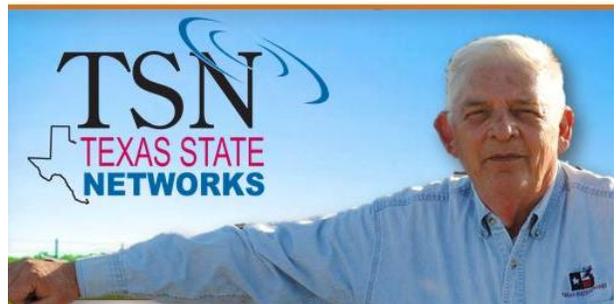


Volume 5, Number 10, October 2, 2017

by Larry A. Quinn



**HURRICANE HARVEY HAMMERS TEXAS** – Tony Purcell (Texas State Networks, Dallas, TX) reports that Hurricane Harvey made landfall August 25, between Port Aransas and Port O'Connor, TX, as a Category 4 storm with winds of 130 mph. “In a four-day period, many areas received more than 40 inches of rain as the slow-moving storm meandered over east Texas causing catastrophic flooding. The resulting floods did massive damage to the cotton crop and threatened more than a million head of cattle.” At the time, cotton growers in the region were harvesting what appeared to be the best crop in a decade. In fact, most of the crop in the 51-county





disaster area had been harvested with modules, each weighing 10 metric tons, covered with tarps and stored in fields and gin yards. Tony added, "The 100 mph winds ripped the tarps off and scattered the cotton over several square miles. The rain finished the job, and all was lost. The destruction of modules combined with the loss of unharvested cotton in the fields is estimated at 400,000 to 500,000 bales." There were 1.2 million head of cattle in the affected area. "That's about 25 percent of the herd in the nation's #1 cattle producing state. With Harvey only moving at 4 mph to 5 mph, ranchers moved a lot of their cattle to higher ground and, in many cases, completely out of the area. While there are no numbers available yet, death loss is expected to be minimal." Slow movement of the storm also resulted in record flooding. "A lot of cattle that had been moved to higher ground were stranded without hay or feed." Tony observed, "The generosity of farmers and ranchers not hit by the hurricane was overwhelming. Hay and feed from north Texas and surrounding states was trucked in to staging areas. The Texas National Guard used Chinook and Huey helicopters to move the supplies to the areas where the hungry cattle were stranded." Tony concluded, "As the waters recede, millions of dollars in damage to fences and infrastructure became apparent. That will be the long-term cost of Harvey."





**HURRICANE IRMA DESTROYS FLORIDA CITRUS AND VEGGIE CROPS** – First reports of Florida crop damage from Hurricane Irma were conservatively estimated at about 50 percent crop loss, but Florida Ag Commissioner **Adam Putnam** stated he thinks it is more in the 80-plus percent crop



loss range, reports **Gary Cooper** (Southeast AgNet Radio Network, Gainesville, FL). “Citrus damage was in all citrus growing areas, both east and west coast. Also, veggie and specialty crops and cattle areas got hit hard.” Gary explained, “This was a huge storm and that alone added tremendous stamina and energy to it for a very wide swath that included most all of the peninsula and a good part of the panhandle on Irma’s swing through the neighborhood. Citrus folks really took it bad. Veggie damage was not as bad, only because growers were just getting the south Florida fall plantings into the ground. Planting that had been completed was a total loss, and fields have become bogs with no access. Gary said, “Farmers will replant late with their fall crop, and the market for that crop will surely be screwed up too since everyone will be planting, and therefore harvesting about the same time. Markets are tough when it all gets picked at same exact time, instead of staggered plantings and harvests for these quick turnaround and high value crops.” Gary added, “Since Hurricane Irma came up through Florida staying over land, it saved much damage, and weakened to a Category One by the time it reached us in the Ocala and Gainesville area in north central Florida. This track also pulled the surge away from the Gulf shore in this area of the state, instead of wiping out our fishing cabin on the Gulf coast in the nearby Big Bend region. The cabin was totally spared of any damage at all. As it is, we can still have some fishing fun at the place until the ‘big one’ for that area comes along, like Irma was for the Keys.” Gary emphasized, “The Florida Keys are simply changed forever. They will never be the same as we’ve known them in my generation, nor will certain parts of old-timey south Florida, which had survived until now.” The

good news for Gary was that his home in Ocala, FL, had no real structural damage because so many huge trees on their 10-acre farm came down early in the storm forming a perfect windbreak that protected them for the rest of the night.



Gary will have a new part-time job dealing with cleanup of all the downed trees on his farm. “I plan to work through as much as I can on my own time.”



