

Volume 4, Number 11, November 1, 2016

by Larry A. Quinn



KELLY LENZ INDUCTED INTO KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS HALL OF FAME – Often called the “radio voice of Kansas Agriculture,” WIBW Radio/Kansas Agriculture Network Farm Director **Kelly Lenz** was honored as one of the 2016 inductees to the Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame. The ceremony took place October 9 at the opening of the Kansas Association of Broadcasters individual awards ceremony. Kelly spoke about several former KAB Hall of Fame inductees with whom he had the chance to work: **Mark Vail** (2013), **George Logan** (1997), **Jerry Holley** (1987) and **Ed O’Donnell** (2003). He also mentioned **Sonny Slater**, who at the time Kelly came to Topeka, was “the dean of farm broadcasters.” Kelly looked back when he first became interested in radio when he was young growing up on a farm in western Iowa. “I received a transistor radio in 1963, a little transistor radio, and I treasured it. I would take it to bed at night, get under the covers, turn on AM radio and see how many stations that I could pick up.” He talked

about picking up stations from Cincinnati, Chicago, Des Moines, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Dallas, Little Rock, Oklahoma City, Kansas City and Denver. "It opened an entire world for me on that Iowa farm, and I became fascinated with radio," he said. Kelly started his farm broadcasting career at WIOK (Normal, IL). A few years later, he took over as Farm Director for WJBC (Bloomington, IL). In 1978, Kelly was hired as Assistant Farm Director for WIBW (Topeka, KS). A year later, he became Farm Director. With 38 years of service, Kelly has been a leader and innovator in the farm broadcasting industry. In 1983 he started the *Ag Issues* program on WIBW, one of the first agricultural talk shows in the nation. Also, he began an annual agricultural conference for farmers and ranchers. Now in its 33rd year, the *Farm Profit* conferences have evolved into four conferences held in different locations in the WIBW listening area. The interest in the farm profit conferences continues to grow with more than 725 producers attending the conferences in 2016. Under his leadership, the station also presented annual programs at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson, KS, including debates for Kansas Governor and the U.S. Senate. At least two USDA Secretaries have appeared on the program, as well as dozens of congressional leaders. Kelly has been honored for his work covering and reporting on Kansas agriculture. He's a former Regional Farm Broadcaster of the Year as recognized by NAFB. Among his most cherished awards include the Kansas Farm Bureau Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award, and the Honorary State and National Farmer degrees from FFA. Kelly also gave special recognition to farmers and ranchers who are the listening audience for the station's and network's ag programming. "They are, in my opinion, the salt of the earth. They are the people that get me up in the morning." Lenz says he reminds younger people that the first three hours of the morning are the most important in radio. "We wake people up, and we help them adjust to their day. So, we can be down, or we can be up. We can be serious, we can be funny, but it's the guy on the radio or the people on the radio through the first three hours of the day that sets the pace for the whole day." About his induction, Kelly said, "I was shocked when **Larry Riggins**, our radio manager, told me I had been selected for the KAB Hall of Fame. Only a very small group of people who have worked in farm broadcasting have received this honor. I am humbled and honored to join their ranks."

HURRICANE MATTHEW FLOODS CAROLINA AGRICULTURE OPERATIONS – Rhonda Garrison (Southern Farm Network, Raleigh, NC) reports significant flooding of agricultural crops and livestock in the Carolinas from Hurricane Matthew, but damage reports are just now starting to come in. Flood waters have not only prevented access to fields and other locations, they've prevented the continuation of harvest. Some crops in the field before the hurricane including cotton, peanuts, soybeans and sweet potatoes may be harvestable, but others will not, she added. "Some crops may be deemed adulterated by flood waters and unsuitable for the human food chain, including feeding to food animals. They're just going to have to come out of the field and be tested before we know," she said. "Cotton losses east of Interstate 95 are upwards of 50 percent. For many producers, this is the second year in a row of crop losses due to excessive rains and flooding," she said. "Unlike Hurricane Floyd in 1999, no hog lagoons were breached, therefore no hog waste ran into rivers that ultimately lead to the Atlantic. Hog loss numbers have been few, and poultry numbers are slow to come in. The last number I heard was 6 million

birds, counting a combination of broilers and turkeys. While that's a big number, it's a very small percentage of the poultry in North Carolina. We've only had one day of spotty showers since the hurricane on October 8. So, we've had good harvest weather for the last 3 weeks, but in many cases, the fields are still just too wet."



