



# NUTS & BOLTS

... Teachers delivering knowledge that works to North America's Farm and Ranch Families

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## We Got a Lot in Minot

By Wayne Pike

Thanks to our North Dakota members for hosting a fun and educational 2003 NFRBMEA conference. It was an event that had us "Reaching Beyond our Borders" from the opening picnic at Scandinavian Heritage Park to presentations from nationally known experts on both foreign and domestic agriculture.

Sixty-four instructors, thirty spouses and forty-four children attended the conference in Minot. We were from Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah and Wisconsin.

We began on Sunday with a picnic at the Scandinavian Heritage Park where we Germans celebrated cultural diversity as we watched the Scandinavian majority warm themselves in the glow of memories of their homeland.

Monday morning we got to business with an overview of Minot and North Dakota's agricultural economy in general. Dr. Daryll Ray, Ag Economist and Director of Ag Policy at the University of Tennessee, spent the day challenging our notions of what agriculture should be in the United States and around the world.

Both of North Dakota's senators spoke to us live via satellite teleconference. After lunch we were treated to Rodney Nelson, Cowboy Poet, who told about his life as a North Dakota cow puncher. Rick Dusek, a grain trader with Cenex Harvest States, closed out our afternoon.

A panel on Value-Added Agriculture filled our Tuesday morning instructional time, followed by our business meeting. Our afternoon tour of a winery, farm, mill and a grain exporter gave us that bit of practical "eyes-on" experience that we enjoy and learn so well from.

Wednesday morning found us in buses on our way to the North Central Research Extension Center where we had our choice of educational opportunities. A tour of local crops plus presentations on GMO Crops, National Crop

Insurance, farm savings accounts, carcass evaluation and farm equipment technology made the morning go fast.

A look back into history was the event for the afternoon as we went to the Knife River Indian Village, the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan. We got a feel for what life might have been like for Sacagawea, portrayed by Amy Mossett.

We began our last day of conference with our traditional Story-Telling Breakfast. David Frederickson, National Farmers Union president, spoke to us about what his organization is trying to accomplish in agriculture. We had four of our own members present some of their current best work in our Exchange of Ideas event.

There is no doubt that we got a lot in Minot. We went home recharged and full of new ideas to try within our own borders.



North Dakota may seem like a long way from anywhere, but it is easy to get to by car, air, and train. Minot is on the Amtrak Empire Builder route. A large contingent of Minnesota NFRBMEA members rode the train to and from our 2003 conference.

## NFRBMEA Moving Forward— Come Along With Us!

### A message from Tom Weygandt, NFRBMEA President



Isn't it great to be a farm business management teacher? I think so and I believe that most of you think so too. Look at the advantages. I get to be intimately involved in the management decision making of some of the top farms in my area. The farmers I work with, for the most part, are progressive thinkers, value my input, and are my good friends. Even as I teach them one subject of farm management, they are challenging me to be better in another subject so I can teach that also. Variation and challenge keeps the mind young. All this, and I don't have to get up to milk on Sunday morning or fork out the manure spreader on a sub-zero day to fix the broken web. What could be better?

I believe that FBM teachers have a great commitment and dedication to their programs and to their students. Likewise, the NFRBMEA Board has a commitment to serve our members. We are moving forward with the priorities that we've identified over the past two years. Establishment of a National Institute is one of our greatest goals. *The 2003 National Farm and Ranch Business Management In-service Education Study* by Dr. Dick Joerger will help us to identify the specific areas in which our members need training. The next step then is to design a way to deliver that training. We're making small but steady progress towards that goal. We hope that by enabling the FBM teacher to do a better job will lead that teacher to greater job satisfaction especially for those just starting out in this career.

As you can see from the first paragraph, I'm a "glass half full" personality. A positive attitude is often a pre-determining factor in success. My idea of several things you can do to cultivate a positive attitude: 1) Do the best job you can for your students. Don't hold back. Just do it! Besides the personal satisfaction of a job well done your students will become your number one supporters. 2) Strive to learn and improve. Strive to see what your students need before they know it. Strive to see ahead, not backwards. 3) Get involved with NFRBMEA. The Board is committed to moving forward and we want to take you with us!

### North Dakota's Senators Speak

By Wayne Pike

We were privileged to have both of North Dakota's senators speak to our conference via live satellite teleconference. They each made a statement and answered questions from our group.

