



Volume 38

March 2015

No. 3

## HUNDREDS CONVENE FOR FAMILY FARM ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

by Alice Parker

The Family Farm Alliance Annual Conference, themed "A New Road Map of Western Water Policy" was held in Las Vegas on February 19-20, 2015 with more than 200 people attending. The main focus of the conference was conservation and the Endangered Species Act. Although the conference was enlightening, it was also depressing as speakers talked about the continuing drought in the west.

Reports from the Southwest showed the severity of the drought in the area. Farmers in the area are very concerned about the availability of enough water to keep their citrus groves surviving. Speakers showed slides of the low water in Lake Mead and Lake Powell. The entire Colorado River system is experiencing drought creating low flows.

Speakers included Deputy Secretary of Interior Mike Connors and a roundtable discussion from the five Regional Directors of Reclamation while the Washington, D.C. panel featured staff of key congressional water committees. Speakers from the Navajo tribes presented success stories on tribes and water users working together.

Jean Sagouspe, representing the Center of Environmental Science, Accuracy and Reliability (CESAR) spoke. He was instrumental in establishing the Family Farm Alliance and is now instrumental in the formation of CESAR. CESAR and Jean Sagouspe filed a lawsuit against the National Park Service, et al. and are using tactics long-employed by litigious environmental groups who target water used for irrigation.

Dave Smith, Coordinator of Intermountain West Joint Venture, from Missoula, MT spoke on the symbiotic relationship between waterfowl management and Western irrigated agriculture. He recognized the value of irrigated agriculture and the benefits it provides for waterfowl.

Climate Change was the topic addressed by Ernie Shea, President of Solutions from the Land, from Lutherville, Maryland. He suggested anyone interested in more information go to [www.sfdialogue.net](http://www.sfdialogue.net) on the North America Climate Smart Ag Alliance.

Other topics and panels discussed include the Colorado River Conservation Pilot Program and a short film "Resilient: Soil Water, and the New Stewards of the American West." The Walton Family Foundation reported on the Colorado River Basin conservation tour and case study report on the National Young Farmers Coalition.

A detailed report of the conference can be obtained by contacting me at [mrsp@smwireless.net](mailto:mrsp@smwireless.net).

# President's Report



By Linda Newman  
Montana

## WIFE keeps busy, heads to D.C. for legislative meetings

DC Bound! A delegation of WIFE ladies from all over the U.S. are in the air as I am writing this article. It is, once again, time for our annual WIFE Legislative Conference in Washington DC.

As I was lifting off from Logan International Airport in Billings, MT this morning, I was thinking--"Wow, I am so lucky and blessed to be a part of such a great group of farm and ranch ladies and to be able to 'get off the farm' a few times a year to be 'agvocates' (new buzzword in Ag these days...) for our very vital Agriculture Industry!"

It is so refreshing to see young women becoming more and more involved every day, which includes everything from doing local Ag Education in schools and fairs, joining local Ag organizations, attending meetings on issues that affect their livelihoods and presenting testimony, to taking leadership roles in those Ag organizations and getting involved. It is so great to seem them active in their state legislative process and then in national organizations and participating in helping to shape policy in the U.S. government process.

With the power of Internet, we have such a great tool to get our message out there--but, since everyone else also has that same tool, it is more important than ever to get involved and "tell the truth" about agriculture! There is a mirage of untruths, half truths, lies, hatred, you name it, concerning farming and ranching practices being

broadcast all over the Web these days, so more than ever before, we need to be proactive in our course of action to combat these issues if we are going to continue to provide food for the world, and more importantly, to provide enough food for everyone in the U.S.

In 1976, when WIFE was organized, the "modus operandi" for the members was writing letters on issues and sending them by "snail mail." Now we copy and paste, ad lib a little, click the mouse, and "woosh" it can be sent to literally hundreds of people in just seconds!

Also, the meeting process has changed dramatically--in those early years, monthly face-to-face meetings were vital in keeping the organization effective. Young rural farm and ranch women, sometimes with children in tow, traveled great distances to be involved in an organization that would help in keeping their farms and ranches afloat.

Today, most of our monthly meetings are held via the telephone on conference calls or in some cases via the Web on programs such as "Go-To-Meeting." Gone are the days when being involved in an organization means leaving your house if you don't want to.

