



# WAAE Winter 2008 Newsletter

Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators  
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## President's Message: "Value Added" Membership - By David R. Laatsch, president

"Membership has its privileges," was the long-time slogan of the American Express Card. Likewise, your WAAE and NAAE membership card also provides privileges. Let's call these "privileges" the same as the marketing world calls them, "Value Added Features." No, I'm not speaking of a discount coupon for car rentals found in your membership packet at the summer Professional Development Conference. I am not even referring to the intrinsic value such as networking, awards, tradition and pride that membership brings. Your professional organization provides you and your program with real services that as individuals we can't afford or can't do. Let's take a look at just a few.



- Countless numbers of programs are using CAERT for lessons, instructional materials and curriculum construction. WAAE underwrote the development of the CAERT program and it's alignment to the state standards.
- The Ag Ed Listserve is the most widely used tool of agriculture educators on a day-to-day basis in the state. Your professional organization was instrumental in the launching of this tool.
- WAAE standing committees direct the operation of the FFA Career Development Events and will soon be the registration arm of your state contests.
- Your professional organization is on the cutting edge of advocacy. Publicity and promotional materials are developed by our committees. The idea of the Council on Ag Education and Workforce Development was the direct result of the Ag Ed Summit, sponsored by WAAE. We now have a real mouth piece that allows the agricultural industry to speak out on the needs for educated and trained employees in the state.
- Through Team AgEd, WAAE cooperates with our partners in Agriculture Education. These groups include the University System, the Career and Technical System, FFA, FFA Alumni, the FFA Foundation and new member Ag Education and Workforce Development Council.
- Most notably, WAAE provides inservice programs in the fall and at the summer PDC. Through the dissemination of instructional materials, each instructor gains in knowledge and skills in performing his/her craft of teaching agriculture.

Here's the point, membership does have its privileges and its advantages!!!! **As individuals we are better instructors and as agents of our schools, our students take advantage of a better education.** If you believe this, then the inverse is also true: **Those that are not members miss out on these advantages and thus, ultimately, their students lose.**

Members can no longer afford to "carry the load" for those who, for whatever reason, choose not to belong to WAAE. In the coming months, the board will be exploring a fee structure for services, much like the FFA Center does for those who elect not to be affiliate members. How can we avoid such a fee structure? It's easy!!!! 100% membership!!!! For those of you who are members, thanks and more power to you! Scholarships are available for new teachers without schools, dues are "blended" with PDC registration and invoices can be generated to meet your specific school's need. And for the first 25 years of my career, I reached into my own pocket and wrote it off on my income taxes!!!! You see, WAAE is "The Professional Choice" and membership has its "value added" features.

2009 PDC Registration will open on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Please log in to WAAE online with the same username and password that you used last year. Conference registration will be \$380 and includes meals, dues and registration fees. If you have lost your username and password please contact Bridgett at [Bridgett@WAAE.com](mailto:Bridgett@WAAE.com) and it will be sent to you.

## There's a Place for Retention in "There's More To Life..." - By Ralph Johnson

On Thursday December 4<sup>th</sup>, I attended two different Professional Development Workshops during the NAAE Conference in Charlotte. The first was "The Key to Teacher Retention Is You!" and the second was "There's More To Life..." My first thought after I had attended these workshops back to back was that they were in contrast with each other. Trying to keep instructors in our profession vs. don't over work yourself! The more I thought about both of these workshops, the more I realized that balancing your personal and professional life will help our younger and older teachers from feeling the burn-out and hopefully be able to retain as many teachers as possible. The feeling of being "burned-out" appeared sometime during my eighth year of teaching. After nine years of teaching, I decided that it was in my best interest to step out of the teaching profession and into Agribusiness. I was in Agribusiness for three years and then after working with our local FFA Alumni affiliate I got the desire and realization that I needed to be back into Agriculture Education. Let's just say that a three year sabbatical gave me a renewed and energized attitude for Agriculture Education, which I can honestly say that I still maintain to this day (maybe not everyday, but the vast majority of days). We need to get the same feeling of revitalization into our teachers in order to retain them, but we must also realize that not all people who begin their careers as Agriculture Educators will or even should continue their careers in the profession. I learned in the Retention workshop that national statistics show that 60% of all educators leave teaching within five years of starting. This number is a bit smaller for Agriculture Educators. Now I am not recommending that we put less emphasis on Retention of our teachers in Wisconsin. Quite the contrary. I believe that if each one of us lends a helping hand or a bit of advice to our colleagues (young or old), it will go a long way to helping each one of us to feel a little less stress.