Democrats Senator Kent Conrad and Senator Byron L. Dorgan took time off from their busy schedules to talk to us on Monday afternoon. They both



Senator Conrad

spend lots of time on farm policy in Washington, D.C. Their comments were enlightening. They seemed to be unusually outspoken for politicians, often speaking very openly about their not-so-subtle judgments about United States negotiating abilities in world farm politics.



Senator Dorgan

## NFRBMEA – NAFBAS Meeting

(Condensed-Please see the Web for the complete record)

The NFRBMEA Board met with NAFBAS representatives in a special meeting on September 17, 2003 in Des Moines. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss cooperative efforts between the NFRBMEA and NAFBAS (National Association of Farm Business Analysis Specialists).

Board members present were Tom Weygandt, Laurie Morris, Rich Baumann, Jim Kelm, Ron Dvergsten, Ed Ruff and Wayne Pike. Charles Duell was unable to attend.

NAFBAS was represented by Bob Rhea, executive director; Bryan Manny, NAFBAS president and president of the Kansas Farm Business Management Association; and Bob McHugh, 2006 conference planner from Kimballton, Iowa. Virginia Berger, NAFBAS member, and John Murray, state supervisor for farm business management programs in Minnesota, joined the meeting later.

The first topic was an overview of each represented state's approach to farm business management education. We listed other states that we knew had farm business management associations, the approximate number of instructors/field personnel in each state and the approximate number of students/clients in each state. This resulted in a statement for our joint efforts of "400 instructors in 27 states serving 40,000 farm families." Bob Rhea suggested that we publish a press release to make note of our joint efforts and our potential.

Major discussion centered on cooperation between NFRBMEA and NAFBAS for the 2006 conference in Omaha or Council Bluffs.

Specific issues regarding conference cooperation include the following:

- a. Joint dues
- b. Separate sessions for business meetings
- c. Conference profit (or loss) expectations. That is, historically NFRBMEA expects the conference to make a profit whereas NAFBAS expects to fund the conference.
- d. Seeking outside funding for conferences
- e. The need for a conference co-planner from NFRBMEA ranks to be on the 2006 conference planning committee already functioning as established by NAFBAS

No conclusions were made concerning these issues, but the group agreed to proceed with planning for the 2006 conference to be a cooperative effort.

The group discussed possible joint professional development opportunities and getting support from government and industry. Regarding our cooperative initiatives, we noted that USDA and others might be interested in funding an organization or organizations that can effectively reach 40,000 farm families in 27 states.

The Farm Financial Standards Task Force and the Ag Ed Council would be good venues for joint efforts. Funding from private industry, community banks and rural electric and telephone cooperatives might work for our joint efforts.

Bob Rhea described his executive secretary position with NAFBAS. The group adjourned after agreeing to proceed with joint planning efforts.

Wayne Pike  
Recorder



**Bob Rhea, Executive Director of NAFBAS**



## Minutes of the NFRBMEA 2003 Post-Conference Board Meeting Minot, ND • June 12, 2003

*(Condensed for space by Wayne Pike. The full version of these minutes are available on the Web at [nfrbmea.org](http://nfrbmea.org))*

**M**embers present: Tom Weygandt, Jim Kelm, Ron Dvergsten, Charles Duell, Rich Baumann, Laurie Morris, Wayne Pike, Debra Pike, Ed Ruff, and Tom Ackerman.

1. 2003 Conference Report - Al Graner said that a final report will be ready for the fall Board meeting.
2. *NUTS & BOLTS* / Web – Jim Kelm moved to continue to contract with Wayne and Deb for the newsletter for \$1,000 and \$2000 for web page maintenance.
3. Fall Board Meeting – The Board will meet at Wisconsin Dells in late October or early November.
4. NAFBAS Cooperation – We plan to meet with NAFBAS representatives while at the NPB meeting on Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion of NAFBAS - Work on the relationship between NFRBMEA and NAFBAS needs to be addressed by the Board, after having been given the go-ahead by the NFRBMEA membership. Jim reiterated that it will be a learning process and that it is not our Board's intent to merge the two organizations, but to explore what similarities and differences there are and how both organizations can benefit from closer association with each other.

The following were appointed to follow-up with NAFBAS: John Caster, Jay Olsen, Rich Baumann, Ed Ruff, Tom Weygandt, Wayne Pike, Jim Kelm, Laurie Morris and Ron Dvergsten.

5. NAAE / participation on The Council – Jim reported that the next step with NAAE is a formal letter asking for participation at the table. Jim Kelm and Gary Thome will draft a letter to NAAE and Tom will sign as president of NFRBMEA.
6. Brochure Committee – Distribution of the brochures may be in electronic format.
7. Instructor Standards – On hold until we hear from Dr. Joerger on what he has found out from the survey.

