

CUSTOMNews

Representing Custom Farming in Wisconsin | WINTER 2016



The 2016-2017 WCO Board of Directors pictured at the recent Forage Symposium event.

2016 Symposium Event a Success!

This past January, WCO along with the Midwest Forage Association (MFA) and the Professional Nutrient Applicators Association of Wisconsin (PNAAW) hosted the annual Forage Symposium at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. This year represents the most attendees at the event - ever. Thank you to the members who attended and sponsors and exhibitors who made the event possible.

The Symposium continues to be the premier forage and nutrient management event in the Midwest. Education remains the focus of the meeting and topics are presented by nationally recognized experts. The event also serves as an opportunity to socialize with fellow custom operators in a relaxing and fun environment.

As part of the Symposium, WCO held its annual meeting and elections. We had record attendance at this meeting - thank you to everyone who made this 'early morning' event

a priority. Kathy Vander Kinter has been re-elected to serve her third term as president. Vander Kinter is employed by Vander Kinter Farms, LLC, a custom harvesting and manure hauling business in Green Bay owned by her husband Luke and extended family members.

"I am honored to serve another year as president and to help continue WCO's forward momentum. Our Safety Certification Program is in its second year and we also just unveiled data from the WCO Member Survey. WCO remains committed to adding value to our members' businesses."

In addition to president, Cole Olson, co-owner of Diversified Farms, LTD from Alma was re-elected as vice president. Troy Meyer, from Meyer Manufacturing in Dorchester was reelected as Secretary/Treasurer. Bill Arneson, Barneveld was elected to the board. Bill is a former WCO president and a founding member of

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

WCO Safety Certification Program
Friday, March 18, 2016
Arlington, Wisconsin

Farm Technology Days
Board Meeting - July 19

CONTACT WCO:

Membership or Sponsorship:
Maria Woldt - Executive Director
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(608) 577-4345



From the President's Cab

By Kathy Vander Kinter



Hopefully this edition of the WCO newsletter finds you enjoying the winter season! First off I would like to thank everyone who was able to attend the WCO annual meeting at the winter symposium in Wisconsin Dells. It means a lot as a board member to be able

to meet face to face with you, our members, and hear your ideas and share in your excitement, concerns and frustrations of what is happening in the industry. It is with great honor that I will be serving you again this year as WCO president. I thank you all for the opportunity to serve you and look forward to working with you on different issues facing our industry.

Just a couple of happenings to be aware of in the next couple of months...Please join us as we present our safety certification program on March 18th at Arlington Research Station in Arlington. We have an impressive lineup of speakers and guests including Mary Bauer from OSHA, WCO member Bryce O'Leary and Jeff Nelson from UW Madison to name a few. Those of you who participated in the program last spring in Appleton know that it is well worth the time and travel to attend and learn first hand from others. At the end of the program you will not only be able to take away a new, safer perspective of harvesting but a free lunch and a certificate to present to your insurance company for a possible discounted insurance rate! Check the website for more details.

Please be aware that IOH Act 377 is in effect and has been for some time now. There are some things in the law that have not 100% advantageous for us as custom operators up to this point. Senate Bill 448 is awaiting a signature from Governor Walker that would revise some of the language in Act 377 including revision to the phrase "from farm to field" to "field to field or "from farm to field" or "to or from a farm related destination". This revision to the law would make the gray area somewhat clear and more helpful to the custom operating community. Another change includes the No-Fee permitting process. This bill allows one no-fee permit to be filled out for multiple IOH or Ag CMVs as long as they are written on the application. So stay tuned to the WCO website for future information.

As was mentioned at the Symposium, Shelly Minick is stepping down from her position. We wish to thank Shelly for all her years of service to the WCO in preparing, organizing and taking care of the financials. We wish Shelly all the best in her future endeavors!

Thank you again for making the WCO organization as strong as it is! I look forward to seeing you at the March Safety Meeting.

-Kathy

2015 Symposium, Cont. from p. 1

WCO. Chuck Rabitz, Denmark State Bank was also elected as a Corporate member. Retiring from the board this year is Dick Kraus, Elkhart Lake and Adam Danzinger, Claas North America. Both were honored

for their service to WCO at the annual meeting.

To view the board of directors roster and to contact WCO go to www.wiscustomoperators.org

New Board Member: Bill Arneson



Bill Arneson of Barneveld was elected to serve on the WCO board. Arneson is one of the founding members of WCO and a former president of the organization.