First of all, I believe that we must realize that we don't have to do everything! Pick and choose the programs in FFA that your students have an interest in and do those well. Also utilize those around you to help you accomplish what needs to be done. This may include FFA Alumni members, your FFA members, professionals in your school district, etc... Two years ago I attended the National Agriculture Education In-service in Indianapolis. One of the speakers was talking about this very topic and made the statement that **You can't do everything**. After he had made that statement, I saw C. Coleman Harris, longtime Executive Secretary for National FFA nodding his head. This had a huge impact on me. We think that when FFA adds a new program that we had better get involved in it whether we have time for it or not. Choose those programs and do the things that work for you and your school. **You can't do everything!**

Marshall Stewart was the presenter for the workshop entitled, "There's more to life..." He did an outstanding job of telling us that we need to balance our Professional Life with our Personal Life. He talked about a time when a colleague had called him and asked him to attend a very important meeting at the state level. He checked his calendar and said that he was busy and would not be able to make this certain meeting. The other person kept after him to reschedule whatever he had on his calendar so that he could make this meeting. Again saying no to her request, she asked, "What could possibly be so important that you can't make this meeting?" Marshall replied, "I am going fishing with my son." The person on the other end of the phone never did understand the decision that Marshall had made, but Marshall had made the decision several years before that he was going to balance his Personal Life with his Professional Life. How many of us would have cancelled that appointment that we had to take our son fishing and rescheduled it when we had time?

I have thought a lot about both of these workshops since I attended them back in early December. I have come to realize that **Retention** and **There's More To Life...** go hand in hand with each other. If you see a teacher struggling with a project, give them some help or suggest what you might do to make things a little easier. Marshall encouraged us to schedule time in our day for ourselves. Give it a try. Maybe you need more than a few minutes. Use a personal day or get away for a weekend. These things will all help with the revitalization that we all need at times during the year.



### "Start Your Engines" - Dale Drees

WOW, what a fantastic representation from Wisconsin at the NAAE National Convention!!! Thanks to all who attended the conference for their professionalism at meetings, etc. and for the good times we had during social activities away from the conference. Congratulations to the other Region III Award Winners from

Wisconsin.

It was an awesome experience for me to represent the "Monster Shop" Outdoor Power Equipment Technician Program at Fox Valley Technical College as the Region III "Outstanding Post-Secondary/Adult Program" Award Winner. I am so fortunate to have such outstanding students who have achieved so much, they are the reason we all work so hard to do what we love-teaching. There have been many outstanding colleagues and mentors who helped me develop into who I am today. Special thanks go out to instructors Kevin Rauchholz, Tom Yost, Randy Tenpas and Jerry Fischer. Also to administrators Mike Cattelino, Jerry Eyler and Dr. Susan May who have been fantastic supporters of the OPE program. Thank you WAAE Board of Directors and Executive Director, Bridgett Neu for making this possible!

Due to the generosity of Toyota, I have a new 2009 Tundra truck to use for the next two years. Toyota also paid the air travel, hotel and conference registration for my wife, Robin and I to attend the conference. I encourage all of you to build your programs, get involved in WAAE and when the nominations for awards come, enjoy the moment.



### **Selecting The Best Individual To Be A Chapter Officer - By: Glenda Crook**

After having a complete turnover my officer this year I chose to attend this workshop in an attempt to prevent this situation from happening again. As FFA advisors we often encounter situations in which we have to deal with issues related to chapter officers. This workshop was organized around the National FFA Officer interview process. The main focus was on Behavioral Based Interviewing. According to the presenters this type of interviewing is 55% more effective than the typical “yes” or “no” or open ended questions. Behavioral Based interviewing is the preferred method that National FFA would like all FFA advisors to prepare their students for since it will be used in the Job Interview contest and proficiency interviews.

Behavioral Based Interviewing is a method that utilizes questions designed to generate responses that demonstrate past practice or history. The questions are created in a way that the interviewee is required to respond with the recollection of a previous situation or task they were involved in and how they responded to or dealt with it. A series of these types of questions reveals the interviewees character.

The type of response that is best for Behavioral Based Interviewing is called the Star Technique. The response includes 1.) the **S**ituation or **T**ask, 2.) the **A**ction, and 3.) the **R**esults. For example if the student is asked to share a time when they were working with a group on a project and you disagreed with their ideas. The students would respond by sharing the exact situation in which this happened to them, what they did to resolve the situation and then what the results were. It is okay to share good and bad results they do not need to all be positive experiences. It was suggested that the FFA members keep a record or journal of experiences that would be beneficial for answering these types of questions.

The behavioral based questions are based on the eight competencies from the FFA. The interviewee is not only evaluated for on their response to the question but communication skills as well. The National FFA website has the rubric for communication skills used to evaluate the National Officer Candidates.

In addition they suggested putting the students in a situation or scenario to practice their skills of introducing themselves, discussing a topic, and then gracefully leaving. Students need to practice how they will introduce themselves and how they should leave a meeting situation. For example set them up with the principal to discuss a possible situation, such as, the principal isn't going to let your chapter travel National FFA Convention this year.

As a final note they recommended that the advisors be very careful in writing their letters of recommendation, because they are carefully analyzed and scored. Your letter of recommendation can reveal a lot about your student's character. Essentially they believe that they can train a student in all aspects of being an officer other than their character!

### **Outstanding Service Award – Paul Larson**



It was indeed an honor for me to be recognized as the Region III Outstanding Service Award recipient. It is always special to be recognized by your peers for your efforts as a professional. While the Outstanding Service Citation doesn't include the use of a Toyota truck for a year, it is one of the distinguished awards presented by NAAE. The award recognizes teachers for their efforts to improve the agricultural education profession at the local, state, regional, and national level. A total of six members, one from each region, are recognized. I very much appreciate being nominated by Wisconsin and of course representing Region III as our winner this year. Wisconsin has many members who are doing outstanding work on behalf of the agricultural education profession. If you know of someone who is providing outstanding effort, let your sectional representative know so she/he can inform the WAAE Past President's committee. This committee is charged with making nominations for the Outstanding Service, Outstanding Cooperation, and Lifetime Achievement awards. The committee might not be aware of everyone who is doing great work for Wisconsin and the region, so your assistance in identifying and sharing information with your representatives would be greatly appreciated. I would like to thank WAAE for providing so many opportunities for me to learn and grow as a professional.