However, for those of you that would like a getaway at the national level with the girls every once in a while, WIFE has two face-to-face meetings, the D.C. Legislative Conference in the winter and National Convention in the fall.

WIFE has changed its policy from having to form a WIFE Chapter, in any given state, in order to enable members' involvement at the national level

to welcoming "members-at-large" and allowing those members to have the same privileges as affiliated State Chapter members. In doing this, we feel it is a good step to attract new members that would like to step up to the plate and help spread the good word for Agriculture!

Another reason I am so blessed to be National WIFE president now rather than "back then," is that I think this is a piece of cake compared to what it entailed years ago! I'm quite sure that earlier leadership roles would have been almost a full time job, yet they felt so strongly that they needed to help their male counterparts and become more active partners in their agriculture businesses, that they did what had to be done.

And, of course, we always get the question, "Do you have to be a wife to join?" I think our Montana WIFE President, Whitney Klasna, says it best--"I was a 'WIFE' before I was a 'wife!'"

Also, our National Area Director, Kerry Froese from Colorado is expecting her first child anytime, so she isn't making the D.C. trip with us this time. But I bet she will be in attendance next year--either with toddler in tow by herself, bringing Grandma Kimmi Lewis with her, or leaving said toddler in Colorado with a Grandma. The possibilities are endless! (Just thought I would give you some ideas, Kerry.)

So, everyone, please spread the word about the work that we, as Women Involved in Farm Economics, do and invite them to join the battle, or "war" on some issues!!

Ok, off to bend our Legislators ears! The saga continues--stay tuned...

# Feed Grains Report



By Donna Bolz  
Nebraska

## Demand for non-GMO food on the rise in U.S.

This story starts out by saying that for the first time in 20 years, an Indiana farmer named Jim is planting his fields entirely with soybean seeds that hadn't been genetically modified (GMO) to withstand herbicides. It isn't because he is against GMO seeds; he wanted a nearly 14 percent per-bushel premium for non-GMO soybeans offered by a local grain terminal, which sells to Asian feed processors.

Jim is among a small but growing number of Midwestern farmers who are moving away from biotech seeds developed by Monsanto, DuPont and other companies in response to lower crop prices over the past two years, cutting farm profits.

More U.S. consumers are seeking non-GMO foods, which some believe to be healthier and friendlier to the environment. According to market research firm Nielsen NV, retail sales of GMO-free cereals, salad dressing, eggs and other food products increased 15 percent to \$9.6 billion last year, making it one of the fastest growing U.S. food segments. Nielsen sharply increased its non-GMO food sales estimate last year after including more products and stores.

Fueling the trend are packaged food companies such as General Mills and Post Holdings, which have moved to strip genetically modified ingredients from some products. Food

companies pay extra for non-GMO grain and oilseeds due to the relatively small supply and the cost of separating those crops from the genetically modified versions that dominate the U.S. Farm Belt.

Biotech crops have become deeply embedded in the Farm Belt, rising rapidly in use since their introduction 19 years ago, though growth has begun to level off. In 2014, 94 percent of soybean acreage was sown with GMO seeds, the same as in 2011, which is up from 54 percent in 2000, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture data.

For corn, acreage rose to 93 percent last year, which is a quarter of all acreage in 2000. The other side to this is that many farmers who prize GMO crops, say they help increase yields and can curb pesticide use because some bio-tech plants produce their own bug-killing toxins. U.S. corn prices have tumbled about 50 percent over the past two years, while soybean prices have fallen about 35 percent, prompting some farmers to decide to revisit non-GMO crops as a way to improve profits.

Many farmers who have made the switch say their motives are economic and not because of the anti-GMO movement that has surfaced in the last few years. Critics of biotech crops say more research is needed on whether foods containing GMOs are safe for consumers and argue the crops rely on synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that could hurt the environment. The Food and Drug Administration and many U.S. health and science groups say food made with GMOs is safe.

For many farmers, switching to

the non-GMO crops means deploying a broader array of pesticides, some of which, they say, already are needed to kill weeds that have evolved to survive common herbicides like Monsanto's Roundup. The savings on typically cheaper non-GMO seeds mostly offset the cost of additional chemicals, some farmers say. Thanks to the Wall Street Journal for help with this article.

