bi-weekly column in two local newspapers. He is also a popular speaker, standing up for what he knows to be the truth, even when he disagrees with prevailing opinion.

Past President Marcie Williams noted, "George Taylor's credentials and his courage in speaking out make him an outstanding Veritas Award winner. We are proud to be able to honor him in this way."



**Veritas awardee George Taylor.**

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# The Marionberry

## Co-Chair AAW Annual Convention

The Marionberry is a bright, glossy blackberry with medium to large fruit, somewhat longer than wide. Named after the county in which it was developed, 90 percent of the world's Marionberries are grown near Salem.

There are only a handful of areas in the world where caneberries thrive and Oregon's Willamette Valley, known as the Caneberry Capitol of the World, offers the most favorable of all climates. The Valley's moist spring rains with summers that are warm in the daytime and cool at night, provide just the right conditions to produce berries that are sweet and plump. The berry's taste is distinctively sweet, yet has a mildly tart and lasting flavor. It has a serious following among berry aficionados, and is one of the most popular souvenirs purchased by visitors to the Willamette Valley. Gifts of Marionberry jams and syrups have been offered to lure potential football players to the University of Oregon.

Marionberries ripen through spring and early summer, reaching their peak during July. They are usually handpicked early in the day. Nearly 900 Oregon growers work with about 20 Oregon processors to ensure that the delicate berries are packed fresh within hours of harvest. Oregon's 1995 Marionberry crop was more than 12,300 tons. Health-minded consumers find them a nutritional bargain. Just 65-80 calories per cup, they are high in vitamins and fiber, yet low in sodium and fat.

This fresh flavored berry is a hybrid blackberry developed by Oregon State University's Agricultural Research and Development Program in Corvallis, Oregon. It is a blackberry cross between two previous Oregon hybrids, the smaller, but tasty Chehalem and the larger, higher-producing Ollalie. George F. Waldo of the U.S. Department of Agriculture began its development in 1945, and it was tested at Willamette Valley farms. The new variety was released under its name of Marionberry in 1956.

The Marionberry is a trailing vigorous grower, generally producing only a few long canes which grow up to 20 feet. The Marionberry can produce up to six tons of fruit per acre. The quality of the Marionberry is high, with flavor superior to the Boysenberry or Evergreen blackberries.

Marionberries are well-suited for use in local fresh markets, and are used for commercial and home canning and freezing as well as pies, ice cream flavoring, jams, and jellies. Marionberry jams, syrups, preserves, and other products are shipped to Africa, Europe, Japan, Australia, and Thailand. Just about anywhere a commercial airliner has gone, Marionberry products have gone there, too.

*(Ed note: Many of us enjoyed the Marionberry pie while on tour and wanted to learn more about the fruit. Thanks to Alice for this article!)*

## Pendleton Blanket Drawing A Success

Betty Jo Smith, Oregon Women for Agriculture, reported that the drawing for the Pendleton Woolen Mills Special Edition Mount Hood blanket netted the organization nearly \$800. Tickets for the drawing were sold before and during the convention. The drawing for the blanket was held at the close of the AAW convention, with your editor, Juanita Reed-Boniface, the lucky winner! Juanita was also the winner of \$100 cash from the trade show.



# People and Programs ...Our Leadership Team 2010

The election and installation of new officers was a highlight of the 2009 convention program. New officers elected were First Vice President Karen Yost, MT, Vice President Communications, Linda Swiercinsky, IL, and Treasurer Carolyn Kleiber, KS. These ladies join President Chris Wilson, KS, Vice President Education Pam Sweeten, CA, Secretary Cheryl Day, IL, and Past President Marcie Williams, OH, as the officer team. Also serving in a major leadership role, appointed by the president, is StART Chair Kathy Reavis, TX.

In order to introduce the leadership team to you, we have asked each of them to tell us why they joined AAW and give us information on what programs they will initiate this year.

## **Karen Yost** *First Vice President*



I grew up with a father who was a state legislator and knew it was important to follow the issues. But I thought, "There are other people out there who can do it." Then I read that there was going to be a Pursuit of Knowledge Conference in Billings, sponsored by Montana Agri-Women. Once I heard the speakers I knew I had to get involved. Vickie Bishop, who was president at the time, was a strong influence on me and took me with her to the 1998 AAW convention in Fargo.



As we enter into a new calendar year and a new AAW administration, our focus is to expand the awareness of agriculture and the vital role that it plays in the welfare of the nation and the world. We are not the only organization that has zeroed in on that message and this is not a new focus. The need to work together now, however, is urgent and has become a matter of survival. Wherever we turn we see messages based on questionable sources; we see attacks on agriculture at unprecedented levels and we see the public being wooed by slanted propaganda. It has never been more important that all of agriculture put away differences and work together to present a united, positive and truthful message to the

public about who we are and what we do. American Agri-Women has always been willing to work within coalitions to promote our causes and we will continue to support positions of like-minded organizations. We will also make a greater effort to reach out to existing agricultural groups to join our coalition. In the 35+ years that AAW has existed, it has established a reputation that is credible and trustworthy. It has worked to provide balance and truth in our policies and has communicated with respect and tolerance.

Membership opportunities for American Agri-Women have never been more promising. As first vice president, I will extend invitations to organizations to join with us. Please contact me with your recommendations of these groups.

## **Linda Swiercinsky** *Vice President Communications*



In 1976, I was public information officer for the Kansas State Board of Agriculture and persuaded my boss, Secretary Duitsman, to let me drive to Kansas City to an AAW convention. He had some misgivings as his perception of those women was that they were a bunch of women's libbers. What I remember most about that meeting was a panel discussion with Carol Tucker Foreman and another consumer advocate, one of whom smoked a small, thin, brown cigarette, which I had never seen before. The women in the audience were polite until the Q & A and then they unleashed some of the most scathing questions and remarks that I had ever heard. I was so proud to be sitting with these women! I liked the fact that they weren't afraid to invite persons with opposing views, listen to their points of view and correct them. By the next year I was living in Illinois with my six-month-old son, John, but took him in the pickup to the convention at Oklahoma City, the first of many drives to an AAW meeting.