### **ACTE First General Session- Future looks bright for CTE By: Marty Nowak**

The ACTE First General Session kicked off the ACTE Convention on Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The session featured keynote speaker Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind - Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future*. Mr. Pink left us with a powerful message that indicates that the future for all Career and Technical Education areas will be in definite demand as the United States will always need right brain thinkers. He stated that in order for a career to be in need, it must meet three demands. The first is that it has to be a career that cannot be outsourced to a different country at a cheaper rate. Secondly, it must be a career that a computer can not achieve faster than we can complete the task. And last, it must be an occupation is there an abundant demand for the product. Does Career and Technical Education deliver these three demands in the careers it teaches? Does Agricultural Education do so as well? The answer is yes.

He went on to explain that the reason left-brain thinkers will not be in demand is that their work can be replaced by outsourcing or computers. When we grew up, many of our parents may have wanted us to become accountants, engineers or lawyers. He explained how these careers were able to be outsourced or be done by computers. Mr. Pink explained the reason for the diminished need of these people is from three causes- Abundance, Asia and Automation. With the crisis that is facing the automotive industry, it is easy to see the affect of these three causes. First, abundance. He stated that the there are 1.5 cars owned for every licensed driver and that it is pretty difficult for automakers to sell cars if there is an overabundance of vehicles currently in use while the economy is struggling as

it is. Next, Asia. Engineers in India are making \$15,000 per year compared to the same occupation making \$70,000 in the United States. And last is automation. Computers and robotics can complete a task faster and more efficient than humans. In his book he states” Computers are simply better, faster, and stronger” (p.43) than humans.

As I look at what we teach in Agricultural Education, it is evident to me that we will stand the test of times as the careers that we teach will always be in need (abundance), most jobs will not be able to be outsourced (Asia), and a computer cannot complete most tasks that agriculturalists are doing (automation).



### **Adventures in Charlotte - By Linda Sattler**

My travel companions and I left early Tuesday morning and arrived safely at the hotel in Charlotte Tuesday afternoon. We were greeted by some fellow Wisconsinites. We enjoyed an excellent dinner, a little socializing and were ready to begin a great week. Wednesday began with an NAAE opening session during which we recognized Outstanding Young members and Outstanding Programs. Next we participated in committee meetings. I once again attended the Public Policy committee. I currently serve as Region III chair of this committee and was elected later in the conference to National Vice-Chair of the committee. Our committee work continues to focus on advocacy. We reviewed the NAAE Program of Activities in regards to public policy and are pleased to have Paul Larson from Wisconsin represent NAAE on the 10X15 Task Force Advocacy committee. We would also like to encourage more members to attend the ACTE/NAAE National Policy Seminar held in Washington D.C. each year in early March. Currently the NAAE will pay registration for one individual per state to attend this conference. Last year 33 individuals attended representing 21 states. The public policy committee will recommend to the NAAE Board of Directors to take the unused registrations and create a lottery system for states who would like to send more than one member.

I had the opportunity to attend some amazing workshops while in Charlotte. Being a newlywed, I have struggled a bit with balancing my personal time with my professional responsibilities. So, I attended two workshops that stressed time management. The first workshop provided us with the opportunity to prioritize what is important and delegate some of our workload. In the second workshop, Dr. Marshall Stewart reminded us all of what is truly important in a workshop entitled “Balancing Work and Family Life for the Busy Ag Teacher.” Dr. Stewart is a gifted public speaker and I enjoyed his workshop very much. I gained a few new active learning strategies in a workshop entitled “RECHARGE with “Ag”tivities” for an Engaging Classroom” presented by Region III’s own Natasha Mortenson and Ellen Thompson from Minnesota. I gained a few insights for teacher recruitment and retention in a workshop entitled “The Key to Teacher Retention is...YOU!” presented by Shannon Washburn of Kansas University and Ann DeLay of CalPoly.

The ACTE portion of the conference provided some very interesting keynote speeches. The opening session featured Daniel Pink. Pink’s speech featured information on how career and technical education fits into the current economic situation. According to Pink’s words agriculture is in a good position to weather the storm. We are needed in a world of abundance, we cannot be automated, and we are still ahead of Asia. Not all industries in the United States can say those things. Friday morning’s speaker was Neil Howe. He spoke of the collective personalities of today’s generations. From baby boomers, to children of the sixties, to generation X’ers, to the new millennials, for the first time in history our workforce is compromised of four distinctly different generational groups. Each generational group works differently, is motivated differently, and provides unique challenges to educators and employers. The ACTE portion of the conference concluded with an announcement that ACTE will be partnering with the International Center for Leadership in Education. William Daggett, a former Career and Technical Education teacher, now heads this group. Daggett’s speech enlightened, entertained, and fascinated us. He has a great insight on education, business, and the world today. I thoroughly enjoyed my trip. Wisconsin can pride itself on a fun, professional, hilarious, intelligent, and overall absolutely FABULOUS group of agricultural educators. I enjoyed all of your insight, companionship and humor. I am proud to be associated with such an AWESOME group. See you soon!

