

# WAAE 2010-2011 Winter Newsletter

Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators

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## Dates to Remember:

March 1 WAAE PDC Registration Opens

April 29 State FFA CDE Contest in Madison & WAAE Board Meeting

June 27-30 WAAE Professional Development Conference at the Hotel Sierra/KI Center, Green Bay

## Presidents Message by Marty Nowak



I hope that this newsletter finds you in good health and happiness. It is hard to believe that the school year is almost half over. I am sure that all of you are busy, and as the application season is about to begin, it is probably not going to let up in the near future. It has been a busy fall for WAAE and Team Ag Ed as well.

First off, I would like to congratulate the award recipients from the **NAAE Convention**. Keith Gundlach received the Outstanding Educator award, Peter Drone received the Lifetime Achievement award, Don Josko received the Outstanding Cooperation award and Jennifer Erb received the Mentor award. Beth Porior also received a trip to NAAE Convention as our Teachers Turn the Key Recipient. I would also like to congratulate all of the WAAE Members as the state received many membership awards including 10% Plus Membership Award, Largest Membership Increase, Largest Student Membership, Largest Numerical Membership Increase. The state also received a "Distinguished" rating for Professional State Association Awards. Many of our members presented workshops at the conference including Lori Berget, Dave Rizzardi, Laura Hasselquist, Rachel Sauvola, and Jeff Hicken.

If you are wondering about **Teach Ag Day**, it is set to occur on March 24, 2011. Section VI has agreed to coordinate their year's Teach Ag Day efforts as their Sectional Committee/Responsibility. Last year, Wisconsin was recognized as a model state for the Teach Ag Day efforts as the state logged more than 1900 minutes from close to 1100 students. I have heard continued comments from NAAE commending us on a job well done.

At the Fall **Team AgEd** meeting, there was a lot of discussion on advocacy and promoting our programs. As the issue was discussed in detail, the idea was thrown on the table to base halftime conference's theme on advocating for your program. There will be workshops presented for both teachers and students. I encourage all of the teachers to participate in these workshops to get some ideas to advocate for your program. In the current economy, it is evident that schools are looking for budget cuts. For this reason, but not this reason alone, it is important that we get out and promote our programs. Let people know the positive impact that Agricultural Education and FFA are having on students! Team AgEd also realizes that there are a lot of newly elected politicians that may not have an understanding of Agricultural Education and the FFA. It is important for us to contact them and let them know the positive impact that we make on students, schools and communities. Many ideas were discussed on how to let the politicians know the importance of FFA. It was decided that the FFA Foundation and FFA are going to provide each of the politicians with the annual report and promotional materials on Agricultural Education. This will help tell some of the story, but I urge you to make sure you contact your politicians and let them know the entire story.

Last, as many of you have heard me talk about data and **data collection**, we are still in the process of looking at collecting data. As of right now, we are unsure of what data we will need to collect. National FFA and DPI will be starting some data collection systems this spring and fall. The WAAE board has discussed and will continue to discuss that data WAAE will need to collect. We do know that we want it to be relevant and important information that will be used. I do want you to understand that I believe data collection is crucial for this organization. It is important for us to tell our story and help us understand where we need to improve. I realize

that it will not be easy, but I challenge all of you that when you are asked to complete the data, you step up to the plate and help us take accurate data so we can showcase Agricultural Education as a vital program to have in our schools and communities.

### **To Grow, or Not to Grow by Troy Talford**

Many times I am asked why I choose to participate in NAAE's Region III Conference and National Conventions. The answers to these questions are quite simple; I participate in these experiences because of the professional development opportunities that are available. Each year I am amazed at the professional development workshops that are available to us as agricultural educators, and this year's workshops helped me out professionally.

The workshop I wish to highlight is a great example of how working with our agricultural partners can help improve your program. One of the workshops I attended was "Learn Podcasting! Skills and Products for Instruction and Assessment" presented by Dr. Joan Mazur and Andrew Ashford, Southeast Center for Agricultural Health & Injury Prevention, Lexington, KY. In this workshop we learned to make, store and distribute digital podcasts for instructional purposes. The workshop provided us teachers with step-by-step instructions for podcasting and other online tools and resources that we can use in our classrooms. I had the opportunity to take this workshop with a couple of other agriculture teachers from Wisconsin and together we created our very own Podcast. While working on these podcasts, I came up with the idea of having students create an informational podcast about animal rights and animal welfare instead of doing the traditional classroom debate. Upon my return, I have shared these ideas with former student of my Intro to Animal & Plant Care class about this idea for the animal rights discussion that they seemed just as excited to hear the results as I am!

This workshop was one of the many events to participate in during the convention. I was also able to gather ideas from many of the other workshops, but I also was able to meet with Business and Industry sponsors during the ACTE Exposition and the NAAE Organizational Members and Partners Reception. What a great opportunity to learn about how to incorporate new ideas into my program.