*The Voice* is an opportunity for members to learn what is happening in our organization and to learn more about each other. A

calendar of upcoming events will be a new feature in *The Voice*. We would like to encourage all affiliates, commodity groups, officers and members to send information about events in your states, so we can add them to the calendar.

For example, it's possible that members in California or Washington State would like to attend Oregon's silent auction/live auction/fundraising party in the spring. I know that I've considered making the trip myself just to see in person how they raise all that money!

Letters to the editor are always welcome. We need to hear more than one side to an issue as we strive to become better informed. Send letters to our editor.

The third resource our members have is the AAW web site: [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org). Go there for information on current issues, our positions, the early history of AAW, and rumors. Recently I received and forwarded an email about McDonald's that was debunked by several of our members. I appreciate the fact that some members know more about a subject than I do. Whether it's climate change or estate taxes, there will be information on the web site. And, if you are into social media and want to Twitter or read our president's blog, you can find it on the web site: <http://americanagriwomen.blogspot.com/> or [twitter.com/women4ag](https://twitter.com/women4ag). President Chris Wilson would like to hear from you with your questions and/or comments, and be sure to check out the fan page on Facebook and our American Agri-Women group.

One last thought: watch the web site for information and dates on our new programs, which will be aired on national TV!

## **Pam Sweeten** *Vice President Education*



Joining AAW to me was the right thing to do. I got involved in California Women for Agriculture (CWA) because my son entered high school and chose to join FFA, so I, too, went from 4-H



**Officers installed for 2010, left to right: Marcie Williams, Past President; Pam Sweeten, VP Education; Cheryl Day, Secretary; Chris Wilson, President; Karen Yost, First VP; Linda Swiercinsky, VP Communications; and Carolyn Kleiber, Treasurer.**

**Leadership Team** *continued from page 6*

to CWA and AAW. When I do something, people usually say I jump right in, and this has been true with AAW. I attended Syngenta Leadership in 2004 and returned home with a feeling of revived energy.

With Syngenta fresh in my mind and feeling like I could conquer the world, I talked a friend into going to Fly-In in Washington, D.C. that June. This was a true turning point in my life, which made me realize the passion I had to ensure that a safe domestic food supply be available for my child and (hopefully someday) his children.

While the relationships continue to grow and bonds develop, I have grown to love all that AAW is and stands for, including the friendships that have supported me through a difficult divorce and becoming a single parent. I attended my first convention in 2004 and have not missed a convention or Mid-Year meeting since. While at times money was tight, I knew that I couldn't miss seeing all the AAW sisters that I have developed friendships with over the years. Thanks for the love and friendship.



As your vice president for education, I will be taking you to new places this year that will be out of this world and, for some, may be out of your comfort zone.

**Social Media**

First stop is Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. If you were at Mid-Year in St. Louis, MO, then you learned about these various types of social media (SM). If you were unable to attend Mid-Year and missed convention, we want to get you up to speed. SM is a way to meet up with people online. You may be thinking I do not have time to spend on SM. Let me assure you, we have to make the time for SM. Take

Twitter, for instance. On Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm CST, Michele Payn-Knoper (if this name sounds familiar, Michele was a speaker at our Miami convention) hosts agchat the first, second, and fourth Tuesday of the month, and on the third Tuesday it is foodchat. I am sure you're thinking, "What am I going to get out of this?" Like anything in life, we get out what we are willing to put in. Social media allows you to tell your story.

The Humane Society of the United States is an example. They have a Facebook fan page on which they send out information they want all their fans to know. How many people do they reach with one fan post? According to their fan page, they have 169,106 fans! How does AAW compare to this? Currently, our fan page has American Agri-Women at 420 fans while our group page has 517 members. How do we grow? Every member of AAW who is on Facebook needs to invite others to join us. It is best to add people to the fan page. That way, when we want to send out messages for non-AAW members, we reach them in our fan page.

**AAW Activity Book**

The year began with a complete makeover of the AAW Activity Book. Now I am working on the Answer Guide. Take a moment to review the book online. If you find something that needs correcting please advise me. Working together is what makes AAW so special.

**Cheryl Day  
Secretary**



I joined American Agri-Women through Illinois Agri-Women (IAW) to become a well-rounded agriculture leader. Even as a young beef producer, I realized the negative attacks on agriculture will not magically disappear. Speaking out for agriculture has always been a high priority for me.

Heather Hampton+Knodle was the first to mention IAW to me. As I engaged in many state agriculture meetings I actively interacted with many great IAW members. After attending IAW meetings, the members encouraged me to attend AAW Mid-Year. Once you attend an AAW event you are hooked. Walking in the shoes of other agriculture producers is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Sharing information and ideas from all experience levels is priceless. The future of AAW is in the hands of young agriculture leaders. We must do more to attract young minds, cultivate them, and confidently give them the respect to lead.

**Carolyn Kleiber  
Treasurer**



In the late 1980s, Chris Wilson and my husband worked together on fertilizer and chemical issues. Chris was our guest speaker for a customer dinner we were hosting. Chris and I had a chance to visit at dinner, and she told me about AAW, and invited me to join. I attended my first AAW convention in 1994. I have not missed a convention since. The perfect organization for a woman, like me, who has been involved in agriculture her entire life.

**Leadership** *continued on page 8*



**left to right:  
Kelli and  
Katie Yost  
Billings, MT**

## Leadership Team

*continued from page 7***Marcie Williams**  
*Past President*

In the early 90s I was looking for a way to make myself useful for the farm. Back surgery kept me from my normal fieldwork and I felt useless with both kids in college and nothing for me to do.

