

COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA

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2015 ANNUAL MEETING



The 70th Annual Meeting of the Council continued with the revised format of the previous year that resulted in a shortened meeting and an opportunity for members to attend two Council activities in one trip away from home.

By holding the Annual Meeting on November 19th and the Director/Manager Workshop on November 20th, we were able to maximize member involvement and the travel time for all involved.

The Annual Meeting drew 186 members and guests to the Holiday Inn in Kearney. The business session included the financial report, President's report, Chairman's report, PAC report, and Excellence in Cooperative Education Committee report. Results of the NCC Board Election were also announced with incumbents David Briggs, President of WESTCO in Alliance, and John Oehlerking, Director of Midwest Farmers Co-op in Elmwood, both re-elected for four-year terms.

Following the business session, we had the opportunity to hear a fascinating presentation by Tony & Jonna Mendez (pictured at left). Both are retired, highly-decorated CIA officers. Tony engineered and conducted the rescue of six U.S. diplomats out of the Canadian Embassy in Tehran in 1980. The story they told provided insight into the danger and intrigue of CIA operations.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony followed with Al Kalkwarf, formerly of Dorchester, being inducted posthumously (see the article on page 3).

At the conclusion of the ceremony, members enjoyed a reception and the opportunity for fellowship.



UNL PROFESSOR OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL COOPERATIVES

In July of 2015, the Council entered into a formal agreement with the University of Nebraska to create an Agricultural Economics staff position for Professor of Agriculture & Rural Cooperatives. The search for this new position began immediately after the signing of the agreement.

As part of the agreement, three Council representatives joined with UNL faculty to review, interview, and recommend a final candidate. NCC Board Secretary Bruce Favinger (CPI-Hastings), Board Member Mike Hechtner (CoBank), and President Bob Andersen served on the Search Committee representing cooperatives.

The Search Committee was in unanimous agreement to recommend Dr. Greg McKee (pictured at right) for the position. Dr. McKee is currently serving as an Associate Professor and Director of the Quentin Burdick Center for Cooperatives at North Dakota State University.

Dr. McKee has accepted this position at UNL and will begin his work in Nebraska after he finishes the spring semester at NDSU. We anticipate that he will begin this new position in May of 2016.

We are very pleased that Dr. McKee has chosen to take this position and are very excited about the possibilities that exist for undergraduate programming, research, and outreach focused on cooperatives. We believe Dr. McKee will be a great addition to the UNL Ag Economics Department staff and will provide valuable research and outreach to Nebraska cooperatives.



EDUCATION PROGRAMS UNDERWAY

The Council's Director/Manager Workshop was held in Kearney on Nov. 20. One hundred eight (108) members heard from Dr. Michael Swanson of Wells Fargo, Bill Davis and Doug Stark from Farm Credit Services of America, and Tom Houser of CoBank. The evaluations from the program were very good and indicated that the program was of value.

The Council's other education programs for 2015/16 include the Director Certification Program in Kearney (Jan. 5-6); Cooperatives For Tomorrow Seminar in Lincoln (Feb. 3); the Cooperative Issues Symposium in Lincoln (Feb 4);



Doug Stark, President of Farm Credit Services of America, discusses board leadership with Director/Manager Workshop participants.

and the Board Officer Seminar in LaVista (Feb. 25).

All cooperative managers and local directors should have received our educational brochure in late October which provided details about all the programs. The booklet and registration forms are also on our website at www.nebr.coop.

COOPERATIVES CLASS OFFERINGS

The Council continues to utilize support from the CHS Foundation to reach the youth of Nebraska with information regarding cooperatives. This year makes the second year that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has held the "Role of Cooperatives in Agriculture" class. This one-credit hour class has once again been taught by Attorney Rocky Weber. A total of 21 students were enrolled in the class this fall.

In addition, we have continued to provide *Co-ops 101* presentations at the state community colleges. Since the start of the school year, we have conducted classes at SCC-Beatrice, NCTA-Curtis, CCC-Hastings, and CCC-Columbus for a total of 140 students/instructors.

A new addition this year has been an effort to reach urban high school students in Omaha and Lincoln. On September 1st we provided two modified



Ron Hunter, Manager of Ag Valley Co-op at Edison (standing at top right), spoke to students at NCTA on September 24th about the various job opportunities available at cooperatives.

Co-ops 101 presentations for 50 students at Omaha Bryan High School. We are also hoping to schedule a presentation for Lincoln students during the second semester at the new Career Academy that has been created by a partnership between Lincoln Public Schools and Southeast Community College.

NEW 2015/16 MEMBERS

The Council welcomes the following new Supporting Members:

*Lewis Goetz
- Norfolk*

*Runzheimer International
- Waterford, WI*

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR 2016/17 ACADEMIC YEAR

For the 2016/17 academic year, the NCC Education Foundation will award six \$2,500 scholarships at UNL-IANR and one \$1,500 scholarship at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture-Curtis.



Posters and brochures/application forms were forwarded to cooperative managers in early December. Additional application forms can be found on the Council's website at www.nebr.coop on the Foundations/Scholarships page or by contacting Deb at the Council office at 402/475-6555. Completed applications must be returned to the appropriate college by April 15, 2016.

2015 COOPERATIVE HALL OF FAME

Al Kalkwarf, formerly of Dorchester, was posthumously inducted into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Hall of Fame on November 19, 2015. The induction ceremony was held in conjunction with the Council's Annual Meeting in Kearney.

Accepting the award were Al's wife Charlene and stepson Gary Hamilton. The family received a framed certificate commemorating Al's induction into the Hall of Fame.

Al became the 62nd person to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. In addition to the framed certificate, Al will be recognized with a plaque detailing his contributions which will be permanently displayed at the Council office.

Al was one of those rare individuals that spent his entire career at one cooperative. He began working at Dorchester Farmers Co-op while in high school and after a stint in the Army, he continued working there until he passed away in 2010. Al began working full time for the cooperative in 1959 and became General Manager in 1981. He held that position until he retired in 1994. After

"retirement," he resumed working for the co-op until 2010.

As General Manager, Al created a financially strong cooperative that provided the goods and services that members needed while maintaining a sustainable equity revolvment program. Al set the ground work for the cooperative to become a major rail grain shipper providing significant value for patrons and positioning the cooperative for significant growth.

Al served on the Nebraska Coopera-



tive Council's Board of Directors (1986-1992), Educational Advisory Committee (1987-1990), and Legislative Advisory Committee (1990-1994), and he was also active in the Nebraska Grain & Feed Association.

In one of the nomination letters, Al's career was summed up by one word, respect. The person said, "Al respected every employee that worked at the cooperative and always showed tremendous respect for the members. Al fostered a loyalty from the membership and the employees that is still felt today in the cooperative."



Al's wife Charlene and stepson Gary Hamilton accepted the plaque on Al's behalf. They are pictured above with Council President Bob Andersen (far left) and NCC Board Chair David Briggs (far right).



Contributions to the NCC Education Foundation are accepted year-round.

Whether it be end of the year donations or memorials, just fill out the form which is available at www.nebr.coop under the "Foundation" tab or call Deb at the Council office at 402/475-6555 and she would be happy to mail a form to you.



