MID AMERICA CROPLIFE ASSOCIATION

UPDATE

OCTOBER 2012

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GAINING GROUND

— By Eric Sfiligoj

Jim Farrell

As anyone who regularly follows the agricultural market knows, today's economic boom times for growers has translated into an unprecedented boom in land values. In recent years, buyers have forked over upwards of $20,000 per acre to get in on the agricultural game – and this trend shows no signs of slowing down in the coming years.

"We are in the middle of the largest transfer of wealth in modern history," said Jim Farrell, president and CEO of Farmers National Co., speaking at the recent Mid America CropLife Association annual meeting. "For ag land values, these are the best of times, and this has been going on for the past three or four years."

For long-time market watchers, this should come as no surprise, added Farrell. According to USDA statistics, farmer profits have increased approximately 30% since 2007, spurred on by record crop demand from ethanol producers and China.

But that's not to say that farming is becoming less popular. According to Farrell, more than 75% of the farm land sold by his firm ends up in the hands of other growers who are looking to expand their existing operations. "This isn't like in the 1980s farmland sales event," he said. "Back then, more than one million farmers just left the market, selling their land to be developed and taken out of production agriculture. It's different today. Most of the land is being purchased by other growers at auction, with the newest phenomenon being the 80-plus-year-old cash buyer who is buying the land for his family."

As for the buyers of the other 25% of current farmland, these are typically what Farrell refers to as new investors. "These buyers are bullish on the

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Chuck Conner

Farm Bills, Election Years Don't Mix

— By Eric Sfiligoj

According to Chuck Conner, president and CEO for the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, everyone in the nation's capital knows how important Farm Bills are in keeping the country's agricultural system protected. But in 2012, there are much bigger issues keeping lawmakers busy – the Presidential Election and, in some cases, their own re-election bids. As a result, the drive to craft a new Farm Bill in 2012 has ranked a very distant second on many Washington politicians' radars.

"That's the one big problem with the 2012 Farm Bill – it's not a good idea to do one in a Presidential Election Year," said Conner, speaking at the annual Mid America CropLife Association meeting in early September. "Agriculture would have been better off if it passed a four or six year bill back in 2007 to deliberately avoid the 2012 campaign."

Of course, that's not to say that absolutely nothing has been done on the 2012 Farm Bill, he added. In fact, the Senate has passed a version of the bill. This includes crop insurance payments (which could top

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2012 AWARD RECIPIENTS

MACA President Matt Wagner presented **Jeff Hayslett** the Association's most coveted award the Dean Roy Achievement Award for "Exceptional Service to MACA and the CropLife Industry" for contributing the most by their selfless service. Hayslett, AMVAC Chemical is the 31st person to receive this award.

"Jeff is committed and involved as he works for the benefit of MACA and the crop protection industry," stated Wagner.

"Jeff has also served on the board several times to fill out a term and also when the board needed someone to serve as Secretary/Treasurer, Jeff stepped up and was more than willing to assist for the year. It also meant that he served on the Executive Committee – yet, Hayslett found the time necessary to make sure the minutes and finances were properly recorded," stated Wagner. "He believes in MACA and works to make sure things get done."

Dr. Chris DiFonzo, accepted the Educator of the Year award from MACA President Matt Wagner. DiFonzo has been the field crops entomologist at Michigan State University located in East Lansing since 1996.

She teaches the introductory Entomology course at MSU, plus Pesticides in Pest Management and Insects in the Cinema.

Chris is an asset to Michigan and Midwestern production agriculture on insect issues as a leader on soybean aphids and other pests. She believes in outreach, including her e-mail news blasts, FastFonzFacts, which is widely distributed.

The award was first presented in 1978. It is designed to recognize demonstrated evidence of significant contributions to American agriculture, especially in the MACA region.

The Ambassador of the Year Award was first presented in 1993 and is designed to recognize an ambassador for their efforts in promoting the crop protection industry through presentations to students or consumers. President Wagner presents the award to **Dave Junge**, President and CEO of Junge Control, located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Since starting in 2004, as an ambassador, he has made 17 presentations to more than 815 students. Dave enjoys showing the positives about agriculture to kids. He also encourages his staff and others who work in agriculture to become a part of the ambassador program.

