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Today's issue: Animal Care and Well-being

By **Juanita Reed-Boniface**

The Election Day vote by Californians to adopt state Proposition 2 has served as a "WAKE UP" call to agriculture. Nearly every agriculture related news source that I have seen since November has given attention to this topic.

Proposition 2 is an initiative that outlaws contemporary food animal practices, including use of gestation stalls, veal stalls, and layer cages. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and Farm Sanctuary, two national animal rights organizations, led the effort.

HSUS leverages its public image as a dog/cat. spay/neuter/pet adoption group, positioning itself as "moderate" in comparison to the PETAs of the movement. But in reality HSUS is anything but moderate, and not too radically different than that of PETA.

Animal activist groups have large membership and are well financed. HSUS claims to have about 10 million members—20,000 per congressional district—and has an annual budget in excess of \$130 million (Source: Steve Kopperud, Senior V.P. Policy Directions). According to the Animal Agriculture Alliance research, charitable donations to animal rights groups rose 11 percent, providing activist groups with more funds to develop wide-ranging activities such as California's Proposition 2, undercover video operations, legislative initiatives, and legal actions. Total donations to the most significant domestic and international animal rights groups reached nearly \$333 million in 2007.

Unfortunately many people who donate to these organizations think that they are contributing to a group that works to



Photo courtesy Leah Churches

improve animal care, yet their funding is primarily spent on campaigns to ban or restrict essential uses of animals such as being raised for food or for research to find cures for diseases. Even worse, many of their campaigns demand changes that are actually harmful to animals' overall health and well-being. An example of that is the current situation concerning unwanted horses.

Items high on the agenda at the national meeting Animal Rights 2008 include effective ways to appropriate religion and co-opt environmentalism, how to maximize the value of "You Tube: as a communication tool and ideal technique for reaching children and young adults with the animal rights message. Animal agriculture was also targeted with groups sharing ideas for utilizing an incremental approach to eliminate animal agriculture. (Source: National Cattlemen's Beef Association Issues Update, Sept. and Oct. 2008)

How do we in agriculture meet the challenges that the animal rights groups present? Here are a few ideas.

Recognize that this is an industrywide issue. Keith Olsen, president of the Nebraska Farm Bureau in his president's message states, "This is an issue that all of

agriculture must be involved in. This is not a pork issue, poultry issue, beef issue, or dairy issue; this is an agriculture issue and all of us must be involved to prevent unreasonable restrictions being put in place that have a negative impact on the production of livestock."

Many states have already formed state and regional organizations that work to "tell the real story of animal agriculture." The Ohio Livestock Coalition and the Minnesota Foundation for Responsible Animal Care are two examples. Other states are or have organized agriculture-based coalitions around the animal care issue.

Understand how society listens to the messages food animal producers are sending. Wes Jamison, an expert on how society views animals, recently stated, "There has been a tectonic shift in the role of animals in the lives of your consumers as evidenced by annual spending of \$70 billion on pets in the United States." According to Jamison, American society exhibits the four factors that are essential to an animal protection ethic:

- ▶ **Urbanization**—people experience animals as companions
- ▶ **Anthropomorphism**—people project human qualities onto animals
- ▶ **Societal belief in evolution**—that people are biologically similar to animals and not that different from them.
- ▶ **Belief in equality**—an urban public that views animals as children, expands its idea of who or what has rights to animals. Animals are the perfect family members because they supply whatever is lacking in our human relationships.

President's Report



Marcie Williams
AAW President

Warm greetings to everyone,

I've had enough winter weather and I'm looking forward to those spring days that will eventually arrive. I know I've only had a few days of below zero temperatures here in central Ohio but they have been enough for me. I've already worn my boots more days than last winter and we have had more snow these first few days of January than all of last winter. It must be my age. I remember climbing this hill behind my girlfriend's house time and time again just to slide down, get snow down my boots and walk home with frozen feet—and enjoyed it! Now, if it's below seventy degrees, I don't venture outside.

Our midyear meeting will be April 3-5 so mark your calendars. Cheryl Day and Illinois Agri-Women have graciously agreed to help host this meeting in St. Louis, MO. It will be held in the Westport Plaza area where there are conveniently located restaurants for evening meals, all within short walking distance.

This important meeting is where we make our policy decisions. It is important that our StART coordinators and chairman be present to represent their areas and make us aware of any changes that might be needed. All AAW members are invited to attend to participate in policy discussions.

Chris Wilson will be hosting a session for chairman, president affiliates and AAW members who want to learn how to put their information on the Internet. Our grant from Risk Management can assist in training for those that want to be more efficient in promoting their business of agriculture through the internet. We would like our affiliates and chairmen to be able to link their information onto our AAW site. You might want to bring along your news editor to be part of this group. Your registration fee will be refunded by AAW for those attending the web page training session. This is our way of assisting you in learning to get your information up and running on the AAW web site.

Please encourage everyone to bring or send an item for the Silent Auction during our Mid Year meeting. Auction proceeds are used for the Resource Center's scholarships. We received very few items last year and I know we can do better. We always have such fun trying to outbid each other at these events. Please consider sending something unique from your state for the auction and bring lots of money for bidding!

