



NUTS & BOLTS

A PUBLICATION OF THE NFRBMEA

John Hest, Editor



VOLUME 2 - NUMBER 1
August 1, 1988

NEW CREW

What a great lift to the spirits to meet at a conference like ours at Lincoln! According to the Nebraska people who put together the details, there were 153 people registered, one of the largest number ever. Even for a retired farm management teacher like me, it was inspiring to meet with former fellow instructors for those days and visit, learn and become updated on the new things in our business.

During the business meeting of our association, new leaders were elected to head our organization for the next year. Loel Nelson was bumped up to become the president and Pat Harrington was voted in as vice-president. Dennis Lehto became our secretary and Allen Graner, the treasurer. Of course, Vic Richardson becomes past-president and will represent us on the executive committee too.

Last year we ran a short biographical summary about each officer and I think it appropriate that we do the same now for this first issue of volume two of our newsletter.

LOEL NELSON - Has taught farm management at Bismarck, ND State College for the past 15 years. Before that he taught high school vocational agriculture in ND. Loel is a graduate of NDSU in Fargo, ND. His experience also includes farming, full-time, for 12 years until the Missouri river flooded his land to fill the Garrison Reservoir north of Bismarck. His wife, Alma, teaches home economics at Bismarck High School. They have three sons, two who are following in dad's footsteps. The oldest is a high school vo-ag teacher in Hebron, ND and the middle son is preparing for that at the U of MN in St. Paul. The youngest does construction work in the state of Virginia. Loel restores cars as one of his hobbies. His pride and joy is a 1908, brass era Buick.

PAT HARRINGTON - Coolidge, AZ. His biography was not available at press time.

DENNIS LEHTO - Dennis is a native of Eveleth, MN and admits to having Finnish blood running in his veins (he can speak the language fluently). He received both his BS and MA degrees from the U of MN. Taught high school vo-ag at Evansville, MN 10 years and then switched to teaching farm management for 11 years. He taught farm management for one year at Perham, MN and has taught at the St. Cloud, MN Technical Institute for 13 years. Dennis does some farm management consulting work and is a partner in a Christmas tree business in his home town. His hobbies include fishing, hunting and golfing and admits to "an occasional shot of bourbon while in friendly company." He's married and they have 3 children, aged, 35, 28 and 26. He has mixed feeling about retirement, an event that he anticipates in a couple of years.

ALLEN GRANER - Allen is a native of Mandan, ND, just on the very eastern side of an area that North and South Dakotans know as "west river" (the Missouri). He received his BS in Ag-Ed from NDSU in Fargo, ND. He taught four years of veterans agriculture and farm management at the Sheyenne Valley Vocational Center, Cooperstown, ND and has taught farm business management for 9 years in the Rugby, ND school system. Allen is married and has two children. He enjoys hunting and gardening as well as being involved in spectator sports.

VIC RICHARDSON - Vic has taught in the Owatonna, MN school system for 15 years as an adult farm business management teacher. Prior to that time he taught for seven years in Jeffers, MN, as a high school vo-ag teacher and farm management instructor. Vic is married and the father of 2 girls, 13 and 17 and a boy, 15. He has an associate degree from Austin, MN Jr. College and BS and MA degrees from the U of MN. He's been a stamp collector since the age of 12 and fishes too when he's not involved in teaching or other farm management education activities. In 1983 he represented Farm Business Management Education when the National Council for Vocational and Technical Education was formed.

FLYING WITH EAGLES

It's true, I'm editorializing, but that Lincoln conference had to be one of the best I've attended, and I've been to all except two. The lead-off speakers made us think we are eagles! And isn't that a great feeling? If we didn't have much self esteem before, that session gave all of us that little extra push that makes the difference between being so-so instead of great. You people, who didn't go to Lincoln, really missed a chance to get charged up for your next year working with your farm and ranch families.

OUR PREXY SPEAKS

Loel Nelson, newly elected president of our National Farm and Ranch Business Management Education Association, got the urge to take out his pencil and jot down his feelings about the conference and farm and ranch business management education when he arrived back home in Bismarck, ND. So, here's Loel's epistle:

Thank You Spokes of Farm and Ranch Management

Since coming back from our 1988 conference in Lincoln, I decided to take out my pencil and put together some ideas that I formulated during and after that inspiring "eagle" first session. I'm choosing to think about the educational business we're in, as a wheel. The Nebraska folks did such a tremendous job organizing our national conference that we'll forever look up to them. It truly was a conference that begins a new era in farm and ranch management. The days we met in Lincoln provided us with organized instructional material that we can use as tools to help us start a new era in agriculture and farm and ranch management education. We recognize you as the first spoke in our business management wheel.

A most important spoke in that wheel is Dr. Ed Persons, of the University of Minnesota, whom we should thank more often for his leadership and expertise. Since I was privileged to be able to meet with him and that group of instructors at Paul Bunyan II in St. Paul, MN in 1986, planning for the "new analysis," I was made aware of the huge task that confronted us. It was evident that Dr. Persons had spent hours planning even before we had that several day meeting.

Attending that planning meeting made me realize that we owe much to Dr. Ed in the hours, and years and years of time that he has put into the business analysis (both old and new) and into the furtherance of farm and ranch business management education. Yes, he's definitely one of the spokes in the wheel. We owe our thanks to him.

To make the whole wheel of management education go round is the spoke that's reserved for the coordinators in all of the states. The coordinators recognize the management instructor as an individual and helps lead him (or her) and fellow instructors on toward a common goal. It takes patience to work with a group of many times, independent teachers and keep track of that paper trail that's instigated by them and their farm and ranch families. You act too as escape valves for us and I think that all of should help you open up your safety valve to let the pressure escape. I thank you in behalf of all of the instructors.