I read a news article in the Columbus Dispatch about women involved in Ohio agriculture and read Pat Leimbach and Judy Loudenslager's names. Pat didn't answer the phone but Judy did and invited me to the next Ohio meeting. That was June of 1990; I attended the Mid Year in St. Louis and the convention in California and the first leadership training put on by then Ciba-Geigy, all within 10 months. That's how fast AAW can get into your veins. I've never missed a convention since.

**Kathy Reavis**  
*StART Chair*

Why I joined AAW? I would have to start with why I joined Texas Agri-Women. Our founder, Gen Long, got a lot of women whose husbands worked in agriculture together for a meeting. I liked the idea and the possibility of helping our husbands out on the legislative and regulation side of the business, besides whatever other work we were doing for the farm and ranch. I think it must have been Gen who got seven or eight of us to go to an AAW convention, and after that meeting, it was a foregone conclusion. All the enthusiasm, knowledge, commonality and friendliness of the AAW members at that meeting made me want to be one. Attending AAW conventions made me not only become more involved in AAW, it also made me a better TAW member as I realized just how much could be done together.



StART stands for Strategic Action Response Team and there are four StART division coordinators working with me. These are: Ag Business & Economics - Carol Chandler, CA; Commodities - Kellie

Yost, MT; Natural Resources - Cheryl Day, IL; and Public Understanding and Awareness - Rae Desautel, ND. Each coordinator has committee chairs working on specific issues. For a listing of committees, check the AAW web site: [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org).

The StART committees are organized by function and commonality. The scope of issues related to the committee's work generally reflects the most relevant current and ongoing issues within that particular field. Two other committees that work closely with StART are Legislation and Fly-In, coordinated by Arlene Kovash, OR, and Janet McPherson, KS, respectively.

If you have an interest in a committee and would like to share information or work on it, please let one of us know. We would like to have representation in the different areas (north, south, east and west) of the United States.

If you happen to be on a committee within your affiliate that deals with a StART issue, please consider joining the StART committee or send us relevant information from your affiliate or commodity group. Sharing information can help all of us stay informed. If your affiliate would like help with an issue, please contact the appropriate chair, coordinator and/or myself to assist you. We are happy to provide resources and references to fill your needs.

The hot issues I see affecting us in the short term (three months) will be health care (if it has not already passed), climate change, Cap and Trade (carbon emissions), animal welfare and immigration. We will be working on these and other AAW positions at our Mid-Year meeting April 8-11 in Denver, CO. We hope you can join us.

My contact information is [JRreavis163@aol.com](mailto:JRreavis163@aol.com) or phone number 956-585-8128.

## Resource Center Officers Elected; Photo Contest Winners Announced

American Agri-Women elected three new members to their Resource Center board at the annual meeting. The Resource Center is AAW's 501c(3) educational foundation. New board members are: Ardath DeWall, Shannon, IL; Julie Tesch, St. Paul, MN; and Jacquie Compston, Wellington, NV. Members remaining on the board are: Peggy Clark, Dayton, OH; Trenna Grabowski, DuBois, IL; Sue McCrum, Mars Hill, ME; Pat Lawfer, Stockton, IL; Dolly Lillis, Dalton Gardens, ID; and Rosemary Eckardt, Merrill, WI.

The Resource Center coordinated several fundraisers during the annual meeting including a 50/50 raffle and a Pass the Hat collection. A total of \$2134 was raised for scholarships and other educational programs.

The annual photo contest winners were announced and note cards featuring the winning photos were selling rapidly. Photo contest winners were: Doris Mold, MN; Marcie Williams, OH; Ruth Jensen, CA; Jane Marshall, OH; Linda Swiercinsky, IL; and Angie Sutton, KS. Note cards are still available by sending \$20 to - Julie Tesch, 1270 W. Larpenteur Ave., No. 304, St. Paul, MN 55113 or email your order to [jtesch@umn.edu](mailto:jtesch@umn.edu).



L-R: Oregonians Marj Ehry and Loydee Stonebrink

## Country Store Now Open

No need to wait for Mid-Year or Convention time to shop at AAW's Country Store—it is open year round—by contacting Vicky Maaske at [maaskefarm@att.net](mailto:maaskefarm@att.net). **Note this is a new email address!**

Available are: AAW totes in various colors and embroidery, Rosie The Riveter posters and T-shirts, pens, devotions by member Eunice Guell (both first and second editions), unique embroidered shirts and sweaters in various sizes and styles.

## Endangered Species Act Ruling Threatens Food Production in California

Judging from the varied reactions of viewers watching a recent Sunday's 60 Minutes TV segment, "California: Running Dry," the state's three-year-drought is more complicated than simply the weather, according to the president of a national coalition of farm and ranch women. "If you look at comments on the CBS web site, you can see how emotional people are," said Chris Wilson, president of American Agri-Women. "But if people studied the facts of this case, they would see the devastating effects of the Endangered Species Act on not only rural people but Americans everywhere, not just California, because these farmers feed the world."

In a 2006 lawsuit environmental groups demanded that the pumps in the Delta be shut off to protect a small minnow-smelt. Protectors of the smelt claim it can be sucked into the pumps that distribute water to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. In August 2007, U.S. District Judge Oliver Wanger ordered curtailing of the pumping of water that supplies the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta until a new biological opinion could be written, which it was in December 2008, resulting in more pumping restrictions. San Joaquin Valley water agencies challenged the ruling. As a result, in May 2009, Judge Wanger agreed the original restrictions on pumping needed to be revisited with the water agency's compelling argument that people are being harmed by unreasonable concern over the welfare of a tiny fish.

According to one Californian, the drought was just as severe last year and farmers cut back on planting, but received 10-30 percent of their water allocation through the Delta, depending on where their land was located. This year, because of the Delta smelt ruling, the allocation is zero percent. Hundreds of thousands of acres have been fallowed, almond

trees pulled, and more than 60,000 jobs were lost.

