



WAAE Fall 2008 Newsletter

Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators

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And The Blue Ribbon Goes To....

By David Laatsch—WAAE President

My home farm is right next to the county fairgrounds. Because of the proximity to the fairgrounds, the excitement of the fair and probably most of all, because our farm work

(outside of milking) nearly ceased for five days in mid July, the fair was central to me and my sibling's lives.

As an FFA advisor and county fair judge, I have participated in hundreds of fairs. There is nothing like fair! I am writing this on the last day of the Dodge County Fair and school inservice will be starting next week. As I reflect on the past week, I see the year of agricultural education ahead.

The fair is about people. The casual visitor sees only animals and other projects. Those of us who have "lived" fair, know that it's about friends, neighbors, relatives and the relationships that are developed and last a lifetime. Our students learn to network with others, building business and personal relationships. They learn to cooperate with others, tolerate diversity and offer leadership to accomplish tasks.

This year we will see new people assume roles in our agriculture education family. Nearly 20 new teachers will join our ranks. The Council of Agricultural Education and Workforce Development will soon fill their position. A new coordinator of Agricultural Education for the Technical College System will be hired. A director of the FFA Foundation and a professor of Ag Ed at U.W. Madison will also come on board. Our success will be dependent upon our ability to get to know and work with these individuals.

The fair is about dreams. We call them goals. This year's pink ribbon is going to be next year's blue. Our students learn that they have to develop a plan to

achieve their dreams. They can see themselves walking across the stage to receive the Star in Agribusiness Award at next year's banquet. They know that they have to record their accomplishments in order to continue their success.

The fair is about entertainment and food. Ask your students to report on the conference that they attended. Most commonly their response will be, "It was fun! The food was great!" If only we could serve blooming onions, funnel cakes and cream puffs at our FFA Banquets!

The fair is about overcoming adversity. We teach our students that there are "joys and discomforts of agricultural life" but there will be "better days through better ways." Like the storm clouds that pester our fairs, adversities for our programs will occur. But adapting and changing to overcome adversity is our challenge.

WAAE has focused on advocacy. We promote agricultural education in our communities and our state, with our constituents and legislators. Each of the businesses that are displayed at the fair is "advocating" their products. And, oh by the way, the legislators and candidates for office are advocating themselves as well at the county fair. We showcase our students and their accomplishments, much like the products of the county are showcased at the fair.

And the fair is about learning. The skills and competencies that we teach every day are the "tools" that our students will use for a lifetime. As ag educators, we change lives and we touch the future.

Like the judge on show day would say, "The blue ribbon goes to... the teachers of agricultural education, for their commitment to excellence, their dedication to service and their leadership to their community."

10 X 15

by Ralph Johnson—WAAE Past President

During the WAAE Officer meeting in Plover in August, a committee was formed to discuss the 10 x 15 Initiatives and how this fits into Wisconsin's plans. Our committee consisted of Jeff Zobeck, Dave Kruse, Melinda Goplin, Chuck Rasmussen, and Ralph Johnson.

Our first topic was Teacher Recruitment. We talked about the efforts of many in organizing and conducting the Change Lives-Teach Agriculture Workshop held at the Wisconsin FFA Convention. We thank all of you that had a part in this program and we encourage that you continue this again at next year's Convention. WAAE is planning to follow up with a mailing in the near future to those students that attended. We talked about coming up with a way to make contact with people in the workforce who are not teachers that may be interested in becoming an Ag Educator. We would like to work closely with Collegiate FFA members and members of the Ag Ed Society and encourage them to consider becoming an Ag Educator. We would like to invite any Ag Ed major from Madison, Platteville, or River Falls to attend our PDC for a day or so. This would give them a chance to see the benefits of attending PDC once they become teachers. We could possibly have them do a few tasks during the conference to help justify their costs of attending. Talk with Professors from the three Universities to see if these students could receive a credit for attending and writing a reflection log on what they experienced at PDC.