### **“Don’t Be Intimidated: Easy Ways to Integrate Biotechnology Into Your Classrooms” By: Marty Nowak**

Former Wisconsin agriculture student and current Minnesota agriculture instructor Stacy Fritz presented an excellent workshop on bringing the fundamentals of Biotechnology into the classroom. Stacy’s biotechnology class is a team taught class with a science teacher in her school. She covers many of the agricultural aspects of biotechnology and the science teacher explains the science approach. She supplied the workshop attendees with CD’s of all of the materials that she uses in the class including labs, worksheets and lesson plans. She described the different areas of Biotechnology that she covers in the classroom. During the workshop, we completed a lab on DNA extraction from Strawberries. We also were able to look at and use the tools she uses in her classroom including the e-gel readers and plates.

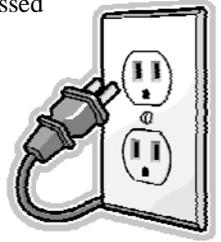


### **NAAE Convention By Jeff Zobeck, WAAE President-Elect**

While in Charlotte, NC for the recent NAAE Convention I had the opportunity to attend several very good professional development workshops. The two workshops that stood out to me as being the most beneficial were both focused on engaging students in the

classroom. This is something we all probably could use a little tune-up on every now and then to make sure we are holding our students' interest while teaching a variety of very important agricultural topics. If you are anything like me you probably find yourself getting into a bit of a rut at times and just need some ways to spice things up again.

The first workshop I attended was titled, "All aboard for an agritainment adventure!" The basis of this workshop was to show engaging ways to incorporate topics we teach about every day into some hands on experiences and explorations. Examples shared in the workshop in which we actually got to participate in included; making salsa, making trail mix, and hunter and shooting safety. In each example we were shown how you could incorporate so much learning into a fun and hands-on activity. For example, in the trail mix portion we not only made the mix, but we discussed how to grade and shell pecans. In the salsa portion we discussed how we could use the ingredients to discuss commodities and value adding. I'm sure we can all think of ways to take something we teach and spice it up a bit!



The second workshop was more of a review of strategies that we can use to add some energy and creativity to class. The workshop was titled, "RECHARGE with "Activities" for an Engaging Classroom. Some of you may be familiar with some of the strategies used in this workshop if you have ever worked with LifeKnowledge or have ever heard of a gentleman named Bill Banks. One of my favorite strategies to use from a previous inservice with Bill Banks is the Think-Pair-Share strategy. I use it often to introduce a new topic, especially when it is a fairly open-ended topic. For example, you may be introducing a lesson on what leadership is. With Think-Pair-Share you would give each individual student a short amount of time to Think of what leadership means to him or her. Follow this with some Pair time for a group of two students to compare their thoughts on the topic and learn from one another. Finish the activity with Share time for students to share their thoughts of what leadership is with the entire class. I also usually will ask for a volunteer from the class to write everything that is shared on the board so we can see it all. My student's love that part! This may then lead into your normal discussion on what leadership is.

A couple of sites you may want to check out with a lot more ideas on creating an engaging classroom would be <http://www.isd743.k12.mn.us/AgTableofContents.htm> and [http://naae.ca.uky.edu:8080/clearspace\\_community/community/dynamics](http://naae.ca.uky.edu:8080/clearspace_community/community/dynamics)

### **"Be the Change You Want." – by David Kruse**

Does the thought of attending the national FFA convention with your students give you goose bumps because of the contagious enthusiasm that spreads through convention attendees? 50,000 people who share the same excitement about the potential for agriculture and the young people to work with.

Attending the NAAE and ACTE convention as a first time attendee was an invigorating experience for me as agricultural education and other career and technical education professionals came together with the same belief that career and technical education is an exciting and vital part of a students education. As agricultural education in Wisconsin has taken a lead in connecting agricultural and career education to science education, it was motivating for me to hear ACTE keynote speakers share the message that I (and probably you) have thought for years. The key message I took from the convention is that schools need to do a better job of preparing students for careers.

I have included an excerpt from a memo that I have shared with my administrators and fellow career and technical educators. My vision may seem like a dream at this point, but I keep it to myself that is all it will remain. Whether or not you agree with my vision, take the time to pursue and encourage change within your own school district. Use your skills to affect change in your own district.

Excerpt from memo to Elkhorn administrators and CTE department members: *I was able to take in a few of the keynote presentations, attend some workshops and visit the ACTE trade show. The following are key items I leave this conference with.*

A reminder that career and technical education can and should play a vital role in a student's academic and career success. Most of us in career and technical education know/believe this, but this conference provided examples of research that should be shared across the educational system. *I personally believe that if schools are going to improve students' ability to succeed in both career and academics we need to see the following:*

1. ***A change in perceived school (often community) philosophy*** that currently usually encourages students should to strive for high academic achievement with little regard for developing skills transferrable in the workplace and life while students that do not necessarily perform well academically are encouraged to develop a higher skill set that will help them succeed in the workplace and life. There needs to be a philosophy where more students are encouraged and given the opportunity to reach a level of both high academic and high skill performance. Many students now leave high school with a combination of high academics/lower skill or lower academics/high skill. Most employers and parents would tell you they want people to have both high academic performance and high skill levels.