Hurricane Irma significantly impacted Florida agriculture. Gary reports that Florida Farm Bureau Women's Fund is accepting tax-deductible donations to aid in relief to Florida agriculture devastated by Hurricane Irma. For information about donations, go to: <http://www.floridafarmbureau.org/hurricane-irma-relief-fund/>



**NAFB PRESIDENTS CO-HOST SESSION AT FARM PROGRESS SHOW** – “The Farm Progress Show comes to Illinois every other year, and this was the year for me to return to my roots,” 2002 NAFB President **Colleen Callahan** said. “Thanks to Max Armstrong (2017 NAFB President) for giving me the opportunity to work together on the ADM stage. It must be like riding a bike,” she said. Max added, “Colleen, who has been doing some stories for us on our weekly TV show, *This Week in AgriBusiness*, was on hand to co-host with me at the Farm Progress Show in the ADM Pavilion. **Orion Samuelson** (1965 NAFB President) was with me the first two days of FPS, and Colleen was there the third and final day.” Max continued, “It was a very busy day, and the ADM exhibit was packed with grade school students. Philanthropist and farmer **Howard Buffett**, who lives not far from the Progress Show site, made it possible for some 600 Decatur students to attend the show on that Thursday to learn about agriculture. Colleen brought three of the students on stage to talk about it. Howard, by the way, will be attending the 2017 NAFB Convention in November in Kansas City.” Max concluded, “I also had the pleasure of interviewing that day at ADM a local woman in the audience who is 101 years old.”



### **LIZ BROWN'S JOURNEY TO FARM BROADCASTING – Liz**

**Brown** (KOEL-AM, Oelwein, IA) was raised in northeast Iowa in a small farming town by a single mom and three older brothers. “Stepping up and doing what you should is not a suggestion, it’s the unwritten rule. That’s how my journey began,” she says. “I was raised in Sumner, IA, a town surrounded by corn and bean fields, livestock of every size, shape, and color and tractors in red, blue, yellow and, of course, green. Liz admits, “I was born with agriculture in my blood and always at my door. My mother first introduced me to the farming world when she worked at John Deere in Waterloo, IA, as a machinist, taking our family on tours of the facility, talking about the parts she was working on each day and showing me what hard work looked like.” In the 1980s, Liz quickly learned how the farm world is linked to the rest of the world as the farm crisis took hold. “Mom and many others lost their jobs at John Deere. Families left our small town in search of work in other states, taking my

friends and school mates with them. Our family fought to hang on and stay where we were. As we grew we would work on neighboring and family farms picking up rocks, walking beans, detasseling, bailing hay, gathering eggs, processing chickens and the list goes on.” When college came calling, she was sure a degree in the legal world would take her far away from the small towns. She studied and became a paralegal, only to never work in that field a day in her life, but her education has suited her well. As a young adult, Liz tried her hand at jobs mostly in retail sales. When she moved to Oelwein, IA, and worked in a jewelry store, she was often asked to voice radio commercials. Initially, she declined. “I was afraid to be on the radio,” she admitted. Years passed and when the local radio station was searching for a receptionist, she applied. “I didn’t get the job. Instead I was offered a job writing and producing commercials. In the middle of my interview my head was screaming ‘don’t do it’ yet my mouth said ‘yes, I can do that.’ After all, I needed a full-time job with benefits and this door was opened for me.” In January 2002, Liz accepted the position of Assistant Production Manager at KOEL AM 950. Most of her work focused on writing and producing commercials for clients, but she was told there may be on-air duties from time to time. She learned that she would be expected to do an on-air shift, every third Saturday that would include local news, funeral announcements and a two-hour call in show. “I still remember the first time I read obituaries live on-air. My co-worker **Roger King** sat me down at the control panel, handed me a stack of papers, turned on the microphone and motioned for me to start. I got through them without adding my name to the list. When I was done, Roger looked at me and said ‘Radio is sink or swim. Glad you figured out how to swim.’” KOEL AM 950 has been in Oelwein and on-air since July 23, 1950, providing national, local, and farm news, Rock, Country and Polka music, but it’s the personalities of KOEL that have made the station so historic. The genetics of KOEL include **Dave Sylvester, Dick Petrik, Arnie Zaruba, Ray**

