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by Larry A. Quinn



**MARK OPPOLD REDIRECTS HIS CAREER** – Last April, **Mark Oppold** left full-time employment at *RFD-TV* after a nearly 30-year association with *RFD-TV* Founder and President **Patrick Gottsch**. Word around the farm broadcast industry was that he retired, but his wife, **Kathi**, said, “He didn’t actually retire. He just redirected.” While leaving full-time employment, Oppold continues to perform hosting and reporting duties for *RFD-TV* at conventions and trade shows. Those duties have included two private one-on-one interviews with **President Trump**, which Oppold says are career highlights. Free of his daily duties, part of Oppold’s redirection is a reintroduction of a piece of his broadcast history.

**Past NAFB President (2013)**  
**Mark Oppold** interviews  
**President Donald J. Trump** at  
the 2019 National FFA Convention.



"Wishing you a profitable day" is a tagline Oppold popularized in the early 1980s when he produced a market program called *The Helming Report*. When the company discontinued the reports, he renamed the program *The Bottomline Report* and continued producing the program for another 10 years, including time with Doane Broadcasting. During his time with *The Helming Report*, Oppold also recorded a video version of the program and fed it daily to a new agricultural television network that had just started in Omaha – *RFD-TV*. Eventually, he joined *RFD-TV* full-time in late 2008, when he helped launch *Market Day Report*, and later was part of the team that put *Rural Radio* on the air on Sirius/XM Channel 147. Oppold also anchored the popular *Rural America Live* call-in

programs. All this time, his radio program laid dormant and out of mind. But upon his decision to "redirect" last April, Oppold tested the idea of bringing back the program with farm broadcasters and producers. He secured initial support and commitments from radio stations; and in late October, *The Bottomline Report* returned to the air for the first time in nearly 20 years. Oppold explains it is not a market report but rather a market commentary with observations of current conditions and intermediate-to-longer-term strategies he hopes are helpful to producers. The report also includes periodic comments on outside markets like crude oil, precious metals, the stock market, and currencies – whatever is moving the market at that particular time. Oppold works with two to three firms providing the information, in addition to leaning on his 45 years of market reporting, to write and voice the script each day. "I can't tell you the satisfaction and blessing that comes with putting this information back on the air and uttering those closing words again each day," Oppold said. He added, "**Susan Littlefield** at KRVN (Surprise, Nebraska) summed it up best when she simply said, 'It's good to have you back on our air again!'" After just three months on the air, the program roster already includes more than 50 stations. The report is offered free of charge. There are no commercials in the program. Opening and closing tags identify supporting sponsors. A pause in the middle allows the local station to add a commercial if they desire. Oppold said he hopes that makes it a win-win partnership. The report runs 1:30 minutes and is emailed daily around 7:30 a.m. CT. For more information, contact **Mark Oppold** at [markvmediagroup@gmail.com](mailto:markvmediagroup@gmail.com) or 913-638-2611.



**NEW KICD ASSISTANT FARM BROADCASTER – Gina Cerrentano** is currently completing an agricultural communications degree at Iowa State University while working full-time at KICD Radio (Spencer, Iowa) as the Assistant Farm Director. She expects to graduate in May 2019. She is new to farm broadcasting, but she has prior experience in both radio and public relations, having interned with OsbornBarr in 2018. Growing up in a northwest suburb an hour outside of Chicago, Cerrentano doesn't have much experience in agriculture, but as she ventured off to college, she found a passion and interest to learn more. "I hope to act as an advocate for the agriculture industry through modern and diverse means of communication, and I am committed to engaging new audiences on the importance of agriculture, rural communities, and farm-rooted values." Since starting at KICD Radio, she said, "I've felt so welcomed and have adjusted so well. I'm excited to continue to tell the stories of the agricultural communities in the area and act as an advocate for agriculture." Cerrentano added, "In college I had fallen in love with the industry and wanted to become an advocate and tell the story of 'real agriculture,' not the narrative that the mainstream media tells. Coming from a Chicago suburb, I grew up believing one thing about the industry; but as I surrounded myself with people actively working in the industry, the more I came to learn that what I used to believe was wrong. I opened myself up to learn the real story and now as I tell it, I want others to open themselves, as well. The importance of agriculture in our daily lives, whether you've grown up in the industry or not, is large, and people should become more eager to learn about this integral part of our lives."