"I have been on the board before, but WCO has come so far since the early days and I did not want to pass up the opportunity to be part of where we are now," Arneson said at the recent WCO Annual

Meeting.

Arneson owns and operates Arneson Custom Harvesting in southwestern Wisconsin. Prior to starting his business, Arneson was an educator in the Barneveld school district. Even though he no longer teaches, Arneson continues to assist with coaching the highly ranked girls basketball team.

Arneson led a presentation at the first ever WCO Safety Certification event where he shared experiences and suggestions for safety in the field - especially during periods of stress such as harvest.

He also presented this past January at the second annual Agriculture Safety Connection event organized by OSHA. Arneson's experience and historical perspective will be an asset to the board.

Welcome Bill!



"Onlookers" watch a Dane County WCO member harvesting in the field next to their pasture.

New Board Member: Chuck Rabitz



Chuck Rabitz joins the board as one of two Corporate representatives. Rabitz is an Assistant Vice President at Denmark State Bank in Denmark, Wis. This is Rabitz's first term on the board and Denmark State Bank's second year as a WCO sponsor. Denmark State Bank was the first financial services provider to join the WCO roster, leading the way for other

providers to find value in the program. Rabitz is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin - Madison where he studied Dairy Science and Agricultural Journalism.

With a background in agriculture and financial services, Rabitz hopes to contribute to the financial health and sustainability of WCO.

"Since I am new to the organization, I come to the board with a fresh perspective and new ideas," he said. "I would like to see WCO continue to grow and serve as the voice of the custom farming industry in Wisconsin and beyond."

In addition to WCO, Rabitz is actively involved with Wisconsin Farm Bureau: He served a term on the Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee, attended the Leadership Institute and is a current Manitowoc county board member.

He also serves on the Manitowoc County Forage Council and is active in the Mishicot FFA Alumni. Together with his wife Nicole, Rabitz has three daughters: Audrey, Olivia and Emily.

Welcome Chuck!

Join a Committee!

Board elections might be over for the year, but WCO is always accepting committee members. If you are looking for a small but important way to get involved, contact WCO about joining a committee. Choose from the following:

- Education/Conference
- Media
- Safety
- Recruitment
- Special Projects
- Scholarship



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Attend the WCO Safety Certification Program

By Matt Digman, Chair - Special Projects Committee

A year ago this month, WCO hosted our first ever Safety Certification Program. Roughly 30 operators (50 people total) attended the inaugural event, and we received great feedback.

This past January, WCO hosted our Certification continuing education session at the Forage Symposium (Clutch Maintenance). At the Symposium, we began to promote our second annual Safety Certification Program scheduled for March 18 from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Arlington Agricultural Research Station in Arlington.

In the coming weeks, you are going to hear even more about this exciting event. The "special projects" committee chose to move the certification to a new location this year to make it easier for WCO members from different parts of the state to participate. Arlington is a popular training venue and has everything we need in one place.

The purpose of the WCO Safety Certification Program is to help participants grow their safety skills and add value to their businesses. Members who complete the program are eligible for insurance discounts from at least one pre-determined company, and others have indicated their interest on a case by case basis. Participants are encouraged to present the program materials to their current insurance companies for potential discounts.

Again this year, continental breakfast and lunch is provided by Vincent, Urban, Walker & Associates and Chubb Insurance. Chubb has committed to offering a discount to members who embrace this program.

For those of you who might be new to WCO or the Safety Certification Program concept, the annual training



Cheryl Skjolaas and Lt. Klingenberg at the 2015 safety certification event.

event focuses on occupational safety and health in order to reduce incident rates. Participants have the opportunity to earn a certificate upon completion. The certification program curricula is based upon industry topic areas that will vary from year to year but will remain focused on safety in real world situations that operators encounter while on the job. Operators are encouraged to attend with their managers, crew leaders and employees.

The training session on March 18 will consist of the following topic areas:

Injury Prevention and Wellness - speaker to be announced.

OSHA Compliance and your Business - presented by Mary Bauer, compliance assistance specialist from OSHA based in Eau Claire

Operating After a Serious Accident - presented by WCO member Bryce O'Leary, O'Leary Brothers Chopping Service

How to Handle Emergencies - presented by Jeff Nelson from the Department of Biological Systems Engineering at UW-Madison.

