



Volume 1, Number 5, November 1, 2013

by Larry A. Quinn

WINTER STORM ATLAS IS IN THE PAST...But, its aftermath will be felt for years to come in South Dakota and northwestern Nebraska, according to **Sharlet Teigen** (NAFB Allied Industry Member, Demeter Communications). Sharlet lives and works from Belle Fourche, SD. "The timing of this storm was a huge factor in the devastation," she said. "The drenching rains, high winds, then huge amounts of snow made it impossible to predict the best places to be for cattle, sheep, horses and wildlife." She adds, "Winter Storm Atlas was the most brutal and livestock-killing winter storm that our generation probably recalls. As one of my rancher friends said: 'if this doesn't break you, it will break your heart.'" **Kerry Frei**, a Demeter Communications associate, lives on a cattle ranch in the very rural community of Red Owl, SD, which was one of the hardest hit. "Seeing the visible damage that our community is going through is bad enough. It's almost unbearable to think about the invisible toll - the agony felt by every ranching family for the animals that they were powerless to help, and now the incredible heartbreak of tallying the losses and moving the carcasses to protect water supplies and other resources." **Chase Adams** (NAFB Allied Industry Member, National Cattlemen's Beef Association) said, "Total livestock losses are still unknown, but are in the tens of thousands." NAFB members have reached out to help - from news coverage to contributions. A portal website has been established and is a good place to start when looking for information: www.ranchersrelief.org. People can also post volunteer services, such as fixing fence, donating usage of equipment, etc.



Sharlet Taigen, Demeter Communications Senior Partner, left, works on key messages to tell the South Dakota story. **Kerry Frei**, Demeter Communications Associate, right, at her Red Owl, SD, ranch.



The South Dakota Rancher Relief Fund was established on October 8, 2013, by Black Hills Area Community Foundation to provide support and relief assistance to those in the agriculture industry impacted by the blizzard of October 4-7, 2013. The fund will be administered by BHACF in cooperation with the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association and the South Dakota Sheep Growers Association for the direct benefit of the livestock producers impacted by this devastating blizzard. More than \$400,000 has been donated so far. An example is the CHS Foundation, the independent giving entity of CHS Inc., the nation's leading farmer-owned cooperative, which has contributed \$100,000 to the fund to assist livestock producers in the aftermath of the blizzard. [See more by clicking here.](#)

OTHER RELIEF EFFORTS...On October 21, AgChat hosted a one-hour Tweetcast to raise funds and awareness. Each tweet resulted in Tyson Foods donating \$10 (up to \$50,000). FFA chapters in several states are collecting donations, selling t-shirts and conducting other fundraisers to support their fellow members and their families. Zoetis (formally Pfizer Animal Health) is donating vaccines needed to treat illnesses in livestock that survived the storm. Merck has donated \$50,000 worth of Resflor Gold to be distributed through local vets to those affected by Atlas. NAFB Allied Industry members in the area volunteered their services to help ranchers share their stories and coordinate communications efforts.

NEWS COVERAGE OF SOUTH DAKOTA STORM...Coverage by farm broadcasters was greatly appreciated, Sharlet said, because it came from knowledgeable people who helped put the storm and the situation into perspective. **Clint Ridley** (KBHB, Sturgis, SD) led extensive coverage by his station, which included interviews that he conducted with South Dakota Secretary of Agriculture **Lucas Lentsch**, U.S. Senator