We next talked about Retention. We have been asked by our members through our PDC evaluations to not forget the needs of the teachers that have been teaching for 2-5 years. Therefore we are looking at having a workshop at the 2009 PDC to have a panel discussion on the Survival of years 2 through 5.

Our mentoring program has been working quite well over the years, however our New Teacher Committee is planning to tweak this a bit. We hope that a Mentor will be matched up with more thought in mind as to geographical location, years of experience of mentor vs. whether the mentor has training or not. We hope that our WAAE Sectional V.P.'s and Bridgett Neu can also have some input in the selection of mentors with their mentees. This is a critical decision being made on the behalf of the mentee.

Goals that we have set for the year include:

1. Re-evaluate and upgrade the mentoring program with the New Teacher Committee.
2. Develop an "Ag In The Box" (a user friendly how-to-develop an Ag program in my school information kit) by the 2009 PDC.
3. WAAE members continue visits to U.W. Madison, Platteville, and River Falls at least once per semester.
4. Continue recruitment, retention, and expansion of program activities. Give ideas and seek ideas from WAAE membership and from WAAE Committees.

Please give any ideas that you have about the 10 X 15 Initiatives to any of our WAAE Board members. I hope that you have a great 2008-2009 school year and remember your fellow Agriculture Educators are only a phone call away if you need something!



Putting Our Product in the Hands of Decision Makers by David Kruse

Agricultural Education has a great product to offer students and school districts throughout the state of Wisconsin. WAAE will be working to share our message with school districts from across the state.

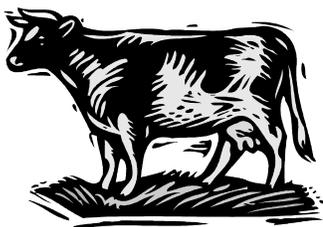
The primary messages we will be promoting include the following

- Agricultural education is (and should be) a vital component of a school district's educational program.
- Explain the agricultural education/science equivalency process and how it can benefit students.
- Agricultural education is a great opportunity to provide career education while helping students succeed in science, math, English and social sciences.

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) has placed an emphasis on the role of agricultural education in our schools for the 2009 annual convention. Representatives of the Delavan-Darien, Lake Geneva-Badger, and Elkhorn School districts have been asked to provide a workshop on the agriculture/science equivalency process at the WASB annual convention. Agriculture instructors and administrators will be involved in presenting the workshop which will likely include a panel discussion format.

WAAE is also exploring the possibility of sponsoring a session speaker for the school board convention. If we are successful in setting this up, WAAE will be able to not only exhibit at the convention as we did in 2008 but also include agricultural education as a more significant emphasis at the WASB convention. This is all great news for Wisconsin agricultural education and can have a positive impact throughout Wisconsin. Be visionary for agricultural education in your school district and be prepared to embrace the opportunity to make positive changes in agricultural education. The spotlight is starting to shine on agricultural education as our state superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction has promoted the agriculture/science equivalency; WASB is looking to include agricultural education in its programming; and the Wisconsin legislature and governor have approved the development of the Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council. Rest assured that your organization, WAAE, will continue to promote the role of agricultural education in Wisconsin schools, but please realize that our mission will be more successful when every agricultural educator and program work together to improve agricultural education not only in your own schools, but also the communities around you.

2008 World Dairy Expo Opportunity



Building Bridges – Making Connections is the theme for the 2008 World Dairy Expo taking place September 30 – October 4. Success of the show is largely due in part to

volunteers willing to give their most valuable resource – time. There are a lot of different volunteering positions to consider based on interest. Some of the available positions include:

- indoor lounge and food responsibilities
 - indoor retail in the Purple Cow Gift Shop
 - indoor room monitoring during seminars
 - outdoor guided tours with 4th Graders
- outdoor shuttle tram driver/rider

In-depth knowledge of the dairy industry is not a requirement; many of the positions only require a smile and positive attitude. All volunteers will receive daily admission passes, 10% off merchandise from the Purple Cow Gift Shop, an invite to the annual Friends of Expo party held in December, and the ability to take in the overall atmosphere of a one-of-a-kind

show. Please contact Kelly Bienfang at World Dairy Expo, 3310 Latham Drive, Madison, WI 53713, by phone at 608-224-6455 ext. 100 or via e-mail kbienfang@wdexpo.com for more details and to volunteer.