Jim Wissmiller, President of Tenkoz, Inc. accepts the Industry Vision Award from MACA President Matt Wagner. The award is presented annually to an industry leader who provides exemplary vision on the issues affecting Midwestern agriculture.

Tenkoz was founded in 1983 and is comprised of 14 regional independent distribution companies with combined purchases representing 25% of the US crop protection market.

Wissmiller began with Tenkoz 11 years ago as Vice President responsible for managing programs and performance for assigned product groups and relationship and performance with assigned basic suppliers. He was also responsible for establishing and managing the Tenkoz private label business. Prior to Tenkoz he held key management positions with Zeneca/Stauffer for more than 30 years.

Steve Fairchild, editor of *Today's Farmer* accepted the Ruth White Media Award from MACA President Matt Wagner. The Ruth White Media Award is presented to an individual who's demonstrated an evidence of consistent, objective and accurate reporting on American agriculture and the myriad of issues involved in modern agriculture, including the CropLife industry. He's been with MFA for 11 years and is responsible for writing and editing *Today's Farmer* magazine, Todaysfarmer.com and MFA's social media; for MFA Inc. During his tenure he has written about many topics including Missouri's Proposition B in 2011.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

After graduating from MIZZOU, I started working for MFA, Inc, as an Assistant Manager at one of our retail outlets then after 3 seasons I moved into our corporate office. It doesn't seem that long ago, but one of first things I attended was the MACA Annual Meeting in 2000. It was interesting and so with a few years of experience with my job I decided in 2007 it was time to become active in MACA because of the networking opportunities. This was one place that I could go and meet with many of my suppliers and talk business, plus if I had any questions on any regulatory issues, someone at the meeting could help me or direct me to the right person. Now five years later, I am still committed to MACA and convinced that the networking opportunities and information are well worth my time as well as the membership dues that we pay. Thus it is my pleasure to serve as MACA's 2012-2013 President.

So as we start the 2012-2013 year, there are a couple of things that I want to focus on to help strengthen MACA.

Involvement. I really want to see more people at the quarterly meetings to provide input on the things that MACA is working on. As I talked with one first time attendee at the MACA Annual Meeting, he told me the meeting was so amazing to him because the attendees were talking to each other and the information was so current and informative. By taking the time to attend and participate you will benefit personally and professionally from the people you get to know and the information that is presented.

The next opportunity to experience MACA is the quarterly meetings scheduled for November 7 and 8 in St. Louis. The committee meetings are on Wednesday with the Board meeting Thursday morning. A special event has been planned for Wednesday evening that I think will be fun, interesting and provide a look in the future. We'll be touring Jacobson Warehouse Facilities to see how they store non-perishable items for Schnuck's grocery stores, do a "voice" pick, then load on trucks and take to stores. We'll also see how they store consumer health care products. We'll end the tour with a reception and dinner at a local restaurant. Again, I think this will be an excellent opportunity to see something new and talk with some other folks.

Increase attendance at Annual Meeting. In 2013 we will be in Broomfield, Colorado – an entirely different location for the meeting. I hope this will encourage people to attend and participate. There's no doubt the annual meeting planning committee will identify timely topics and find the right speakers to make it worth your time. So reserve September 3-4-5 on your calendar.

Continue moving forward. I want to continue to build on the company visits that Immediate Past President Matt Wagner began this past year. I think it is an excellent way to stay in touch with our members. The committees continue to work on various projects and I want to encourage them to build on those efforts. Also, a special welcome the new member companies and first time attendees that were at the 2012 MACA Annual Meeting. Won't you make plans to be an active part of MACA? Please plan to join us for the quarterly meeting in November!

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact me at 573-876-5527, email me at jparis@mfaincorporated.com, or hit me up on Twitter @MFAJason. I look forward to seeing you at future MACA events!

Jason

Jason Paris, 2012-2013 PRESIDENT

2012 MACA ANNUAL MEETING

Helena Team

GOLF TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Forty four golfers participated in this year's tournament September 6 at Dodge Riverside Golf Club in Council Bluff, Iowa.