This wheel wouldn't go around very many times if it weren't for Wally Hoffman and his crew at Specialized Data Systems in Madison, WI, and for that reason they'd have to be a most important spoke too. How do they keep their cool with that mess of figures coming at them from computers and the mail box? I finally caught on why they sponsor a social evening the first night of the conference each year. When the teachers are socializing they aren't sending you all those figures, and for once you get a few minutes rest.

Wally, you're the spoke in the wheel that gives us the printed document that provides our families with a tool for giving direction to their business and helps them to better reach their goals. You deserve our collective thanks too for being that much needed spoke for these many years.

So far we haven't talked about the people who are one of the spokes of the wheel and also make the wheel go around: ourselves, the farm and ranch management teachers. Without our leadership and being in a position to give direction to "our" families, nothing would happen and likely they'd be spinning their wheels. We probably see ourselves as "change" agents helping to form the next generation of farmers or ranchers. I feel that we should thank each other for the privilege of being in a position to be those agents.

Since we set up our group as NFRMEEA at the Pierre, SD conference in 1985, we chose to elect a slate of officers to help keep us on the "right" track and give leadership to ourselves as leaders. With their leadership we can keep farm management on the cutting edge of the total educational thrust in society. That makes sense since farming and ranching produces the food for the people of our nation. So, the elected officers are another important spoke of that farm management wheel.

At our 1987 conference in Worthington, MN, we decided to begin a newsletter to help bind us together by making this the communications arm of our profession. I think that it serves the purpose of all of us becoming better acquainted with one another whether we be from the state of Washington or a teacher in Nebraska. Whether we be teachers of farm management or ranch management, we have a commonality of purpose. Our newsletter can give us that. Our editor, a veteran farm management teacher for almost 23 years, is helping us do that communications job. I don't know if NUTS & BOLTS is a spoke in the wheel or the tire that holds the wheel together, but I think that it is an integral part.

This completes my look at the wheel of farm and ranch management education. Maybe there some spokes that you can think of that I missed, but if there are any, people are involved and should be thanked for the job that's being done (or will be in the future).

It's great to be a part of this new era in agricultural education. And may we soar like eagles!

NEXT YEAR

The people who were at the 1988 business meeting of NFRMEEA in Lincoln voted to have the 1989 conference in Greeley, Colorado at the Raintree Inn. According to Dr. Darrell Anderson, the tentative dates will be June 12-15. So circle those dates on your calendar or plug them into your computer's "date" section and plan to attend.

Jim Kelm, Red Wing, MN spoke for the MN delegation when he bid for the 1990 conference in southern MN.

MEMBERSHIP

If you weren't at the Lincoln conference, why don't you slip a check for \$10 if you're an active teacher, or \$5 if you fall into the associate category, to Allen Graner for your 1988-89 membership. Make it out to NFRMEEA. Please fill out this slip and send it along with your check.

Date _____

To: Allen Graner
Treas., NFRMEEA
428 2nd St. S.W.
Rugby, ND 58368

I would like to become a member ___ or renew my membership ___ in NFRMEEA for 1988-89. Enclosed is my check for \$_____. My name and address is:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE & ZIP _____

ODDS & ENDS FROM YOUR EDITOR

Due to an inconsistency in registration during our past conventions, some of you are receiving your NUTS & BOLTS in your home mail box, and some of you are receiving yours in your school mail. Do you like how you're getting it now or would you prefer a change? Just drop me a line for that change.

If you have retired adult farm and ranch management instructors living in your midst, I'd appreciate the home address for these people. Then we can assure them that they'll be getting our mailings. Please do that.

NEW WRITER

In response to my plea at the conference, a few of you did respond by writing an article for NUTS & BOLTS. Here's one that came in shortly after I came home from Lincoln. Thanks Dan.

Are We Solving the Problem?

Daniel Persons
Sleepy Eye, MN

Abraham Lincoln once said "You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves." I think he could not have been more correct. Too many times we catch ourselves doing for others what they ought to be doing themselves.

The day has come when the farmers we work with must be able to understand their own businesses. I have been asked several times if I would go with a cooperator to visit his banker and each time I have politely refused. Ask yourself, will I really be solving the basic problem? In most cases the farmer who asks feels inadequate in explaining his situation to his banker.

My approach in these cases turns to the education of the farmer. It is tempting to take the easy way out, go to the bank, explain his situation, and discuss all of his options as the farmer silently stands by. The farmer in this case would have left the bank knowing little more than when we started. By educating the farmer we can permanently increase the knowledge of his business.

We can teach the farmer about equity statements, what they mean to the banker and what they should mean to the farmer. We can help the farmer develop a meaningful earnings statement and discuss its uses in long range planning, family budgeting, and debt retirement strategies. We can utilize enterprise statements to help the farmer understand where his profits are generated in the business. Our farm analysis can be used in all of these areas to give us comparative data and look into the trends of the business over the past few years.

These are not things that can be done in one single visit the day before the banker wants to see the farmer. They take time and need to be stressed throughout the year. The farmer should know his business well enough to explain all of its strengths and weaknesses to anyone who asks. How many of us have entered an item or two into a farmer's account book because "it's easier to do it than to explain the process"? I know I have and it's a hard habit to break, but we need to try.

I remember when I was younger and my brother would take me hunting. We had our favorite spot. He would drive and I would ride so I never learned how to get to the spot until I was allowed to drive. Then it stuck in my mind. Somehow, watching just isn't the same as having to do it yourself.

We all need to be educators first, then we will leave a lasting impression and a heightened knowledge with all of our cooperators. Remember Lincoln's admonition: "You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves."

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