So what does the WAAE logo represent?

By Jeff Meske

It probably isn't too hard to pick out the outline of Wisconsin as it encircles an eagle perched on a book along the acronym WAAE

for Wisconsin Association of Agriculture Educators. For those with the memory, the eagle/book was borrowed from NVATA (predecessor to our current NAAE) so that Wisconsin would correlate to the national parent group. The WAAE board is looking at the logo and trying to make a simple yet clear message with the logo. No change will be made in the next year, but as ideas are gathered, a new logo may better define our family of ag educators in the future.

Reasons for change include: match NAAE's "oval" format, update with the times (eagle/book). Reasons to keep the current logo for the time being is that it is unique (state outline), many members just purchased WAAE polos, they look professional, and there are set up charges for new logos.

One of the problems encountered in designing a logo for agriculture is its diversity. How is this represented? There were ideas of a web including different clusters. Should there be a connection to the future, success or being progressive? Please forward any or all ideas to your sectional WAAE representative as a committee will be drafting some logo ideas over the next year.

WAAE Board Strives to Give YOU the BEST Professional Development Conference Experience!

By Linda Sattler

I know it is a long title for a newsletter article – but golly it is the truth. Your WAAE board works hard to create a professional development conference experience that any educator would be proud to attend. I personally believe our conference vastly outshines that of any other subject area. So – in an effort to

continue excellence, all avenues will be investigated. Alternative sites are currently being investigated throughout Wisconsin.

You may ask – what does a WAAE PDC need? Here is the short list. Accommodations: 150-160 sleeping rooms, 10-15 breakout rooms, a 2-3 year contract, a possible connection with FFA conferences to guarantee more bargaining power and of course a great deal. These needs narrow our search a little.

Any change in location would require the following: state rate meal and room rates (a huge cost savings), free internet for breakout rooms and hopefully sleeping rooms, and somewhat central location with a strong secondary and post-secondary agricultural connection. A change may be coming... but not before 2011... stay tuned for more details.



Teaching Tips with Sattler

Okay – truthfully all of these tips were stolen from a workshop by Paul Larson entitled “Do You Orchestrate Learning or Shovel Information?” But they work – trust me

Begin each lesson by setting the context. Start with **acknowledgements**: “Good morning, thanks for being on time.” Then set up your **expectations**: “Today we are going to focus on proper methods of vegetative propagation.” Next **speak to the best self**: “Thanks for staying on task during this last exercise.” And, explain **where we are in relationship to the whole unit or lesson**: “Yesterday, we discussed nutritional requirements of animals, today we will explore balancing rations.”

Also give great directions (it even works on middle school kids – I promise) Have you ever said: “Everyone listen-up. We are going into the greenhouse to measure plants and take notes on your experiment, stay away from the cut flowers.” ?

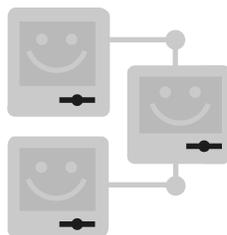
Effective Directions use **action verbs**, have an **attention signal**, a **time limit**, a **beginning signal**, and a **check for understanding**.

Next time try: “When I say “measure,” you will have 8 minutes to move into the greenhouse, locate your experimental plants, measure and record on your data

sheets. Hand your papers in when I raise my hand and say stop. What questions do you have? “Measure!”

I am not kidding it works – have a fun and wonderful start to the school year.

Networking at its Best- By Melinda Goplin



Congratulations on surviving your first weeks of a new year. Your classroom is organized, boxes of new supplies are showing up daily and your FFA officer team is recruiting new members by the minute. But wait...what about all these "buzz words": transcribed credit, science equivalency, CAERT, and Carl Perkins. Are you still not sure where that road leads?