Education is one of our top priorities. What better way to get involved than to join the CropLife Ambassador Network. Janet Braun is the Program Coordinator for Mid American CropLife Association and can be reached at their web site, www.ambassador.maca.org. The CropLife Ambassador Network connected with over 25,000 youth in the last five years with one hour, face to face meetings between a producer and a classroom of students. MACA provides ambassadors with a list of locations, presentation materials and acts as a liaison between schools and ambassadors. Several AAW members are already involved; why not try it yourself? I'm happy to see that Illinois Agri-Women already has a link to the site and Heather Hampton+Knodle was featured in the October issue of MACA Update. Congratulations Heather!

Don't forget National Agriculture Week March 15-21. Find all the information you might need to host an Ag Day event at www.agday.org. Afterwards, don't forget to send us information about your event. With today's consumers it is important that we use every opportunity we have to spread the word about the healthy and safe food supply we furnish both U.S. consumers and countries abroad.

A new era is underway in Washington. A new leader has plans for change, just exactly what that change will be for agriculture is unknown at this time. Those of us who are in this business will need to continue our efforts in sharing "the rest of the story" about agriculture and remain vigilant on environmental, energy and climate change issues. Telling our story with knowledge and passion will be our biggest advantage. American Agri-Women have always been prepared and must continue to get involved in new areas that will give new opportunities to tell our story.

Regards,

Marcie

American Agri-Women Executive Committee

| | |
|--|--|
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| <i>The Voice</i> is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December by American Agri-Women as a service to members. Deadline is the 15th of the month before each issue is published. Articles and suggestions are always welcomed by: | |
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Animal Care

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A recent Ohio State University study found that 81 percent of respondents believe farm animals well-being is as important as pet well-being. Food animal producers make a mistake when they use economic arguments to respond to consumers' concerns.

"Animal agriculture needs to reclaim its legitimacy," Jamison continued. "We need to lead with a moral argument—that what we do is morally right. Food animal producers provide good care to their animals and do the work that consumers don't or won't do to have meat on the plate. What you don't want to do is buy into the animal rightist's strategy of getting producers to accept small incremental changes in production practices," he added. "They'll increase your costs inch by inch until you lose efficiencies and go out of business."

Institute an animal welfare assurance program on your farm or ranch. Utilize good production, transporting and processing standards following industry guidelines. Set your standards high and maintain that quality. Properly evaluate all employees, including day labor. Be vigilant in hiring practices; check applications, work history, backgrounds and references thoroughly. Fully train employees in basic animal care practices and the priority of these practices in everyday husbandry. Take swift and appropriate action if unacceptable animal handling occurs.

Keep informed. Know who the leading activists and anti-agriculture groups are; check out their web sites. Become familiar with their agendas, know who the leaders are, and how they are funded.

Be a legislative watch dog. Activist groups have well-designed strategies and resources for influencing legislation at all levels. Many states report a flurry of bad legislation and court cases led by anti-animal agriculture groups. Prominent law schools around the nation are preparing lawyers by offering courses on animal rights. Agriculture leaders need to stay alert and work to defeat bad legislation both state and federal.

Speak up for animal agriculture. Let consumers know that farmers and ranchers give animals humane, healthy and caring treatment while providing safe and nutritious food products for a



Photo courtesy Kara Weeks

hungry world. Provide accurate, science-based information while inspiring positive emotion among consumers toward farming and ranching. In an article, "The Faces Behind Your Food," Lyn Messersmith, writer/cowboy poet has some sound advice. "Your best assets are the sincerity in your smile, the conviction in your voice, and the firmness of your handshake. That is putting a face on agriculture; a face that people will remember long after our words have faded."

The challenge of marginalizing the animal rights movement is not easy, but it is winnable. All segments of agriculture—feed industry, equipment companies, animal health companies, animal science friends, veterinary medical community, processors, and retailers—must put aside their commodity squabbles and differences and come together to speak with one clear voice.

For information on individual specie care programs check out these web sites:

- Beef www.gqa.org
- Dairy www.dbqa.org
www.dqacenter.org
www.dairywellbeing.org
- Pork www.pork.org
- Eggs www.uepcertified.com
- Chicken www.nationalcheckcouncil.com
- Turkey www.eatturkey.com
- Veal www.vealfarm.com
- Sheep www.sheepusa.org
- Markets www.imaweb.com/alerts

Sources: The Voice of Agriculture, Minnesota Farm Bureau: Selected articles, FRAC FACTS, Minnesota Foundation for Responsible Animal Care newsletter; Selected issues, Drivers e-newsletter, Steve Kopperud, Senior V.P. Policy Directions, Inc. interview with Chuck Jolley for CattleNetwork, Nov, 2008; Nebraska

Farm Bureau News, "Crossroads Speaker Explores How Society Views Animals," article by Cheryl Stubbendick, Nebraska Farm Bureau, National Cattlemen Beef Association Update.

Industry News

Wolves move off protected list, again

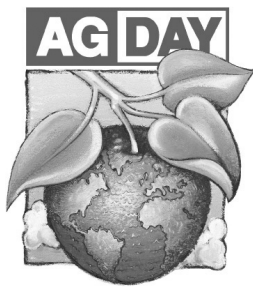
The U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) has removed gray wolves in the western Great Lake and in the northern Rocky Mountains from the federal endangered species list.

The decision would apply to wolves in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Idaho and Montana but would leave the Wyoming wolves under protection. The revised plan could put management back in the hands of the states as soon as next month, but the Obama administration could delay implementation. Animal rights extremists have also promised to challenge the latest plan by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to delist the wolf.

