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by Larry A. Quinn



NRRA GM & CEO TO STEP DOWN – Nebraska Rural Radio Association (NRRA) General Manager and CEO **Craig Larson** recently announced he plans to step down from his position on January 1, 2020. Larson informed the NRRA Board of Directors at their quarterly meeting in April. Larson has been with the ag media company for 24 years, serving the last eight years as general manager and CEO. “I want to express the gratitude of the board of directors for all of Craig’s inspired leadership, vision, and contribution to the NRRA,” said Board President **Ben Steffen** of Humboldt. “With Craig at the helm, the company has grown considerably over the last several years and has strengthened our position of leadership serving the industry and the community. Craig’s team building, communication, and vision have been instrumental in that growth. We could not be prouder of Craig’s accomplishments and the way he has moved the

NRRA forward.” In 2015, NRRA purchased radio stations in Cozad and York. A year earlier, the NRRA started providing ag programming to affiliate radio stations across the state. Current affiliates include stations in Chadron, Sidney, Nebraska City, Beatrice, and Fairbury. The company added a news bureau and production facility in 2017 at the Nebraska Innovation Campus in Lincoln, allowing for more audio and video capabilities from the eastern part of the state. Larson, a Loomis native and graduate of Kearney State College, said timing seemed right for him to step aside. “I’ve been in radio close to 40 years,” he said. “It’s important to walk away while you still can and while I’m young enough to pursue other opportunities. I’ve been blessed to be part of a great team. We have dozens of professional men and women in this company. They’ve done the heavy lifting all these years. They are the reason the NRRA enjoys such a great reputation across the state and around the country.” A search for Larson’s replacement has already begun. The NRRA is the only radio group owned by farmers and ranchers. Stations consist of flagship KRVN in Lexington, KNEB in Scottsbluff, KTIC in West Point, KAMI in Cozad, and KAWL/Max Country in York.



LINDER FARM NETWORK ON THE ROAD – It’s been a busy month of appearances for the Linder Farm Network, reports **Lynn Ketelsen** (Owatanna, Minnesota), including Dairy Days across the state, local ag celebrations, and county fairs. “I just returned from a weeklong Linder Farm Network crop tour through Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, with daily reports live on the air,” he said. Ketelsen has grown the number of radio stations he’s affiliated with to 20, with radio clusters in Mankato and Marshall, adding to existing stations in Rochester, Fairmont, Owatonna, Waseca, and Willmar. (Photo above: **Lynn Ketelsen** covers June Dairy Month celebration in Goodhue, Minnesota, with **Jack Colwell** of KCUE radio.)



Lynn Ketelsen talks with Princess Kay of the Milky Way **Rebekka Paskewitz** (left) and local dairy princesses in Goodhue County.



AWARD-WINNING BROADCASTER JOINS NAFB MEMBERSHIP – Rick Worthington

became a member of the Ag Information Network of the West in 2017 as the host of the *Farm and Ranch Report*. Worthington is a longtime broadcaster who started his radio career in his hometown of Elko, Nevada. Now based in Boise, Idaho, Worthington continues broadcasting on 670am KBOI as news director and associate program director. He was no stranger to agriculture reporting before joining the Ag Information Network of the West. Worthington spent time as a general assignment reporter at KFBK (Sacramento, California) where agriculture and farming is a huge part of the community and economy.

Worthington is an accomplished news broadcaster, having won Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards in 2009 and 2010. Also, he is the recipient of the Associated Press Mark Twain Award in 2008 and 2009. Worthington also has been recognized by the Idaho State Broadcasters Association for Best Newscast and Story of the Year in 2018. While agriculture broadcasting is a huge focus, his biggest passion is for sports. Worthington gets his “football fix” as the host of Bronco Game Night (following Boise State football broadcasts) and enjoys coaching his children’s youth sports teams. On a more personal note, Worthington’s family has been dealing with a series of tragic turn of events. His wife, **Kristen**, is currently undergoing chemotherapy to treat stage-4 metastatic breast cancer. The Worthingtons also lost a child to cancer in March of this year, when 15-year-old son, Nikko, lost his battle to Rhabdomyosarcoma. Rick and Kristen are now proud supporters and volunteers at St. Luke’s Children’s Hospital in Boise.