**Leafstedt, Pam Ohrt, Tom Parsley, Gary Rima, Phil Pannier, and Von Ketelsen**, just to name a few. In life and in work, things evolve, people move on and people step up. “By 2007, nearly a dozen personalities had come and gone. News Director **Roger King** and I had been the constant voices for our listeners. Each stepping up to fill in until the next personality arrived and eventually left. That’s when I leapt forward and applied for the Farm Director position at KOEL.” She acknowledges, “It’s no hidden secret that I do not have formal schooling in radio broadcasting. I also do not have formal education in ag science. I have never lived on a farm and until this year, I have never been in a show ring with a steer.” She adds, “My education has come from my experiences. I am thankful to the listeners who willingly call to tell me, usually politely, that I am wrong and this is how to fix what I did. I am thankful for my co-workers who believed in me and pushed me to take the next step in my career and continue to push me out of my comfort zone today. I am mostly thankful that my family who understands ‘mom has to go to work’ is a natural part of our middle of the night and weekend life.” Since March 2007, Liz has been the Farm Director and Brand Manager at KOEL AM 950. “The inspirational people I have interviewed, the places I have gone, the experiences I have had are at times overwhelming and rewarding.” She remembers the first time she went to Kansas City to attend NAFB.



“I was so overwhelmed and under prepared. I vowed next year will be better, and it was, until my equipment broke and I had to borrow a recorder before Trade Talk.” She concludes, “As I reflect on my years at KOEL, I smile when I remember my first time in a milking contest where I lost to an 8-year-old who had to tell me listens to our radio station every morning to hear birthdays before he goes to school. I rejoice in the

memories and friends made during several of our Great Autumn Tractor Rides, the KOEL Farm Expos and a bus trip to Branson, things our listeners ask us to bring back again and again. And now in 2017, I will add to my experiences a celebrity livestock show at the Fayette County Fair in West Union, IA, where my partner in crime was an all-black steer who enjoyed rolling his eyes at me when I refused to scratch his belly for the judges. Stepping up and doing what you should is not a suggestion, it’s the unwritten rule. I live that every day while reflecting on the words of a friend gone too fast, the late **Lindsay Hill**, who said, ‘Life is too short to wake up with regrets.’”

**STATION MANAGER AND FARM BROADCASTER – Jared White** (WHOW/WEZC, Clinton, IL) serves as Station Manager of WHOW and WEZC as well as farm broadcaster for the Miller Media Group radio stations in Clinton and Taylorville, IL. Jared has been in the farm broadcasting position since May 2010 and has been an NAFB member since then. Also, he has periodically supplied reports for the RFD Illinois Radio Network.



At the Illinois State Fair, **Jared White**, left, and **Randy Miller**, owner of WHOW, interview **Rich Guebert**, President of Illinois Farm Bureau.

Originally from Sullivan, IL, Jared currently lives in Clinton, IL, with his wife, three sons, and three stepchildren. He graduated with an associate degree in Radio/TV Broadcasting from Lake Land College in Mattoon, IL. He worked for the Miller Media Group in Taylorville and Shelbyville, IL, as a News Director and Morning Show host from 1999 to 2002, and he worked for the Radio Group in LaSalle-Peru, IL, as an afternoon country music host and sports director from 2002 to 2007. From 2007 to present, he has worked for the Miller Media Group in Clinton, IL. Jared was awarded the *Excellence in Media Award* from the Illinois Corn Growers Association in 2012 and was presented the *Service to Illinois Agriculture Award* by Farm Credit Illinois in 2014. In his current position, he produces two 15-minute local farm shows a day for WHOW and WTIM. “Between the two signals, our coverage area is most of central Illinois,” Jared said. “I try to feature interviews with everyone from farm leaders, researchers, market experts, and agronomists to all sizes of producers – whether it’s someone farming 10,000 acres or an organic produce grower with a few acres selling at the local farmer’s market. My hope is the program is a place where farmers can get information they can use to be more successful as well as where consumers can be better connected to where their food comes from.” Jared explains, “I suppose that’s where

the outcue of my show came from: “Remember, if you eat, then you, too, are involved in agriculture.” He enjoys his farm broadcasting role, but he admits that perhaps his favorite activity is their annual *Combine Reports* each fall. “We’ve been doing them for several years now, and without a doubt they garner more comments and response than anything else we’ve done. I’ve had the pleasure of riding in combines interviewing farmers in at least 25 Illinois counties, and I can’t wait to add more!” Jared loves his role as farm broadcaster for the Miller Media Group. “I have learned that agriculture is always a work in progress, and there is always something new and innovating being discovered. Also, it gives me the chance to speak to consumers so they realize where their food comes from, and what it takes to bring it to the table. Plus, who wouldn't love a position where you get to surround yourself with some of the hardest working people in the nation?” Jared concludes, “My role in farm broadcasting has been a learn- as-you-go affair. I didn’t grow up on a farm, or have much direct exposure to agriculture growing up. Before taking the role, I had just a basic knowledge of agriculture. It’s been rewarding to be able to learn about everything from agronomics to marketing. From early on, I discovered that each farming operation does things a little differently from the next. Part of what I try to do with my program is find out what that is, and share that with the audience.”