The government delisted wolves last year, and management was turned over to the states for three months, but federal protections later were restored after environmental groups successfully sued U.S. District Court in Missoula, MT

Federal and state wildlife managers said the new plan is better, both scientifically and legally. Additional evidence shows that genetic intermingling is occurring between the wolves in three subpopulations, Idaho, Northwestern Montana and the greater Yellowstone National Park.

Source: American Sheep Industry (ASI) Weekly, January 16, 2009



National Ag Week March 15-21

By Juanita Reed-Boniface

National Ag Week is about recognizing and celebrating the contribution of agriculture in our everyday lives. It is a week to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. It is also a time to encourage every American to:

- ▶ Understand how food and fiber products are produced
- ▶ Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy
- ▶ Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products

Classroom visits are one way that many Agri-Women celebrate Ag Week and educate youth about agriculture. In the classroom we can meet with tomorrow's citizens and future leaders to give them an awareness of the importance that agriculture plays in our lives. Few young people today are aware of the industry's significance or the many career choices related to agriculture. Well-informed consumers and policy makers can partner successfully with the agriculture community in providing a safe and healthy food supply system for the world.

New secretary of agriculture sworn in

Former Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack was sworn in as the 30th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Appointed by President Barack Obama, Vilsack received unanimous support for his confirmation by the U.S. Senate. Secretary Vilsack has served in the public sector at nearly every level of government from mayor to state senator. In 1998, he was the first Democrat elected governor of Iowa in

Whether you're new to school visits or have been going to the classroom for years, here are some suggestions for making the most of your visit and planning your presentation.

- ▶ Know why you want to visit the classroom.
- ▶ Determine the topic(s) you want to present.
- ▶ Plan your presentation; remember that students learn in many ways, using all their senses: touch, taste, smell, hear, and see. Be sure that your presentation is age appropriate.
- ▶ Contact the principal and/or teacher to make arrangements. Explain your program and the objectives. Explain how your visit fits into the curriculum (if possible). Be sure to confirm special equipment needs: table, chalkboard, VCR/DVD, etc.
- ▶ Remember, you are the classroom visitor, not the teacher. The teacher should look after discipline.
- ▶ Take time for a vocabulary lesson to explain terms that you will be using. Many students do not know our farm/ranch jargon.
- ▶ Get students' attention at the beginning and keep them involved as much as possible throughout the presentation.
- ▶ Let students share their knowledge.
- ▶ Take students' comments and questions

more than 30 years, an office he held for two terms.

His first priorities are ethics, civil rights and reviewing all pending rules and regulations from the outgoing Bush administration. Vilsack stressed "the most important thing for us to do right now is to have a complete and thorough understanding of the Farm Bill as it was drafted by Congress and to make sure that we implement the provisions of the Farm Bills as promptly and properly as possible. There are "600 provisions and 15 titles that



Butter making, a fun hands-on activity led by 4-H members from Waseca County, Minnesota.

seriously. There are no dumb questions or answers.

- ▶ Build student self-respect.
- ▶ Ask questions that require students to think.
- ▶ Be yourself—casual and relaxed.
- ▶ Inspire students with your enthusiasm for what you do.

For lesson plans and other ideas for classroom activities, check out these web sites:

www.agclassroom.org
(Agriculture in the Classroom)

www.agday.org
(National Ag Day)

Other excellent resources can be found at the web sites of all of the commodity organizations: beef, dairy, soybeans, corn, etc. Don't forget the *Food, Land and People* lesson plans that were presented at the AAW convention in St. Paul.

have to be implemented and that is our job.

Vilsack said he and President Obama are committed to being creative and innovative in this year's reauthorization of the nutrition programs to provide more nutritious food. Improving food programs improves health, reducing health care costs and food stamps provide economic stimulus.

Source: Secretary Tom Vilsack's first press conference.

AAW 2010 Mexican Riviera Cruise

Save the date and book now!

AAW Cruise Coordinator Alice Dettwyler has completed reservations for a seven-day Mexican Riviera Cruise for February 7-14, 2010. This is the second cruise sponsored by AAW as a fundraiser for the organization as well as a great opportunity to “get away” with agriculture friends.

Here are the details:

Carnival Cruise Line, Carnival Splendor (new ship 2008)

Schedule

| Date | Location | Arrival | Departure |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|
| February 7 | Long Beach, California | | 5:30 p.m. |
| February 8 | Fun day at sea | | |
| February 9 | Fun day at sea | | |
| February 10 | Puerto Vallarta, Mexico | 10:00 a.m. | 10:00 p.m. |
| February 11 | Mazatlan, Mexico | 9:00 a.m. | 6:00 p.m. |
| February 12 | Cabo San Lucas, Mexico | 7:00 a.m. | 3:00 p.m. |
| February 13 | Fun day at sea | | |
| February 14 | Long Beach, California | 9:00 a.m. | |

Cost

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Inside Cabin (Category 4B): | \$553.57 | 1st & 2nd passenger |
| | \$343.57 | 3rd & 4th passenger |
| Oceanview Cabin (Category 6B): | \$673.57 | 1st & 2nd passenger |
| | \$373.57 | 3rd & 4th passenger |
| Balcony Cabin (Category 8B): | \$843.57 | 1st & 2nd passenger |
| | \$403.57 | 3rd & 4th passenger |

- ▶ Rates are per person and include all current taxes and fees. Travel insurance is recommended and not included in above rates.
- ▶ Deposit of \$250 per person due at the time of booking
- ▶ Final payment due November 16, 2009.

