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Scoops

Quarterly publication of the Alberta Farm Writers' Association

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Scoops

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Eggs, salt and UFO's focus of tour

by Janet Kanters

Check your e-mail in-box for the tentative agenda and registration form for AFWA Tour 2003.

AFWA co-presidents Lee Anne Palutke and Jack Howell have lined up an impressive list of tour destinations, and are hoping for a good turnout.

Our tour bus will leave the J.G. O'Donoghue Building (7000 - 113 St.) in Edmonton, at 8:30 a.m. on July 19.

Our first tour stop will be at the Vegreville Colony near Lavoy to view their egg operation.

Next stop is the Iron Creek Colony near Bruce, where Andy Hofer will give us a run-down of their bio-digester.

Following lunch at the Caledonia Inn in Viking, we'll head to Vermilion to visit their community newspaper, the *Vermilion Standard*.

On to the Super 8 Motel in St. Paul where we'll have time to relax before supper, the details of which are currently being worked out.

Bring your questions, comments and ideas to our annual meeting which follows supper. And time permitting, we may be able to check out St. Paul's UFO Landing Pad.

No, I'm not joking.

On Friday, we leave the hotel at 8:30 a.m. and travel to Lindbergh for a tour of the Canadian Salt Plant.

Lunch at the Empress Restaurant at Elk Point precedes our next stop, a tour of Highland Feeders at Hairy Hill. Highland Feeders is a recent winner of the Environmental Stewardship award.

We finally head back to Edmonton, arriving between 4:30 and 5 p.m.

Please contact Janet with sponsorship opportunities, at janetkanters@shaw.ca, or call her at 403-901-1160.

Fairview College forms partnership

by Deb Craig

Fairview College has entered into a partnership with the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). The changeover will be effective June 2004, providing a year of transition time.

Fairview College's currently offers six turf grass programs, two equine programs, an animal health technology program and a veterinary

administrative assistant program.

The Fairview campus houses the North Peace Forage Association, sponsors a number of agriculture seminars each year and several research projects are on-going at the College farm.

NAIT offers an animal health technology program, landscape architecture program and a new equine studies



program. The partnership means that after July 1/04, all Fairview College programs will be offered at NAIT.

For more information, contact Deb Craig, Communications Officer, Fairview College: dcraig@fairviewcollege.com

 **Fairview College**

Meet a new AFWA member:

Jennifer Cockrall-King is a writer based in Edmonton, where she lives with her husband.

Jennifer freelances regularly for Western Living magazine, and both the Calgary and Edmonton editions of City Palate. Her articles have also appeared in the National Post and Chicago Sun-Times.

These and other freelance features can be seen on her Web site, www.foodgirl.ca.

While Jennifer does write about things other than food (such as travel and some lifestyle articles), there's usually a description of an interesting ingredient or a great new dish she has just come across.

"It's the subject I return to most often," she says. "Behind every great recipe, meal or ingredient is very likely a great story. Discovering and writing about those stories allows me to satisfy my curiosity about the world I live, travel and eat in."

Jennifer's culinary education began early in life growing up in a prairie family whose roots were close to the land. Her first real job out of university was with a team of Alberta chefs who carted her along to the World Culinary Olympics in Berlin in 1996.

Jennifer's current project is a book about food and travel in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, which is co-authoring with her writing partner, Terry Juzak.

GALA invites leadership nominations

Growing Alberta Leadership Awards (GALA) honour individuals and organizations that demonstrate innovation and leadership in the advancement of Alberta's agriculture and food industry.

Growing Alberta invites nominations from all sectors of agriculture and food, including ranchers and farmers



who are making a difference, and individuals and organizations which make the industry leading edge.

Nominees can be from the private or public sector, and work in primary production, research and development, value-added processing, food retailing or food service.

They must be based in Alberta or have a major presence of impact in the province.



Deadline for entries is June 30, 2003.

For more information, visit www.growingalberta.com, or contact Leanne Fischbuch, Policy, Program Coordinator, Agriculture and Food Council, at leanne.fischbuch@agfoodcouncil.com, or call her at 780-955-3714, ext. 228.

Fairview College's animal health program is strong

by Deb Craig

Fairview College's Animal Health Technologist (AHT) program has been producing highly-skilled and capable professionals since 1974.