KULBA IS AG NEWS PRODUCER AND GENEALOGIST – Besides being an ag news producer, **Marjorie Kulba** (Farm Journal Broadcasting, South Bend, Indiana) shared she is a wife, a mom, and an amateur genealogist. She graduated from Grand Valley State University. Originally, she went to college to become a music-video editor because she was inspired by MTV. Her parents weren't keen on that, but they assumed she would end up doing something in film and video. Kulba's first job in broadcasting was working for the local PBS station in master control, where she assisted with productions and rolled videotapes on the air for shows such as *Lambchop's Playalong* and *Barney*. She went on to a job at the local CBS affiliate in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where she was the main editor. "One day a newscast producer/writer didn't show up, so I asked to give it a try and they let me. The person who didn't show up never came back, and I moved into her job. Eventually, I was producing an hour-long morning newscast."



From there, Kulba moved to Rochester, New York, to work at another CBS affiliate. "By then, I had married my husband, **John**, who was a local radio newsman in Kalamazoo, so the news has always been a part of our lives. In Rochester, I produced several newscasts, eventually becoming the executive producer before moving again to Albany, New York, to work for the ABC affiliate. My last week there was during 9/11. Producing newscasts that week is something I will never forget as Albany was only a few hours away from New York City, and many people in the Albany area lost loved ones in the attack," she said. Kulba moved back to the Midwest to be closer to loved ones and to start her own family. She worked for several years at the NBC affiliate in South Bend. "That's when I was first exposed to AgDay TV. The show was, and still is, produced out of the same building as the NBC affiliate. I got to know many of the people who work for AgDay yet today. After the NBC station, I worked for 12 years at the CBS affiliate in South Bend before deciding it was time to get out of the local news business." During this time, she had two kids, **Curtis**, now 14, and **Cathlyn**, now 10.

“I started working for AgDay on October 1, 2018, and it was quite a day to start. President Trump had just announced USMCA. I sat down, got to work, and have been busy since. I absolutely love the job and love our staff. **Clinton Griffiths** is a terrific anchor, along with *U.S. Farm Report's* **Tyne Morgan** and our national reporter **Betsy Jibben**. You’re probably wondering how much experience I had covering agriculture before I started with AgDay. The answer is zero, but I love learning about it. My father absolutely loved AgDay, too. He watched it every morning. He was not a farmer, but his cousin was, and he loved learning about it so he could carry on conversations with one of his favorite cousins.”

“I do come from a long line of farmers,” Kulba concluded. “I have a great interest in genealogy and have traced one family branch all the way back to the 14th century. Many relatives on both sides of my family were farmers. Several of my cousins are still involved in farming in Michigan and are a constant source of inspiration for me. I also love to help others discover their family histories through pictures and documents. For me, it helps bring their stories to life.”



ADAMS JOINS NAFB AS NEW MEMBER – **Brent Adams** marked a new chapter in his career in January with the launch of *Fastline Fast Track*, a weekly radio show and biweekly podcast featuring ag industry newsmakers, farm equipment talk, rural lifestyle features, and a country music segment recorded at the legendary Ernest Tubb Record Shop in Nashville, Tennessee. (Photo above: **Brent Adams** with country music star **Tayla Lynn**, granddaughter of **Loretta Lynn**.) Adams serves as host and executive producer of the Buckner, Kentucky-based show, which launched January 3 as a podcast. It featured a two-part interview with American Farm Bureau

President **Zippy Duvall**. Other notable figures who have appeared on the show include USDA Secretary **Sonny Perdue**, National Cattlemen's Beef Association President **Jennifer Houston**, and noted ag economist and national columnist **David Widmar**. Since its inception, Adams has taken the show nationwide, with stops at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, Kentucky; Commodity Classic in Orlando, Florida; 3i Show in Dodge City, Kansas; and the Fort Worth Stockyards in Fort Worth, Texas. Later this year, the show will make stops in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Missouri, and back to Texas. *Fastline Fast Track* launched its first weekly radio show Saturday, May 4, on WOCC-FM/AM in Corydon, Indiana, and currently is working to expand its network nationwide.