Carnival will donate \$5 per person/per day on each fundraising booking. That is a total of \$70 per cabin in donations!

Book by August 31 to secure this low group price. After September 1, rates are subject to new pricing and may be higher.

Don't miss the boat... book the 2010 AAW fundraising cruise.

Contacts

Newberg Travel & Cruise, Inc
601 E Hancock Street
Newberg, OR 97132
503-538-0456 or
800-234-6968

Alice Dettwyler
5582 75th Avenue NE
Salem, OR 97305
503-371-1399
dasfarm@juno.com

AAW Networking

By Doris Mold

The networking committee is working on setting up a variety of networking opportunities both within AAW and with organizations outside of AAW. These networking opportunities are efforts to build better relationships both within our organization and outside of our organization in accordance with our strategic plan. Plus it should be fun and interesting to learn new things from others!

We have already had some successful networking activities within the organization, including convention-only mentoring where people new to convention are matched up with more seasoned convention attendees. The mentoring program has taken place for five years and has resulted in knowledge being shared and many new connections and friendships being made between AAW members. We have also done some specific networking activities at past conventions and mid-year meetings in order to get members to meet and network with a larger cross-section of the participants.

At the 2008 AAW Convention in San Antonio, the committee handed out a survey asking members what their interests were in relation to networking activities. Members responding to the survey indicated an interest in a wide-range of networking opportunities. The activities that the committee will focus on are pilot projects in the following areas: organized exchanges within the organization where members' affiliates travel to another state or affiliate. Hosting members of another agriculture or non-agricultural organization so that we could learn from each other and develop a better understanding of our organizations and where we might work together. Arrangements may also be made to be hosted by one of these organizations. Yet another area is to host or be hosted by a person or persons in another agricultural field/business other than your own in order to develop a better understanding of our work and perspectives. This would entail matching up individual members with individuals in different fields.

Networking opportunities will be announced via the various AAW communication methods, so keep your eyes open for these opportunities coming your way soon. Rather than be all things to all people, we will start small with our pilot projects and learn from them and then expand our work to encompass a broader network within AAW, agriculture and the community at large.

The committee would like to hear from members who are interested in participating in the exchanges whether you are interested in those within or outside of the organization, or perhaps both. If you, your chapter, or affiliate would like to be involved in the exchanges, we would appreciate hearing from you. If you have suggestions of organizations or individuals who should be involved in the exchanges, we would also like to hear from you. Please contact Doris Mold, networking chair, if you have an interest or information in any of these areas; by mail: P.O. Box 8192, St. Paul, MN, phone: 715-822-6347, or email: doris@sunriseag.net.

In future issues of *The Voice*, we will cover some additional areas of networking including virtual networking and mentoring programs, among others.

2009 AAW Midyear Tentative Meeting Agenda

St. Louis, Missouri • April 3-5, 2009

Thursday, April 2

8:00 p.m. Executive Board Meeting
StART meeting for coordinators and chairpersons

Friday, April 3

7:30 a.m. Registration Table opens

8:00-11:00 a.m. Resource Center Board Meeting

11:15 a.m.-Noon Joint AAW Executive Committee/Resource Center Board Meeting

Noon Lunch (included with registration)

1:00-3:00 p.m. Board of Directors Business Meeting (everyone invited)
StART Reports at this time
Strategic Plan of Action Revisited

3:00-3:15 p.m. Break

Resource Center Silent Auction Begins

3:15-5:30 p.m. StART committees break out to work on position statements (all members are encouraged to attend)

6:00 p.m. Presidents' Meeting and Dinner (Affiliate Presidents or Proxy's)

Evening Dinner on your own

Saturday, April 4

9:00-10:00 a.m. "Turning the World Onto Agriculture"
Our USDA risk management segments for RFD TV

10:00-10:45 a.m. "Editing our Web page"
AAW web page training for officers, affiliate presidents, StART chairs
Chris Wilson, AAW 1st VP

10:45-11:00 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m.-Noon Web page training continues

Noon Lunch (included with registration)

1:15 p.m. **Resource Center Silent Auction Ends**

1:15-3:00 p.m. Reconvene Business Meeting
Strategic Plan of Action Reports from:
Heather Hampton-Knodle,
Consumer Awareness;
Kris Zilliox, Leadership;
Doris Mold, Networking

AAW Member Benefits/American Grown Goodness report

Review of 2008 Policy Position revisions

3:00-3:15 p.m. Break

Pay for Silent Auction Items

3:15-5:30 p.m. Continue Policy Positions

Evening Dinner on your own

Sunday, April 5

8:30-9:00 a.m. Devotional Service

9:15-11:00 a.m. Business Meeting
Adopt 2009 Position Statements

11:00 a.m. Adjourn
Executive Board Meeting begins immediately after adjournment

AAW Resource Center Silent Auction

The AAW Resource Center raises funds to finance scholarships. During midyear meeting, the center annually holds a silent auction as one of their money-making projects. Affiliates are encouraged to donate an item to the auction, and each are welcome to nominate their members for scholarships. Individual donations are also appreciated.