The Obama administration has addressed the California water crisis by releasing a coordinated interim action plan of six federal agencies with their list of actions to be coordinated with the state. But some say it is too little, too late.

Carol Chandler, past president of California Women for Agriculture, stated, "There is a lot of rhetoric about conservation and restoration without addressing the need for water storage and temporary suspension of the Endangered Species Act. To improve our situation, growers in California need more water storage, conveyance capabilities around the fragile Delta so water can travel south, repair of the Delta levees to prevent salt water intrusion and flooding (salt water intrusion comes into the Delta during drought when the water seeps in from the Pacific Ocean), and suspension of the Endangered Species Act during severe drought conditions." Chandler added that many people would like to see a review of the biological opinions declaring that the pumps were the reason the smelt were dying.

AAW President Wilson stated, "A fish has been put above the needs of human beings who rely on the fresh products that come out of one of the most bountiful breadbaskets in America. We depend on California production of over 300 crops. Just one example is that 90 percent of almonds come from California. Without an adequate water supply, we risk shortages of our food supply here at home. United States farmers produce the most plentiful and safest food supply in the world so why risk growing it elsewhere? We all believe in conservation of the species but your families must come first."

*AAW news release by Linda Swiercinsky*

## Ohio Agriculture Wins First Battle with HSUS

Farm groups across Ohio banded together last November to take on the Humane Society of the United States. In February of 2009, the HSUS called a meeting with Ohio Farm Bureau and other farm organizations. They said that if Ohio agriculture didn't agree to some legislation that illegalized common farming practices, they would consider forcing its regulations via a ballot initiative. They had previously been successful with a ballot initiative in the state of California, affecting poultry laying crates, veal production and swine gestation cages. Ohio farmers and producers refused to accept the threats, so they went into action.

Farm groups voiced their concerns with legislators, who responded in June by introducing a bill that would place a constitutional amendment on the November ballot to give Ohio a comprehensive process to address animal care issues. The Ohio legislators worked together and across the aisle to pass this resolution with an overwhelming majority.

The resolution called for an Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board that would include family farmers, veterinarians, a food safety expert, consumers, the dean of an agricultural college and a local humane society representative. It would be chaired by the director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The board, in conjunction with the Ohio Legislature, will prescribe standards for animal care and well-being that protect Ohio's farms, families and locally grown food supply.

Many members of Ohio Agri-Women, Ohio Corn Growers, Ohio Soybean Council, Ohio Pork Producers, Ohio Poultry Producers, and others hit the ground running to win support for Issue 2. They talked to civic groups and distributed information at community events. They put up thousands of yard signs. They wrote letters to their editors. They spoke to their urban neighbors to explain the details of what could have been a misunderstood concept. Their efforts paid off on election day when Issue 2 was passed with an overwhelming two to one margin.

When HSUS comes back for the next battle in 2010, as it has promised, Issue 2 has provided a blueprint for what can be achieved when farmers unite in the largest grassroots campaign in Ohio agriculture.

*Based on an article in Buckeye Farm News, December 31, 2009. Submitted by Peggy Clark, Ohio.*

# Anatomy of a News Release

**Linda Swiercinsky**  
AAW VP Communications

An email alert from AAW on December 27, 2009 at 9:10 a.m. stated, in effect, "There's going to be a 60 Minutes program on California's water crisis tonight. Try to watch!" Thus began for me an adventure in fact finding, public opinion, and communications with AAW leaders culminating in the release of an AAW news article a few days later.

The day after the 60 Minutes segment (California: Running Dry), AAW VP for Education Pam Sweeten, who lives in central California, sent me a response to the program from a group called Restore the Delta. The article was titled, "We Expected Better of the Network that Gave Us Edward R. Murrow."

Restore the Delta sounded like an ag group, but I was confused when I read their statement, "All the sympathy was reserved for the west side farmer who had to pull out the almond trees he should never have planted. And he got the last word, threatening Americans with having to get their food from somewhere else."

There were more red flags that made me think we should educate our members. I didn't worry until the next day when Kathy Reavis, our Strategic Action Response Team (StART) chair, suggested that we send out a news release. Good idea, I thought, when Kathy (from Texas) volunteered to write the news release and send it to Carol Chandler, past president of California Women for Agriculture, to critique it. Then she would send it to me for distribution to the news media.

A flurry of emails followed. Water Chair Cheryl Day emailed from Illinois that she had covered this in her fall report, but she would be more comfortable if someone from California took the lead in responding to the TV program.

About this time, I started thinking that if I didn't understand the situation, there were

probably many other AAW members who were also in the dark. I decided to ask Carol some questions figuring it would help me write the final draft and compile information for *The Voice* readers.

*Linda: What is a water transfer?*

Carol: Water transfers are done to bring water from one water district to another. The problem is the Delta pumps were shut down so water could not be transferred even if there was excess in the northern part of California. Therefore, the water just flowed into the ocean!

*Linda: Who does the Latino Water Coalition represent?*

Carol: The Latino Water Coalition is made up of growers, farm labor contractors, water district folks, farm workers, and others who want to draw attention to the water crisis that is harming our people and economy. They were very successful getting Latino legislators in CA and DC to understand the problems and work to help. The pressure they applied led to the CA water bond.

*Linda: Is there the potential for levees breaking in the event of an earthquake?*

Carol: Earthquakes in the Delta could break the man-made levees and cause a catastrophe like Katrina... severe flooding and salt water intrusion.

*Linda: What is involved in salt water intrusion?*

Carol: Salt water intrusion comes into the Delta during drought when the water seeps in from the Pacific Ocean. Delta farmers worry that conveyance around the Delta will cause this to happen if the channels are not flushed with clean water. This would call for a Delta Water Commission to prevent this from happening.