So, when a teacher asks me the question as to why I attend these conferences and conventions I hope that they realize the potential for professional growth. I know we are all very busy as agriculture educators, but investing our time in these conferences will pay back in the long run by giving us tools that will allow us to be much more efficient with our local program.

### **A Word of Thanks from Don Josko**

*I would like to thank the members of WAAE for my nomination for the Outstanding Cooperation Award. It was a thrill and an honor to receive the state award at your convention this past Summer! I just returned from the Las Vegas NAAE national convention where I received the Region III Outstanding Cooperation Award. The experience was very humbling! I hope you know how much you have all touched my life and have inspired me to continue my support of your work to educate future agriculturalists! Your organization and your members are shining examples of the "best" that American Education has to offer! I will never forget your kind words and support on my quest to best serve my industry by serving you in any endeavor that brings support and value to your needs! Thank you again WAAE members you have truly touched my heart!*

### **Thanks from Pete Drone**

*I would like to thank the Wisconsin Selection Committee for believing in my achievements over the years and selecting me as the Wisconsin Representative and thank Region III for choosing me as the Region Winner. I also would like to thank Ford Motor Company for sponsoring this award as well.~ Pete Drone*

### **NAAE OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD by Keith Gundlach**

*I would like to say thank you to WAAE members in Section VI who nominated me for this award as well as the WAAE Board for selecting me to represent Wisconsin as a Region III candidate. Additionally, thank you to Bridgett Neu for helping edit the final photos needed for the application. I was recognized at an awards banquet on Tuesday evening in Las Vegas where NAAE board members hosted the regional winners on the high school level as well as the technical college level. It was a great meal featuring prime rib and gave me a chance to talk to the other regional winners and glean a few ideas which I might be able to incorporate into our agriculture program here in Randolph. I would encourage anyone nominated for any awards to pursue them. While I am not really into recognition, the prospect of driving a new Toyota managed to allow me to overcome that idea and it was well worth the time and effort.*

*Overall, I would say, one of the best parts of the trip is the social interaction with your peers. The large Wisconsin delegation was a great group to be with in Vegas, especially on Fremont Street. Finally, I would add, due the economic slump Nevada is going through, I did manage to leave a little cash there to be put toward their recovery.*

### **NAAE Teacher Mentor Award by Jen Erb**

The Teacher Mentor is an award area deserving of so many Wisconsin agriculture educators. The award program highlights teachers who have influenced and assisted beginning instructors with curriculum, FFA activities, classroom management, instruction techniques, professional contacts and much more.

I was privileged to receive the Region III Teacher Mentor Award at the 62<sup>nd</sup> National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE), December 4 in Las Vega, NV. The award includes a beautiful plaque, convention registration, and \$400. to pay for convention travel and lodging. Other receipts include Sue Poland, Cambridge High School, ID; William Kirkpatrick, Fox High School, OK; Don Wheeler, Laker High School, MI; Damon Morgan, Morristown West High School, TN; and Deb Seibert, Manheim Central High School, PA. The Teacher Mentor Award program is sponsored by CEV Multimedia.

I encourage instructors to complete the application with the assistance of the nominee. The WAAE application consists of a cover page, three typed pages, and one support page. The three typed pages highlight the mentors' overview, mentoring, instruction, experiential learning student organizations, marketing and professional growth. The NAAE form consists of a cover page, five typed pages examining six area emphasis and three support pages. The areas of interest revolve - overview, mentoring situations, instruction, experiential learning, student organizations, partnerships, marketing, professional growth, and community-based learning.

As I noted during a Region III business meeting, that it takes an entire community to raise children, but it takes a community, state, region and a country to educate innovative teachers. There are so many individuals who have influenced my ability to educate others. I want to thank Rene' Lehman who has taught with me for 14 years at Waupaca High School. She deserves the award as much or more than I. Thank you to Sandra Cordes, Little Wolf High School for nominating me and helping me complete the application with the assistance of Connie Peterson (Weyauwega-Fremont High School), both past mentees of mine. Like so many agriculture educators, I have had outstanding student teachers and mentees who have greatly influenced my professional and personal life. As time goes on, they have given me as much as I have offered them throughout the years. They are some of my best commandants!

The Teacher Mentor program is an initiative to address the teacher shortage issue and teacher retention. Beginning teachers are in desperate need of leadership and guidance during their "induction" years.

### **What Happens in Vegas. . . by Lori Berget**

The sign read: What Happens in Vegas. . . Stays in Vegas (and I chuckled to myself). I was hoping that not many of the Agriculture Education Instructors attending our workshop were thinking about that sign, but were in fact

thinking about ways to take home our workshop information on “Technology and Natural Resources”. What an honor to present at a national conference! The preparation for this workshop (just like teaching any unit in our classrooms) helped me learn so much more about infusing technology into my natural resources curriculum. When I applied to be a presenter last spring, I first thought of what topic I’d like to present, and a natural (or not so natural) combination of technology and agriculture made its way to the top. At Black Hawk High School we are on our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of an EETT grant through CESA 3 – using an online content management software called “Study Wiz Spark”.