Before coming to Fastline, Adams spent eight years as editor of *The Southeast Outlook*, based in Louisville, Kentucky. He joined *Fastline Fast Track's* parent company, Fastline Media Group LLC, in August 2018, as director of content. In that role, he created the *Fastline Fast Track* concept, which is expanding to include video projects and a strong social media presence, including a live-streaming weekly show. Also, he serves as content editor and producer for the company's *Fastline* and *Big Ag* print publications, which are distributed nationwide.

"This has been a unique venture," Adams said of the creation of the *Fastline Fast Track* brand and the expansion into print and broadcast content for Fastline, which was established in 1978 as a farm-equipment catalog. "And 41 years later, that business continues strong, but Fastline saw an opportunity to provide people who know and trust the brand with content that helps them save time and money, make more money, and understand hot-button ag industry issues. The country-music angle was an added feature that provides entertainment to the listener and creates new opportunities for artists to reach listeners in rural America and beyond."

Adams spent his formative years in Holmen, Wisconsin, and Jasper, Indiana, and graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University with a BA in mass communication and media studies and a minor in digital audience management. He also holds an AS in journalism from Indiana University. He began his career as a sports editor with *The Seymour Tribune* and later held that position with the *New Albany Tribune*. He went on to become a writer and editor with *Business First of Louisville* and with the *Indianapolis Business Journal*. His radio experience includes a five-year stint as a producer for Summit Media Louisville, which includes stations WQNU-FM, WVEZ-FM, WRKA-FM, and WSFR-FM.

Adams' work in Nashville as a social media coordinator and publicist with entertainment public relations firm Hart Street Entertainment, public relations director with the Ernest Tubb Midnite Jamboree Association, and public relations chairman with the nonprofit Vetlinx Community Partnership for Veterans organization opened the door to connections that made the country music segment of *Fastline Fast Track* possible. He has a passion for bringing traditional country music back to the airwaves and taking it directly to America's farmers and ranchers.

As mentioned, Adams grew up in the heart of dairy country in La Crosse County, Wisconsin, where he lived surrounded by farms and learned to appreciate the hard work and dedication of

farmers. His family later moved to Dubois County, Indiana, which boasts a booming poultry industry. There he learned more about the industry as many of his classmates' families were row-crop farmers and raised hogs, cattle, and turkeys. His summers in high school and college were spent bailing hay on a horse farm, where he learned the value of hard work and perseverance.

Today, he has the unique opportunity to live out his love of broadcasting by melding his interest in agriculture with his business journalism experience and his passion for country music to produce an informative and entertaining show that has rapidly earned the respect of ag industry leaders and the country music industry alike.



(Photo above: **Brent Adams** interviews **Chris Evenson** of Farmers Edge at Commodity Classic.)

“I am excited to be working in agriculture,” Adams said. “Every day I get to learn from the people in the chain responsible for producing much of the food we eat and the materials used to clothe us. They are unsung heroes who face a myriad of challenges that many people in society are unaware of. We want to work to educate the public so their work isn’t taken for granted by lawmakers and consumers alike. We want farmers and ranchers and others who drive the industry to have a voice, and we want listeners to be informed and entertained.”

Adams added he is excited about being a part of NAFB because he looks forward to connecting with, and learning from, industry veterans.

“There is such a wealth of ag knowledge among the membership, and I hope I can tap into that in ways that will help me constantly improve and evolve as a broadcaster,” Adams said. “I want to create something of value that people in the industry look to as a credible, go-to source for insight — where they can leave each episode informed and entertained and eagerly looking forward to the next episode.”

Adams invites NAFB members to contact him at brent.adams@fastline.com, connect with him on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BrentAdams01>, and check out *Fastline Fast Track* at <https://www.fastline.com/podcast/fast-track>.



