

COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA

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2014 ANNUAL MEETING



Board Chair David Briggs (at podium) shares a lighter moment with (L to R) Board Vice Chair Randy Robeson, Board Secretary Bruce Favinger, and President Bob Andersen.

The Council's 69th Annual Meeting featured a significantly revised format that resulted in a shortened meeting and an opportunity for attendees to participate in two Council activities in one trip away from home. The Annual meeting was held at the Kearney Holiday

Inn on the afternoon of November 19th with 184 members and guests in attendance. See more photos on page 4.

During the business session, the financial report, President's report, Chairman's report, PAC report, and Excellence in Cooperative Education Committee report as well as an update on the UNL Cooperatives Class, Internship and Study/Tour, and the Nebraska Model Business Act were provided.

Following the business session, the group heard from Sergeant Keni Thomas. Sgt. Thomas provided an inspiring presentation based on his service as an Army Ranger in Somalia, which inspired the book and movie "Blackhawk Down."

The Hall of Fame induction ceremonies provided the capstone for the 2014 Annual Meeting. Virgil Harms of Blue Springs and Roland From of Lincoln were this year's inductees into the Hall of Fame.

On the following day (Nov. 20th) the Council hosted its Director/Manager Workshop in Kearney. See the article at right.

COLLEGE COOPERATIVE OFFERINGS

This fall has been a historic time for a "cooperative presence" with college ag students in Nebraska. In total this fall, we have reached over 250 college ag students through three different offerings.

On August 26, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln held the first session of the "Role of Cooperatives in Agriculture" class. This one-credit-hour class, taught by Attorney Rocky Weber, has proven to be very suc-

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The Council's Director/Manager Workshop was held in Kearney on Nov. 20. Eighty-seven (87) members heard from Dr. Mike Boehlje of Purdue University and Steve Dawson, founder of Dawson Forensic Group. This was the first time the Council held its Annual Meeting and Director/Manager Workshop on consecutive days. After review of the evaluations, it appears like the membership approved of this change. Unfortunately, the late harvest did adversely impact attendance for a few of our members.

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

Other scheduled programs for 2014/15 include:

- Jan. 6-7: Director Certification Program - Kearney
- Feb. 4: Cooperatives For Tomorrow Seminar - Lincoln
- Feb. 5: Cooperative Issues Symposium - Lincoln
- Feb. 26: Board Officer Seminar - LaVista



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Council's 69th Annual Meeting was conducted at the Kearney Holiday Inn & Convention Center on November 19th with a modified format. Our intent was to minimize travel and create more time efficiencies for the 184 members in attendance. Based upon the membership feedback, the majority of the members liked the new format for the Annual Meeting and Membership Reception.

Accordingly, your Board of Directors has elected to utilize the same format again in 2015; however, due to hotel space availability, the Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 19 and the Director/Manager Workshop will be on Friday, November 20; both, again at the Kearney Holiday Inn & Convention Center.

Incorporated into this year's Annual Meeting was the implementation of voting by mail ballots as authorized by the Board of Directors. The ballots were tabulated by Gardiner Thomsen CPA's,

and they reported that 78% of the eligible Active Members returned their ballots. Many members shared positive feedback to this mode of member participation.

On January 7, 2015, the Nebraska Legislature will convene its 90-day legislative session. This year, there will be 17 newly elected senators plus an appointed senator to replace Senator Janssen who was elected State Auditor. The key issues before the 2015 Legislature will be: property tax relief, health and human services reform, corrections reform, tax cuts, unfunded mandate reform, and the budget.

I encourage you and your cooperative management team to attend the Council's education programs for directors and managers which will be conducted in January and February. For dates and locations, refer to the calendar on page 6. As the redeployment of cooperative assets continues in the state, the responsibilities upon local management teams become greater; understanding these

responsibilities and preparing for the future success of the cooperative should be taken seriously by management teams.

In closing, I want to extend best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to each of you and your families.

In the cooperative spirit, I remain...
Robert C. Andersen

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR 2015/16 ACADEMIC YEAR

For the 2015/16 academic year, the NCC Education Foundation will award six \$2,500 scholarships at UNL-IANR and two \$1,500 scholarships at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture-Curtis.



Posters and brochures/application forms were forwarded to cooperative managers in late November. Additional application forms can be found on the home page of the Council's website at www.nebr.coop or by contacting Deb at the Council office at 402/475-6555. Completed applications must be returned to the appropriate college by April 15, 2015.

BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS



During the Annual Meeting, three members were re-elected/elected to the NCC Board. Pictured at left (top to bottom) are Randy Robeson, Manager of Frontier Co-op Company in Brainard, who was re-elected; and newly elected directors Tim Rowe, Board Chair of All Points Co-op in Gothenburg; and Doug Ohlson, Manager of Frenchman Valley Farmers Co-op in Imperial.