This South Carolina photo shows the Little Pee Dee River running across the top. Flooded grain silos and a poultry farm are in the lower right corner.



This photo from eastern North Carolina shows a flooded poultry operation.



WIND ENERGY PROJECT COMING TO MILLARD CENTURY FARMS –

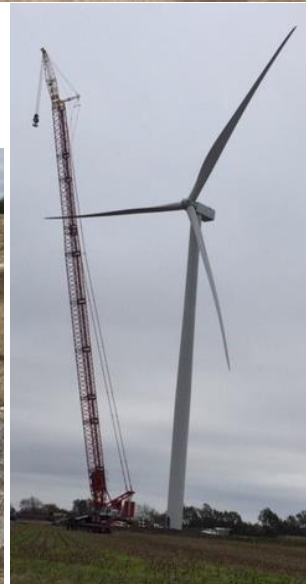
A 100-megawatt wind energy project by *Nextera Energy* has arrived at Millard Century Farms LLC at Osborn, MO. **Gene Millard** is the third generation custodian of the family farm started by his grandparents on the first 80-acre tract in 1905. Additional adjoining acreages were acquired over the next 100 years by Gene and his parents to make the current farm of 750 acres that compose Millard Century Farms LLC. A 240-acre tract of that land is being used for three 2-Megawatt wind turbines. That part of the farm has a history of contributing its resources for the public benefit dating back to the 1940s. From 1941 to 1944, the U.S. Army Air Corps had a grass air strip that was used for fighter pilot training during World War II. While corn for ethanol and food products, soybeans for livestock feed, and soy diesel along with beef cattle are the major crops at Millard

Family Farms Inc., wind energy is now being added to the productivity to provide more than 6 megawatts annually from the three 500-foot wind generator turbines that will be operational before January 2017. **Gene** and his son, **Brian**, are the operators of Millard Family Farms Inc. that manages a total of more than 1,400 acres near Osborn, MO, 25 miles east of St. Joseph, MO. Gene is a 52-year broadcaster and NAFB member. He currently broadcasts *Agri-Shop*, a weekly hour-long, live radio show every Saturday morning on KFEQ (St. Joseph, MO). The show is carried also by a network of 10 other stations in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado. “There continues to be some strong local opposition to building this wind farm with neighbors harassing neighbors and making personal attacks,” Gene said. “My personal feelings are mixed. First, I have a very strong personal appreciation for the many years of intense work, worry and commitment (we refer to it as blood, sweat and tears) that was required to build and sustain this little portion of farmland.” He continued, “When the construction began, I had a feeling of being invaded and violated as there are some special places with special memories that I almost held sacred being graded for roads and huge holes being dug in the middle of some beautiful soybean fields. The size and extraordinary cost of these projects is somewhat beyond the ordinary person’s



comprehension.” Gene said, “One question might be: Is this *green energy* policy driven by political forces that have no real concern for the impact on those being used to fulfill their campaign.” Further, he observes, “Is this progress making the world a better and more exciting place to continue to build upon our heritage and passion for our Family Century Farm?”

Below: Large wind turbine blades are being installed on the Millard Farm. A wind turbine base is readied to support the large windmill. Turbine blades are mounted on the energy-generating windmill.