In the first flight, the Helena team comprised of Doug Goff, Matthew Likens, John McKinney and Randy Parman took first place with a 62. Taking second place was Eric Cowling, Helena; Spence Vance and Jerry Miller of Albaugh, and Trey Soud, Valent. In third place was Carl Bartenhagen, FarmChem; Dan Vest, GROWMARK; Tom Quade and Matt Foster, FMC.

In the skill events, Jerry Miller was closest to pin #9, Randy Parman was closest to pin #15. The longest drive age 49 and younger was John McKinney and Andy Bogue, Valent, had the longest drive for 50 and older.

In the second flight, first place with a score of 70 went to Travis Hirst and Elisha Kemp, Dow AgroSciences; Jim Colitis and Austin Tinsley, MANA. Second place went to Dave Flakne, Syngenta; Bob Gestring, Nova Source; and Eric Sfiligoj and Rick Welder, CropLife Media.

In the skill events, Craig Harthoorn, Brokaw Supply, was closest to pin #2, while Austin Tinsley was closest to pin #11. The longest put on hole 1 went to Bob Gestring, NovaSource.

GAINING GROUND CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

prospects for agriculture and they have a set plan for how to make a profit in farming for 10 years or so," he said.

A Lasting Trend

But can this land value "golden age" continue? According to Farrell, it should, at least based upon several positive factors influencing agriculture at the moment. "Right now, there are still more buyers than sellers, with more money pouring into this segment," he said. "That should keep land values high."

In addition, Farrell pointed out that the average debt-to-asset ratios for most growers looking to buy additional farmland is still under 10% and very manageable given the current high commodity price situation that exists in the market.

Even this year's nationwide drought could help keep the land value boom going. "The drought will undoubtedly deplete some of the world's grain stocks, which should keep commodity prices higher for the next year," said Farrell.

So in conclusion, Farrell sees no end in sight for the current land value boom times. "We expect a good land market into 2013," he said. "If commodity prices stay high, interest rates stay low, renewable fuel standards stay intact and China's growth keeps going, then all is good."

FARM BILLS, ELECTION YEARS DON'T MIX CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

$20 billion in 2012 because of the nationwide drought and its impact on some crops, said Conner), very modest cuts to nutrition spending and a gradual scaling back of conservation acreage. "This last provision could bring five million acres back into agricultural production immediately and ultimately could see 10 to 15 million acres come back," said Conner.

Unfortunately, the House of Representatives version of the 2012 Farm Bill is much different, which has kept it from even getting to the voting stage. In this version, direct payments are completely eliminated and nutrition spending is cut $16 billion over 10 years.

"The deeper nutrition spending cuts in the House version is the reason why we don't have a 2012 Farm Bill done," said Conner.

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 4**

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE 2012 MACA ANNUAL MEETING

A

D

E

B

F

C

G

CAPTIONS:

A: MACA President **Matt Wagner** congratulated ACRC Executive Board Vice-Chairman **Jim Jenkins** on their 20th anniversary. **B:** Long time members **Bill Anderson**, FarmChem, and **Jim Jenkins**, Syngenta Crop Protection. **C: Bob Gestring**, Nova Source, talks golf strategy with Immediate Past President **David Flakne**. **D: Dave Junge**, Ambassador of the Year, talks with long time member **Carl Bartenhagen**, FarmChem, and **Rick Welder**, CropLife Media Group **E: Brad Reed**, Kova Fertilizer, Inc.; talks with **Chuck Conner**, NCFC. **F:** Golf Chair **Rob Dittmer** and golfers signing in. **G:** Golf Chair **Rob Dittmer** explains the rules and credits the sponsors.

FARM BILLS, ELECTION YEARS DON'T MIX
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Fiscal Cliff Notes

At the time of his speech, Conner pointed out that there were virtually no days left for Congress to reconcile these two Farm Bills and pass them before the November election. "I've made a career on Congress doing nothing," he said. "And the election will make progress going forward much more difficult."