John Thune and other officials. Also, his station broadcast an interview with Agriculture Secretary **Tom Vilsack**. Beside his farm broadcasting work, Clint has a livestock brokerage business, and since most producers are selling their yearling cattle now, it is a busy time for him in more ways than one. **Michelle Rook** (WNAX, Yankton, SD) followed this story extensively, too. She said WNAX interviewed producers, state livestock organizations and state officials about the number of head of livestock impacted, carcass disposal and what producers needed to do to document losses in case there is a Livestock Indemnity Program passed as part of the new farm bill. WNAX has continued to promote and solicit contributions for the Rancher Relief Fund and the Heifers for South Dakota program. "There have been various numbers reported by the mainstream media on the losses, and most have been inaccurate," Michelle said. "The Wall Street Journal reported 100,000 head. However, that number is inflated, according to state officials who say the estimate is closer to 10,000 to 20,000 head." Actual totals may not be known until spring. Gathering data was complicated by the Farm Service Agency offices being closed due to the government shutdown. There were also losses in western Nebraska, although the numbers were much lower than in South Dakota. Northern Ag Network aired substantial coverage, including a special on Heifers for South Dakota, which is the organized effort for ranchers to donate cattle. RFD-TV and its affiliated news programs interviewed ranchers, South Dakota organizational representatives, agricultural business owners and government officials.

GETTING THE WORD OUT...about both the recent Colorado flooding and the early October storm in South Dakota, Nebraska and Wyoming has added to an already busy workload for **Brian Allmer** (Barn Media and Colorado Ag News Network). Brian has been in agriculture broadcasting since 2005 and has lived in Colorado his entire life. Barn Media originated in 2007, and the Colorado Agriculture News Network was added in January of 2012. Brian said, "Barn Media and the Colorado Ag News Network's mission is to provide accurate and factual information pertaining to any ag issue facing producers and agriculture entrepreneurs and then let the listener or webpage visitor make up their own minds based on the facts about the discussions presented to them." Brian lives on a working family farm and ranch in northeastern Colorado with his son, TJ, and wife, Connie. He says his lifelong goal is to promote agriculture in a positive way and to shine the light along that journey on the hard-working young women and men involved in Colorado's 4-H and FFA organizations.

FIGHT AGAINST WOLF PREDATION...is one of the big issues that **Greg Martin** (Ag Information Network, Kennewick, WA) is spending a lot of his reporting time covering. In the Pacific Northwest, they face the inevitable good versus evil of the gray wolf. "Our reporters have looked at this issue from many sides," he said. Greg has spent the better part of 30 years in broadcasting, beginning in the Midwest where he spent his summers growing up unloading wheat trucks or driving a tractor. His years in radio and his love of writing combine to help him cover the world of agribusiness. In addition to working for radio stations in Salina, KS; Bloomington, IL; Wichita, KS; Sonora, CA, and most recently at KONA AM/FM in the Tri-Cities, WA, Greg has successfully operated his own advertising agency, produced a nationally syndicated TV program and written a stage play. In his spare time he loves to write and play the piano and guitar. Greg and his wife, Gail, have one son and two grand-kids.



"VITTLES WITH VON"...is a promotion that **Von Ketelsen** (Carroll Broadcasting, Carroll, IA) started to serve lunch to county farmers each week during harvest. The winning families chosen get lunch served to them by Von. "It's gone over very well. A great way to connect with listeners, out where they are," Von said. **Bob Adams**, Adams Motor Company, left, shakes hands with Von Ketelsen next to the "Vittles with Von" truck provided by the company to deliver lunch to farm families.

ETHANOL INDUSTRY: A GAME CHANGER IN IOWA...We invited **Dan Skelton** (KICD, Spencer, IA) to describe how his station has "aired on the side of agriculture." Dan replied, "When I think of KICD farm programming that has 'turned the spotlight on agriculture,' I think of our focus on the development of the ethanol industry in the upper Midwest in the past 15 years. I know ethanol isn't popular everywhere, but the industry has been a game changer here. It is a classic example of supply and demand. In the past, we produced more corn than we could use, resulting in prices that were often 20 to 30 cents per bushel under the Board of Trade. The advent of 41 corn-based ethanol plants in Iowa reversed that, with corn prices last summer 30 cents over the Board of Trade."

"That extra income spent very little time in the farmer's pocket. Machinery has been purchased, new homes have been built, farmsteads improved and, in some cases, the decline of small towns has been reversed. Obviously, KICD farm programming didn't do all of that, but we helped. We chronicled the development of the industry and supported it. We closely followed the research into feeding the byproducts to cattle and the enthusiastic acceptance of DDGs by cattle feeders. We are currently reporting on the development of POET-DSM's cellulosic bio-ethanol plant near Emmetsburg, Iowa. That first-in-the-nation commercial-scale plant will open next March and create 20 million gallons of ethanol each year from the cobs, husks and stalk material from the corn plant. To do that, the plant is purchasing 100,000 tons of 'cob bales' from area farmers this fall, creating another source of farm income."