2. **A change in philosophy of career and technical educators as well as other elective content areas.** As CTE educators we need to do a better job of pointing out the academic connections in our classrooms to our students and colleagues. In CTE classes, we use academics all of the time, but may forget to point out the connection.

3. **A change in philosophy of core academic educators.** Core academic areas are so pressured to cover so much information they may very likely feel like they do not have the luxury of time to help students implement the concepts into their own lives. Time is a precious commodity, but helping students learn the concepts in a way to successfully them is much more important.

4. **A district/administration that is willing to take a risk on a change of philosophy.** We often talk about making a good school a great school. A district and its leadership are obviously key components determining the direction of an organization while providing the motivation, support and resources necessary to fulfill its mission. School districts across the country are scrambling to improve student scores on standardized testing (high content assessment with limited skill assessment), because that is how schools are currently evaluated. Common reaction is to cover content faster so more content can be covered as well as increase the amount of time students spend in core academic classrooms. Schools have talked about curriculum integration but few have embraced it as a way to improve a student's opportunity for success. Historically schools have often separated academic prep and career prep. Why not develop a philosophy where there is no separation between the two? Changing a district's educational philosophy is scary because it's different, requires additional work, the district may be criticized by others, and might not work. Let's set a philosophy of evaluating schools by how well students use their knowledge in life rather than how well they perform on a standardized test. I believe that if students learn to use academic concepts in their life, performance on standardized test also improve



### **Middle School Agriculture by Troy Talford**

If you have ever taught a middle school class, you would know that someday you are more of an entertainer than you are a teacher. Connecting knowledge to middle school students is crucial as it often times is their first exposure to your program. The workshop titled “You tube, Komic Zone, and Discover, Oh My! Using the Internet to Engage Middle School Learners” was a great workshop to learn new technological ways of increase student's interest in middle school classes. With the help of the workshop presenter, Robin McLean of Northern Burlington County Middle School (Columbus, NJ), participants of this workshop were able to learn how to operate websites that can enhance student learning in a middle school classroom. Websites like YouTube and Komic Zone on the National FFA's website are both great ways to grab the student's interest at the beginning of class. This workshop also provided teachers with resources to some simple online webquests and activities. One such example was “The Great Plant Escape.” Lastly, this workshop provided the participants with information about utilizing a website and really getting the middle school students interested in checking out your website. One such suggestion was by using pictures. “Students love to see themselves on the web,” according to Robin McLean. Obviously with many of the items we discussed during this workshop, teachers would need to get approval from their building technology coordinator. It is also important to note that teachers also should get parental permission when using pictures as a part of their classroom. Remember that the internet can be a great teaching tool if utilized correctly in the middle school classroom.



### **Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens - By David R. Laatsch**

Away from the hustle of downtown Charlotte is the Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens. Nestled in the rolling hills near Belmont, N.C., the Gardens reveal the natural beauty of a southern state, while the architecture of the old homes exhibits a Civil War era history.

Established by a foundation by successful textile manufacture, Daniel Stowe, this arboretum and series of seven gardens gives the visitor a window to the beauty of nature. Over 400 acres huddle up along a lake in a sprawling suburban area; the gardens feature native vegetation in a beautiful array of textures, colors and habitats. A brand new visitors center opens up to open spaces framed with trees, shrubs, ground covers, annuals and perennials. Designed in plantation style architecture the center welcomes guests to instructional classes, workshops and special features.

The newly constructed Orchid Conservatory provides the guest with 5,000 square feet of tropical vegetation under a 5-story dome, uniquely designed to match the visitor's center. Entirely natural pest controls, the conservatory requires a keen observer and manager to make sure that native pest do not take over the vegetation. Seven full time gardeners, 30 part-time gardeners and 100's of volunteers maintain the grounds, give tours and present programs to the public. In cooperation with the colleges of agriculture, 7 to 10 interns also gain valuable experience at the facility.

Tours like this at the NAAE convention allow us to see what is going on in the field. They also provide a basis of understanding for the regionalism of agriculture. Our hosts were volunteers who had a “soft spot” for vocational education—both being retired “home ec” teachers, so they provided us with special insights.

## Congratulations Wisconsin!! - By Ralph Johnson



I would like to **Congratulate ALL WAAE Members** for receiving the Distinguished Professional State Association Award at the 2008 NAAE Conference in Charlotte!! This is the highest award that a State association can receive. The other two levels are: Professional State Association and Active State Association. The application consists of answering either Yes or No to 56 statements listed on the Award application. Upon filling out the application last summer, I was able to check Yes to 50 of the 56 statements on the application. Answering Yes to more than 47 of the statements will put a state in the Distinguished category. Let me share with you some of the statements that I was able to answer Yes to.

- Provide leadership coordination and creation of professional development workshop activities. *We accomplished this one during our Annual Summer's PDC, with last summer offering over 60 different workshops.*
- Developed and implemented a teacher recruitment and retention plan.