2009 Auction Chairpersons:

Pat Lawfer rplaw@blkhawk
Pam Sweeten-Shaw..... pamelasweeten@yahoo.com

National Cattlemen Beef Association identifies issues

Change is in the air with new challenges and opportunities for the cattle industry. Increased activism and its growing mainstream acceptance could mean more regulations, more oversight, more fees and more stringent rules. Top five issues for 2009 announced at the recent NCBA Convention are:

1. Trade—the continued expansion of U.S.

beef markets and passing important free trade agreements.

2. Taxes—decreasing the Death Tax and reducing the Alternative and Capital Gains Taxes
3. Food Safety and Nutrition—maintaining our consumer's confidence, using science-based strategies to ensure food safety and ensuring that beef is recognized as a good source of nutrition in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines.

4. Renewable Fuels—reducing government intervention in the market for feedstocks while continuing to encourage development of new bio and alternative fuels.
5. Environmental Regulations—implementing the Clean Water Act CAFO Rule, preventing efforts to redefine the "waters of the United States" and making sure that farms are not considered or regulated as factories.

Source: National Cattlemen, January 2009

AAW Midyear Meeting Registration

St. Louis, Missouri • April 3-5, 2009

Reservations due by Sunday, March 15

- Full Registration (includes two lunches and web page training) \$100.00
- Full Registration (includes two lunches; no web page training) \$80.00
- Partial Registration (Friday or Saturday only) \$60.00
- Collegiate Full Registration (Friday or Saturday only) \$35.00
- Partial Collegiate Registration (Friday or Saturday only) \$20.00

Total _____

Attention Midyear Participants

An in-depth web page training for affiliate presidents, officers, StART chairs, or other members attending Midyear will be held during this year's meeting. Those attending this program will have their registration fee reimbursed by AAW from the Risk Management Grant we have obtained. Keep this in mind when making your decision to attend this meeting.

Attending Web Page Training? YES NO

Name _____

Affiliate _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Date of Arrival _____

Mail form to: Carolyn Klieber, American Agri-Women Treasurer, P.O. Box 111, Hillsboro, KS 67063-0111, e-mail treasurer@americanagriwomen.org or phone 620-877-7204 for credit card registration information.

Register online at www.americanagriwomen.org. **Deadline March 15.**

Hotel information

Double Tree Westport, 900 Westport Plaza, St. Louis, MO

Make reservations at Central Reservations office at 866-786-8088 or phone the hotel directly at: 314-434-0100; fax: 314-434-5067

Room Rates: \$89.00 for single-quadruple occupancy. Free airport shuttle and Westport areas within five miles. Free on-site parking.

Hotel registration **deadline is March 5.**

Scholarships Available

Thanks to the work of the Agri-Women Resource Center and the generous support of donors, AAW can provide two scholarships for farm, ranch, or agribusiness women or their daughters, to pursue accredited courses in ag leadership, communications, rural sociology, medicine, or any other courses directly related to agriculture. Each scholarship is for \$500 to be used for tuition.

The scholarships are provided through the Daughters of American Agriculture Foundation, created to honor the memory of those courageous and adventuresome pioneer women who played such an important role in the founding of this nation and to encourage the present generation to continue their education in agricultural pursuits. Funding for the foundation was provided by Jean and Calvin Ibendahl, who farmed near Tamaroa, Illinois, and from farm families around the country who pitched in "dollars for daughters."

AAW member and educator Jean Ibendahl initiated the Jean Ibendahl Scholarship in 1991. It was later supported by a generous endowment of \$10,000 by Jean and her husband Calvin. It is further maintained by donations by AAW members and affiliates. This scholarship is available to high school graduates and women ages 18-23.

The Sister Thomas More Bertels Scholarship was begun in 1991 to honor a founding mother of AAW. Sister T. More Bertels was a history teacher at Silver Lake College in Manitowoc, WI. She traveled the United States and Canada extolling the virtues of agriculture and empowering producers to realize their potential.



This scholarship is available to women who are returning students in agriculture and are 24 years old or older.

An applicant must be a farmer, rancher or be the wife, daughter or other close relative of a farm, rancher or other person employed in agriculture. She must have knowledge of or work experience in agriculture and show an economic or financial need. Grade point average or placements on tests are considered. For more information, copy of the application, and submission information, visit the AAW web site at www.americanagriwomen.org.

Other scholarships awarded annually:

- ▶ **Gail McPherson Fly-In Scholarship** (\$400) is awarded to an AAW member to attend AAW's fly-in for the first time.
- ▶ **Helen Whitmore Scholarship** (\$400) is presented to an AAW member to attend AAW's annual convention for the first time.

Affiliate News ▶▶

ΣΑ Sigma Alpha National Alumni Association

By Kayla Kelly, President

The Sigma Alpha National Alumni Association has been hard at work this year. We have expanded our membership benefits and introduced new programs. Our focus this year will be on offering more professional development opportunities for our members. One of the ways that we are accomplishing this goal is through our new mentoring program. We will be linking alumni with collegiate members who have an interest in the same field. The topic of mentoring was introduced at the 2008 Sigma Alpha National Convention. Throughout 2009 we will be introducing our members to the mentoring process and we will kick off the start of the program at our National Convention in October. We believe that the mentoring program will not only benefit our alumni but also our collegiate members. We are looking forward to another great year working with AAW!

Good Oak

There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other than heat comes from the furnace.