CHASE ADAMS ACCEPTS SHEEP INDUSTRY POSITION

Chase Adams will move to Denver at the end of November to join the American Sheep Industry as its Senior Policy and Information Director. “While I have truly enjoyed my time with the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, I am excited about the opportunity to work with our nation’s sheep producers,” Chase said. “Growing up in western South Dakota and having covered the sheep industry as a farm broadcaster, I know first-hand many of the issues these producers face. Having worked on many of the same environmental issues with the cattlemen and



land use issues with the Public Lands Council, I am confident we can hit the ground running and bring value to all the members of the American Sheep Industry Association.” Regarding his NAFB membership, he said, “NAFB has been invaluable in making and maintaining connections and networking throughout my career. Starting in 2005 as a student member, then becoming a Broadcast Council member and finally an Allied Industry member, I have represented both segments on the Board of Directors. I have been proud to work with NAFB, and proud to have served. I fully believe NAFB has a vital role to play in preserving the value of broadcasting and networking for folks that have a love of agriculture. I am committed as ever to ensuring NAFB maintains that relevance now and into the future.”

NEW MONTANA NAFB MEMBER – Jim (Sarge)

Sargent (Great Falls, MT) comes to KINX 102.7 FM and Star Radio with an agriculture background. He’s been in the radio business for the past 25 years reporting agriculture news and sports at all levels, and he enjoys following the Montana State University Bobcats. Among highlights of Sarge’s radio career, he lists interviewing **Hillary Clinton** and meeting **President Obama**, as well as broadcasting on the sidelines at Kyle Field (Texas A&M University stadium) when the Cats played the Aggies. He’s received numerous awards from sports broadcasting and the FFA and 4-H Foundations in support of the future of agriculture.



Also, Sarge has worked in production agriculture with Cargill elevators in buying and shipping grain as well as raising and selling cattle in Montana. Sarge said, “I really enjoy being a part of the community and am willing to help promote agriculture in my state as much as I can. I am always

willing to help. As the Ag and Sports director at KINX, I love working with kids and keeping folks in Montana informed through stories and information that affect all our lives.”

NORTHERN COLORADO DEEP WATER-WELL TO SERVE WATER-SCARCE REGION – Brian Allmer (BARN Media Network, Briggsdale, CO) reports, “On Colorado’s arid, northeastern plains, a high-capacity water-well promises to tap into a much-needed resource for local cattle and crop production. The 1,500 foot-deep well outside Briggsdale, CO, has been a long-term vision for the **Mertens** family and their ranching operation.” Through the engineering and legal support of Quantum Water & Environment and Hydro Resources, the years-long process for the well could wrap up as early as this December, Brian said. Rancher **Jim Mertens** explained that while



expensive to take on as a property owner, the addition of the well could provide relief when water is short. “We’ve been here since 1947, when my mom and dad came, and we’ve always been short on water, so we’re just trying to remedy that situation,” Mertens told Barn Media from the well-site. “The two big things are livestock and spraying. Our farming operation keeps expanding and right now we’re hauling basically all the spray water from Fort Morgan, and we’d like to get those trucks off the road.” Hydro Resources Drilling Manager **Jasen Decker** explained the high capacity of the Mertens well, a flooded, reverse-circulation, drill rig. The well has been engineered to optimize production from the property’s shale and sandstone-dominate ground structure. “It’s actually a 150,000-pound rated, carrier-mounted rig. It’s a lot bigger than what you’ll typically see in your residential and your small-diameter stock well. It drills a lot larger hole to accommodate bigger pipe and larger production wells,” Decker said. To access the water beneath their property, the Mertens have also taken on the long process of adjudicating their resource through water court. While the well structure is already in place, the Mertens must still finish with legal proceedings. Although a demanding and time-consuming process, legally settling water rights can pay off for property owners, explained **Theresa Jehn-Dellaport**, president of Quantum Water & Environment. “This is extremely valuable, and water in Colorado is only going to get more expensive. The sooner you adjudicate, the better off you are going to be,” Jehn-Dellaport said. “The cost of drilling this type of well is pretty expensive, but at least if you have the water adjudicated, you know you have that under your property, and it’s much more valuable to your property rights if you ever wanted to sell.” The Mertens are currently adjudicating more than 350 acre-feet of water under just a portion of their property, Jehn-Dellaport said. As current court proceedings wrap up, she anticipated further water development on the ranch’s remaining

acreage. For more information on the Mertens well, you can read more on barnmedia.net or watch on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/xRgusOilz3U..>

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***.