*A New Teacher Committee was developed a year and a half ago to help our new teachers with resources, information, and ideas that they can use in their new career. This committee hit the ground running and they are doing an outstanding job!*

- Contacted agribusiness commodity groups and/or agriculture production organizations to support and influence the promotion of legislation for agricultural education.

*AB 83 was passed to create our Workforce Development Council which has met for the first time now and is operating. This happened because of your help in contacting our legislators and also was supported by many agribusinesses and agricultural organizations across the state.*

- Conducted a public relations program that communicated the goals, purposes and achievement of the state agricultural education association membership to the general public.

*The WAAE Public Relations Committee met several times during the year to discuss methods of promoting Agriculture Education across the state. One such method was to have a booth at the Wisconsin Association of School Boards Convention last winter.*

- Developed and implemented a membership drive aimed at achieving annual growth in total numbers of active and associate NAAE members.

*Following the annual Professional Development Conference, those Agricultural Educators not paying WAAE/NAAE dues were identified. The WAAE Executive Director and President contacted each of these non-members to show the benefits of WAAE/NAAE membership. Each of these potential members were then followed up with a visit or phone call from their Sectional Vice-Presidents.*

I had the opportunity and privilege to fill out this application, but as you can see it took all of us working together to accomplish the tasks that we did during the 2007-2008 year. Once again, **CONGRATULATIONS** on helping Wisconsin to achieve Distinguished Professional State Association Status! It was indeed an honor to accept this award on behalf of all of you!



## Got Gas???? - By David R. Laatsch

The title of this workshop, "Integrating Efficient and Green Energy into your Ag Classes" by the Propane Institute was a bit misleading. However, through a process of bureaucratic word-smithing, propane is identified as a "Green Fuel" because of its clean-burning nature and its use in organic agriculture. Enough on that... "Got Gas" would have been a better title anyway!

Rural America depends on propane as a source of reliable, portable and clean energy. Use of propane follows electricity, diesel and gasoline as a fuel on farms. The main source of propane is surprising enough...natural gas!!! As natural gas comes from the well, there is a virtual smorgasbord of hydrocarbons. Through a process of separation, propane is liquefied under pressure, thus it's common names LP or Bottle Gas. Other sources include 1) crude oil 2) coal and 3) somewhere in the future, biological production. It boils at minus 44 F.

Propane contains 84,000 BTU's of heat per gallon as compared to 128,000 BTU's per gallon of diesel fuel and 76,000 BTU's of heat per gallon of ethanol. When burned in an internal combustion engine, the ignition is complete, resulting in water and carbon dioxide as the only emissions. Thus propane has found a strong home in the fork lift engine. Engines last 4-5 times longer because there are no abrasive or corrosive by-products.

This workshop demonstrated basic biochemistry lab activities, using marshmallows, tooth picks and jellies to construct various hydrocarbon chains. These are then compared to the chemical equations of oxidation as they appear on paper.

The NAAE Convention allows educators to be informed by industry representatives. In this case, the instructor was a former agriculture teacher. By collaborating ideas, lab materials, instructional units and background information can be disseminated. The Propane Institute is currently working with CAERT to develop units on energy on the farm.

## Reflections of the NAAE Convention by Rachel A. Sauvola



Another NAAE/ACTE convention has come and gone. This one took me to a place I had never been...a place where school is delayed for two hours when temperatures dip below 30 degrees...Charlotte, North Carolina!

The highlights of the week for me were the amazing workshops I attended and the camaraderie of the Wisconsin folks while we cheered on our astounding award winners. Couple that with re-connecting with friends from across the nation and region and you've got yourself a learning opportunity! I can't forget to mention my time serving Region III on the National Marketing Committee, working to recruit and retain new teachers and NAAE members continues to be a passion of mine. The first workshop I went to focused on Agritainment. A word derived from the Agritourism facet of agriculture, Agritainment is a way to entertain students in your classroom while you instruct them about important topics.

The workshop was divided into three stations. One station featured pecans with a look at grading, quality indicators, value added agriculture, tools used in agriculture, and marketing. We made trail mix as we discussed these components. The next stop was the hunter safety station where we shot fake guns from Target at an inflatable deer with a bulls-eye on the kill zone. Discussions about safety programs for certification, ethics, and proper hunting procedures followed. Did you know that Glenda Crook is a Master Marksman? The third station was a salsa making activity where we tied in food safety, proper food handling, nutrition, allergies, proper food labeling, etc. What a fun way to educate and get students up and moving in our classrooms!

I also attended several fabulous workshops sponsored by DuPont through Lab Aids. This is a program that Rick Henningfeld attended this past summer. Consequently, he facilitated a workshop about plant genetics and corn. The materials are very well put together and are hands-on, using inquiry-based instruction. Having begun using inquiry based instruction in my Master's program, I know that once you adopt this style of facilitating learning, rather than spoon feeding students, your students learn and grow in knowledge and confidence.

The other Lab Aid workshop I went to was called Cattle Calls and again focused on genetics, but using animals instead. We had a Bovine Love Connection show where we matched up breeds based upon the climate and needs of different countries across the board. This led to a discussion about breed bingo activities and things we can do with our Smart Boards.