However, he added, there are two words that could spur Congress into action during a Presidential Election Year – fiscal cliff. For those unfamiliar, the fiscal cliff refers to several tax hikes and automatic government spending cuts that will kick into place on January 1 unless Congress acts to delay them. Among the potential fallout from the cliff – the nation's gross domestic product could fall four points during the first quarter of 2013, which Conner said would virtually guarantee another nationwide recession.

"Everyone, including their own people, has warned Congress that to not act on this would mean the economic blood of America would be on their heads," said Conner. "So assuming they do act, I think you could see the 2012 Farm Bill being part of this package because of how it will play as helping rural America."

NEW OFFICERS / BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

2012-2013 MACA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRONT ROW L TO R: Immediate Past President Matt Wagner; Vice President Greg Reigh; President Jason Paris; Secretary-Treasurer Tom Quade. BACK ROW L TO R: Norm Wagoner, Dan Vest, Jeff Hayslett, Phil Harms and Steve Koziolek. MISSING FROM PHOTO: Matt Ewers, John Howe, Wayne Jelinek, Tim Stoehr and Kathy Zander.

MACA elected officers for 2012-2013 at their recent annual business meeting held in Omaha, Nebraska. The group also filled several board of director positions at the September 6 meeting.

New officers include President Jason Paris, MFA, Inc., Vice President Greg Reigh, BASF and Secretary/Treasurer Tom Quade, FMC. Matt Wagner, Banjo Corporation, will serve as immediate past president.

Elected to three-year board of director terms were: Phil Harms – Dow AgroSciences; Matt Ewers – Inland Empire Distribution Systems, Inc; Jeff Hayslett – AMVAC Chemical; and Wayne Jelinek – Monsanto. John Howe – Winfield Solutions was elected to complete an unexpired term which ends in 2014.

NOVEMBER MACA QUARTERLY MEETINGS SET FOR ST. LOUIS

The Mid America CropLife Association committees will meet on Wednesday, November 7, 2012, beginning at 9:30 a.m. for the Executive and D&E committees meetings followed with lunch and a short program. All other committee meetings will start at 1:30 p.m. as well as the D&E committee will continue. The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, November 8, 2012, at the Marriott St. Louis Airport Hotel, 10700 Peartree Lane, St. Louis, Missouri, (314) 423-9700.

Following the committee meetings, there will be a tour of two of the Jacobson Warehouse Facilities located in St. Louis. The tour at the first facility which has about 300,000 square feet will show how they store non-perishable items for Schnuck's (grocery store in St. Louis area with several stores) and do a "voice" pick and then load on trucks and take to stores. The second warehouse which has a half million square footage will show how they store consumer health care products – like cleanser, shampoo, soap, etc. The group will then stop for reception and dinner at a local restaurant before returning to the hotel.

FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT THE MACA OFFICE.

KEY MEETING DATES

NOVEMBER 7-8, 2012
MACA QUARTERLY MEETINGS
MARRIOTT AIRPORT HOTEL
ST. LOUIS, MO

SEPTEMBER 3-4-5, 2013
2013 MACA ANNUAL MEETING
INTERLOCKEN RESORT
BROOMFIELD, COLORADO

CropLife AMBASSADOR Network

Our Mission...

to provide scientifically based accurate information to the public regarding the safety and value of American agricultural food production.

Requests are coming quickly. Ambassadors, please check the website often for fabulous opportunities to get out into the classroom. Join Dave, Roger, Greg, Jim and Sarah in spreading the good news about today's agriculture.

Presentations are available on the website and are easy to access and download for classroom use! Teachers can choose from seven presentations to compliment their curriculum:

- AGRICULTURE'S ABUNDANCE
- FEEDING PLANET EARTH
- FARMING AND THE WATER CYCLE
- TODAY'S AGRICULTURE, CAREERS ACROSS THE SPECTRUM
- FARM FUELED, BIOFUELS
- FARMERS STEWARDS OF THE LAND
- WIDE WORLD OF WEEDS: SOLUTIONS THROUGH TIME

Contact:

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2012 AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to MACA's 2012 Ambassador of the Year, Dave Junge of Junge Control, Inc.; Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Dave is the owner/operator of Junge Control, Inc. and has been a member of MACA for nine years. Dave has done seventeen presentations in the Cedar Rapids, Iowa area schools in the past six years and has spoken out for agriculture to eight hundred fifteen school children.