Our thanks go to outgoing board members Ron Heerten, Board Chair of Farmers/Ranchers Co-op Assn in Ainsworth; Ron Velder, President of Farmers Cooperative in Dorchester; and Carl Dickinson, President of Central Valley Ag (CVA) in York. Heerten chose not to seek re-election and Ron Velder was appointed to the Board in September to fill the unexpired term of Dickinson who stepped down upon the merger of United Farmers Co-op and CVA because CVA was already represented on the NCC Board by Dave Beckman.



2014 COOPERATIVE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Roland From of Lincoln and Virgil Harms of Blue Springs became the 60th and 61st members to be inducted into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Hall of Fame on November 19, 2014. The induction ceremony was held in conjunction with the Council's Annual Meeting in Kearney.

As part of a distinguished group of cooperative leaders, Roland and Virgil each received a framed certificate commemorating their induction into the Hall of Fame. In addition, they will be recognized with a plaque detailing their contributions to cooperatives which will be permanently displayed at the Council office.

Roland From...

Roland became a cooperative member in 1973. In 1988, he was elected to the Farmers Cooperative Business Association board and served on it for 13 years through 2001. The last nine of those years, he served as board chair.

When FCBA merged with neighboring cooperatives in York and Hampton

to form United Farmers Co-op, Roland was a key leader in this merger. He continued his service on the board of UFC for two years, serving as board vice chair each year.

At the time, the formation of UFC by three strong cooperatives was unique. Today, however, this model is being replicated by many cooperatives across the Midwest.

Roland served as a members representative for the Nebraska Cooperative Council for two years and then served on the NCC board from 1999-2002. While on the board, he served on its Educational Advisory Committee for three years with two years as chair and on the Fund for Excellence Committee for three years with two years as chair.

Virgil Harms...

After graduating college, Virgil taught business at Deshler High School. In 1971 he began a 35-year career with the Omaha

Bank for Cooperatives and its successor CoBank.

He began as a business analyst, and at retirement he was responsible for CoBank's largest regional office in Omaha. At various points in his career, Virgil also had responsibility for CoBank's Wichita KS, Sacramento CA, Spokane WA, and Austin TX offices.

Virgil was a particularly key figure in providing leadership in working with regional and local cooperatives during the farm crisis of the 1980s. He was a strong and respected advocate for cooperatives and customers throughout this trying time.

Virgil served on the board of the Nebraska Cooperative Council for two 2-year terms. He also served on its Legislative Advisory Committee for two 2-year terms and on the Hall of Fame Committee for six years.

Education was a life-long passion of Virgil's, and it was demonstrated in his communication with managers and board members. Through his leadership in the financing of cooperatives, those cooperatives were positioned to grow and become stronger to meet the needs of a rapidly changing agricultural sector.



Roland & Bev From with Senator Jerry Johnson



Virgil Harms (right) and Bob Andersen



**2014
ANNUAL
MEETING
AND
RECEPTION
PHOTOS**



NEW 2014/15 MEMBERS

The Council welcomes the following new members:

Supply/Marketing Co-op

Fordyce Farmers N/S Co-op

Out-of-State Rural Electric Co-op

Wyrulec Company - Torrington WY

Supporting Members

FarmLink - Kansas City, MO

Union Pacific Railroad - Omaha



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.

NEBRASKA COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

Address 134 S 13th St., Ste 503, Lincoln NE 68508-1901
Office Hours..... 7:45 am to 4:30 pm CT
Phone / Fax (402) 475-6555 / (402) 475-4538
E-mail / Website ncoopc@nebr.coop / www.nebr.coop

BOARD OFFICERS

David Briggs, Chair.....Alliance
Dean Thernes, Vice Chair.....Battle Creek
Bruce Favinger, Secretary.....Hastings

BOARD DIRECTORS

Dave Beckman.....York
Mike Hechtner, CoBank - Omaha.....Participating Member
John Oehlerking.....Elmwood
Doug Ohlson.....Imperial
Randy Robeson.....Brainard
Tim Rowe.....Gothenburg

STAFF

Robert C. Andersen, President.....boba@nebr.coop
Ed Woeppel, Educ/Program Dir.....edw@nebr.coop
Glenda Gaston, Office Mgr/AA.....glendag@nebr.coop
Deb Mazour, Program Coord/AA.....debm@nebr.coop

Below are the minutes of the Council's 69th Annual Meeting. Council Management Policy provides that minutes must be mailed to all meeting participants. If no written objections are received within 10 days of mailing, they are deemed to be accepted and shall be the official record of the meeting. If a written objection is timely received, action will be taken at the next meeting. Please notify the Council (134 S. 13th Street, Ste 503, Lincoln, NE 68508) by December 25 if there are any objections/errors in the minutes as reproduced below. If not, they shall be deemed accepted as distributed.



NEBRASKA COOPERATIVE COUNCIL 69th ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES November 19, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

The 69th Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Cooperative Council convened at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2014, in Ballroom I of the Holiday Inn & Convention Center in Kearney. David Briggs, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, presided.

SPECIAL THANKS

Briggs thanked the Participating & Supporting Members and other sponsors for providing today's breaks and speaker costs.