The third workshop I will tell you about is spawning a workshop that will be taught by Glenda Crook and myself at the WAAE PDC this summer. Get ready for some cool stuff! In the world of differentiated instruction, relevance, rigor and student ability...we discovered the answer with the layered curriculum approach. We incorporated Bloom's Taxonomy and Gardener's Multiple Intelligence Theory to begin creating layered curriculum models for our classes. You can learn all about it by taking our workshop that will be held on Thursday of PDC. Bring a laptop, a jump drive and a class curriculum you want to beef up with exciting and motivating student learning activities. We'll help you kick it up a notch!

I would also be remiss if I didn't put a plug in for the NAAE Communities of Practice. If you are a newer teacher struggling with daily life in this wonderful profession, check there...you are bound to find something that can help. If you're a seasoned teacher looking to make some changes or see things in a different light, you will find ideas there that can make a difference in your classroom.

It was a pleasure to attend this year's NAAE/ACTE Conference to represent the great State of Wisconsin! We showed them that 30 degrees isn't really that cold. We also showed them the breadth of our amazing teachers and ag supporters through all the National Award Winners we brought with us! Congrats to all those that have made a difference in the lives of so many students over the years. I applaud you! Next year's conference is in Nashville in mid November – you won't want to be left at home! Come on along for another incredible journey of learning and growing in this profession. I will see you there!

## Students in Change by Kevin Rauchholz

This purpose of this workshop was to show teachers how to examine daily objectives and how to incorporate multiple intelligences into the classroom to increase student learning abilities. The presenter summarized how to teach in learning blocks and how to set up the learning week to set up C, B and A grade level learning.

One of the suggestions of this workshop discussed how to utilize an eighty-minute teaching block affectively. It was suggested to lecture for twenty to thirty minutes, allow the student ten to fifteen minutes for classroom jobs, utilize another twenty to thirty minutes for worksheet time and finish the block with five to ten minutes for student presentations. Another suggestion of the workshop was to set up the week with learning activities so the students could progress from a "C" grade to an "A" grade by completing more detailed assignments. The workshop did have some great ideas but, some of the concepts would be difficult to employ on college level because of the week long format and the fact students could stop at "C" learning. From an individual standpoint stopping at a certain grade level may be okay but, when assigning work in groups this method may be ineffective.





## **Urban Agriculture by Troy Talford**

I want you to think for a moment as to how your Agricultural Education program has changed over the course of time. Whether you are a new or experienced teacher, it is safe to say that in some aspects your program has changed. For some agricultural educators, changes may have been monumental like shifting from teaching Ag 1, 2, 3, and 4 to teaching specialized courses. Today's generation of teacher's are in a new monumental change in the fact that we are seeing fewer and fewer students coming from a farming background. During the workshop titled "Life Support for Urban Agricultural Education: Providing Aid for Future Success" a discussion was had about how do we make sure that schools in an urban setting are providing a quality agricultural education to their students. As a part of this workshop, a study done with schools in the Chicago, IL area was reviewed and the teachers in the room soon found that they understood many of the concerns and frustrations of urban area instructors. Some of the concerns include being knowledgeable and incorporating the three circle agricultural education model as well as being a teacher who was never in FFA. In Wisconsin, many of us may have gone through an Agricultural Education program and been involved in FFA all while maintaining an S.A.E., but there are great teachers out there who may not have had that experience. So, does this make those teachers unqualified to teach agricultural education? According to this workshop, these individuals still make great teachers, it is just that they may need to connect SAE and FFA with their students in a different fashion than we may do in a traditional program. This workshop was filled with great discussions, and even though I would consider my program to be traditional in its nature, I would now say that I can see issues with my students that are being battled in urban areas. Simply put, students have less time to invest in additional activities and their options for completing agricultural work outside of the classroom is becoming more limited. I ask that you sit and reflect on your program. Has your program changed over the course of time? Are you finding yourself changing constantly to meet the needs of today's students? If you answered yes to either of these questions, you would make a perfect candidate for a discussion of "Urban Agriculture."

## **New Innovations at the ACTE Convention - Larry Plapp, Badger High School**

I was given the good fortune to attend the National ACTE and NAAE convention in Charlotte in December 2008. My main reason for going this year was to present a workshop along with Jeff Hicken and David Kruse on the Wisconsin process for getting science credit for agriculture classes. I enjoyed meeting at the workshop, other agriculture teachers and state leaders who are attempting similar processes in their state.



One of my favorite things to do at any national convention is to attend the trade show. I like to keep up on what is new and dream about how I could use the new equipment and products at the trade show in the modern agriculture sciences classroom. While many of the items at the ACTE convention were more for our Tech Ed colleagues, I found a number of items that I would like to share with you.