I asked our Business Education Instructor, Joan Miller, to help with the presentation, and she agreed. We started to throw ideas out and decided we wanted to highlight some of the more prominent Web2.0 sites as well as touch on some of the Web3.0 sites. Throwing terminology at me like “Delicious, audacity, podcasts, skype, glogster, zamzar and jing. . . I quickly knew that I would be learning as much as I would be presenting! Water was the natural resource we decided to use as the teaching unit (since it is a very important resource nationwide, including Nevada), and the Mississippi River came into the picture. So, armed with that information, Joan and I put together a unit on water conservation with lessons using the Mississippi River and infused as much technology as possible.

One major goal of the workshop content was to help instructors reach out to students to keep them engaged. We also wanted to improve student understanding and learning using “free” and “easy to learn” technology web skills. Time is a very big factor when utilizing new resources in the classroom, and we were looking for a way to help teachers adapt technology without having to spend a lot of time creating new lessons, etc. The workshop content is available on the NAAE community sharing site, also.

The NAAE Conference was a time to meet new people, explore places that I’ve never been and give back to a profession that has been my career the past 20 years. While in Nevada, I traveled to a small town (325 students PreK-12) called “Sandy Valley”, in the foothills of the mountains on the California border, west of Las Vegas. I was curious how technology was being used in their curriculums – and while they didn’t have an agriculture education program, they did have some “technology courses”, and we will be starting a chapter exchange via internet with our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. After visiting with some residents, stopping by the school and later viewing their website, I would like to commend Wisconsin schools and Ag Departments/ FFA Chapters on their inclusion of technology (in their curriculum and chapter websites).

“Technology and Natural Resources” will be offered at the WAAE conference this summer in Green Bay. I hope that you can take the time to attend. Even though we have a lot of tech savvy people in our profession, I hope you will be able to take one or two ideas home with you on the Web2.0 skills and incorporate effective technology into your curriculums.

**Wish You Were Here! – NAAE Reflection on Vegas 2010 By: Rachel Sauvola,  
New Richmond HS Agriscience Instructor**

It’s never easy to leave your classroom for four days. It’s never easy to say goodbye to your family and your roles as wife/husband and mother/father for six days. It’s never easy to believe that your FFA officers will get done what they need to do to prepare for fruit delivery when you return. The list of things that it’s not easy to do is a long one when looking at the potential of attending a six-day NAAE adventure in November or December. But the list of benefits that a teacher gains when making the choice to attend is equally as long of a list!!!!

This year was my sixth NAAE Convention. Since winning Teachers Turn the Key back in 2004, I have only missed one. I choose to attend each year to grow professionally and gain skills and knowledge to bring back to my students in my classroom. The workshops are top notch and help me to provide new classroom activities, technologies and concepts when I return. I have presented at two conventions and that experience helps to gain a broader perspective of agricultural education across the nation. We have always gotten positive feedback that shows us that Wisconsin and the WAAE is a leader in our field. I have also gotten the goods from several workshops that I then turn into PDC workshops for your benefit. I also appreciate being a part of our

organization's business. We have much to celebrate and much to wary of for the future with Dr. Case's retirement. I want to be in the know so that I can successfully advocate for my program. It's all about learning and growing to me!

So many of us are single department people. We work hard to keep our heads above water or our feet on the ground. Going to NAAE is an opportunity for me to ask questions and share things that are working for me so that I can play the game of give and take. Benefiting from the experiences of those that have gone before me, teaches me over and over again that I am not alone! There is no better feeling!

Traveling with friends I only see briefly at ag teacher events, it's a time to renew and further develop friendships with colleagues as well. From these experiences, curriculum projects have come about, but honestly, it's the fun and adventure we find that takes the cake! This year I had the opportunity to visit with a teacher who was attending his first NAAE convention after teaching 33 years! I soon realized that I could have easily been in his shoes had I not completed that TTK application all those years ago because Dick Aide made me do it! I will always be thankful that Richard pointed me in the right direction! ☺

This year was no different – oodles of professional growth, ideas to make my head spin, workshops with live dogs I was allergic to, fun and exciting evening entertainment – I wouldn't have missed it for the world! I challenge YOU to come with us next year! Come spend some time learning and growing, laughing till your sides hurt and renewing yourself so you're ready for more time in the classroom. Agricultural education needs you! And this is one way you can put coins back in your bank! Make a deposit that benefits you personally and professionally!

As a result of this conference, look for a WAAE PDC workshop entitled, The Dream Team Presents: Wish You Were Here! You aren't going to want to miss it! We have some exciting field trips in store for you! Be there or be square!

### **Renew Your Efforts to Advocate for the Future of Agriculture Education – Paul Larson, Freedom H.S.**

The election season has finally ended. The results are in, so you are probably thinking, good no more ads or other annoyances for another two years. Well that might be true, the truth is NOW the work really begins. With over 100 new representatives in DC it is time for all of us to crank up our relationship building with the new members. Most know little of agriculture or agriculture education, most have little time to dig into agriculture or our issues. So, now is the time for us to be diligent and garner new relationships with new members and their staffs. Many will be looking for information on topics related to agriculture or education. Now is the time for us to become energized with informing them of the important issues involved with agriculture and agriculture education.