To avoid the first danger, one should plant a garden, preferably where there is no grocer to confuse the issue.

To avoid the second, he should lay a split of good oak on the andirons, preferably where there is no furnace, and let it warm his sins while a February blizzard tosses the trees outside. If one has cut, split, hauled and piled his own good oak, and let his mind work the while, he will remember much about where the heat comes from, and with a wealth of detail denied to those who spend the weekend n town astride a radiator.

Aldo Leopold

Photo courtesy of Doris Mold, Minnesota Agri-Women

Affiliate News ► Farm Safety 4 Just Kids

By Keely Pearson
Marketing & Communications Director

In the fall of 1986, Marilyn Adams received the phone call that every mother fears. She learned that her eleven-year-old son Keith Algreen had suffocated in a gravity flow wagon while helping with the first full day of harvest on the family's farm in Iowa. One year after Keith's passing, Marilyn was helping her oldest daughter write an FFA speech about farm safety. During the research process, they were astonished to learn more than 300 children were killed in farm-related incidents each year. Determined to find a constructive outlet for her grief, she founded Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, a non-profit organization headquartered in Urbandale, Iowa. Farm Safety 4 Just Kids' mission is to promote a safe farm environment to prevent health hazards, injuries, and fatalities to children and youth.

Over the past two decades, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has developed a variety of hands-on demonstrations, educational products, and promotional items to teach youth about rural health and safety issues. The organization is comprised of 137 volunteer chapters, nine outreach coordinators, and two youth representatives that tirelessly work to educate rural children and families in their communities about the underlying hazards present in the rural environment.

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids' Chapter Network was formed in 1992 and now spans across the United States and Canada. Communities are encouraged to form chapters to educate their families, friends, and neighbors about rural health and safety hazards. Chapters receive Farm Safety 4 Just Kids' educational materials, discounted purchase prices, grant reimbursement, and training opportunities.

In addition to the chapter network, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has nine part-time, outreach coordinators in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Tennessee. The coordinators travel their respective states giving educational presentations, holding safety day programs, setting up county and state fair booths, and assisting new and existing FS4JK chapters. The outreach coordinator program is funded by Archer Daniels Midland Company, Cargill, and Monsanto.

To reach the teenage crowd, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has enlisted the help of two high school youth representatives. The youth host programs in their communities to educate young children and positively influence their peers to take safety precautions to avoid hazardous situations. Popular presentation topics include animal, chemical, grain, tractor, and seatbelt safety.

Two new safety issues that have recently emerged include all-terrain vehicle (ATV) usage and part-time farms. The machines were designed as work vehicles but are frequently being used as recreational toys. ATVs continue to get larger and faster and youth riding them are often too small in stature and lack the appropriate training to safely operate the machine. Farm Safety 4 Just Kids recommends following manufacturer guidelines when determining which ATV to purchase. Budget money to invest in personal protective equipment such as helmets, gloves, and riding boots for your children and family.

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids is partnering with Country Living Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting and protecting rural citizens, to educate at-risk audiences about the dangers on part-time farms or acreages. Many part-time farmers fled the city to live in the serene countryside and most are unaware of the risks associated with antique tractors, horses, and large mowers. Farm Safety 4 Just Kids is working with the University of Iowa to identify trends affecting the growing part-time farmer population.

To improve and establish farm safety and health programs, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids is conducting eight regional workshops sponsored by the USDA Risk Management Agency. Events are currently planned in California, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and West Virginia. The workshops are free and the public is invited to attend.

While agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries in America, most farm-related injuries and fatalities are preventable. Together we can help protect the next generation of farmers—our children! For more information, call Farm Safety 4 Just Kids at 1-800-423-5437 or visit www.fs4jk.org.

Affiliates

American Angus Auxiliary
American Hereford Women
American Sheep Industry Women
California Women for Agriculture
California Women in Timber
Colorado Wool Growers Auxiliary
Farm Safety 4 Just Kids
Florida Agri-Women
Foremost Farms USA
Fur Commission USA
Idaho Agri-Women
Illinois Agri-Women
Kansas Agri-Women
Kansas Cattle Women
Kansas Sheep Auxiliary
Lakes States Women in Timber
Maine Agri-Women
Michigan Agri-Women
Michigan Peach Sponsors
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Missouri Agri-Women
Missouri Cattle Women
Montana Agri-Women
Montana Women in Timber
National Shorthorn Lassie Association
Nebraska Agri-Women
New Mexico CowBelles
New Mexico Wool Growers Auxiliary
New York State
Vegetable Growers Association
North Dakota Agri-Women
North Dakota Cattle Women
Ohio Agri-Women
Oklahoma Women for Agriculture
Oregon Women for Agriculture
Oregon Women in Timber
Penn's Agri-Women
Salers Belles
Sigma Alpha National Alumni Association
Sigma Alpha Sorority
Texas Agri-Women
Texas Produce Association
Texas Vegetable Association
United Agricultural League
Washington Women for Agriculture
Wisconsin Women for Agriculture
Women of National Agricultural Aviation Association
Women in Kansas Agricultural Aviation Association

Industry News ▶▶

Immigration, trucking, and agriculture

It is time to stop thinking about the “immigration problem” solely in terms of immigration. The issue is a legal, reliable and adequate labor supply. The trucking and agricultural industries, today and in the future face a labor supply challenge and must engage in the legislative debate and action on immigration. Enactment of a comprehensive immigration reform plan that includes border security, and meets the needs of the U.S. economy and labor supply is needed. The U.S. must provide ways for immigrants to legally and appropriately assimilate. Simply building a fence is not a comprehensive answer.