### WIFE Supporting Members

#### VIP Membership

- Bayer CropScience

#### Executive Membership

- Renewable Fuels Association

#### Associate Membership

- American Bankers Association
- American Council of Life Insurers
- Monsanto
- Florida, Texas, and Hawaii Sugarcane Growers
- U.S. Beet Sugar Association

#### Contributor Membership

- American Sugarbeet Grower's Association
- North Bridge Communications
- Western Skies Strategies
- AT&T

#### In-Kind Contributors

- Miller/Coors
- Rauner & Associates



By Marlene Kouba  
North Dakota

# Homeland Security Report

## Minneapolis one of several hotspots for militant recruitment

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is a cabinet department of the federal government, proposed by the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century in January of 2001 and expedited in response to the September 11 attacks. DHS is charged with the primary responsibilities of protecting the United States and its territories (including protectorates) from and responding to terrorist attacks, man-made accidents, and natural disasters. DHS is equivalent to the Interior ministries of other countries. In fiscal year 2011, DHS was allocated a budget of \$98.8 billion and spent \$66.4 billion. DHS works in the civilian sphere to protect the U.S. within, at, and outside its borders. Its stated goal is to prepare for, prevent, and respond to domestic emergencies, particularly terrorism.

On March 1, 2003, DHS absorbed the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and assumed its duties. In doing so, it divided the enforcement and services functions into two separate and new agencies: Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Citizenship and Immigration Services. The investigative divisions and intelligence gathering units of the INS and Customs Service were merged, forming Homeland Security Investigations. Additionally, the border enforcement functions of the INS, including the U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Customs Service, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service were consolidated into a new agency under DHS: U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The Federal Protective Service falls under the National Protection and Programs Directorate. With more than 200,000 employees, DHS is the third largest Cabinet department, after the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. Homeland security policy is coordinated at the White House by the Homeland Security Council. DHS also constitutes the most diverse merger of

federal functions and responsibilities, incorporating 22 government agencies into a single organization.

IRS said that illegal immigrants granted deportation amnesty are entitled to collect additional tax refunds under the president's plan for executive action on immigration. The refunds will come from an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and will be retroactive, based on money earned while working illegally from as far back as 2011. This only applies to individuals who previously registered for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) and hold a valid Social Security number, but could still add up to billions of dollars in payments they were ineligible for prior to amnesty. Because the IRS wants to be paid taxes based on earnings of illegal immigrants who do work in the U.S., they have issued millions of ITIN numbers—those that qualify through the loophole have paid taxes, but there is a long standing debate over whether illegal immigrants should be eligible for benefits at all. As many as 4 million illegal immigrants could earn deferred action but it is unclear how many of those could be eligible. Illegal immigrants are also entitled to additional refunds under the Child Tax Credit. The law is vague over who is eligible, so for now, illegal immigrants also qualify.

The White House announced in early February that the new border security plan is being expanded to allow illegal immigrants in the U.S. to bring their children, their adult children, their grandchildren and even step-parents into the U.S. The expansion also means they will be given residency, citizenship, free use of government aid and can be used by foreigners, including convicted criminals. It is also open to the roughly 5 million people who came during the 2012 and 2014 amnesties and would give them legal means to win permanent residency. The number of illegal immigrants coming through as the result of this new one could be twice that...or more. The Senate has tried to bring H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appro-

priations Act of 2015, a bill that fully funds the Department of Homeland Security and prohibits spending any taxpayer money on the amnesty order, to a vote multiple times. It has not yet been debated but is likely to be vetoed.

In mid-February, Homeland Security Chairman Jeh Johnson is taking seriously a threat made by militants against shopping malls, including the Mall of America in Minnesota and urged people going there to be careful. Mall officials are implementing extra security measures. Some militants are being recruited in Minneapolis, which is home to the largest Somali population in the U.S. Over 800 Somalis have entered U.S. cities and towns every month since the early 1990s—all of them hand-selected by the United Nations refugee agency. Many young men have left to join the group in Somalia. Minnesota has become the most popular destination with secondary hotspots in Maine, Ohio, Colorado and southern California. About 70 percent of the 900 cab drivers at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport are Somali men. U.S. law enforcement officials have been concerned about the community. The Mall of America has more than 500 stores and attracts 40 million visitors a year, about two-fifths of them tourists.

