

REPORTS



January 2019

President's Message—By Thomas Carter



Happy New Year everyone! 2018 is a year I am glad to have behind me even though it did leave some fond memories. One of those memories is the conference we had in Columbia, SC this past September. My congratulations to all of the SC delegation for a mighty fine job done. The agenda with the speakers and tours presented was very educational. The hospitality was superb and they really made you feel at home even if you weren't their next-door neighbor like I am. I guess I

also need to go on record to congratulate the SC delegation on the recent national championship by the Clemson Tigers. I don't think I saw a Game Cock in their entire delegation.

Another fond memory I have is when you gave me the opportunity to serve as president for 2019. I hope I can do as well as my predecessors. Thanks go out to Mr. Jerry Driscoll for his service as President last year. I am also fortunate that we have a fine Board in place that are very dedicated. The persons you work with can always make or break you in many ways. I am sure that our Board will help make 2019 a very successful year for NARRC. We also have a firm foundation which we operate on being our Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Vernon Eagan. I am thankful for all you do and know that you will make my job in 2019 much easier than without you.

Looking on into the future, I believe Ms. Terri LaBrie has an excellent conference planned for us in South Dakota this coming September. Thank you, Terri, for hosting us and I look forward to working with you and your team. The hotel and agenda look to be very educational and entertaining. We should be able to give you more details of the annual meeting plans after our Mid-Year Planning Meeting.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions for your Board of Directors. Thanks again for the opportunity to serve you.



- Clockwise: SCRRRC President **Bill Stanley** welcoming delegates/guests at President's Awards Banquet.
- NARRC President **Jerry Driscoll** presenting a Past President Award to **Harold Gary**.
- SCRRRC Host **Phil Perry** introducing Clemson's **Dr. Kirby Player** and the Clemson student scholarship recipients prior to their presentations.
- Speakers SC Commissioner **Hugh E. Weathers** and Clemson University President **Dr. James P. Clements**.

Report of 2018 Annual Meeting—Columbia, South Carolina—By Vernon Eagan

Meeting Program: The 47th Annual Meeting of NARRC was called to order by **President Jerry Driscoll** on Monday, August 27, at 8:30 a.m., in the Carolina Ballroom, of the Marriott Columbia Hotel, in Columbia, South Carolina. **South Carolina Rehab Corporation (SCRRC) President Bill Stanley** gave the official welcome. **The Honorable Steven K. Benjamin, Mayor of Columbia**, extended a welcome to the city and proclaimed the “**SCRRC and NARRC Day**” in appreciation of their efforts to assist rural America.

Posting of Colors was by **The Richland County Sheriff’s Department Honor Guard** followed by the “Pledge of Allegiance” led by Kansas delegate **General Donald Jacka, USAR (Ret.)**. The “National Anthem” was sung by **SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh E. Weathers**. **Delegate Harold Gary (MS)** delivered the invocation.

Secretary/Treasurer Vernon Eagan conducted the official roll call with 18 states represented. A moment of silent prayer was offered in remembrance and on behalf of the family of former NARRC president David Skinner; Marion Holder and Ethel McCormick (FL); and our military troops and families; and our nation.

Kathy Colson (FL) and Pam Wessel (AR) served as NARRC’s official conference photographers.

Dr. James P. Clements, President, Clemson University, addressed the delegates in noting that agriculture is South Carolina’s greatest industry. He noted the positive impact gained by the relationship between SCRRC and Clemson and their combined commitment scholarships in the training and giving back to rural America. Clemson is dedicated to “educating the next generation of agriculture.”

SC Ag Commissioner Hugh Weathers addressed South Carolina’s efforts to assist its farmers—with emphasis on the teamwork during the aftermath of 2015 flood. “Leadership from the top sets the tone” is his guiding principal. He thanked the delegates for their service and encouraged their continued efforts in sharing ideas and new innovations so that together we can improve the quality of life for our nation.

Clemson University’s Dr. Kirby Player, Director of College Relations, College of Agriculture, Forestry, & Life Sciences (CAFLS), focused his remarks on “Someone Planted a Seed in Your Life.” Four different speakers who interacted with Dr. Player at CU told of their personal stories: 1) **1980’s Amanda McNulty**—an extension agent and host of ETV; 2) **1990’s Brent Crenshaw**—owner of Hi-Cotton Greenhouses; 3) **2000’s Rose Jordan**—her extraordinary journey from humblest beginnings and circumstances to graduation and teaching vo-ag at Hemingway High School with 100 students; and **current CU student Katie Martin**—a former SC state FFA officer.

CU’s Dr. Nathan Smith, Extension Professor, Agribusiness Program Team Leader, shared his insight as a row crop economist and the challenges farmers are experiencing—crop

insurance, prices, production, and supply and demand. He addressed the trade conflicts and their significance in affecting land values, production, and low markets.