The Strategies for Quality & Growth in Agriculture Education Advocacy Taskforce (formerly 10 X15) has started formulating an aggressive advocacy agenda for agriculture education. These topic areas will be refined and then linked to specific legislation in the future. Perhaps our initiatives will be linked to ESEA (Elementary Secondary Education Act) or to the Farm Bill or perhaps others. It will be important as we move ahead to have a large network of members to support our efforts and help guide the votes of our representatives. As this group moves forward, watch for action alerts and other initiatives to help move agriculture education toward the future. So it is vital that YOU take a few minutes TODAY and start building or rebuilding YOUR personal advocacy network. The FFA Coin bill is still out there; use that as a starting point to make your contacts. At the NAAE website, there is much information under the advocacy tab to assist you as you get started. As always, if I can be of any assistance to you as you work on your advocacy efforts, don't hesitate to contact me. E-mail is [plarson@freedomschools.k12.wi.us](mailto:plarson@freedomschools.k12.wi.us)

### **Stepping Up to the Plate: Developing Your Leadership Skills on the National Level** **By: Glenda Crook, Region III Secretary**

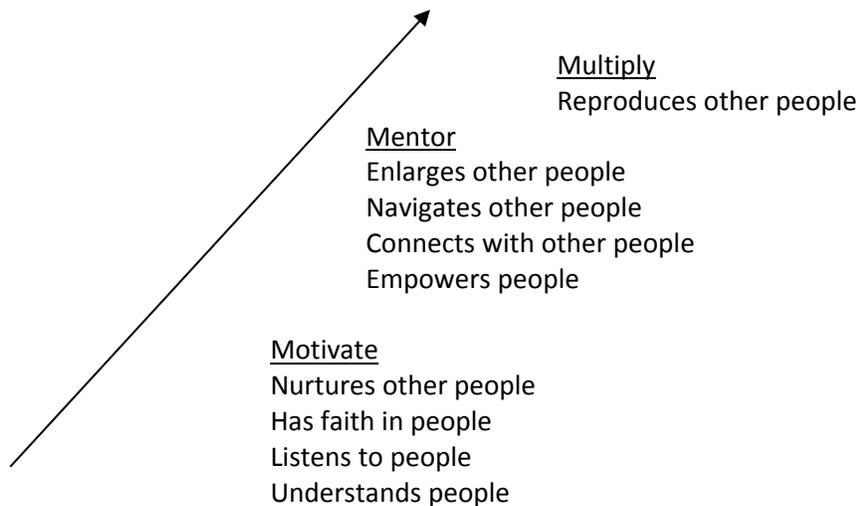
"How did you get to where you are?" This was the question posed to the participants of the Developing Your Leadership Skills on the National Level workshop by Dr. David Jones, North Carolina State University. He asked us

to share how we became agriculture teachers. Most everyone that shared mentioned someone in their life that had an influence on them and led them in the direction of agricultural education. Dr. Jones focused most of his presentation on two things, influence and impact. His first question to us made us all think about the person or people that had influenced us. Then he asked us, "Where does your impact begin?" This was a question we couldn't answer, because we don't know. Your impact could be one small thing you did with or for a student that changed their life. It may have been a field trip you took them on, a judging contest they participated in, a guest speaker you invited in to class, you just don't know when your impact will begin or when it will end, for that matter.

Dr. Jones was actually the third presenter in this workshop on National Leadership. Prior to his thought provoking questions Ray Nash the President of NAAE led the group through a list of ways an individual can serve as a leader at the National level. Many of the positions require memorandums of understanding with the individual's school. There is quite a long list of National leadership positions including; National Board of Directors, National Council for Ag. Ed. Board of Directors, National FFA CDE Committee, National FFA Board of Directors, National FFA Alumni Board of Directors, and the NAAE Standing Committees chairs and vice-chairs. Wisconsin has several National leaders, individuals who have or are serving as NAAE Standing Committee chairs or vice-chairs, Regional Secretary, Regional Vice Presidents, National Council for Ag. Ed Board of Directors, and probably others.

Nash had us share how it is our states recruit leaders and the deterrents that keep people from serving leadership roles. Deterrents included self-serving to own program, lack of time, lack of administrative support, whether or not the class time missed was going to be positively offset by leadership development, and padding resumes to move on is the thinking of some administrators. These issues brought about some great discussion and helped states develop better ideas for recruiting leaders.

Dr. Jay Jackman focused his part of the workshop on the book, "Becoming A Person of Influence," by John Maxwell and Jim Dornan. Nash shared a model from the book explaining how you can become a person of influence.



When I look at this model I see many agriculture teachers exhibiting each of these levels with their students and FFA members. Applying this model to our peers and adults will be slightly different. However, if we can use the same principles we apply to influence our students to influence our peers then we should be able to help recruit our future leaders.