A former man camp for oil workers in Dilley, Texas, is now a \$290 million, 480-bed detention center for up to 2,400 women and children immigrants caught at the border. It will have new playgrounds, classrooms and a library. The first residents will come from Artesia, New Mexico. Texas has led the nation in refugee resettlements for the past four years with about 500 a year. Many are coming from Myanmar, Vietnam and other parts of Asia.

When California passed Proposition 187, which limited social services to illegal immigrants, many started coming through Arizona, which is now trying to pass strong immigration laws as well as Texas. Security screening can take up to 24 months. (Sources: DHS, White House's The Daily Caller, Newsmax, Houston Chronicle)



By Mary Ann Unruh  
North Dakota

# Rural Life Report

## U.S. farmers older, more diverse than in 2007

There are 3.2 million farmers operating 2.1 million farms, covering 915 million acres that generated food, fuel, and fiber for Americans and other consumers around the world, reports the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

U.S. farmers were older and more diverse than reported in 2007. The total number of farmers declined, with the percentage of decline more for women than men. More minorities operated farms in 2012, and the number of beginning farmers declined.

Forty-four percent of all farms re-

ported having two operators, and seven percent reported three operators involved in day to day decision-making. Principal operators are on average older, more likely to be male, and consider farming their primary occupation. They work fewer days off of the farm than do second and third operators and 78 percent had been on their current farm for ten or more years.

Of the 2.1 million principal operators in the United States, 288,264 were women. This is a six percent decrease since 2007--larger than the decrease in male principal operators. Women were 14 percent of principal operators but 30 percent of all operators.

The number of women operating farms with annual sales of \$10,000 or more increased in all categories, but 91 percent

of farms with principal operators had less than \$50,000 in annual sales.

Farmers' average age continued to rise between 2007 and 2012. Of the principal operators, six percent are under 35 years old, 61 percent are 35 to 64 years old, and 33 percent are 65 and older. The older groups all increased in number.

In 2012, the number of new farmers who have been on their current operation for less than ten years was down 20 percent from 2007. In 2012, nearly 172,000 had been on their current operation for less than five years; this group was down 23 percent from 2007. The proportion of principal operators who were new farmers varied, with Asian principal operators having the largest percentage who had been on their operation less than ten years.

# Natural Resources Report

## ESA, environmentalist groups make Ag a hard business to stay in

### CLEAN WATER ACT

In the February 6 issue of the Capital Press article written by Carol Ryan Dumas, she says that "the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers have withdrawn the controversial interpretive rule ag groups contended would narrow agricultural exemptions under the Clean water Act." The rule became effective March of 2014. Congress directed the agencies to do so in the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriation Act of 2015. Although the agencies have withdrawn the rule, it is still being considered.

Over 1 million comments were submitted during the comment period that ended in November of 2014. The interpretive rule focused on the Section 404 ex-

emptions. "The rule stated that producers are exempt from 56 routine farming practices 'if' they comply with detailed Natural Resources Conservation technical conservation standard," she says. Ag groups felt it opened the door to litigation and will be a disincentive to participate in conservation programs.

Other opposition said that it narrowed the scope of what is normal farming and would require mandatory compliance with NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) standards. NRCS role would change from a friendly advisor to an enforcer. Those speaking against the rule were the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). The NMPF



By Alice Parker  
Washington

thought the rule would "actually discourage water conservation and environmental best practices". The NCGA is calling for "continued dialogue on the larger WOTUS (Waters of the U.S.) proposal and how the Act is administrated."

### ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Also in the Capital Press, February 6 issue is an editorial article titled "Endangered Species Act created an environmental industry." It stated that a review of tax

*Natural Resources: Continued on Page 8*

# Cereal Grains Report



By Jean Wach  
Nebraska

## Wheat can help lead to a heart-healthier you

February was American Heart Month. While we should be making heart healthy choices year-round, February is a month dedicated to educating the public about the best ways to care for your heart.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States but you can keep your heart healthy by eating healthy, exercising and living a healthy lifestyle.

The vital nutrients in whole and en-

riched grains make wheat an essential part of a heart healthy diet. According to the American Heart Association, a number of studies support the connection between consumption of whole grain foods, such as whole wheat, and the reduced risk of coronary heart disease. In addition to their many nutrients, whole grains are a good source for dietary fiber.