Dan concluded, "I think our interviews and reporting over the years has helped the public understand and accept the ethanol industry."

FFA COMES NATURALLY TO ME...said **Ron Hays** (Radio Oklahoma Network, Oklahoma City, OK) as he reflected on his nearly 40 years of farm broadcasting while covering the 86th National FFA Convention in Louisville this past week. His earliest memories of FFA are of hanging out as a six- or seven-year-old with his Dad's FFA boys at the State Fair. "Later, I put that FFA jacket on and showed hogs and sheep, and fell in love with the speech competitions. During those FFA years, I got bit by the radio bug and wanted to combine radio and agriculture, and that included FFA."

His first full-time farm broadcasting job was at KFH Radio in Wichita in 1974, where he quickly hooked up with the state FFA leadership. They plugged him into judging and other leadership development training. When he moved from Kansas to Oklahoma in 1977, he developed a national training workshop that he conducted at the 1977 National FFA convention in Kansas City. "That caught the attention of the Oklahoma FFA folks, and I have been helping them in a variety of ways ever since. Down through the years, I have judged speeches and the presentation of the Creed at the state and national levels. I have served as a proficiency award judge at the state and national level as well."

Ron began helping produce the Stars over Oklahoma pageant for the annual state convention of the Oklahoma FFA in the mid-1980s. He's done it annually since that time - missing only one year when the bombing of the Federal building in downtown Oklahoma City changed the convention radically. He's also served as a speech consultant for many prepared and extemporaneous speaking winners that have qualified for state. The same is true for many national FFA officer candidates.

He says it is "a huge thrill" when one of the young men or women win it all. "I've got two I am rooting for this year here in Louisville," Ron said. This year [Ron produced radio spots](#) that featured outstanding FFA Alumni telling how FFA has made a difference in their lives. Those spots ran statewide last spring and summer.

FFA has recognized Ron's contributions, awarding him the Honorary American Farmer Degree. Later, the state of Oklahoma honored him with their VIP Award at the state level, and in 2011, nominated him for the [National VIP Award](#), which may have been the first one ever given to an "on air" farm broadcaster.

How does supporting the FFA fit in with the need to earn money for his network's success? "It's an investment in the future when we report on the spring livestock show. We remain relevant to the local communities across Oklahoma, (and it) translates into loyalty." Ron emphasized, "I cannot tell you how many adults that listen to me today or read our daily email were once interviewed by me when they were in 4-H or FFA."

Ron's story shows that he is not only "airing on the side of agriculture," but also "airing on the side of FFA."

THOUGHTS FROM NAFB PRESIDENT...Mark Oppold (RFD-TV/Rural TV, Nashville, TN) said, "As my year as NAFB President comes to an end, I have a deeper appreciation of those men and women who have gone before me in leading this great association. I have a better understanding of the meaning of stewardship. We use the term in agriculture on a regular basis, and certainly farmers know that while they may own the land on paper, they are only caretakers of the land until the next generation takes over, and the next.

"NAFB and RFD-TV as organizations are stewards of the news important to rural America and the rural lifestyle. Others will follow in both organizations, but while under our care, we must do our best to remind or even educate those who consume food and fiber, but do not produce it, on where their food comes from, and see and hear from the people who produce it.

"It has been a focus as NAFB President that each of the three councils within NAFB have a better sense of belonging and the important role they play in reminding America of the importance of a healthy agriculture. It has been an honor to 'hold the owners papers' of NAFB the past year."

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

NAFB
P.O. Box 500
Platte City, MO 64079
(816) 431-4032

[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to tom@nafb.com by info@nafb.com |
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

National Association of Farm Broadcasting | 1100 Platte Falls Road | Platte City | MO | 64079