2013/14 FINANCIAL REPORT

Robert Andersen, NCC President, presented the 2013/14 Financial Report. He reported that the Council's Board had reviewed and accepted the 2013/14 Financial Report and that a full-scope audit in accordance with the appropriate auditing standards had been conducted. Andersen reported that the auditor expressed an unmodified opinion.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

David Briggs, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, presented the Chairperson's Report. He introduced the Council's directors and recognized the committee members and membership for their support of Council programs.

EXCELLENCE IN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ECEC) REPORT

Bruce Favinger, Chair of the ECEC, presented the background of the ECEC, the importance of education, and future programming. Included within same was the decision to seek to elevate the Council educational programming by using regionally or nationally recognized speakers based upon topics or issues.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC) REPORT

Randy Robeson, Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors and Chair of the PAC committee, presented the background of the PAC, voluntary contributions received to date, and the 2014 Nebraska Legislator PAC interviews.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Robert Andersen provided the President's Report for the prior year which included the addressment of legislative and regulatory issues and educational programs as well as the challenges before the association.

UNL COOPERATIVE OFFERINGS

Dr. Larry Van Tassell, UNL Ag Economics Department Head, briefly covered the coopera-

tive class offered this year for the UNL students and the plans to create a study/tour and internships for students.

NEBRASKA MODEL BUSINESS ACT
Attorney Rocky Weber, Crosby Guenzel LLP, covered the impact on the cooperatives of the Nebraska Model Business Act which becomes effective January 1, 2016.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING DIRECTORS

Carl Dickinson, President at York and Ron Heerten, Board President at Ainsworth were recognized for their service on the Council's Board of Directors. Ron Velder, President at Dorchester was thanked for serving on the Board to finish out Carl's year on the Board.

VOTING DELEGATE ELECTION RESULTS

Dean Thernes, Election Committee Chairman, reported the results of this year's Board election results as follows:

- * Producer Director: Tim Rowe, Board Chair at Gothenburg, was elected for a four-year term.
- * Manager Director: Randy Robeson, Manager at Brainard, was reelected for a four-year term.
- * Manager Director: Doug Ohlson, Manager at Imperial, was elected for a three-year term.
- * Participating Member Director: Mike Hechtner, CoBank, was reelected for a two-year term.

SERGEANT KENI THOMAS

Briggs introduced the keynote speaker, Sergeant Keni Thomas, retired task force ranger with Bravo company of the 3rd Ranger Battalion, who captured a criminal warlord named Mohammed Farrah Aideed.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS

Andersen introduced the two (2) candidates selected for induction into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Hall of Fame: Roland From of Lincoln, NE and Virgil Harms of Blue Springs, NE.

ADJOURNMENT

Andersen declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Favinger, Recording Secretary

College Cooperative Offerings

(continued from page 1)



Attorney Rocky Weber (standing at podium) teaches the first Cooperatives class offered at UNL. Co-op Managers (seated at front L-R) Dale Piper, Midwest Farmers Cooperative-Elmwood; and Ron Velder, Farmers Cooperative-Dorchester, attended the class on December 2 for a manager panel discussion.

cessful and will become an ongoing offering within the Ag Economics Department. A total of 13 students were enrolled in the initial class that allowed students to gain an in-depth understanding of the cooperative business model.

The Council was pleased to work with UNL in the development of this class. In addition to the class, students will have the opportunity to earn credit through cooperative internships and participate in a cooperative study/tour scheduled for May of 2015.

The Council and many local cooperatives also partnered with Northeast Community College in Norfolk which hosted their first Agricultural Career Fair. Over 70 students had the opportunity to learn about Nebraska cooperatives and the career opportunities in cooperatives.

In addition to these “first time” events, the Council is in its third year of conducting the Co-ops 101 program with community colleges. This continues to be a successful way to reach two-year ag students in every area of the state. This fall we have provided 10 presentations to 178 students and instructors at the two-year post secondary schools. Since the inception of the Co-ops 101 program, we have reached over 840 students.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2015

- 6-7 Director Certification Program - Kearney Hampton Inn
- 7 Nebraska Legislature convenes
- 26 NCC Legislative Advisory Committee meeting - Lincoln

February 2015

- 4 Cooperatives For Tomorrow Seminar - Lincoln Embassy Suites
- 5 Cooperative Issues Symposium - Lincoln Embassy Suites
- 25 NCC Board Meeting - Lincoln
- 26 Board Officers Seminar - LaVista Embassy Suites

April 2015

- 15 NCC Education Foundation Scholarship Application Deadline

NCC RADIO SPOTS

Every other Friday, the Nebraska Rural Radio Network provides the Council with complimentary network airtime to present a 3-4 minute update on current cooperative issues. This allows the Council another method of communicating with our members.

The radio spots air at approximately 1:15pm MT on KNEB and at 2:17 pm CT on KRVN and KTIC. Our scheduled air times over the next few months are:

- December 19
- January 2, 16 & 30
- February 13 & 27

NCC MISSION STATEMENT

To defend, protect and enhance the agricultural cooperative movement through pro-active programs in education, legislation, government affairs, communication, and regulatory issues.