Fiber, as part of an overall healthy diet, helps reduce cholesterol levels and may lower risk for heart disease. Whole and enriched wheat is also an important source of many other nutrients that provide heart healthy benefits: B vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and folate) play a key role in metabolism which can help manage weight; Folate (folic acid)

is one of the B-vitamins and helps the body form red blood cells; Iron is used to carry oxygen into the blood; Magnesium builds bones and releases energy from muscles; and Selenium is important for a healthy immune system.

Wheat loves your heart year-round. Make wheat an essential part of your diet, then combine it with exercise and healthy living for a heart-healthier you.

With spring just around the corner, we start thinking about getting rid of those extra pounds that accumulated this winter. It is good to know that one of the crops we grow will not only keep our hearts healthy but will also help us maintain our weight (National Wheat Foundation).

# Sheep and Goats Report

## Springtime is wool time

Spring is just about here! But good wool socks are as important now as when winter first started.

Wool socks can almost be magical. If you have “extreme cold” winter boots, or just boots, your feet may get hot and perspire. Spring is the time of the year for wet weather. In either situation, your feet may get wet and cold. A cotton sock will lose its insulating properties when wet, much quicker than it will take for a wool sock to get wet. Wool has several unique advantages, that include:

- Wool is a great insulator. When it's cold out your feet will be toasty and warm.
- Wool can absorb a high amount of moisture – much more than cotton. Wool can actually hold one-third of its

weight in moisture before it even starts to feel “wet.”

- Wool dries much more quickly than cotton or other synthetics.
- Wool fibers naturally have anti-bacterial properties and are, therefore, odor resistant.

Wool socks are great, but in full disclosure there are a few downsides. A few manufacturers do not recommend machine wash, however there are many that do. Hand washing will get a longer life from your wool socks. Also, if you purchase wool socks made from a lower grade wool there may be some itchiness.

Personally, I like SmartWool and Wigwam. Wigwam also makes a sock for Costco under the brand Kirkland Signature.



By Tammy Basel  
South Dakota

The Helle family from Montana markets wool garments under the Duckworth brand. They do not have wool socks yet, but some other great wool, next-to-skin wear and outer wear. Montana has some great sheep, and if buying locally is important to you than look them up on the world wide web, because they may be difficult to find in your region.



By Maggie Nutter  
Montana

# Beef Report

## Did the fat lady sing? Pacific ports reopen after months of negotiation

On February 20, 2015 after nine months of negotiation, International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association (which is the shipping companies and port terminal operators) came to a five-year agreement. Depending on the source of information, the 29 ports along the coast that stretches from southern California and north to the Canadian Border handles about 25 to 30 percent of the United States international trade.

Many retailers like clothiers and electronic stores complained about late shipments, empty shelves and seasonal items too late to use. You can understand the financial strain of their situation, but agriculture took the big hit.

Much of the products that agriculture produces are perishable. California already suffering from drought, has seen

a huge loss in the grapes and almonds they would export. Up to 25 percent of the citrus produced in California this time of year is for export. Farmers sit by, helpless, while produce rots in containers sitting on the docks. Other producers, such as the Washington apple growers, have dumped truckloads of spoiling apples in ravines; apples that were to be sent to China for the Chinese New Year's celebrations.

In a *USA Today* news article, Peter Friedmann, executive director of the Agriculture Transportation Coalition, stated, "We know that even upon ratification, clearing up the congestion will take months. Agriculture has taken a beating."

As a result of the work slowdown, many orders for meat, fruit, hay, cotton, rice, nuts, and potatoes (French

*Marjory Carter, long-time WIFE member and WIFE-line editor for ten years recently passed away. Those of us fortunate to know her were blessed indeed. Cards would be welcomed by her daughter and family: Marjory Johnson, 5001 County Road 30, Shorter, Alabama, 36075.*

fries) were diverted to suppliers in other countries. Containers full of produce, sitting on docks for weeks longer than anticipated will be a major monetary loss and possible loss of future contracts for those producers.

Closer to home, in a Bloomberg Business report article, Barry Carpenter, president and chief executive officer of the North American Meat Institute stated, "The short shelf life of chilled beef and pork makes timely delivery critical. Our cold chain simply cannot sustain this backlog much longer and our employees should not be forced to experience the lost work days that may result if we must slow or stop production in some of our plants." Meat and poultry exporters are being hit with an estimated \$40 million a week in lost sales and extra costs, with up to \$45 million in weekly hide and skin export sales lost.