The CEV company has developed an entire career cluster pathway curriculum that looks very promising. The agriculture pathway contains several specific areas such as animals, plants, food processing, etc. These units contain several PowerPoint's, DVD's, worksheets, and projects for each area within the agriculture pathway. While the package is quite pricey, I think it is worth a look. The link for this site is: <http://www.cevmultimedia.com/agpathwaylist.php>

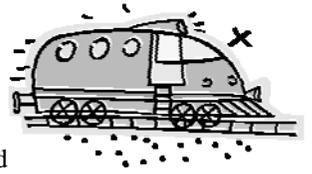
The Vernier Company has several interesting products for the agriculture science lab. Vernier sells data logging devices which are great for long term science experiments. The Vernier Lab Quest handheld interface and sensors can perform 31 experiments in cell respiration, photosynthesis, membrane diffusion, osmosis, human physiology, transpiration, fermentation, and other important biological/agricultural concepts. The link for this site is: <http://www.vernier.com/labquest/>

I attended a workshop on the ScreenCorder 5 by Matchware. Think about this...how many times have you given the same directions over and over again for using certain computer software or developing a computer project? This software captures and records all of your desktop activities and allows you to create your own "tutorials" in about 5 minutes! Cool stuff! The link is: <http://www.matchware.com/EN/products/screencorder/default.htm>

Another company that I chatted with develops instant websites for FFA Chapters. The company name is the website home, which is [www.ffachapter.net](http://www.ffachapter.net). All you need to do is choose a design and add content. Simple forms are used to create the content for your website. According to their website, a few schools in Wisconsin are using their service including the Janesville Craig FFA. I encourage you all to take a look at the NAAE partner list of vendors. This may provide you with additional information about new products in the agriculture education world. That link is <http://www.naae.org/orgmembers/orgmembers/>

As I wrap up this article, I encourage all of you to consider attending the NAAE/ACTE convention in the future. These conventions provide great opportunities to hear what is going on in the business of education, network with others in the Career and Technology Education Fields and get a picture of what the ACTE and NAAE organizations do for us on a national scope.

## All Aboard for an Agriculture Adventure - By: Glenda Crook



How often do you feel like you are in the entertainment business rather than education? We are constantly thinking of new and creative ways to present information to our students to keep their attention and interest. If you think about it we are much the same way when we attend a workshop or conference. All Aboard for an Agriculture Adventure focused on “agritainment”. The workshop covered three activities you can use in the classroom to enhance your students learning, strawberry salsa, pecans, and wildlife management. The strawberry salsa activity provided information for several key topics that you could tie into making salsa. We discussed, measuring, creating nutrition labels, growing a salsa garden, and product development and marketing. The pecan activity could be adapted to a more important nut to Wisconsin or more familiar to our students and still cover the same concepts. The pecan is related to the hickory nut so that would work just as well. The students could learn about the production or life cycle of nuts, grading quality of nuts, and value added products created from nuts. To demonstrate value added we were shown a woman’s product she created using the pecans and cranberries to create a sugar coated sweet snack. We then were challenged to create a trail mix with the pecans. Students could create a marketing plan for their value added product. Wildlife management focused on teaching hunter safety, boating safety, and archery safety certification for students. The activity included target shooting with a foam dart gun at a blow up white tail deer marked with a kill zone. The participants competed against each other to see who could hit the kill zone. I am proud to report that I won the target shooting contest and won a door prize! (Sorry Ralph.)

It was evident that one activity can lead to numerous instructional strategies related to math, nutrition, safety, science, marketing or product development. Staying true to our preferred method of teaching and focusing on hands-on activities this workshop demonstrated how an activity can lead to several different lessons and/or differentiated instruction if students are given the freedom to explore the various strategies.

## You Mean I Have To Work With People!!! -By Kevin Rauchholz

The purpose of this workshop was to learn and understand more about personality profiles so people can understand who they are and to more thoroughly understand the people they contact on a day to day basis. Dr. Jones proposed four different personalities styles, D (Doers, Drivers, Dominant), I (Inspirational, Influencing, Impulsive), S (Steady, Stable, Supportive) and C (Competent, Cautious, Careful).



Knowing the different personality styles it will help to understand people better by learning how people process information differently. Some of the traits of the personalities are listed below;

**D-** Doers, Drivers, Dominant. The focus of D personalities is to get the job done, just do it and to overcome opposition and achieve your goals. **I-** Inspirational, Influencing, Impulsive. The focus of I personalities is I am for you, If we all pull in the same direction and stay motivated, there is no end to success. **S-** Steady, Stable, Supportive. The focus of the S personality style is all for one and one for all. If we work together we can make a great team. **C-** Competent, Cautious, Careful. The focus of the C personality style is to make sure things are done in a correct manner. Looking closer at the personality styles Dr. Jones suggested each personality wants to know the following;

**D's- What? I's- Who? S's- How? C's- Why?**

The seminar suggested once a person understands the personality traits this knowledge can be incorporated into working with other personality types. Dr. Jones suggested it was important to know your personality style and the personality styles of the people you are working with so you can accept and understand others better.

## Working with the School Board - Tips taken from the Agriculture Teacher’s Manual

The school board provides philosophical direction for the district’s educational approach and determines funding for its programs, including agricultural education. School board members serve as the community’s fiscal watchdogs over the use of public monies to provide the best possible educational experiences. To nurture support from the school board, incorporate the following activities and approaches into your plan each year.



- Attend school board meetings, and ask FFA and FFA Alumni members to join you.
- Present annual or semi-annual reports of your program’s activities at school board meetings. Have students and advisory committee members (or other industry supporters) make the presentation.
- Get to know your school board members professionally.
- Invite board members to chapter events and FFA conventions.
- Train your students to be goodwill ambassadors for the school as well as the agricultural education program and FFA chapter
- Participate in other school events.
- Volunteer for task forces or committees that recommend policies to benefits the entire school.