8. Industry Alliances – we need to forward names of industry contacts to the committee. John Caster is the chair of the committee.

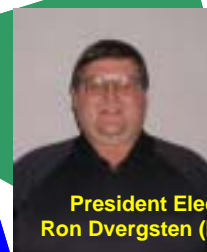
9. Membership Committee – Suggestion for free student membership.
10. National Institute – Dr. Joerger's survey needs to be completed to assess needs. Committee members are Jim Kelm, Wayne Pike, Rich Baumann, Ira Beckman, Dr. Joerger, and Ron Dvergsten.
11. Resources Committee – Charles referred to the resources committee idea for a library of resources. Specific concerns are copyright, internet availability, server, location and maintenance.
12. 2004 Conference preview – Ed Ruff gave a brief synopsis of the 2004 conference planning. The theme is likely to center on the environment, wind power, energy, Discovery Farm, environmental awareness, Aldo Leopold, and NRCS.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Charles Duell

## Welcome, New Board Members!



Secretary  
Charles Duell (CO)



President Elect  
Ron Dvergsten (MN)



2005 Conference Chair  
Tom Ackerman (OH)

## “Globalization is Globe-aloney”

By Wayne Pike

**D**avid Frederick, president of the National Farmers Union, spoke at our conference in Minot. He had some strong words about the United States government and its attitude toward global farm policy. He summed up his opinions with six myths of United States ag trade negotiations.

**Myth 1** – Exports will save us. They haven’t yet.

**Myth 2** – Trade agreements promote free and fair trade. They haven’t yet.

**Myth 3** – United States trade policies will make things better for farmers. They haven’t yet.

**Myth 4** – Exports use up the production from 25% of our acreage, however imports replace the production from 18.5% of our acreage.

**Myth 5** – United States farmers are the most productive and efficient in the world. That much is true, but the other side of the coin is that our fixed costs of labor and land are the highest in the world.

**Myth 6** – Under free trade, markets will self-correct. History has yet to show this is true.

## Marketing Tidbits

By Wayne Pike

**R**ick Dusek is the senior spring wheat trader for the Harvest States grain marketing division located in Inver Grove Heights, MN.

Rick spoke at our conference in Minot and gave some interesting background into the factors that affect the grain trade. There are some things that are so obvious that we might not even think about them, but they make a big difference. For example, how long does it take a ship to get from place to place? Rick knows and he told us.

- From Duluth to Europe takes a ship about 15 days.
- From the Gulf of Mexico to China takes a ship about 25 days.
- By rail from the U.S. Midwest to any ocean takes from 2 to 5 days.

Another factor in the grain trade is the cost of shipping. Shipping rates from Duluth to Europe by bulk are about \$22 per ton. The cost of shipping in containers is about \$75 per ton. It is possible to ship grain as an identity-preserved commodity in bulk on ships.



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## You Had to be There

By Wayne Pike

**P**at Harrington conducted another rollicking story-telling breakfast. Who can forget these wonderful tales?

- ☺ Ron Dvergsten's story about Lena's unfaithfulness to Ole.
- ☺ Jerry Bartel's story of Ole and Lars at the Oslo store.
- ☺ John Woodford's story about Knute, the pirate who lost his eye to seagull dung.
- ☺ Ira Beckman's story about Lena's unfaithfulness to Ole. (It seems that Lena was unfaithful to two husbands. See Ron Dvergsten's *Lena* above.)
- ☺ Tom Weygandt's story about two friends of Al Graner's eating grass.
- ☺ Doug Wertish's story about Jim Kelm consorting with women with glass eyes.
- ☺ Ron Van Nurden's story about cows crossed with grizzly bears.
- ☺ Denny Jackson's story about shotguns, horse ma-

nure and college administrators.

- ☺ Diane Woodford's story with sound effects, "clumpety-clump-bang".
- ☺ Steve Metzger's classic story of a priest, a rabbi, a ham sandwich and sex.
- ☺ Ron Dvergsten came back with another story about keeping squirrels away from churches.
- ☺ John Woodford returned with another story about Ole, Lena, their son, a rich uncle and a frog.

The winner of the contest and the "pot of gold" was Doug Wertish who came from behind with a desperate, yet winning, story that included his vocal rendition of "There's no business like show business."

I'm dying here. Who comes up with these anyway?



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NUTS & BOLTS

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