Dr. Jones compared our influence and impact to the six degrees of separation. We are only six people away from really knowing anyone. Use your influence to help recruit our future state and national leaders. I know I would

not be sitting on the NAAE Board of Directors as the regional secretary right now if it hadn't been for the influence of some very good agriculture friends. So ask yourself, "How did you get here?" professionally and literally. And consider this your little push!

### **NAAE Workshops are 2<sup>nd</sup> to None! By Josh Rusk**

Traveling to NAAE has become quite an event for me and this time was no different. This trip I decided to leave out of Green Bay with a connection in Chicago. Who would of thought that the weather would be perfect for flying in Green Bay, but the weather in Chicago would have held up air traffic all day! So after leaving Green Bay two hours late (8 PM) and barely making my connection in Chicago on a different airline, I hit the strip of Las Vegas, Nevada at 1 AM (3 AM our time). Little did I know that the changes made on this day would come back to haunt me on Sunday morning while attempting to get back home.

Once I got to the convention and began hitting the workshops the real excitement began. I took the opportunity to attend such workshops as: The Peanut Butter and Jelly Challenge, The Real World H2O Edition, Wildlife Biology and Natural Resources: The resources to get you started!! I have a greenhouse...what do I do? A Workshop for Dummies, Do You Google?, and Applications of Molecular Biology to Agricultural Biotechnology. As you can see the variety of workshops offered vary drastically from one end of the Ag. Ed. Spectrum to the other end. These workshops are all put on by individuals that use their strategies daily in the classroom as existing ag. Educators and are sponsored by such companies as DuPont Agriscience Institute and Edvotek/DNA Depot.

Highlights from the workshops include:

- ☆ **Peanut Butter and Jelly Challenge:** provided the participants a unique way of teaching product packaging and marketing while thinking green all while trying to figure out a way to package, ship and sell a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- ☆ **The Real World H2O Edition (DuPont Agriscience Institute & Lab Aids):** this workshop taught the water cycle as a game and interactive lesson that each participant received from Lab Aids. Participating teachers also shared unique ways that they teach cycles and strategies for classroom management .
- ☆ **Wildlife Biology and Natural Resources: The resources to get you started!!:** this was a truly unique workshop for WI teachers as we took part in a mining lesson using chocolate chip cookies to teach students about the importance of natural resources and their importance to our economy and preservation of our environment. Online resources were also shared that would make assignments and projects easier and faster to complete for both students and staff. This was an awesome workshop but it also reassured me that what I was currently doing in my classroom was right on target with what others were doing across the country.
- ☆ **I have a greenhouse...what do I do? A workshop for Dummies:** This was a workshop that really made fell like I was behind the curve, but I guess I already knew that seeing that I had only had a greenhouse for a year and a half. I gained companies, contacts, schedules and specifics to make my greenhouse as effective as I possibly can from the beginning of the year all the way to the end and even make it a builder of SAE programs for those students that are looking for an educational experience with little input required up front.
- ☆ **Do you Google?:** Taught by college Ag. Ed. Professors we were able to explore all the possibilities that the world of Google has to offer. Google no longer is just a search engine anymore and has a world of possibilities that can improve ag. Programs across the country and the productivity of an ag. Educator.
- ☆ **Applications of Molecular Biology to Agricultural Biotechnology (Edvotek/DNA Depot):** Electrophoresis, bioremediation and GMO DNA sampling were major topics of this workshop. New ways to teach each of the topics were presented and we were given the opportunity to actually complete them while learning about them in order to see how our students would see and understand the experiments.

Each of these workshops provided me with a huge amount of new and exciting curriculum to use in my classroom that I could not have gotten all in one place anywhere else. This is just one of the key components of NAAE that make disrupted travel arrangements all worth their while even if it means your airline loses your return flight out

of Las Vegas! I will say it again this year. If you have the opportunity to attend NAAE it will be worth every minute and dime for the experience. NAAE is an organization that we have the privilege to be a part of and like WAAE is one huge support group that is there to help each other achieve the same goal of educating today's youth about the importance of Agricultural Education in the best possible way there is!

### **NAAE Workshops – Hitting the Jackpot! By Kim Houser**

This has been the 4<sup>th</sup> NAAE Convention that I have had the opportunity to attend and this year certainly didn't disappoint! I attended many workshops that will help me out in the classroom and I will give you a 'sneak peak' at two of them.

The first workshop was called, "Well I have a Greenhouse, so now what?" For many of us, getting a greenhouse and learning the ins and outs of it is quite a process. But soon, after everything is up and running you can breathe a sigh of relief, look at it and then panic with thoughts of "What do I do now?!?" This workshop focused on raising and selling poinsettias, spring bulbs, bedding plants and mums. Ideas were given, from tracking your poinsettia growth (from year to year) on the website – <http://ontarget.ecke.com> to planting and selling potatoes in planter boxes, a new trend called patio planting!