**BUCHENROTH ADVANCES FROM STUDENT TO FARM BROADCASTER – Kolt Buchenroth** (Ohio Ag Network, Columbus, Ohio) is refreshing his NAFB membership after transitioning from a student member to the Broadcast Council. He got his start in agriculture showing beef cattle in 4-H and FFA and was active at his county fair as an exhibitor. While he was in high school, Buchenroth cut his teeth in farm broadcasting at WKTN, a small, locally owned and operated station in Kenton, Ohio. In high school, he worked with Ohio Ag Net and Ohio's *Country Journal* as an FFA student reporter covering Ohio's State FFA Convention. Through that experience, he discovered his passion for farm broadcasting and agricultural communication. As a result of his experience at WKTN and Ohio Ag Net, partnered with his side-gig as the Marketing and Communication Director at the Hardin County Fair, Buchenroth won the State and National FFA Agricultural Communication Proficiencies Award in 2017.

After a three-year stint, he left his hometown station to attend The Ohio State University and study agricultural communications. While there, he reconnected with the team at Ohio Ag Net and Ohio's *Country Journal* and joined their broadcast team in January 2019 while continuing his studies. In addition to his broadcast and academic duties, he is a freelance photographer and videographer. Additionally, Buchenroth has a passion for advocating for his community. He serves on several committees around his hometown and county. He is an avid supporter of first responders and works with local agencies on research, planning, and developing improvement projects. He is expected to graduate with his ag communications degree from Ohio State in May 2021.





**CALLAHAN NAMED TO ILLINOIS POSITION** – Colleen Callahan is the newly announced Acting Director of the [Illinois Department of Natural Resources](#). “I’m honored to be asked to serve in the Pritzker Administration and humbled to be in a leadership position. I’m also eager to work with the dedicated DNR career staff, to learn from them, and collaborate on ways to help meet the needs of enhancing Illinois’ natural resources. I welcome the opportunity to communicate the importance and impact of our natural resources and the diverse responsibilities of Illinois DNR. From mines and minerals; to museums and management of lands; from parks to preservation of history; from water to wildlife – the oversight is vast and various. I’m looking forward to connecting with those who use and those who depend on our state’s greatest asset, our natural resources. There is strength in numbers – a number of agencies and groups are impacted by our natural resources. Working together is an opportunity, individually and collectively, not to

mention encouraging the experience of our parks, trails, lakes, preserves, hunting, and fishing – all without leaving Illinois.” Callahan was NAFB President in 2002. She was named Farm Broadcaster of the Year in 1999 and was inducted into NAFB’s Hall of Fame in 2011.

**ADAMS PRESENTED AG JOURNALIST AWARD** – Mike Adams, host of *Adams on Agriculture* (Jacksonville, Illinois), was named *Ag Journalist of the Year* by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association at their 2019 annual convention. *Adams on Agriculture* is a national agricultural talk show featuring a mix of commentary on agricultural issues and interviews with decision makers, such as members of Congress, USDA personnel, and leaders of agricultural organizations. A 44-year broadcast veteran, Adams was named NAFB Farm Broadcaster of the Year in 1995 and was elected NAFB President in 1999. He was inducted into NAFB’s Hall of Fame in 2018. Adams said, “I was very honored to receive this award from NCBA. I’ve often thought I might receive a ‘consumption’ award from the beef industry for my dietary preference for their product, but this award means a lot to me. I enjoy helping tell beef producers’ stories and to create awareness of the issues they are addressing.”





