



January 2009

President's Message—By Kim Porter



Happy New Year!

It is wonderful to be associated with a group of people so dedicated to agriculture and rural America. I was looking up a statistic on the number of farms and ranches in Wyoming and was alarmed and surprised at the drastic reduction in the last few years; so I decided to peek at the national statistics. There were 6% fewer farms and ranches in 2007 than 2006. This is a growing trend to lose our agriculture lands out to corporate farms and development. This may not seem very high, but the American farmer is aging, production costs are sky rocketing, and more and more laws are coming about making it harder for production agriculture.

Where will this statistic be in five or ten years? It is going to take a dedicated effort from groups such as ours to ensure that agriculture remains viable in the United States. This is where many of our programs come into play and can help keep rural America "rural." The annual conference is a great place to network and get ideas from other states on the programs they have implemented. It is a good time to find out what has worked for other states and what may not have been as successful. The contacts you meet at the annual conference are also an excellent resource throughout the year when you want to bounce an idea around. I would encourage everyone to attend the annual meetings and get to know what other states are doing and to share your programs.

Next, I must thank the North Dakota Rural Rehabilitation Corporation for a wonderful conference in Fargo, North Dakota. They put on a fabulous program that was informative and interesting. From high tech innovations to cultural exhibits to farm rescue, this was a great learning experience. Entertainment and hospitality were top notch also!

We look forward to seeing old and new friends alike at the 2009 annual meeting to be held in Traverse City,

Michigan, on September 20-23, 2009. I am excited about a new (hopefully permanent) addition to the agenda! A panel of our peers will be discussing a topic of mutual interest, kind of like a formal networking session. The tentative topic is "New Programs and How They are Implemented" and will include at least one private corporation and state program. I hope everyone will find this informative and helpful!

Last, but not least, I would like to welcome the new NAARC officers and board:

Sandra Tenorio (TX) - Vice President
John Trotman (AL) - Past President
Vernon Eagan (AR) - Secy/Treas

We welcome back board members Harold Gary (MS), Don Jacka (KS), Marion Weers (MI), Bud Weiss (CO) and newly appointed Larry Mack (FL).

Many thanks to Roald Lund (ND), out-going past president, for his dedication and service to this association!

Report of 2008 NARRC Annual Meeting—Fargo, ND—By Vernon Eagan

Meeting Program: The 37th Annual Meeting of the National Association of Rural Rehabilitation Corporations was held in Fargo, North Dakota, on September 28—October 1, 2008. Official welcomes were given by President John Trotman and by The Honorable George Sinner, former governor of North Dakota. NDRRC President Bill Fortier gave a brief history of the North Dakota Rural Rehab Corporation to familiarize newer delegates with their state's program.

The General Session was called to order by President Trotman and followed by Secy/Treas Eagan conducting the official roll call. Nineteen states were represented. Eagan gave brief reports on states with scheduling conflicts. A moment of silent prayer was observed in remembrance and on behalf of the family of Bonnie Newstrom (AR).

Marion Weers (MI) served as NARRC's official conference photographer.

Dr. Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center at North Dakota State University (NDSU), gave a presentation on "Demographic Changes and Outlook in Agriculture." He addressed his current research efforts of examining the consequences of the aging baby boom on labor force issues and its implications for rural communities.

Dr. William W. Wilson, Professor at NDSU in Agribusiness and Applied Economics, spoke about "Energy Development Alternatives for Farmers and Ranchers as Economic Opportunities." His remarks focused on risk and strategy as applied to agriculture and agribusiness with particular attention on procurement strategy, international marketing, and competition. Dr. Wilson advises large Agribusiness firms, major food and beverage companies, and also governments in other countries.

Dr. Sharon Clancy, who worked her way through college by teaching in the 1950s and 1960s, gave a presentation on "The 21st Century Communities: Organic and Sustainable." She addressed sustainable agriculture and its evolution: the productivity of both no-till and organic farming.