The second workshop I will focus on was virtual field trips. Now at first, I wasn't too sure about this workshop but as it got going I became more inspired! By using [www.mapwing.com](http://www.mapwing.com), you can develop a field trip for your students without ever having to leave your classroom! My thoughts veered from class to class...how about developing a field trip for a Small Animal Science class to a veterinarian office? What about having my work experience/coop students develop a virtual field trip to their place of employment for a final project? What if I develop a virtual tour of the agricultural education department and then have it linked to the high school website? Now, I know that some of you are wondering how you will ever have time to create your own virtual field trip. Well, wonder no further! There will be a workshop at WAAE's Professional Development Conference, entitled "The Dream Team Presents...Wish You Were Here". Dan Ziegler, Linda Sattler, Rachel Sauvola and I will be presenting the ins and outs of [www.mapwing.com](http://www.mapwing.com) to creating a field trip that you can use in your classroom.

### **Ideas without action are just ideas! By David Kruse**

Take a few moments and remember how you felt before you started in your first teaching job. There was probably a little fear of the unknown and a little (or a lot) anxiety about how you would do. I will also venture a guess that there was a HUGE dose of optimism about how you were going to change the lives of your students and impact the quality of agricultural education in your community.

As president-elect of your WAAE organization, I have the same kinds of feelings also dominated by optimism and excitement about the future of agricultural education. However, I am also keenly aware we face many challenges and that the bright future of agricultural education is dependent on the efforts of each of us. I am asking each of you for your ideas, and to be quite honest, your actions. Let your actions at the local level continue to show the pride you have in agricultural education. Likewise, let your involvement in the Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators demonstrate your resolve to help agricultural education in Wisconsin not only continue in Wisconsin but to grow and flourish. We have a very active membership and committee structure that has helped Wisconsin agricultural education excel, but we must also realize that the responsibilities of WAAE are changing and those changes will also require your assistance. As these changes arise, please join your fellow agricultural educators in helping our profession move forward.

No one begins teaching with the goal of being the "most average" teacher you could be-we start with the goal of being the "best" teacher we can be. Whether you are teaching your 1<sup>st</sup> year, 31<sup>st</sup> year, or somewhere between or beyond; you will occasionally find yourself placing limitations on what you can accomplish. I know and understand that our "daily pie of time" is sliced so many ways that is impossible to do everything, but I challenge you to creatively allocate some of your time to feed your passion for agricultural education. There is not a slow time in agricultural education, so remember to find the time to enjoy your job and share that joy with others.

Anytime I have the opportunities, such as WAAE and NAAE, to interact with other agricultural education professionals in this state or across the country I return home with new ideas and a renewed passion for agricultural education. As a professional that teaches students that choosing a positive attitude is a key to developing a positive future, remember that the same applies to us as teachers. Choose an attitude that motivates you to turn your ideas into action.

We are agricultural educators because we believe agricultural education is great for our students, our communities, and the agriculture industry's ability to provide food and other resources for our planet. A simple belief in agricultural education is not enough, it is our time to take our ideas-add action- and create a reality where agricultural education continues to be a leader in schools. I am excited to take action with you-we can help make a great future for agricultural education.

### **Putting the Learning Back Into Hands on Learning! By Jeff Zobeck, WAAE Past President**

While in attendance at the National Association of Agricultural Educators National Conference in Las Vegas I attended many great workshops. There is a lot of great stuff to take from a trip to the National Conference from great speakers to learning about award winning teachers and programs to networking with colleagues, but probably the most rewarding part is attending these great workshops. The one that stands out to me this year is the one put on by Michael Retallick of Iowa State University. He challenged workshop participants to take a close look at the "hands on" activities we were having our students participate in. Does learning actually take place in all of these activities? How do you ensure learning is taking place?

At times these well intentioned activities may hold some educational value, but are we making sure the the students get the learning we intended from them? Mr. Retallick has done quite a bit of research on the topic of Experiential Learning and had these suggestions on the topic:

- 1) Make sure the "hands on" activity has a clear purpose to the content you are teaching. We discussed what some examples of "hands on" activities could be from field trips to labs and everything in between. Mr. Retallick used the example of having students using a pitch fork. It's definitely "hands on", but is there truly learning taking place after the first fork full?
- 2) Utilize pre-questioning to set the stage for the activity. Get the students in the frame of mind to learn from the experience.
- 3) Make the "hands on" activities inquiry based. Give the students the opportunity to come to their own conclusions and findings from the experience as well.
- 4) Utilize post questioning to ensure that the learning you wanted the students to get from the activity is actually taking place. This is the assessment or evaluation piece needed to bring closure to the activity.

Towards the end of the workshop we were given time to take a look at a lesson we may be teaching in our classes back home that involved "hands on" learning and to apply his model to that lesson. We shared our ideas and thoughts on these lessons to close the workshop. The idea I shared that I just recently did with my Forest Science Class was in tree measuring. I posed the question to my students on how we can measure tree diameter without cutting the tree down? Students came up with a variety of ideas as I had hoped including pulling on their prior knowledge of circumference and diameter relationships and the formulas utilized there for example. I then challenged the students to utilize this knowledge to come up with a tool we could use to accomplish this. They came up with a piece of rope with increments marked on it for diameter based on its relationship with circumference, a diameter tape! We then took our ropes out and measured trees.