The H-2A program is especially important to agriculture. The final rule, published Jan 2, 2009, modernizes this program for employing foreign workers in temporary or seasonal agricultural jobs, and enhances important worker protections. These reforms will improve the operation of the H-2A program for agricultural employers and help ensure that the employment of temporary foreign workers does not adversely affect U.S. workers.

It will also improve the process for hiring, reduce unnecessary duplicative filing and application review, and employer recruitment for U.S. workers will begin earlier. The rule also establishes enhanced penalties for violations and new tools to ensure employer compliance. The rule became effective January 17, 2009.

Source: *Farm to Fork*, the Hall Report, ER, Hall Associates, LLC, January 13, 2009

Sheep industry supports H-2A provisions

The sheep industry adamantly supports the current provisions in the H2A program that allow the sheepherder program to work for the industry. Labor for sheep production has been a decade-long priority for the industry as evidenced by the sheepherder provisions of the H-2A program, which date back to the 1950s.

The H-2A program, with the sheepherding provisions is critical to the

entire industry,” stated Peter Orwick, ASI executive director. “With more than one fourth of the nation’s entire sheep production supplied by the ranches that use sheepherders, all aspects of the industry are dependent on its use, from lamb meat processing companies to wool warehouses and textile firms.”

The three-year contract is especially important given the animal welfare and management dependent on an experienced herder caring for the sheep. The herder’s understanding and familiarity with the large rangelands, location of water, noxious plants are key, as is the knowledge of sheep care at shearing, lambing and shipping as well as use of livestock protection dogs and horses.

Source: American Sheep Industry (ASI) Weekly, January 9, 2009

What does “natural” mean?

After years of debate, USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service has finally released a standard to help answer that question and define how “natural” should be applied to livestock production claims.

The voluntary standard was published in the January 21 edition of the *Federal Register*. The “naturally raised” standard will say that livestock used for the production of meat and meat products have been raised entirely without growth promotants and antibiotics (except for ionophores used as coccidiostats for parasite control), and have never been fed animal byproducts. The standard will establish the minimum requirements for those producers who choose to operate a USDA-verified program involving a natural claim. According to a USDA release, the segment of the marketplace that includes specific animal-raising claims has experienced exponential growth in the past five years. Use of a naturally raised marketing claim standard has the potential to increase the available supply of U.S. meat products eligible for niche marketing programs in the United States, the European Union and other export markets, that require livestock to be raised without the administration of growth promotants.

Source: Drovers Industry News, January 22, 2009

Beat the stress with wool

“One in four people are currently finding it harder to sleep than they did 12 months ago because of job uncertainties and money worries,” said the British Sleep Council. This stress and lack of sleep can become a downward negative spiral that leads some people to resort to using medication in order to sleep.

Luckily there is an alternative that is natural and doesn’t require medical intervention. This brand new alternative comes in a surprising form: wool!

There are five stages of sleep: stages one to four and Rapid Eye Movement (REM), which occurs while dreaming. Stage four is the most restful state of sleep, which is when the body regenerates and recuperates from the strains of the day. Wool is proven to give the sleeper 25 percent more stage four sleep than sleeping under synthetic duvets, leaving you feeling healthier and happier.

There are old preconceptions about wool that have been blown away by today’s modern wool products. You can now buy washable and tumble-dryable wool duvets that fit with your modern lifestyle. These duvets allow you to create your own microclimate, and this more comfortable sleep environment allows you better, deeper sleep.

This is such a fabulous true story about nature providing all of the tools we need, if only we take the time to find them! Sleeping under wool is a new experience for many, but is the ideal way to combine all the benefits of using a natural sustainable fiber with the enhanced sleep benefits that using a wool blanket or a wool mattress protector can bring. Remember, wool is SAFE!

Source: ASI Weekly, Dec. 20, 2008

Minnesota to sponsor conference

Minnesota District 11 Agri-Women will sponsor the 11th annual Leadership Conference, April 14, at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Conference theme is: “Activating Generation X.”

Council for Biotechnology Information's Updated Web Site

Over the past year, the Council for Biotechnology Information (CBI) has been in the process of identifying positive messages about agricultural biotechnology that will resonate with the public and incorporating those messages into new materials that will effectively convey those messages to the media and the public.



Earlier this year, CBI unveiled the main repository for most of its new messaging materials: a dramatically updated and improved Web site that highlights CBI's focus on agricultural biotechnology's contributions to sustainable agriculture. The new site is located at CBI's existing url: www.whybiotech.com.

The message underpinning the tools and information on CBI's Web site is this: in the United States and globally, agricultural biotechnology is contributing today to sustainable agricultural practices, and it has the potential to make even greater contributions in the future through production of biofuels to help meet energy needs, development of drought-tolerant plants to better preserve and manage water resources, and increase crop production on existing cultivated land to feed our nation and the world's growing population.