The 20,000 Longshoremen and Warehouse workers are back to work, but the affects of their slowdown will affect agriculture producers for months, if not years to come.

## *Celebrate agriculture on Ag Day!*

by Klodette Stroh

Ag Day is celebrated on March 18, 2015. America's ability to feed and clothe her people is at the center of our national security. We have a good reason to celebrate and thank American farmers. More than 21 million U.S. jobs are generated by agriculture. In comparison, that's more than the U.S. automotive manufacturing, sales, and service sectors combined. Unfortunately, too few people truly understand this contribution. Each American farmer feeds more than 144 people, a dramatic increase from 25 people in the 1960s. Quite simply, American agriculture is doing more and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the United States. According to the United States of Department of Agriculture (USDA) report, agriculture exports reached a record high of \$152.5 billion in 2014. Agriculture is a renewable industry and brings blessing and wealth to our beloved United States. Members of our U.S. Congress should set a goal to support American farmers and assure our nation's peace and security.



By Klodette Stroh  
Wyoming

# Sugar Report

## Sugar prices likely to stay at depressed levels

bobank, one of the largest banks in the world and a key lender to the U.S. food industry.

The U.S. sugar program gives authority to regulate the import quota to the Secretary of Agriculture. U.S. sugar policy is the main reason that prices have remained so affordable. The farmer's cost of production has been escalating and, as every farmer knows,

the high cost of fertilizer and fuel is mind-boggling. The commodity market is expecting lower prices for 2015.

### SUGAR PROGRAM AND LOWER GLOBAL SUGAR PRICE

The American Sugar Alliance (ASA) has been vigilant about the fact that the sugar program operates at no cost to the U.S. taxpayers. Sugar farmers in Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Nebraska, Florida or anywhere else in the United States have not received a check from the government as a subsidy.

On the other hand, India's cabinet will increase the raw sugar subsidy. They will pay their mills about 4,000 rupees (\$64) per ton according to an ASA report. India, the world's biggest producer behind Brazil is paying a subsidy of 3,300 rupees to produce and export raw sugar in the season that ended in September. World sugar prices are depressed and are likely to remain the same over the coming year as surpluses overhang the market. That is according to a December 24 report issued by Ra-

### 2014 WEATHER AND CROP DAMAGE

The 2014 growing season brought early cold temperature to Wyoming, Montana, and Colorado. Farmers sustained high loses in dry edible beans, corn and damaged sugar beet piles. My husband Rick and I lost our whole crop of bean seed and had to deliver our beautiful beans, which were damaged by cold weather, to our local landfill. Many like us have to carry such financial burden into the 2015 growing year.

America needs her farmers, they are the backbone of this country. U.S. agriculture remains one of the only sectors of America's economy that positively contributes to this country's economy. President John F. Kennedy's statement makes sense as he said, "The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways."

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Faithful North Dakota  
WIFE member Joanne  
Pahlmeyer passed away  
on February 10, 2015.  
Joanne and her husband,  
Harold, attended several  
national conventions. She  
acted as treasurer for nu-  
merous organizations in-  
cluding WIFE and was an  
accomplished seamstress  
and needleworker. Harold  
preceded Joanne in death  
on December 8, 2014.  
.....

**Natural Resources: continued from page 5**

forms filed by many environmental groups showed the top 10 groups received almost \$1 billion in contributions and legal fees. Instead of actually helping endangered species recover, they choose to drag their targets into court. This action makes it difficult for farmers, ranchers and others to stay in business.

Most environmental groups don't like animal agriculture, they don't like large-scale farming. Their intent is to get rid of ranching and large farms. The groups couldn't raise money if the problems were solved so they make sure the problem continues. They never say to donors "we have solved the problem, thanks to your help. We will now dissolve the group."

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) has been a gift to the environmental movement. These groups are using the gray wolf, salmon, smelt, owls, grouse and other species to continue the fund raising for their coffers. For instance, the gray wolf is being protected in the lower 48 states while just over the border in Canada, there are over 50,000 wolves and in British Columbia there are approximately 10,000. Under the ESA, the wolf is being protected like it is the last of the breed. Environmentalism is big business. If the Fish & Wildlife service or any other agencies don't follow the letter of the ESA law they are drug into court by environmental groups. The more lawsuits they instigate only assures the issue continues and prevents the problem from being resolved.