**ARMSTRONG RIDES PURDUE BOILERMAKER** – Max Armstrong (Farm Progress, Batavia, Illinois) reports that he had a “fun ride,” courtesy of the Purdue Agriculture Alumni Association on February 2, 2019, in Indianapolis, Indiana. “The university has an annual luncheon called the Purdue Ag Fish Fry. They always try to have an interesting program, and this year they brought back four former Purdue Ag School deans, and those four joined the current dean on the panel.” Armstrong added, “They asked me to moderate the panel, which I was proud to do, of course. The real thrill, though, was to have them deliver me to the stage riding in the official Purdue mascot, the Boilermaker X-Tra Special, the little locomotive that goes to all sports events. They even let me sound the horn. Yes, it was quite a thrill for this Purdue guy. Thanks to student Aris Hoath, from South Bend, who was at the controls, for allowing me to ride along. What a thrill!” Armstrong was NAFB President in 2017, and he was named NAFB Farm Broadcaster of the Year in 2001.





**SCHULTZ IS NEW NAFB MEMBER -- Scott Schultz** started working last year as the assistant farm director at WAXX 104.5 radio in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and is expanding into other roles at Mid-West Family Broadcasting's Eau Claire stations. The long-time print journalist recently joined NAFB after making his broadcasting debut last fall. "I'm excited about this new challenge in my life," Schultz said. "I've known WAXX Farm Director **Bob Bosold** for many years, and each day I look forward to working with someone so talented and respected." Schultz earned awards in news writing, feature writing, headlines, and design during more than 40 years in the newspaper business. He was raised on a central Wisconsin dairy farm. His journalism career started while serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, which led him to study journalism at the Defense Information School and through Indiana University, University of Missouri, and Pepperdine University. He worked as a combat correspondent, public affairs noncommissioned officer, and base newspaper editor. After returning to Wisconsin, he worked for daily and weekly newspapers in the state. That work included a 23-year stint as a regional editor and managing editor of *The Country Today*, an Eau Claire-based publication which then was Wisconsin's largest paid-subscription rural-life weekly newspaper. During that time, he founded a non-profit educational organization, The Heartbeat Center for Writing, Literacy and the Arts, Inc. Schultz briefly left journalism to work for two years as executive director of the Wisconsin Farmers Union and to give more attention to his nonprofit work. Through The Heartbeat Center, Schultz founded *The Pulse*, a free-distribution weekly newspaper that went to 13,000 homes in the region south of Eau Claire. Publication of *The Pulse* was halted so the non-profit's resources could be refocused on its educational mission. He and his wife, **Dee**, operate The Heartbeat Center on their Eimon Homestead farm along Eimon Road, between Pigeon Falls and Osseo in Wisconsin. Schultz often lectures about writing and creativity in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools and at The Heartbeat Center. Essays, newspaper stories, and photographs by Schultz have appeared in several state and national publications, and have been used in a national rural life project. A collection of his essays was organized into the book, *Rural Routes and Ruts: Roaming the Roads of Rural Life*, which has been used in universities' creative writing, rural sociology, and library science programs. He continues work on other book projects including *Rural Rerouted*, another collection of his essays. Schultz also coached high-school wrestling and football for more than 20 years; and he also worked as a Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association wrestling and football official. His community work

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has included local, county, and regional economic development projects, including initiating proposals for siting the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial – which became The Highground Veterans' Memorial Park – near Neillsville, Wisconsin. He also served on the state Department of Public Instruction's Council for Rural Schools, Libraries and Communities, and on the Marshfield Clinic Medical Research Foundation Personalized Medicine Advisory Committee, and many local and state agricultural committees and boards. He's a past president of the Central Wisconsin Press Club, and he has served on the National Farm Medicine Center Advisory Council, church councils in Greenwood and Pigeon Falls, and several communities' chambers of commerce.

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