Following lunch, delegates and guests boarded buses for tours of the NDSU Science and Technology Research Park and of Amity Technology. At the Research Park we were guided through a close look at the development of new cutting-edge technology (micro-chips for consumer products, etc.). At Amity we had a first-hand view of the production of their innovative farm devices to harvest and/or plant crops.

Guest speaker for the President's Awards Dinner was Mr. John W. Phipps, host of US Farm Report. He spoke about his experience in returning to his sixth-generation farm in east-central Illinois in 1975, growing the 600-acre family farm to

1800 acres, and the complexities farm families face.

President Trotman presented an award plaque to Past President Roald Lund for his "superb" leadership as 2006-2007 NARRC President. Two New Program Recognition (NPR) award plaques were presented—one to Kim Porter and the State of Wyoming for the development of a new innovative program entitled, "Farmers' Market Fuel Reimbursement Grant," and an award plaque to Tony Minicozzi and the State of Arkansas for their new program entitled, "AREF Memorial Scholarship Program."

On Tuesday, Mr. Bill Gross, Founder and President of Farm Rescue, spoke about "Farm Rescue" and how this non-profit organization came into being to help farm families who have experienced a major injury, illness, or natural disaster. Farm Rescue volunteers and sponsors plant and/or harvest crops free of charge for these designated family farmers.

Mr. Rick Millner, with Prairie Ridge Management Company of Veblen, South Dakota, gave an in-depth look at dairy farming and his oversight of 180 employees in six dairies—with over 9500 milking cows, 3000 dry cows, 500 heifers, and 2500 baby calves. Their key to success in dairy is healthy, comfortable cows—sand bedding and cross power-ventilated system free-stall dairy barns. Their new barn system has gained industry and international notoriety.

The delegates and guests boarded buses for a tour of the Norwegian culture exhibit with a Viking sailing ship at the Hjemkomst Cultural Center. After lunch, Mr. Clay Jenkinson—a humanities scholar, author and social commentator—gave a rousing 45-minute impersonation of Teddy Roosevelt. Mr. Jenkinson has performed at the White House and on documentary producer Ken Burns' film as Thomas Jefferson. His knowledge of his subject is extraordinary--bringing his character to life in the Chautauqua style of theatre. The tours concluded with a visit to Sinner Bros. & Breshahan Feedlot and the Dennis and Kerry Radermacher Farm where the delegation enjoyed the hospitality of this farm family serving homemade cakes and pies.

Mrs. Linda Horn, vice-president of Pioneer Electric Cooperative in Greenville, Alabama, spoke on the topic of, "Solution for High Energy Cost Households." Her presentation highlighted the recent \$2 million grants secured to retrofit high energy use households in Alabama—thus reducing household energy bills and improving the quality of life for rural Alabama residents.

Annual Business Meeting: President Trotman called the Annual Business Meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. A quorum was established.

(Report of 2008 NARRC Annual Meeting cont'd)

Minutes: Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting held on September 26, 2007, at Point Clear, AL were distributed and approved as recorded.

Treasurer's Report/Audit Report: Copies of the Financial Statement for the period September 22, 2007, to August 31, 2008, were distributed. Secy/Treas Eagan expanded on the report. Linda Stover presented the Audit Report. The delegates approved the Annual Financial Statement and Audit Report as presented.

Website Report: Chairman Lee Boyer (MT), advised the delegates that all areas of the website are up to date—including the state-to-state awareness section.

2009 Annual Meeting Invitation: Marion Weers (MI) gave the official invitation for the delegates to attend the annual meeting in Traverse City, Michigan, to be held at the Park Place Hotel, on September 20-23, 2009. Tentative plans include a pre-conference trip on Saturday, the 19th, to Mackinac Island, if enough interest is expressed. Topics and speakers will represent: Great Lakes Maritime Academy; Black Star Farms; Land Preservation; and the NW Michigan Horticulture Station. Tours are scheduled for Tuesday and will include the Great Lakes Maritime Academy; NW Michigan Horticulture Station; and the Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes Climb and scenic drive.