# Energy Report



By Barbara Broberg  
Montana

## Backups are a must-have for energy reliability

This energy column is about backing up energy. It is as important to hold on to information, as it is energy, so there is a even a collision in terminology. There is true energy stored like a log before it goes into the woodstove and there is something like a backup drive in the energy world that you might purchase for your computer--to hang on to the information, a back up. You need it: these devices use electricity to keep information. There is no way to talk through all the research or ideas being worked on; all that is brought out here are bits and pieces.

At a farm show this winter, the trade name "Generac" came up. The website is generac.com and the company is Generac Power Systems, Inc. The address is Waukesha, Wisconsin, USA. Telephone: 1-888-436-3722.

The reason this standby generator stands out is because it is powered by typical existing LP (liquefied petroleum), or natural gas fuel supply. The motto on the specification sheet states, "Control your power. Control your life." These words are trademarked. There is a nearly instant switch over from normal to "auxiliary."

The motto on having control is meaningful. If farm, business and health can no longer weather a loss of power, then these back-up power supplies are an answer. Hospitals and ships have this kind of instant back-up power.

Diesel generators, of course, are familiar to farm families. In industry and health care there can be no hesitation so these systems are engineered, tested, and monitored to be there in their time of need. Huge generators but diesel powered.

On a different scale, Powerbank units are little and come in every size and shape (see [www.usbpromos.com](http://www.usbpromos.com)). When we first experienced them around here, they were a perk from

the local grain elevator. Plugging into a computer charges them, then the energy is passed along where you need it, to a cell phone or e-reader. They feel about the same as AA batteries in weight. Charged power cells are available to buy for electronic devices. Liken that to buying 'blue ice' already frozen.

Recent news flashes are saying that Apple, known as a computer company, is busy accelerating technology for uses in electric cars. The Tesla electric car company has existed to make electric cars. Electric cars are not common, but these companies could change that.

The need to "firm" any source of power means that finding a way to keep it in storage, even for a little while, would be massive. We are at a tipping point. This whole mining data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) is at a point that breakthroughs will accelerate.

In the January, 2015 issue (on page 26), Bela Liptak, the vocal columnist at [www.controlglobal.com](http://www.controlglobal.com), mentioned, "we live at a time when cultural attitudes concerning automation are changing and the result is a debate about who should have the last word on safety---the machine or the operator?"

The answer is the machines are storing the information to help the process. The machines are complex, the tasks are real. The complexity of our energy systems is dependent on backups, controls, and automation. We are all about safety today. Safe workers, safe environment. It is possible and we are getting there.

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# WIFE Updates

Dear WIFeline Recipients,

If you have not paid your 2015 WIFE dues, please send \$60 to National WIFE in care of me. We would very much appreciate your continued support. The issues facing agriculture seem to increase every year and the need for our united voice is great.

This issue of the WIFeline will be the last one mailed out to anyone who is not a current member. It costs \$2.38 per person just to print and mail each issue, so if you have an email address or access to the Internet where you could print a copy off of the WIFE website, ([www.nationalwife.org](http://www.nationalwife.org)) please let me know and I will take you off the mail out list.

Also, please contact me if you are having any questions or problems receiving your WIFeline.

Your membership and patience is appreciated,

*Shana Baisch*

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## 2015 DATES TO REMEMBER:

- ✓ **March 15**--Finished quilt blocks need to be mailed to Linda Newman
- ✓ **May 27**--Proposed bylaw changes must be in to Jennifer Folzein at [gjfelz@KCI.net](mailto:gjfelz@KCI.net)
- ✓ **June 17**--Board of Directors conference call

There were a limited number of Policy/Directory books printed and the cost was \$4.45 each. It is also available on our website, [www.nationalwife.org](http://www.nationalwife.org), but if anyone needs to have a printed Policy/Directory book mailed to them, please contact Linda Newman by email at [dlnewman@itstriangle.com](mailto:dlnewman@itstriangle.com), or by mail, 442 #4 Rd., Roundup, MT 59072.



**WIFeline**  
a publication of  
WOMEN INVOLVED  
IN FARM ECONOMICS  
Published monthly except June and November

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