*Linda: Why did they plant almond trees in this area?*

Carol: Almond trees were planted on the west side when there was an adequate water supply through the Delta. Yields were very high, and California grows 90 percent of the almonds in the world! China can't grow almonds and we export all over the world. Good for balance of trade.

*Linda: Can you give us a bit of history on the water issue?*

Carol: Farming began in earnest on the west side of Fresno County (we farm on the east side where the water table is higher) when the feds, the state and growers combined to build a canal to bring water from the northern part of the state in the 1950s. Crops flourished (cotton, alfalfa, lettuce, melons) with good deep topsoil and a secure water supply. During dry years, farmers cut back on planting but were still able to get enough water to keep farms going until the ESA ruling on the Delta Smelt. This shut the pumps at the Delta, through which the water must flow to reach the farms and the city of Los Angeles. Hundreds of thousands of acres were fallowed, almond trees were pulled, and 60,000 people were put out of work to protect an endangered fish.

The almonds, pistachios, and grapes were planted on the west side because of the good soil and using efficient drip irrigation. Tomatoes for processing also are a good west side crop. Cotton is hardly grown at all any more because of price and water needs. When the water was cut off, choices had to be made to pull almond orchards (like you saw on 60 Minutes). One of our friends pulled a 400-acre almond orchard with 4-year-old trees because he had no water. It is a tragedy for all concerned... growers, workers, the California economy (agriculture is a \$36 billion industry), and the supply of healthy U.S.-grown foods.

*Linda: What do California growers really need?*

Carol: Growers in California need:

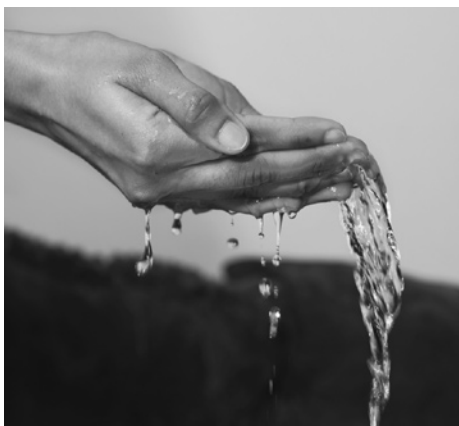
- More water storage to supply the needs of 35 billion people (urban and rural)
- Conveyance around the fragile Delta so water can travel south (users are willing to pay)
- Repair of the Delta levees (to prevent salt water intrusion and flooding)
- Review of the biological opinions that declared the pumps were the reason the smelt were dying
- Suspension of the Endangered Species Act during severe drought conditions causing harm to humans and the economy.

**Anatomy of a News Release**

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**Carol Chandler**



**Anatomy of a News Release**

*continued from page 10*

There will be an \$11.4 billion water bond on the November 2010 ballot, but it is questionable that it will pass since our state is close to bankruptcy and the voters already have passed a Clean Water Act that did little to solve our water problems. Water is our lifeblood. We are already seeing the effects on our east side water table as more wells are sunk on the west side. (\$900,000 per well!)

Comments posted on the 60 Minutes web site, as well as those from our AAW members, are examples of the wide range of public opinion from this program. The lack of knowledge of real world agriculture evidenced in some of the comments serves to remind us again of the importance of keeping abreast of the issues and working hard to tell our story.

**AAW Members Share Opinions**

“Westlands Water District and its growers are pleased 60 Minutes has brought national attention to the ongoing water crisis facing all Californians. As discussed by Leslie Stahl, this water crisis is California’s Katrina. Approximately two-thirds of the state of California relies on water that travels through the Delta. Until the health of the ecosystem and methods of delivery of water are improved, the problem will continue.”

—Sarah Woolf, *past president, Greater Westside Chapter, California Women for Agriculture*

“I don’t buy the smelt problem for a minute. I don’t believe they are a native California fish.”

—Jacquie Compston, *former AAW natural resources coordinator Wellington, Nevada*

“I haven’t lived there (in California) for 22 years. I could tell you A LOT about chickens, but everything I know about water is 22 years out of date! I remember what a contentious issue it was. The Northern and Southern California women agreed that we simply wouldn’t mention it at meetings but focus on what unites us rather than on what divides us. I also remember the phrase I heard from a water attorney, “In California, more blood has been spilled over water than over women.”

—Mitzi Perdue, *former California rice farmer and AAW president 1988-89 New York, New York*

**Selected Comments from the 60 Minutes Web Site**

“Your story, California: Running Dry, neglects to mention the fact that while federal government claims to be protecting the endangered smelt by diverting water previously used for agriculture to the ocean, Fish and Game Commission stocks striped bass in the Delta which eat none other than the endangered smelt. I smell something fishy.”

“Why is there such an emphasis on keeping the farms? The single largest source of work for the illegal immigrants from Mexico are the farms. The California farmers are the ones who are creating the immigration problem. It’s stupid to import immigrant labor from Mexico, when you can just leave the cheap labor in Mexico and grow all your produce in Mexico. Then you don’t have an immigration problem.”

“The only reason there are farms in California is because a century ago farmers ruined the Midwest due to plowing up the prairies, and when they turned the Midwest into a giant Dust Bowl, the stupid farmers just moved west to California and started the same extraction farming all over again.”

*Another person responded:*

“Just what we need, our food coming from Mexico. We need to solve these problems, not send them away because of illegals. What about the families that have their lives invested in farming? Send them to Mexico, too?”

“In the natural world, when an ecosystem cannot support life, the life has two options: move on to better places or die out!”

“California’s infrastructure is over 50 years old and needs to be fixed now. California’s population has increased dramatically over the last 50 years and when you have more people, you need more water. It’s as simple as that.”

“The U.S. Navy can make millions of gallons of drinking water out of sea water and they do it every day. Why not get the Navy’s technology and build a water conversion plant out in the ocean?”

