



Volume 1, Number 2, August 1, 2013

by Larry A. Quinn

FIRST RESPONDERS...to last month's column were encouraging and insightful. **Don Borgman** (Director, Industry Relations, John Deere, Olathe, KS), wrote, "As **Tom Steever** pointed out, the key is being good journalists, and that means fair and accurate reporting. For too long, the uninformed and misinformed non-ag media have been painting the narrative about modern agriculture." Borgman concluded, "We owe the consumers of the food we produce the truth, and NAFB members can play a critical role in that effort. Encouraging balanced dialog and correcting misperceptions and misinformation isn't advocacy. It's just good, solid journalism."

FEEDBACK...is negative when you're using a microphone, but it is welcome in this space. **Cyndi Young** (Brownfield Ag News, Jefferson City, MO), **Bill O'Neill** (former NAFB Executive Director), **Jerry Lackey** (retired farm broadcaster, San Angelo, TX), **Wey Simpson** (retired farm broadcaster from Spokane Valley, WA), and **Ken Root** (Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network, Dyersville, IA) were among those offering their endorsements of this column's concept and their appreciation of news about NAFB members. As you will see, it also brings us updates from responders.

HIS VOICE FOR AGRICULTURE...has retired from the microphone, but it continues in print. **Jerry Lackey** still writes three agriculture columns per week for the *San Angelo Standard-Times*, but he reports, "My focus is turning to writing books. I am currently working on Number 7." *Homestead-Volume II* was released in June, and Jerry has book signings just about every Saturday throughout the summer. The book is a second collection of columns he has written over the years about the heritage of west Texas farmers and ranchers. "Although I'm retired from broadcasting, and just about everything else, I still like to keep up, and this column is great."

DIVERSITY...describes the agricultural communications work that **Ken Root** is doing. Beside broadcasting for Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network (which he owns with two partners), he is farm broadcaster for WGFA Radio (Watseka, IA), produces Open Mic for *Agri-Pulse*, and writes for the *High Plains Journal*. He also produces a weekly half-hour show for the Iowa Knights of Columbus called *Knight Life*. Recently, he interviewed **Bob Dineen** (Renewable Fuels Association) for that show about Bob's work in publishing a book on the history of his parish in Maryland. Ken and I share an interest in doing oral history interviews. When I told Ken of my own recent interviews, he said, "I think it is great that you are doing these oral histories and giving us a chance to archive the pioneers in their own time, and in their own words." Farm broadcasters can provide a real service documenting the history of farmers and ranchers in their listening areas. 4-H youth are engaged this year in a national project to document the early years of 4-H. Perhaps you have helped train youth in this important effort.

BEYOND HIS 50-YEAR BROADCASTING CAREER...WEYMUTH (WEY) SIMPSON is still writing, now for his church. He has been working on a book of devotions, and he even conducts church services on occasion. After retiring from broadcasting, he took on the project of penning his life's story. Even though he has completed 500 pages, he muses, "I keep thinking of ideas and events I didn't touch on, so a Post Script may be

in the works." For young members who have not met Wey, his roots are in agriculture, growing up on his family dairy farm in Deer Park, WA. He began his broadcasting career in 1947 as a student at Washington State College, where he earned a degree in speech and broadcasting. Before joining KHQ Radio and Television in Spokane in 1961, he worked at stations in Boise, ID, Eureka, CA, Yakima, WA and Ephrata, WA. He was news editor for KHQ until 1966, when he turned his attention full-time to covering agriculture and agribusiness. Serving 20 years in that job, Wey reported on daily agricultural developments and produced special programs on a wide range of agricultural issues. He also worked for KXLY Radio and Television. In 1986, he joined KAQQ radio where he concluded his farm broadcasting career. A member of NAFB since 1966, Wey served three terms as regional vice president and has earned the National Farm Broadcaster of the Year Award. In 1997, Washington State University awarded him the WSU Alumni Achievement Award citing him "for a half century of distinguished service to the broadcasting and agriculture industries, enduring commitment to the principle of journalism, and for his loyal support and assistance to his alma mater." Wey observes that he is in good health for his age (86/87). "I am convinced that long life may depend on one's genes, but also on how one lives, and keeping involved, connected and active must also play a major part."



THANKS FROM AFGHANISTAN...for providing farm information "around the world" came to Linder Farm Network (Owatonna, MN) from U.S. Forces Garrison Command, 652nd Regional Support Group, Kandahar, Afghanistan. Signed by the Commander and Lieutenant Colonel of the Command, the plaque contained an American flag and a thank you. **Lynn Ketelsen** and **Linda Brekke** are shown with the plaque. Lynn said, "We thanked the troops on the air and frankly, it gives me goose bumps just thinking about it." He said he'd "never considered that young troops around the world from the farm want to keep up with the farm reports on www.linderfarmnetwork.com, but apparently they do." Lynn concluded, "In all my years of farm broadcasting, we've never gotten anything like this."