Recently, recommendations from the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), as well as from Fairview College's animal health staff, were implemented to the program. The result is a comprehensive curriculum that will be delivered in eight-week modules. The revamped program will be launched this September.

To facilitate the new curriculum and CVMA recommendations, a practice clinic has been established on campus. While the clinic is not open to the public, it will allow the students to perform all tasks associated with patient admission, discharge, records and inventory management.

The re-vamped program also means a few changes. For instance, AHT students will no longer perform clinic rotation at the North Peace Animal Hospital in Fairview. But the working farm and companion animals living on-site at the College provides the students with opportunities to

gain hands-on experience in handling, treating and caring for live patients. As well, on-the-job training is obtained through six-week practicums, where students are individually placed in private veterinary practices and other animal health venues.



Comment

It's a game of hide and seek

by Will Verboven

Recent discussions on the North American Agricultural Journalists (NAAJ) listserv showed once again journalists' angst about access and influence. To many in the media business, these are matters of principle and integrity. To others it appears to be more a matter of ego and self-righteousness by journalists.

The discussion was prompted by a USDA decision to limit media access to their officials and USDA meeting participants. There was an outrage by a few ag journalists that this infringed on citizens' rights to know what their government was doing.

It then spilled over into the role of government officials trying to influence the media without being held responsible – an Agriculture Canada example was even cited. Some stated they would even refuse to meet with officials if they were not given complete freedom to report as they saw fit.

It all seems so noble and probably makes for great discussion between journalists at watering holes around the world. Perhaps such views are the result of the party line on journalistic ethics pounded into naive student heads in journalism school. But who is kidding who – access and influence, whether for journalistic endeavours, government

spin doctoring or for other more nefarious intentions are just part of the media business. Knowing the difference would seem to be the best skill a journalist could acquire.

I have found government officials and their PR people either tolerate or despise the media – it all depends on how you write about them. Of course they want the media to write enthusiastic stories and opinion on their activities. When the media doesn't they bite back – it's just human nature. I am baffled as to why there is any surprise when that happens.

The real talent as I see it, is to accept whatever access or information is given or restricted by governments and still be able to find the story.

In many ways it's a game of hide and seek that governments can't win, but at times it is amusing to watch them try.

Will Verboven is an Ag opinion columnist with the Calgary Herald



Do you have a comment to make about the state of agriculture and/or agricultural coverage and farm writing/broadcasting? E-mail your opinion for the September issue of Scoops by August 22 to the editor, janetkanters@shaw.ca

What's upcoming

Reduced Tillage LINKAGES is hosting a Low Disturbance Direct Seeding Equipment Demonstration at the Olds College Farm, on Tuesday, June 10, 2003, 1 p.m.

- Contact Rick Taillieu at 780-679-1787.

Rick Soetaert, Winter Cereals Agrologist with Ducks Unlimited Canada, is hosting a winter cereals school on June 24, 2003, in Camrose.

- Contact Rick Soetaert at 780-489-2002.

The annual Alberta/NWT Outstanding Young Farmers Regional program for 2003 is being held in Lethbridge, July 4-6, 2003. The banquet, being held at the Lethbridge Lodge July 5, will announce this year's winner who goes forward to represent the region at the National Program in Vancouver this December.

- Contact Lisa Anderson at 1-866-695-7352.

'Walk the talk'

If you preach teamwork, do you work well with others?

If you ask your people to take risks, does your behaviour match your words?

If you recommend lifelong learning, do you attend seminars and keep up in your field?

Managers who fail to practice what they preach lack credibility. Others won't follow their advice.

Put this reminder on your office wall: "Walk the Talk."

Source: *The Answers Are on the Office Wall*, by Paul B. Thornton, Monochrome Press, P.O. Box 424, Exeter, NH 03833.

Use your brain to cut stress

Relieve stress by understanding which brain hemisphere is stressed.

If you feel depressed or emotionally overwrought, your stress is in the right hemisphere – the creative, emotional, holistic side.

What to do: Switch to your matter-of-fact left hemisphere by doing math, writing factual prose or organizing. The emotional right brain will calm down.

If you feel time-stressed and overburdened, the left hemisphere is involved. Switch to your right brain by singing or playing a sport.

Source: Jane Cole-Hamilton, registered nutritional consultant, Wellspring Seminars, 355 Park Ave., Newmarket, ON L3Y 1V4.