He encouraged us to apply this to the activities we do and see the results for ourselves. I have invited him to present at the WAAE PDC, if it fits his schedule, (he is a former Wisconsinite) and hopefully allow for more time by participants to develop "hands on" activities for lessons with an expanded amount of time we could offer him in our workshop format. Look for this opportunity if available when you register for conference.

### **Share What You Know- Laura Hasselquist**

Professional development is something we all benefit from. Every year we all head off to summer Professional Development Conference to learn new information and brush up on some teaching techniques. But, have you ever considered being a presenter?

This past fall I had the opportunity along with a coworker to present at NAAE convention in Las Vegas. The application process was a simple application that asked for workshop objectives and brief description for publishing. With your acceptance letter comes a welcome feeling of relief and realization of all the work to be done between now and then. NAAE does a fantastic job of communicating what is available for workshops and what to do if any special there are any special requests for equipment. Once you are at convention, the NAAE interns do an outstanding job of making sure that you have everything you need to make it a positive experience.

Ag teachers have a never ending "to do" list at our own schools and perhaps the idea of presenting at a conference seems daunting and something you don't have time for, but I guarantee it is time well spent. Not only do you become better acquainted with your topic but you get the added benefit of hearing new ideas from the workshop participants. Being able to network with your peers from all across the country is one of the best reasons to attend any NAAE convention.

As teachers, we have one of the most rewarding careers in the world: we get to share our passion for Agriculture with our students. Why not take an opportunity to share what you know with your fellow Ag teachers? Next time the call for workshops is issued, please take a few moments to consider presenting. It is a decision that you won't regret!

### **Lucky in Vegas by Dan Ziegler**

I am so glad that I attended the NAAE convention this year, and not just because it was held in Las Vegas in December. I am proud to be from Wisconsin and never more so than at this convention. Wisconsin had one of the largest state groups and our quality was second to none. Dave Rizzardi, Rachel Sauvola and Jeff Hicken shared secrets about our amazing Teacher mentoring program. That session was the talk of the convention, and I wouldn't be surprised if they aren't asked to assist other states in getting a program started there. I attended one workshop that showed the true Wisconsin spirit. The session was called SWELL Classrooms-SMART Worldwide Effective Learning Labs. The description said it would help integrate SMART board technology into the Ag Classroom. As people started to show up it became evident that the presenter wasn't going to show up but the room was filling up with people eager to learn more about SMART boards. After the room host announced that the presenter wasn't going to show, the Wisconsin spirit took hold. Troy Talford a SMART board guru in our state asked Linda Burton if he could use her computer and he stepped in and taught a very well received session on Smart boards. All indications were that he was one of the highest rated experts that presented and he had not planned for this presentation. This one act is just another reason we should be very proud of where we teach.

This was my second National Convention in my career but it will not be the last. I came back from the convention with new ideas and new contacts that were worth every minute of preparation and planning it took to get away in December. I recommend this trip to all members and everyone young and old should make every effort to attend a National Convention and see our organization at its best.

### **Man's Best Friend & The Continental Kennel Club by Tracy M. Harper**

There is nothing like a dog to 'light-up' our students. Even the most stoic, uninvolved student cannot help but to interact with a dog. But really....what can be learned by bringing a dog to class???

Well, actually, a LOT can be learned from studying the behavior, history and science of canines. They were the first animal to be domesticated, and are the most owned animal in the United States with an estimated 77.5 million. Overall the pet industry contributes about 45 billion dollars to the economy each year, and despite our recent economic issues, the industry still had a 5% increase last year.

In 2006 the Continental Kennel Club (CKC) developed a curriculum that offers nearly 75 hours of activities and education relating to the canine industry. The Canine Care and Training Program (CCTP) extends beyond the historical aspects of the canine industry, breeds and veterinary science. The program includes aspects of both training and behavioral science. The activities in the curriculum are hands-on, with the dogs facilitating the learning! The curriculum includes worksheets, projects and supporting teaching materials, the equivalent of a ½ credit course. Teachers interested in becoming certified to teach the course can take the course on-line or through regional workshops being offered by the CKC.

With additional training, students and teachers can easily develop this into a non-traditional SAE or even a class Service Learning project, whereby your students can offer training for dogs being housed in area shelters. It is estimated that 6 to 8 million dogs and cats enter shelters each year. Unwanted behaviors, lack of training and lack of understanding of animal behavior is the most common reason dogs enter the 'system'. Educated and responsible ownership is critical to solving this issue. Students completing the initial Level I of training can expand their knowledge, through fostering and training shelter dogs, offering this as a service to the local shelters.