FARMFEST...will feature a noontime, hour-long Ag Jamboree broadcast on August 6, 7 and 8. This is the 32nd year of Farmfest, which is expected to attract 35,000 people to the Gilfillan Estate in Redwood County, MN. **Lynn Ketelsen** and **Linda Brekke** will host the stage show that is a throw-back to old-time farm radio with live music by Uncle Roy and the Boys. The show will be carried by 30 radio stations throughout Minnesota. Economic and weather news along with appearances by the Minnesota Governor, Senators and Congressmen will highlight the broadcast. Lynn is marking his 36th year with Linder Farm Network. Linda has been with the network for 20 years.

NEW TO NAFB...but not to broadcasting, is **Don York** (KMJ, Fresno, CA). Coming from an Air Force family, Don spent most of his early years moving around the country from the east coast to northern California. He studied Broadcast Journalism and Theatre Arts at California State University and began his broadcast career as an intern for a Sacramento, CA news talk radio station. Prior to moving to Fresno in 1995, he reported for two New Mexico TV stations where he won several journalism awards. He helped launch Valley Ag News in Fresno as the main anchor at KMPH-TV. He was honored in

1998 by the Fresno County Farm Bureau for his journalism work. Starting in 1998, he worked as a news reporter and producer for KGPE-TV in Fresno before going back to KMPH-TV to become a commercial producer. In 2012, Don was back on the air reporting California farm news on a statewide radio network. In March 2013, Don was hired by KMJ radio as Director of Agri-Broadcasting. He anchors, produces and runs his own board for KMJ's California Ag Net Farm Report, Monday through Friday, 5:00 to 6:00 a.m. Don says, "KMJ has a big commitment to agriculture. Located in the heart of the biggest agriculture county in the nation, KMJ supports various farm related issues." For example, Don explained, "The station is currently airing a series of messages with help from one of its advertisers, urging the government to provide more irrigation water to farmers. " We welcome Don as one of the newest members of NAFB. You can contact him at don.york@peakbroadcasting.com.

NEW ASSIGNMENT...for **Jody Heemstra** (KWAT, Watertown, SD) begins August 5th. In announcing her addition to Red River Farm Network, **Mike Hergert** (RRFN President) said, "Jody will be a huge asset to the Red River Farm Network. She is an excellent farm broadcaster and will be a wonderful addition to our organization." An agricultural journalism graduate of South Dakota State University, Jody has worked for KWAT for almost 13 years. Before that assignment, she worked for stations in Milbank, SD, Sioux Falls, SD, and Storm Lake, IA. Jody is a graduate of the South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership Program, and she was recognized by *Cattle Business Weekly* as one of the "Top 10 Industry Leaders under 40." Red River Farm Network is based in Grand Forks, ND, and serves agriculture in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota through a network of 18 radio stations. You can contact her at jody@rrfn.com.

AG AD AGENCIES WERE HOSTED...

by Red River Farm Network on July 15-16 in the Moorhead - Fargo, ND area. The advertising representatives got a close look at modern agriculture and met with farmers at an evening barbecue. **Don Wick** (Red River Farm Network, Fargo, ND) said that **Bill Holst** (WNAX, Yankton, SD), chair of NAFB's Marketing and Promotion Board, also participated in this informational event.



AUSTRALIAN FARMERS TOURED OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURE...during their month-long tour of the U.S. taking them from New York to California. **Sam Knipp** (Oklahoma Farm Bureau) reports that the farmers spent two days in Oklahoma viewing the historic Ft. Reno USDA research station, a dairy farm, irrigated cotton and corn fields, and the historic Oklahoma City Stockyards. In the photo, **Mike Dain** (First Oklahoma Ag Network, Oklahoma City, OK), right, interviews **Geoff Campbell**, one of 36 Australian farmers on July 23, 2013.

SMITHSONIAN SEEKS FARM STORIES FOR NEW EXHIBIT...to help describe how much agriculture has changed. The Smithsonian National Museum of American History is looking for help from farmers, but since broadcasters are among the best storytellers, you may want to contribute. To find out how to participate, go to: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/agheritage/how-to-participate>.

NAFB 70TH CONVENTION
NOVEMBER 13-15, 2013

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REGISTER BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30...for the 70th NAFB National Convention to be held at the Westin Crown Center, November 13-15, and benefit from an early registration discount. To register and learn more details of this year's convention, go to the [NAFB website](#).

WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU...so we can share your stories of service to listeners. Contact me at larryaquinn@verizon.net or call me at 703-819-6532.

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