SC Ports Authority’s Mr. Paul McClintock, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing, focused his remarks on exports, noting that 38% is agricultural products. His mission is facilitating ways to expedite the transportation of product and keeping the cost at a minimum.

USDA Liaison Mr. Russ Clanton addressed the delegates regarding the loan servicing aspect of the Farm Service Agency (FSA). He noted that delinquencies are creeping up, but is hopeful they are short lived. Also, he advised that hemp is in the farm bill—noting some were concerned about that last year. He addressed the joint pilot program with Texas A&M designed to assist veterans and beginning farmers—an 18 to 24 month program. The purpose is to qualify the veteran for a “certificate of eligibility” for a farm loan. He challenged the states—if they have not done so already—to give veterans a break with a 1% reduced rate on their farm loans.

To wrap up the delegate session, **SCRRC’s Wesley Harris** moderated a panel discussion consisting of a diverse group of farmers—each sharing their stories as SCRRC borrowers and the impact on their livelihood:

- **Scott Riddle of Tailfeather Growers** described his successful operation of 170 acres plus 360 leased acres, eight broiler grow out houses with a total of 248,000 square feet, a cow-calf herd, and a haying operation.

- **Vikki Brogdon of Brogdon Family Farms** is a fourth-generation farmer; she began her farming career working with her father and over the years was able to purchase small acreage. SCRRC made Vikki a limited resources participating loan enabling her to purchase more land to be a viable operation. A partnership was formed, and now the operation consists of 2,400 acres.

- **Joe McKeowen of JJJ Farms and SDP Grain Company, LLC**, has been farming for 30 years and currently farms 9,000 acres. He shared his early years’ experiences and love for agriculture—studying at Orangeburg Calhoun Technical College. Coming from a non-farming family, he gained experience working for a large farming operation prior to starting his own operation.

- **Josh Riddle of Riddle Dairy Holdings**, a fifth-generation farmer, gained first-hand experience on his dad’s 800 Jersey cow dairy farm. As a young adult he was offered the opportunity to purchase a dairy farm from a retiring dairyman. He currently milks 300 head of mostly Jersey cows and utilizes grazing as his primary feed source with some supplementation of feed with corn silage and hay. He anticipates expanding his operation upon his dad’s retirement and will include his dad’s 800 Jersey cows plus his 300.

The President’s Awards Banquet was held Monday evening. **SCRRC Board Member Phil Perry** offered the invocation.

(Report of 2018 Annual Meeting cont'd)

A Past President's Award was presented by President Driscoll to **Harold Gary** for his "Outstanding Leadership to Improve the Quality of Lifestyle for Rural America." **Terri LaBrie** gave a presentation on what to anticipate at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota. **Mrs. Jane Jenkins Herlong**, keynote speaker, gave a humorous account of her life in rural South Carolina and some of her experiences before and after as a contestant in the Miss America Pageant.

On Tuesday, delegates and guests boarded buses for educational agricultural tours: **Walter P. Rawl and Sons**—a Lexington family-owned operation providing greens and specialty vegetables since 1925; **Yon Family Farms**—a family-owned operation raising high-quality Angus, SimAngus, and Ultrablack cattle. Having recently acquired a pecan business, some of the family oversee this operation; **Titan Farms**—owners **Chalmers and Lori Anne Carr** direct every aspect of the business which includes over 6,200 acres of peaches in production, 600 acres of bell pepper, and 1,000 acres of broccoli. Delegates and guests were treated to bags of delicious peaches upon departure. Lunch was served at beautiful T&S Farm with a catered barbecue lunch and was entertained by humorist, **Glen Ward**, painting vivid pictures with his stories and impersonations. The final stop was **Hickory Hill Milk**—owned by fourth-generation family members and Clemson graduates **Watson and Lisa Dorn**. The family raises Holstein cows—producing, processing, and distributing whole milk, chocolate milk, and buttermilk. We were treated to bottles of delicious cold chocolate milk.

Annual Business Meeting: President Driscoll reconvened the meeting on Wednesday at 8:45 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the Annual Business Meeting held September 20, 2017, in Ft. Collins, Colorado, were distributed, and upon motion by Horace Horn/John Stencel, the minutes were approved as recorded, mailed, and distributed.

Treasurer's Report/Audit Report: The Financial Statement for the period of August 31, 2017, through July 31, 2018, was distributed. Secy/Treas **Eagan** asked for questions. None were voiced and upon motion by Steve Ferguson/William Stanley, delegates approved the Annual Financial Statement as presented.

Audit Committee Chair **Roberta Valdez** presented a report of the Audit Committee's review and findings of the Secretary/Treasurer records. The records were found to be in order on all counts. Upon motion by Roberta Valdez/Larry Mack, delegates approved the Audit Report as presented by Valdez.