The event will also include a DOT safety inspection walk-through.

To register for the event, go to www.wiscustomoperators.org and click on the "Events" tab on the top right of the page. On the Events page you will find details of the program along with a link to register. The program is free for WCO members. Non-members are welcome to attend (for a fee). Thank you in advance for supporting the program.

Membership Incentive Program

Don't forget - WCO has a membership incentive program! If you sign up a new member and they list your name on the paper application or online, you receive \$25 towards your 2017 membership. Sponsors can participate also. Simply list your company name on the "referred by" line and earn money towards your 2017 sponsorship.

Incentive not to exceed cost of membership or sponsorship. We already have members and sponsors taking advantage of the program. Help WCO grow our membership base!

Welcome to WCO

General Members (\$50/year) derive their income (whole or part) from custom farming. Receive full voting rights and featured on website with business information.

Associate Members (\$50/year) support the custom farming industry, but do not engage in custom farming themselves.

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Kaila Wussow



Alan Osterhaus

WCO Announces Scholarship Winners

Dr. Kevin Shinnars, Chair - Scholarship Committee

The WCO Board understands that the foundation for the continued success of Wisconsin's agricultural economy depends on a well-educated workforce. The Board also recognizes the high-cost of additional education, so we offer three annual scholarships to support and develop the next generation of Wisconsin's agriculture.

Students are selected based on leadership, civic engagement, academics and volunteer activities related to agriculture. Students also submit essays detailing their educational and career plans for the future. Scholarship winners are required to have ties to the WCO – either as a member, relative of a member or employee of a member.

The quality of applicants continues to grow every year. This year each of the three ag schools in the UW system are represented. New in 2015, the scholarship amount was increased from \$750 to \$1,000 to reflect increased tuition costs and to remain

competitive with similar awards.

Winners of the 2015 \$1000 WCO Scholarships include: Kaila Wussow of Cecil, Alan Osterhaus of Chadwick, Ill. and Scott Lenius of Poynette.

Applications for the 2016 WCO scholarships are currently being accepted and are due May 1, 2016. This year, three (3) \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded. Go to www.wiscustomperators.org for more information including eligibility, criteria and application. Awards are open to members, children of members and employees of members and are applied to **any post-secondary educational pursuit.**

Meet the winners

Kaila Wussow is a freshman at University of Wisconsin-River Falls where she is majoring in Dairy Science. She is a member of the Dairy Club and several other agriculture organizations on campus. Kaila is a 2015 graduate of Bonduel High School and is the daughter of Ron Wussow

from Milk-N-More Harvesting.

Alan Osterhaus is a freshman at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville majoring in Animal Science with an emphasis in Dairy. He is the son of John Osterhaus of Silver Streak Ag in Chadwick, Ill. Alan plans to use his degree to further his goal of owning his own farm one day. In addition to the WCO scholarship, Alan is financing 100% of his education through other awards and money earned from several jobs.

Scott Lenius is a freshman at the University of Wisconsin - Madison studying engineering. He is a 2015 graduate of Poynette High School where he was active in sports and academic extra-curriculars. During the harvest season, Scott is employed by D&J Manthe Forage Services in DeForest, Wis. He is currently deciding which area of engineering he wishes to pursue. Please join WCO in congratulating these outstanding young professionals!



Scott Lenius



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“
Senate Bill 448 is awaiting a signature from Governor Walker and would revise some of the language in Act 377 to make the gray area somewhat clear and more helpful to the custom operating community.”

-Kathy Vander Kinter, WCO President

To complete your no fee IoH/Ag CMV permit applications
(Required as of January 1, 2015), go to
www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/ag

Questions about IoH definitions and rules? Go to
<http://wiscustomoperators.org/resources>

Save the Date!
**WCO Safety Certification
Training Session**

Friday, March 18, 2016
Arlington Ag Research Station
N695 Hopkins Road, Arlington

8 a.m. Registration, coffee
8:30 a.m. Welcome
11:45 a.m. Lunch
2 p.m. Program concludes

WCO Members: Free
Non-Members: \$50
(includes WCO Membership)

REGISTER online at
www.wiscustomoperators.org
RSVP Deadline - March 11
Contact WCO at (608) 577-4345 or
execdir@wiscustomoperators.org