2010 Annual Meeting Update: John Teel (MS) advised the delegates that the 2010 annual meeting in Olive Branch, Mississippi, will be held September 26-29, 2010, at the Whispering Woods Hotel and Conference Center. Olive Branch is located about 25/30 minutes from Memphis International Airport and/or from downtown Memphis.

2011 Annual Meeting Invitation: Steve Gallagher (Alaska) gave an official invitation to host the 2011 annual meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, on July 17-20, 2011. The delegates voted unanimously to accept Alaska's invitation to Anchorage and for this date.

Finance Committee/Board of Directors' Recommendation: Ratify BOD's unanimous vote on April 30, 2008. The delegate body voted unanimously to ratify the Board of Directors' unanimous vote on April 30, 2008, recommending that the Annual State Dues as stated in the Bylaws be raised from \$100 to **\$150**. In addition, the dollar amount in the policy statement authorizing NARRC to give funds to the host state each year to offset their costs of hosting the annual meeting be increased from \$2000 to **\$3,500**. (*A total of up to \$3,500 would be given to the host state if requested.*)

Proposed Amendment to Bylaws: The delegates voted unanimously to amend the Bylaws on page 1, "Dues" Sec-

tion, first paragraph, second sentence by striking out \$100 and inserting **\$150**. The amended Bylaws—after the dollar change—will now read: **"Thereafter, annual membership dues shall be \$150 per year, unless otherwise amended . . ."**

Nominating Committee: Delegates Don Jacka, chairman of the nominating committee, and Tony Stafford, committee member, presented the following slate of officers for 2008-2009: President – Kim Porter (WY); Vice President – Sandra Tenorio (TX); Past President – John Trotman (AL); and two, two-year term directors – Larry Mack (FL) and Don Jacka (KS). (*Directors Harold Gary (MS), Marion Weers (MI); and Bud Weiss (CO) each have one year remaining on their elected terms.*) The delegates voted to elect this slate of officers by acclamation.

Past President Trotman commended North Dakota for a superb meeting. The delegates voted unanimously to give a \$500 donation to Farm Rescue (a program presenter) in honor of the North Dakota Rural Rehab Corporation and their outstanding program.

There being no further business, the 37th Annual Conference/Meeting of the National Association of Rural Rehabilitation Corporations was adjourned.



NARRC President Trotman with The Honorable George Sinner, former governor of ND, and Lou Dunn, secy/treas of the NDRRC.



Presenter Bill Gross, founder and president of Farm Rescue, located in Jamestown, ND.

2008-2009 NARRC OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Jeannie Eagan

Finance Committee:

Larry Mack, Chair
Don Jacka
Tony Stafford
Vernon Eagan

News items for the next Rural Rehabilitation Reports due out in June 2009 are requested from member states. Send articles for publishing that would be of interest to the membership to: Vernon Eagan, NARRC Secretary/Treasurer, 4408 Dawson Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72116, or email: egnavljj@swbell.net.

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Vice President Sandra Tenorio and Gayle Marks (AR) enjoying the tour of the Hjemkomst Cultural Center.

Future NARRC Annual Conferences

2009

September 20—23, 2009
Park Place Hotel—Traverse City, MI
(www.park-place-hotel.com)
Host: Marion Weers

2010

September 26-29, 2010
Whispering Woods Hotel—Olive Branch, MS
(www.wwconferencecenter.com)
Host: John Teel

2011

July 17-20, 2011
Anchorage, Alaska
Host: Steve Gallagher

REMINDERS

- **Annual Dues Notices have been mailed and are due upon receipt.**
- **New Program Recognition (NPR) Award—entry forms will be sent in the June Newsletter or can be obtained earlier by email request to egnavljj@swbell.net.**
- **Begin making plans now to attend the 2009 Annual Conference in Michigan.**

Rural Rehabilitation

REPORTS

Vernon and Jeannie Eagan, Editor
Additional copies of this newsletter are available. Please contact Vernon Eagan, NARRC Secretary/Treasurer, 4408 Dawson Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72116, phone: 501-758-4723 or 501-920-4621.