Website Committee Report: Member **Jeannie Eagan** advised that the website is current.

2019 Annual Meeting: **Terri LaBrie** had copies of a magazine about Rapid City available for delegates to take home. No further remarks were needed since the presentation had already been given on Monday evening. The 48th annual meeting will be held in Rapid City, South Dakota, at the Holiday Inn Rapid City-Rushmore Plaza Hotel, on September 13-18, 2019. Room rates are \$139.00 and (plus taxes).

2020 Annual Meeting: President Driscoll advised that Kansas will host; location and date will be forthcoming.

2021 Annual Meetings: **Jeannie Eagan** briefed the delegates on plans for the 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting to be hosted in Richmond, Virginia. The 50th Anniversary Committee members were announced: Steve Ferguson and Eagan's co-chairing; Sandra Tenorio; Larry Mack; Jerry/Patty Driscoll; and Thomas Carter. They will be working with Kendra Shifflett of Virginia who oversees the Virginia Rural Rehab Funds. Jeannie advised the delegates that extra funds might be needed. In Sunday's meetings, the NARRC board and 50th Anniversary Committee had previously discussed possible financial needs. Upon the NARRC Board's recommendation, the delegates voted unanimously to have a maximum amount available—if needed—from NARRC funds for this one-time event.

In addition, Jeannie advised that some states may wish to sponsor an activity—offsetting any NARRC costs to preserve NARRC funds. The sponsorships might include an amount of \$500 to \$2000, and would strictly be voluntary. Some states have already expressed their desire to assist in this way. The 50th Anniversary Committee will keep the member states informed—seeking their input for a memorable event. Survey information will be incorporated into the planning.

Nominating Committee: Chair **Larry Mack (FL)** presented the following 2018-2019 slate of officers:

President — Thomas Carter (Georgia)

Vice President — Bennie Hutchins (Mississippi)

Past President — Jerry Driscoll (Kansas)

Director — David Reeves (Florida) two-year term

Director — Roberta Valdez (Utah) two-year term

Director — Mike Crosby (South Carolina) one-year term (filling the one-year term remaining of Bennie Hutchins)

(Directors Don Giffey (ND) and Tony Minicozzi (AR) each have one year remaining on their elected terms.)

There being no further nominations and upon motion by Lou Ciarkowski/Bud Weiss the delegates voted unanimously to elect this slate of officers by acclamation.

Newly elected **President Thomas Carter** announced the continued appointment of Vernon Eagan as Secy/Treas with Jeannie Eagan assisting him.

President Driscoll and incoming President Carter each commended SCRRC President Bill Stanley and the entire SCRRC board and staff for an outstanding conference. Appreciation was also expressed to the NARRC board for their dedicated service this past year. It was announced that the newly elected Board would meet upon adjournment.

There being no further business and upon motion by Don Jacka/Harold Gary, the delegates voted to adjourn the 47th Annual Conference/Meeting of the National Association of Rural Rehabilitation Corporations at 9:10 a.m.

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Future NARRC Annual Conferences

2019

September 13-18, 2019 — Rapid City, SD
Holiday Inn Rapid City-Rushmore Plaza Hotel
505 North Fifth Street; Rapid City, SD
PH: 605.348.4000

Host Contact: Terri LaBrie
Email: Terri.LaBrie@state.sd.us

2020

Kansas: Date/Location TBA

2021– 50th Annual Meeting

Richmond, Virginia: Date TBA

2022

Open for Hosting

(Contact: Vernon/Jeannie Eagan)

In Remembrance

Ann Burton Portis, long-time Arkansas board member and dedicated NARRC delegate passed away September 27, 2018. Ann was instrumental in coordinating the annual meeting in Vermont.

Monet Wible—wife of former NARRC Board Member Ben Wible of Texas Rural Communities, Inc.—passed away on December 6, 2018



2018-2019 NARRC Board: Seated L to R— Mike Crosby; Tony Minicozzi; and David Reeves. Standing L to R—Vernon Eagan; Don Giffey; Roberta Valdez; Thomas Carter; Bennie Hutchins; Jerry Driscoll; Jeannie Eagan.

REMINDERS

- **Dues Notices have been mailed and are due upon receipt.**
- **New Program Recognition (NPR) Award: Form included with newsletter via email. Or you may request a copy by email to Vernon Eagan at egvljj@swbell.net.**

News items for the next Rural Rehabilitation Reports due out in June, 2019, 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: egvljj@swbell.net. Phone: 501.758.4723.

Rural Rehabilitation REPORTS

Vernon and Jeannie Eagan, Editor

Additional copies of newsletter are available. Please contact Vernon Eagan, NARRC Secretary/Treasurer, 4408 Dawson Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72116. Email: egvljj@swbell.net.