The solution for getting a better hold on the new opportunities that await your program and students is to attend your Fall DPI Inservice. The great Jeff Hicken will be attending each inservice with information to fit the needs and desires of all agriculture instructors. Everyone is at a different waypoint with each of these, but rest assured that together, we will help each other succeed with our goals and plans for the year. I have yet to hear of another discipline with the kind of sharing, camaraderie, and support we see in agriculture education. It is how we survive on challenging days and why we continue to make a difference in this crazy world.

Each WAAE officer will also conduct an update on noteworthy business during a portion of this inservice. As you are reading the rest of the newsletter, keep in mind that many of these items will be up for discussion at inservice. Your WAAE officers are here to represent their entire section. Please feel free to voice your thoughts on these important items of business.

Watch your mail as well as email from Jeff Hicken as the specific agenda, along with dates, times and other important information will be arriving to you shortly. If you still have questions or concerns, please contact your WAAE officers. They will be glad to help answer questions.

Wisconsin Hosted Region III By LeRoy Miller

On June 17th, LaCrosse, Wisconsin was invaded by over 130 agricultural instructors and guests from Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska. The golfers started out the convention at the LaCrosse Country Club.

Ron VonGlahn and his committee set up tours for the enjoyment and education of those in attendance. We visited the hatchery. We saw the inside runs for raising the fry, the outside growing ponds. One of these ponds was empty and we could see the catch kettle in the lower end used to harvest the fish. They also had a building where they were working on clam restoration. These clams need fish to act as an intermediate host. We also visited Organic Valley, warehousing and shipping division. They also provided snacks of orange juice, milk and cheese for breaks during the conference. They have a very interesting website about their organization and organic farming. That site is www.organicvalley.coop, check it out.



The Mississippi River cruise was on the LaCrosse Queen a steam driven paddle boat.

This almost turned into a disaster but a alert Wisconsin teacher noticed that they forgot to load the BEER!! Disaster struck later while on the river, Jay Kennedy found the boats pilot and his MICROPHONE!! We then had a guided tour narrated by Jay. A great time was had by all. Lucky for us the boat docked about a block away and across a small park for the hotel. The Radisson Hotel was separated by an very nice park and only one street. We could see the river, boats and barges from the windows.

Business meetings involved committee reports and work. We also saw presentations of some of the contestants in Region III. They were then selected for competition at the National Convention. Good Luck to all of those who advanced from our region. We also got a sneak preview of the NAAE Webinars. So if you get an e-mail about webinars do not be afraid to open it up and see what they are about.

Don Josko and BFG sponsored the riverboat cruise and some of the meals. Don was the keynote speaker at the banquet. He did an excellent job as all of us

from Wisconsin know.



South African Adventure

Cal Geiger, ag teacher at Mayville High School, was the grand prize winner at the Environmental Science Summit in Stevens Point, WI this summer. He won a South

African Education Tour with the Global Environmental Teachings Program (valued over \$6,000)!!! There is still space available in the program if you want to join Cal in South Africa next year! Visit <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/get/southafrica.asp> for more information.

NAAE Award Recipients

it is with pleasure that I announce the names of the NAAE award winners for 2008. You are, indeed, individuals who make our association strong and our profession proud. The following are the **2008 National Award Winners** who will be recognized at the convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, December 2-6, 2008:

Outstanding Young Member
Region III—Richard Henningfeld, WI

Outstanding Teacher
Region III—Lisa Konkell, WI

Outstanding Middle/Secondary Ag Ed Program
Region III—Randolph High School, WI

Post-Secondary Adult Ag Ed Program—
Region III—Fox Valley Technical College, WI

Ideas Unlimited
Region III—Tracy Harper, WI

Lifetime Achievement
Region III—Dr. Harold Crawford, IA

Outstanding Cooperation
Region III—William Nelson, MN

Outstanding Service
Region III Paul Larson, WI

Teachers Turn the Key
Region III—Darren Swartz, WI & Candice Olson, WI