**Jared White** joins fellow farm broadcasters and reporters in covering Secretary of Agriculture **Sonny Perdue** at his farm bill listening stop in Rochester, IL.



**WYXY WELCOMES TWO NAFB FOUNDATION INTERNSHIP GRANT RECIPIENTS – Gale Cunningham (WYXY, Champaign, IL) mentored two NAFB Foundation 2017 student intern grant recipients, **Kade Hill**, left, and **Bethany Boose**. Kade Hill, WYXY (Champaign, IL) intern said,**

“It goes without saying that my decision to pursue a career in agriculture is a first for my family. Kade is from Paxton, IL, and he graduated from Paxton-Buckley-Loda High School in 2015, He is a sophomore at the University of Illinois majoring in agriculture education. “While I did not grow up in an agriculture setting, nor with an agriculture background, I am still very passionate about agriculture. My connection to

agriculture came from my decision to take an agriculture class in high school. Soon to follow came my decision to join the Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA Chapter. I took agriculture classes through the duration of my high school career, and I was heavily involved in the National FFA Organization.”

His involvement in the National FFA Organization presented him with an opportunity to grow his knowledge and experience in the agriculture industry. “It pushed me to pursue higher goals based on a core value of service. While my involvement in the National FFA Organization continues as a current candidate for National FFA President, I strive to find other avenues to immerse myself in the agriculture industry such as my internship as a farm broadcaster with WYXY Classic 99.1.” He said, “My decision to pursue a degree in agriculture education and a career as a high school agriculture teacher and FFA advisor was, and still is, greatly influenced by my high school agriculture teachers and my experiences in the National FFA Organization.” He credits his teachers with a great impact on him. “It is my goal to create a similar impact on my students through serving as a teacher and advisor.” Kade concludes, “I am very thankful for the opportunity to intern with WYXY Classic 99.1 this summer as a farm broadcasting intern. This internship has, and continues to, present me with experiences to learn about the agriculture industry. As an agriculture teacher, it is my goal to use the skills learned through this internship to teach my students about agriculture.



WYXY (Champaign, IL) Farm Broadcaster Intern **Bethany Boose**, left, grew up just outside Georgetown, IL, showing hogs and cattle. “I have been involved in the show pig industry for as long as I can remember and became active in the show cattle industry around the age of eight when my uncle introduced me to his passion.” She added, “My family focuses on mainly the Yorkshire, Duroc, and Berkshire breeds, however, we have had every breed in the barn at some point. I have always shown primarily Shorthorn heifers with an Angus

heifer in the mix on occasion.” Bethany graduated from Georgetown - Ridge Farm High School in 2015. During high school, she was very active in her FFA Chapter and Section. “During my Junior year, I served as the Section 18 Treasurer and during my senior year I served as our Chapter’s President and Section 18 Vice President.” During her four years in FFA, Bethany participated in many Career Development Events (CDE's) and Community Service Projects. In June 2015, she

received her State Degree. In 2016, she finished her 4-H term as a 10-year member. During her 4-H years, she held many different offices within the club and the 4-H Federation. Bethany is now a student at Lake Land College in Mattoon, IL, studying agricultural business. In the spring of 2018, she plans to transfer to Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL. "Growing up, I always listened to WYXY Classic 99.1 in the truck with my dad and when I got my own vehicle 99.1 was always one of my preset stations. Growing up showing hogs and cattle, I was always at several different county, state, and national shows. **Gale Cunningham** was at every county fair I attended. I did my first interview with him at my home fair in Georgetown when I was only eight years old. Since that interview, Gale and I have done several more interviews at different fairs and FFA events." Last summer, Bethany started to realize her 2017 summer would be quite different as she would no longer be eligible to show in the Junior shows at county fairs. "In August at my home fair, I asked Gale what process I needed to go through to be an intern for the summer of 2017. He told me all about the process and the details of this internship. In December, I contacted Gale to set up an interview that would be much different from any other interview Gale had done with me." After the interview, she was informed that she and **Kade Hill** had been chosen as the summer interns for WYXY Classic 99.1. **Kade, Bethany, Gale** and the entire WYXY Classic Broadcast team extend a sincere thank you to *DuPont Pioneer for their support of the NAFB Foundation Internship Grant Program.*

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