FFA EXPERIENCE LED TO HOWELL’S CAREER – Delaney Howell (*Ag News Daily*, Ankeny, Iowa) grew up on a row-crop and livestock farm in southeast Iowa and never really knew she wanted to pursue a career in agriculture until late middle school when she had a phenomenal FFA teacher. “I didn’t fully understand that there were people who had never been exposed to farms or agriculture, but I knew I was passionate about the industry and wanted to share it with others. I decided to go to college to pursue a degree as an agricultural education major, largely because I had had such an impactful FFA teacher. It wasn’t until my junior year of college that I decided to make the transition to a general ag degree with a broadcasting minor,” Howell said. “After working for two years at local radio station KNIM, it turns out I loved it, and I found a place where I felt I could educate people through the information I was sharing. I also spent a semester studying abroad in Bulgaria, and I came to realize that agriculture was so much bigger than what I had been exposed to in the United States. It sparked a fire in me to learn more about the global agricultural scene.”

“To this day, I continue to take opportunities to travel abroad and learn more about the global system and, so far, have traveled to 21 countries. The summer between my junior and senior years of college, I applied for an internship at *Market to Market* and was hired. I spent that

summer learning more about the show I had grown up watching and fell more in love with writing stories and telling the story of agriculture. **Mark Pearson** was an icon to me through the role of host for *Market to Market*. I never knew broadcasting was a career option for me until I interned for *Market to Market*. That was the biggest moment that changed my career path forever.”



(Photo above: **Delaney Howell** with **Max Armstrong**, 2017 NAFB President.)

“I continued with my education online through Texas Tech, and it was because of an NAFB Foundation scholarship a couple years ago that I was able to finance part of that degree. For that I am forever grateful. After I graduated from Northwest Missouri State University, I was working part-time at Iowa Public Television as a producer for *Market to Market*, pursuing my graduate degree in agricultural communications, and I launched my own video company responding to requests from ag businesses to produce videos. About six months after graduating from Northwest, **Mike Pearson** approached me with a business idea which led to creating a daily agricultural news podcast, *Ag News Daily*. After we had been podcasting for about a year and half, the idea of a podcast network started to form. We launched Global Ag Network last fall, which is a podcasting platform for originally created agricultural podcasts. We searched through ag podcasts and created a list of podcasts, and people approached us about joining the network. Individuals who host these podcasts aren’t broadcasters, but they’re folks who work in the industry and have such a depth of knowledge in their respective sectors in agriculture. It has been fun to watch them evolve and grow.”

Besides her podcasting business, Howell had a career-defining moment in 2018. “I was selected as the first female host, the fourth host of the program, and youngest host of *Market to Market*. It was really exciting to be able to step into a program with almost 45 years of production history, and one that so many farmers and ranchers trusted to their news and information. It has been a humbling experience that has opened a lot of doors for me, such as traveling the world as a public presenter for the Agricultural Speakers Network; and I’m eager to see where it heads and what’s next in my career path. I also want to mention some of the great outlets and mentors that have helped me during my career to find my voice and style, and how they all strengthened my confidence as a broadcaster and journalist. I currently host a daily radio program on Your Ag Network thanks to **Monte James**. I freelance stories for *This Week in Agribusiness* thanks to **Max Armstrong**, and I do freelance writing and event coverage for *Agri-Pulse* when dignitaries make it to Iowa. **Sara Wyant** has assisted me on how to run a successful business and to be a strong woman role model for the industry. NAFB President **Lorrie Boyer** took me under her wing and showed me the ropes at NAFB. I really do love telling agriculture’s stories, and I am so passionate about this industry. My dad teases me that of his three children, he figures I would be the least likely to pick a career in agriculture, but I love it. It’s where I feel at home.”

WE WANT YOUR NEWS – Send us your stories and photos for future newsletter issues. Contact me at larryaquinn@outlook.com or call me at **703-819-6532**. *Airing on the Side of Agriculture* is included in the blog section of NAFB.com. For an archive copy of any past issues, go to **Membership** and click on *Airing on the Side of Agriculture*.