The Web site contains informational tools and materials that explain everything from the basics of genetically engineered crops to the multitudinous ways that agricultural biotechnology contributes to the ability to minimize the "environmental footprint" of agriculture by increasing yields for food, fuel, and fiber crops without cultivating additional land, and by growing crops that require less tillage (thus using less emissions-creating fuel and creating less run-off), and that use water more efficiently. One of the most interesting features of the Web site is located on the home page, where there are three narrated slide shows which focus on agricultural biotechnology's contributions to sustainable food production, biofuels production, and water conservation.

CBI's goal in producing these materials is reflective of the organization's main mission: to provide the general public, directly and through the media, with science-based information about the benefits of agricultural biotechnology. In providing these tools, CBI also hopes that members of the food and agriculture industry will continue to look to CBI as a trusted and valuable resource for this information.

CBI's member companies are BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, Monsanto Company, and Syngenta.

Industry News ▶▶

Wheat growers support biotechnology in wheat

From Arlene Novak,
AAW Grains Chair

A petition survey was recently sent to wheat growers across the country seeking their opinions about deploying biotechnology traits in wheat. The survey is intended to measure and document the level of support for biotech trait commercialization among wheat growers.

"The petition is designed to document the depth and breadth of support for biotechnology among wheat producers," said Daren Coppock, NAWG's chief executive officer. "Anecdotally, we're convinced the support is there – this petition will either confirm or confront that belief. By reading the petition and responding with their support, growers can help our industry show biotech companies that they are smart to make the commitment of time and resources and bring this tool to growers," Coppock said.

Wheat area in the United States has been on a steady decline for the past 30 years as other crops

that do have access to biotech traits have competed for producer interest and delivered greater returns. NAWG and many other groups in the "wheat chain" believe biotechnology will be a key component in the future competitiveness of wheat as a crop by providing a variety of agronomic and, eventually, consumer advantages. For more information on the survey and to read the full petition, please visit NAWG's biotechnology page at: www.wheatworld.org.

Oregon Women state position

Oregon Women for Agriculture has defined sustainable agriculture as using time tested, proven, traditional farming practices to grow a safe, abundant, high quality, varied, nutritious, and affordable food supply for Americans and the world, while managing our land wisely year after year to make a living, raise our families, and leave our land and environment improved for future generations. A 'white paper' detailing the position is available from Deanna Dyksterhuis, 541-265-9302, or jurrian@charter.net.

**Thank you to CBI for sponsoring this issue of *The Voice*.
AAW appreciates the financial support of industry partners.**



Look at those cows and remember that the greatest scientists in the world have never discovered how to make grass into milk.

Michael Pupin

Photo courtesy of Doris Mold, Minnesota Agri-Women



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Cowboy Ethics



Cowboy Ethics is a book written by James P. Owen, a 35-year veteran of Wall Street and an owner/partner and director of corporate values for Austin Capital Management in Austin, Texas. The illustrator is well-known western photographer David Stoecklein.

In words and images, *Cowboy Ethics* explores the life and code of the working cowboy as a catalyst for a movement to transform the finance industry. Although intended for Wall Street leaders, the principles articulated in the book could be applied to many other businesses that have been tarnished by ethical misdeeds in recent times. For those of us in agriculture, they harken to principles that have always been and continue to be part of our way of life. Here are the ten principles of Owen's *The Code of the West*:

- ▶ **Live Each Day with Courage**
Real courage is being scared to death and saddling up anyway.
- ▶ **Take Pride in Your Work**
Anything worth doing is worth doing well.
- ▶ **Always Finish What You Start**
When you're going through hell... keep riding.
- ▶ **Do What Has to Be Done**
It's not always easy to do the right thing, but nobody said it would be.
- ▶ **Be Tough, But Fair**
If you find yourself questioning what's fair in any given situation, all you have to do is ask, "How would I want to be treated?"
- ▶ **When You Make a Promise, Keep It**
A man/woman is only as good as his/her word.
- ▶ **Ride for the Brand**
The cowboy's greatest devotion was his calling and his way of life.
- ▶ **Talk Less and Say More**
When there's nothing more to say, don't be saying it.
- ▶ **Remember that Some Things Aren't for Sale**
To the cowboy, the best things in life aren't "things."
- ▶ **Know Where to Draw the Line**
There's right and there's wrong, nothing in-between. Just because something isn't illegal doesn't mean it's right.

Industry News ▶▶

Truck transportation legislation

In the area of truck transportation is the growing movement to increase gross vehicle weight limits up to 97,000 pounds for trucks on federal highways for trucks transporting raw agricultural commodities and forest products. The AgTEC Coalition, a growing national coalition of over 70 companies and associations, is strongly advocating the inclusion of the legislation in the 2009 Highway Reauthorization Bill. This proposed legislation, when enacted, will reduce carbon emissions, improve the environment, conserve fuel, improve safety and help reduce traffic congestion and save thousands of American jobs in the forest products and agriculture industries. For more information on this important legislative effort, please visit the AgTEC web site at www.Ag-haul.org. To present just one example, shipping the nation's unprocessed pulpwood on six-axle trucks loaded to 97,000 pounds (with corresponding axle weight increases) would produce the following benefits over current configurations, on an annual basis, nationwide:

- ▶ Reduction in diesel fuel used 13.9 million fewer gallons
- ▶ Reduction in truckloads 1.3 million fewer truckloads
- ▶ Reduction in total miles driven 69.5 million fewer miles
- ▶ Reduction in CO2 emissions 242.3 million fewer pounds

Source: Agricultural Transportation Efficiency Coalition (AgTEC)