“I live in the San Joaquin Valley and am going to list crops/foods that I have seen grown and ask yourself which of these have I eaten the last month? Milk and cheese (fed by corn and alfalfa), walnuts, pistachios, almonds, head lettuce, romaine lettuce, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, tomatoes (fresh, canned and for ketchup), garlic, onions, cilantro, celery, wine grapes, table grapes, pluots (plum/apricot cross), raisins, cherries, peaches, plums, nectarines, dried plums, apples, pears, pomegranates, oranges, tangerines, olives, avocados, apricots, asparagus, watermelon, cantaloupes, squash, peppers, blueberries, and strawberries. We have been blessed with a unique climate and soil combination here; just add water and anything grows. Some of the crops I listed only grow here. Add water and you create food, jobs and taxable income. Wake up, America, before our food supply is outsourced to China. (Remember the melamine-tainted wheat that poisoned our pets or the tainted milk that poisoned their own babies?) Lastly, other factors affecting the fish were not mentioned like invasive species, or the ammonia-laden sewage water released into the Delta by Sacramento and Stockton.”

“I am an environmentalist. I also am a native Californian. But I am deeply disturbed by the lack of foresight and perception by those who are—even NOW attacking the farmers who provide the

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## Legislative Report ▶▶



**Arlene Kovash**  
Chair

Mid-Year, as the name implies, falls midway between conventions, and is the meeting where we review and update our policy positions to take to our congressional delegates at our Fly-In in Washington, DC, in June. This year Mid-Year will be in Denver, April 8-11. It is especially important that our StART coordinators and chairmen be present to make us aware of any changes that might be needed in their areas, but all members are encouraged to come and bring issues. Every member is welcome in any of the committee meetings—just go to the ones that interest you most. There is often a leadership training activity also, so Mid-Year is definitely worth attending. Go to the AAW web site, [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org), to

preview our positions and register.

Fly-In will be June 13-16 in Washington, DC, and is our opportunity to take our positions and share our views with our congressional leaders and also with the agencies and departments we visit. We also hear from people who impact our farming operations, and often visit the embassy of another country where we gain an understanding of their agricultural issues. Every single time I ask my senator and representatives and lobbyists I work with what can I do to help, they always (100% of the time) tell me to visit and write letters. Every visit and letter counts on our side, so when you go to DC even once, you are adding to the numbers of pro-agriculture folks who speak up. Because we are a grassroots organization with no paid lobbyists, they hear from the other side hundreds to one over us, so we need to be there whenever possible. I'm starting to get the message and so should you!

So... see you there?

*Arlene*

## Affiliate News ▶▶ Illinois AgriWomen



Illinois Agri-Women has taken to heart the emphasis on international connections that AAW has initiated. The International Congress of Farm Management gathering at the Illinois State University campus at Bloomington this past summer gave us an opportunity to host one of their speakers.

Christine Finigan, a New Zealand dairy producer and consultant, visited with members from northern Illinois during the week prior to the Congress for tours of our state's dairy country and a wind farm that recently has been established. She then joined the membership at the summer board meeting to present information about the dairy industry in New Zealand. We continue to be amazed at the similarities that challenge the agricultural industry, no matter where one might live.

Illinois Agri-Women also is reaching out

to the young women of agriculture. We are proud to announce our first IAW scholarship for agricultural education majors. Mallory Swanson of Oneida, IL is a senior at Western Illinois University and plans to teach in the agricultural education field. Mallory's outstanding essay on the importance of sharing the story of agriculture with those who are uninformed became a front page story in the state's weekly agricultural newspaper, Illinois AgriNews.

We are proud of our members who recently have been named to key state positions. Scherrie Giamanco has been named state director of the Illinois Farm Service Agency and Colleen Callahan was appointed state director of USDA Rural Development. Both have a rural background and a solid understanding of the challenges producers and rural communities are dealing with.

*“There is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem.”*

—Booker T. Washington

## Networking News ▶▶ California/ AAW Networking Exchange Set

You are cordially invited to explore California during our next scheduled AAW Networking Exchange, February 26-March 2, 2010. The exchange will feature opportunities to learn more about California's agriculture, become better acquainted with some of your fellow AAW members, and sightsee.

We will be in California during the almond bloom and asparagus harvest, and we will get a chance to see both. We will also have the opportunity to learn about their water issues, wine and livestock industries, among others. Participants will have the chance to provide input on the final itinerary.

Participants are responsible for their travel expenses to California, some meals and any personal expenses. Lodging and some meals will be covered by your hosts. Participants who fly into San Francisco will have transportation from the airport arranged for the afternoon of February 26. If you fly into another airport or on a different day, you will likely have to arrange your own transportation.

Space is limited. Contact Pam Sweeten to make your reservation by February 2, 2010. Email to [pamelasweeten@yahoo.com](mailto:pamelasweeten@yahoo.com) or by phone at 209-606-1418.

If you have questions about AAW networking or would be interested in organizing an exchange, contact Doris Mold, networking chair; by phone at 715-822-6347; by email at [doris@sunriseag.net](mailto:doris@sunriseag.net); by mail at P.O. Box 8192, St. Paul, MN 55108.



**Kelly Benarth, Sacramento, CA, was the 2009 Helen Whitmore Scholarship winner.**

## Affiliate News ► American Angus Auxiliary

### Make Mine Black

By Kathi Creamer  
President  
Montrose, Colorado

*"If you want happiness for a lifetime—help the next generation."*

*Chinese Proverb*



The American Angus Auxiliary was established in 1952 to recognize youth for their accomplishments, support the American Angus Association and to promote Angus beef. That commitment remains the focus of today's auxiliary. The auxiliary sponsors scholarships to ten Angus youth graduating from high school, the Janet Castle Crystal Awards, Silver Pitcher Awards, National Junior Angus Show Showmanship contest awards, Richard L. Spader Extemporaneous Speaking Award (Senior Division), Miss American Angus, the Certified Angus Beef Cook-Off, The Black Kettle Award, Pat Grote Extemporaneous Speaking Award (Intermediate Division), Achievement Awards, and the Pat Grote Leaders Engaged in Angus Development Conference (LEAD Conference) Scholarship.