On a 'personal note' I was impressed with the depth that this curriculum offered. It really was beyond the typical breeds and history, offering students a thorough study of animal behavior and science. I have raised and trained dogs for nearly 30 years, and taught both individual and group dog obedience class for the past 10 years. I look forward to getting certified to teach this curriculum and bring it to the state of Wisconsin in the future.

### **Proud To Be a Wisconsin Agriculture Teacher by Tim Pederson**

As I am nearing the end of my teaching career I had time, while traveling to the NAAE Convention, to reflect on my career. Who would have thought that I would be a school teacher for more than thirty years? I remember sitting in our Section 3 fall workshop, listening to Floyd tell us that no other professionals would give up time after school to get updated information from the state and to improve their teaching skills as much as an Agriculture teacher. I often wondered if this is what I wanted to do as my lifelong career. I soon learned that the Agriculture teachers were a tight group of educators and were willing to help out each other at any given time.

My big brother (mentor) Don Cook received many calls from me those first few years and was always willing to help. I give Don a lot of credit for helping me through those first years and without his help I may have left the teaching field. I also had help from Don Hendrickson and Mel Nelson who were like father figures to me and kept encouraging me. I was able to talk to Don Hendrickson this past week about the sad news that Mel had passed away, as Floyd would say "Rest in peace good friend." Don and I had a great conversation and I am still proud to say that Don is a great support for educators and he still motivates me to be the best I can.

While at the NAAE Convention, I attended different workshops and it was amazing to observe fellow Agriculture teachers willingness to share information. I came home with many new teaching methods including: how to effectively present information to my students. I was also impressed that Wisconsin had many presenters at the convention. It was great to be able to spend time with and be a part of the Wisconsin Agriculture teachers group. I enjoyed the tour we had, thank you Rachael for setting that up, and the bus ride downtown was a blast. I feel everybody should attend the NAAE Convention and I only wished I would have done it earlier in my career.

Before I finish my report, I would like to thank all teachers who helped me throughout my career. As teaching methods keep changing, I am so lucky to be part of supporting group of Wisconsin Agriculture teachers. Who knew that you could go on list serve and get a worksheet with answer key at a moment's notice? Just a little advice, get involved in the WAAE, be a board member, attend conferences and just be part of the list serve or the next technology method to communicate that comes about. Agriculture teachers are a special group and I am proud to be a part of this group. I love teaching and being a Wisconsin Agriculture teacher.

## WAAE Member Benefits

What WAAE does for you your FFA your agricultural education program and your students (written by a WAAE member):

- **CAERT curriculum** - WAAE is a full partner in the adoption of this tool as a statewide agricultural education resource. CAERT is an educational tool that agriculture departments can use to develop curriculum aligned with state and national agricultural education standards in addition to Wisconsin Model Academic Model Standards for math, science, social studies, and English.
- **Science Equivalency for Agriculture courses** - WAAE members were critical in accomplishing this goal by serving on a DPI taskforce to establish a statewide process for establishing equivalency.
- **Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council** - WAAE has been an organization leader in the work with the Secretary of Agriculture at the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) in creating this council.
- **Mentor Program** - WAAE is committed to the success of its young members as well as established teachers. We have a nationally recognized mentor program and volunteers are available to provide all members with assistance as needed.
- **WAAE is a champion for advocacy** and has developed materials which you can use to promote your program in your school district. All WAAE members have access to these materials and help is available from all sectional WAAE officers as well as a number of other veteran teachers who have strong advocacy efforts for their programs.
- **WAAE has an awards program** not matched by other education programs in Wisconsin. It has long been the practice to honor and recognize our professional members through these awards. As an association, WAAE has more members from our state being recognized at the NAAE Convention than any other state in Region III.
- WAAE has a long honored system where every member can **apply to receive funds** to attend the NAAE Convention.
- **WAAE sponsors** our annual professional development conference each summer. Members receive a substantial discount which offsets a reasonable dues package.
- Your professional association offers you much in the way of **continuing education** through workshops as well as co-sponsored inservice sessions with DPI in both spring and fall.
- Becoming a WAAE/NAAE member also fosters **networking** between fellow agriculture instructors in all areas of our education family who work in the promotion of agriculture education.
- WAAE is the fiscal agent for the **Wisconsin FFA State Career Developments** held at UW-Madison. The WAAE CDE committee and its members are key players in the organization of career development events.
- School districts of WAAE members are eligible to receive **subscription discounts** to CAERT curriculum materials.
- WAAE has **member representation** in the following professional roles
  - Wisconsin FFA Foundation
  - Wisconsin FFA Center Board
  - Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council
  - Wisconsin FFA Alumni Council

When I think about the challenges we face every day, I realize now more than decisive voice that speaks loudly and commands respect is effective.

Thank you for your dedication to our profession and to the students in your program. WAAE wants to welcome you to our united family of agriculture educators and is open to your suggestions for improving services.

### Ways to Pay

- Perkins Funding - Dues can be paid for with Perkin's funding provided they have at least one program of study in agriculture. They need to be able to provide rationale that at the conference each year Career Clusters will be discussed and professional development on ways to enhance their programs of will be on going.