### Behind the Scenes

The success of the auxiliary's programs and activities is due to the time and energy given unselfishly by a dedicated group of individuals—our members. Their assistance with contests, awards and scholarships has enabled the auxiliary to expand its promotion of Angus and Angus youth. We sincerely appreciate all their support and efforts. The auxiliary also relies on the sale of promotional gifts from the Angus Sale Barn and various auxiliary exclusives.

### Order the Gift That Sizzles

Looking for the perfect gift to honor someone on their anniversary or retirement or would you like to send your customers a special gift of appreciation? Look no further than the auxiliary's web site. Recently the auxiliary teamed up with Scavucco's Inc. and S & S Meat Company of Kansas City to continue to provide Certified Angus Beef® gift boxes.

The CAB® gift box selections include beef patties, filet mignon, strip steak, top sirloin steak and rib eye steak. Ten percent of each purchase is returned to the Auxiliary for educational outreach and scholarship programs.

### Shopping Online

You can always shop online at the Angus Sale Barn. Simply go to the web site! The Angus Sale Barn offers many unique items and the proceeds from our Angus Sale Barn are used to finance the auxiliary's educational programs and awards. The Angus Sale Barn also can be found in Louisville during the North American International Livestock Exposition at the Angus headquarters hotel and also in the trade show at the National Junior Angus Show.

### Unique Show Awards & Gifts

Internationally known western and wildlife sculptor Harvey Rattey has teamed up with the auxiliary to offer his sculptures of Angus cattle. Harvey's show heifer and cow/calf are exclusive pieces created especially for the American Angus Auxiliary. Other sculptures are available as well. A portion of the proceeds benefit the auxiliary. These make great show awards and gifts.

### Communication

The Auxiliary Post newsletter was introduced this past year to increase and enhance communication among members. It was received with great enthusiasm and will continue to be an effective means of communication for the auxiliary. The newsletter will be mailed out to members in April and October. The development of a Facebook page is also in the works; look for this in the very near future.

### Regional Director Success

Last year regional directors were elected for the first time in the auxiliary's history. Their responsibilities included assisting state auxiliaries and recruiting and retaining new members. The increase in membership over the past year indicates that the addition of regional directors was successful. And we anticipate more successes from this dynamic group of women. Their contact information can be



found on the American Angus Auxiliary web site at [www.angusauxiliary.com](http://www.angusauxiliary.com).

### New Look for Scholarship Application

The scholarship program recently revised the scholarship application. The 2010 scholarship application features several changes meant to provide a simplified format. Scholarships will be awarded to five young men and five young women at the 2010 National Junior Angus Show in Denver, Colorado. Information regarding the auxiliary scholarships can be found on the auxiliary web site at [www.angusauxiliary.com](http://www.angusauxiliary.com).

### Our Personal Invitation

Women from all walks of life involved in promoting or raising Angus cattle can become part of our organization. If you are not currently a member of the American Angus Auxiliary, we invite you to join us to help promote Angus youth and Angus cattle.

Now is the time to join the American Angus Auxiliary. Annual dues are \$10 and lifetime dues are \$100. Membership forms are available from Membership Chairperson, Pam Patterson at 123 Patterson Ranch Road, Columbus, MT 59019 and on our web site at [www.angusauxiliary.com](http://www.angusauxiliary.com).

### Thank You

We truly appreciate the opportunity to share with others our mission and activities.



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food we all eat. Here's the basic factor: we are not living in 1850 California."



"The Central Valley farmers and farm workers provide over 50 percent of the produce in this country. Cutting off water to the most fertile farming soil in the world is a bigger disaster waiting to happen. It is all about national security: a safe and reliable food supply, not one tainted with melamine, lead or other chemicals that are not regulated in other countries."

Person responds:

"This national security nonsense has been cooked up by the PR firms who are guiding the efforts by big growers to get the taxpayers to spend another few billion dollars for two more large dams and a peripheral canal. Google 'The PR firm from Hell' if you really want to know what is going on."



The resulting AAW news release was a team effort with special thanks to Carol Chandler. It has been distributed to national media, posted to our web site at [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org), and published in this issue of *The Voice*. If you have questions or comments send a letter to *The Voice* editor or VP communications.

# Mid-Year Tentative Meeting Agenda

The 2010 Mid-Year meeting will be held April 8-11, at the Doubletree Hotel in Denver, Colorado, 3203 Quebec Street. Room rates are \$89 per night and include wireless Internet and free parking. The Doubletree has a complimentary airport shuttle which runs every half hour at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour. Meeting reservations may be made online at [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org) or by sending the registration form to Carolyn Kleiber, treasurer. Make hotel reservations directly by calling 303-321-3333 and asking for the AAW room block. Hotel reservations are due March 19. **Make reservations for Mid-Year by March 19.**

**Thursday, April 8**

1:00 pm StART meeting for coordinators, chairpersons  
 1:00 pm Standing committees meet  
 6:00 pm Executive committee meeting

**Friday, April 9**

7:30 am Registration table opens  
 8:00-10:00 am Resource Center board meeting  
 10:15-11:15 am Joint AAW Executive Committee/Resource Center board meeting  
 11:30 am Board of directors meeting convenes (everyone invited)  
 Noon Lunch (included with registration)

1:00-3:00 pm Board of directors business meeting continues, StART and Affiliate reports  
 3:00-3:15 pm Break  
 Resource Center silent auction begins  
 3:15-5:30 pm StART committees break out to work on position statements (all members are encouraged to attend)  
 6:00 pm Networking dinners

**Saturday, April 10**

9:00-10:45 am Business meeting continues  
 10:45-11:00 am Break  
 11:00 am-Noon Business meeting continues  
 Noon Lunch (Included with registration)  
 1:15 pm Resource Center silent auction ends  
 1:15-3:00 pm Reconvene business meeting  
 3:00-3:15 pm Break  
 Pay for silent auction items  
 3:15-5:00 pm Continue policy positions  
 Evening Networking dinners

**Sunday, April 11**

8:30-9:00 am Devotional service  
 9:15-11:00 am Business meeting  
 Adopt 2010 position statements  
 11:00 am Adjourn, executive board meeting immediately after adjournment

## Annual Convention Photos



Outgoing President Marcie Williams (right) presents the President's Award to Dolly Lillis, Idaho, StART chair.



Recognizing the contributions of our young members, a second President's Award was presented to Joanna Wilson, Kansas, by Marcie Williams.

We were honored to have Gerry Ottosen, (pictured right) active AAW member and one of the oldest (age 90) in attendance. Gerry is a long-time member of Oregon Women for Agriculture and received one of the three President's Awards.



The Ag in the Classroom workshop (above) featured a number of hands-on learning activities. Here AAW members demonstrate Pumpkin Pie in a Bag, an easy to make, easy to clean up fall recipe suitable for grades K-3.



## 2010 AAW Mid-Year Meeting Registration

The 2010 American Agri-Women Mid-Year meeting will be held April 8-11 in Denver, Colorado.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliate \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Arrival \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees**

- Full Registration (Includes breakfast, breaks, and lunch on Friday and Saturday).....\$125
- Partial Registration (Friday or Saturday only) .....\$75
- Collegiate Full Registration .....\$85
- Partial Collegiate Registration (Friday or Saturday only).....\$50

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**To Register**

- Mail completed registration and payment to:
  - Carolyn Kleiber
  - American Agri-Women Treasurer
  - PO Box 111
  - Hillsboro, KS 67063-0111
- Email [treasurer@americanagriwomen.org](mailto:treasurer@americanagriwomen.org)
- Phone 620-877-7204 for credit card registration
- Online at [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org)
- Indicate if you would like a roommate

**Hotel Information**

The 2010 AAW Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting will be held April 8-11 at the Doubletree Hotel, 3203 Quebec Street, Denver, Colorado. Room rates are \$89 per night and include wireless internet and free parking. The Doubletree has a complimentary airport shuttle which runs every half hour at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour.

Make hotel reservations by calling 303-321-3333 and ask for the AAW room block. You can register online at [www.americanagriwomen.org](http://www.americanagriwomen.org) or by submitting the registration form to Carolyn Kleiber.

**Hotel registration deadline is March 19, 2010.**

**Deadline for AAW registration is March 19, 2010.**

## Important Dates Ahead

### JANUARY

- 22 Organization of Colorado Agri-Women, contact Danell Kalcevic at ColoradoAgriWomen@gmail.com or call 303-910-5723
- 21-23 American Sheep Industry Women Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN, contact www.sheepusa.org
- 25-30 American National Cattle Women Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, contact ancw@beef.org

### FEBRUARY

- 5-6 Illinois Agri-Women annual meeting, 2nd day in conjunction with Chicago Farmers Farmland Investment Fair, Joliet, IL, contact Ruth Hambleton at ruthhambleton@wildblue.net
- 15 Deadline next issue of *The Voice*

### FEBRUARY

- 26-3/2 California/AAW Networking Exchange

### MARCH

- 6 Kansas Agri-Women annual meeting, Manhattan, KS, contact Abby Dechant at abby.dechant@gmail.com
- 13-14 California Women for Agriculture and California Cattle Women combined meeting, Harris Ranch, Coalinga, CA. Contact Lyn Figone at figgiepudding3@yahoo.com

- 14-20 National Ag Week

- 20 National Ag Day

### APRIL

- 7 Minnesota Ag Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference, contact Doris Mold at doris@sunriseag.net
- 8-11 AAW Mid-Year, Denver

## Industry Briefs ►► Wool Heating Qualities Promoted

The Wool Carbon Alliance applauds world leaders serious about mitigating climate change, particularly those who led by example and wore wool at the United Nations Climate Change Conference. Wool suits, jackets and coats were all seen at the conference, an example of a natural thermal insulator with the capacity to reduce reliance on heating from fossil fuels. "Wearing wool, walking on wool, and sleeping with wool are all ways of using this great renewable fiber in our everyday lives and in doing so think globally and act locally," said Wool Carbon Alliance Chairman Chick Olsson. (Source: *ASI Weekly*, Jan. 8, 2010)

## Industry Briefs ►►

### Feedstuffs FoodLink

Do you wish you could keep up to date on the latest issues like "Meatless Mondays," or the recent article in *Time* magazine that attacked animal agriculture? Besides reading your weekly farm newspaper, an easy way to stay informed is to sign up for the Feedstuffs FoodLink, emailed every Monday. Trent Loos and Sarah Muirhead will stay on top of the news if you can't. There's no charge and they don't use your email for any other purpose but to educate you. Go to [www.FeedstuffsFoodLink.com](http://www.FeedstuffsFoodLink.com) and sign up with your email address.

## Industry Briefs ►►

### Humane Society to Train Future Leaders

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) recently established Humane Society University, a distance-learning program based in Washington, D.C. that began instruction last fall. Students will be able to pursue a Bachelor of Science in animal studies, animal policy and advocacy or humane leadership, studying under professors whose expertise is grounded in animal rights extremism. (Source: *National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Issues Update*, July, Aug., Sept. 2009)



American Agri-Women  
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If you would like to receive *The Voice* via email instead of by mail, email your request to Carolyn Kleiber at [Carolyn@agpowerinc.net](mailto:Carolyn@agpowerinc.net)