Dave sees the need to educate school age children on modern agricultural concepts. "My job as an ambassador is to show the positives about agriculture in a society that's news media is quick to criticize. I have dozens of hand-drawn thank you cards from kids and emails from teachers letting me know they enjoyed the hour we shared and were more informed about agriculture. When I retire, these cards will mean more than any paycheck I every received."

As a CAN volunteer, Dave finds time to juggle work and family responsibilities as well as filling the teacher request to speak at local Des Moines area schools. Dave leads by example of how you too can find time in your day for that which is important to you.

HONORABLE MENTION:

We would also like to give an honorable mention to the four Ambassador of the Year Runner Ups: **Roger Henderson** of Oil-Dri Corporation of America, **Greg High** of Monsanto, **Jim Jenkins** of Syngenta Crop Protection and **Sarah Miller** of Successful Farming. Thank you to all of you for the combined 37 classroom visits you have made, the 1800 students you have reached and the four new ambassadors you have recruited.

Ambassador Recruitment Contest:

Time is running out on our Olympic Ambassador Recruitment Contest! Recruit your coworkers today – email me their contact information and I will follow up with them! Ambassadors are what make our program successful and we need your help. There are lots of fun prizes but the real winners are the kids. Contest officially ends November 1, 2012.

THE VIEW FROM WALL STREET

– By Eric Sfiligoj

In terms of geography, Wall Street may seem like an awfully long way from the majority of the nation's growers. But according to Ed Lopez, director of marketing for the investment firm Van Eck Global, agriculture is quickly becoming the area of investment for Wall Street firms and their investors.

"Food, and the means to produce it, is becoming the new oil of the 21st century," said Lopez, speaking at the annual Mid America CropLife Association meeting. "As a result, agriculture is going to be one of the great new areas of the U.S. economy going forward."

Needless to say, Wall Street firms are practically falling over themselves to get in on some agricultural action, he said. "All over Wall Street, investors are paying attention to farmland and its rapid rise in price," said Lopez.

As many observers have pointed out, part of the reason for the quick rise in agriculture's fortunes has to do with the state of the world. According to most analysts, the globe's population will continue to rise now through 2050, ultimately topping the nine billion mark by that time. These additional mouths will need plenty of additional grain crops to survive.

On top of the population increase, the quest for renewable fuel sources is also driving demand for crops such as corn to produce ethanol. Put together, both of these factors are driving commodity prices to record highs, which have kept Wall Street focused on agriculture.

"Increases in global population consumption and biofuels demand is driving commodity prices up – and will continue to do so," said Lopez. "Most market watchers believe that grain prices will be sustainable at their historic levels, given these current demand profiles."

THE CHINA SYNDROME

In particular, said Lopez, China's appetite for corn should keep that crop in a strong price position. "China became a net importer of corn for the first time in 2010," he said. "The country imported 140 million tons of grain that year, and this figure has continued to go up since."

Because of this growth, other parts of the agricultural economy should also continue to increase in demand and price levels, he added. This includes fertilizer, pesticides and seed usage. "In addition, this should lead to higher incomes for growers, which will mean many of them will re-invest into their businesses by buying new equipment, adding new technologies or diversifying their seed choices."

In his conclusion, Lopez summed up the growing importance of agriculture to Wall Street by comparing the industry to a car dealership. "If you are not in agriculture, buy a Lamborghini dealership in Nebraska," he said. "Because the growers will be driving Lamborghinis with all the income their will have on hand and Wall Street investors will be driving tractors on the farms they've invested in."

Seed Warehouse & Distribution Center Audit

The Seed Warehouse & Distribution Center Audit is now available on the MACA website. Developed by the MACA Distribution & Environment Committee this document is designed to provide assistance in evaluating public (3rd party) warehouses' qualifications to receive, store, inventory and ship seed products and identify any areas for improving procedures and safety at any such public warehouses.

The MACA D&E Committee worked with its members and other organizations in the seed industry over the past year to develop this document to make sure it is easy to use and will meet the needs of those who deal with seed warehouse and distribution.

■ FOR YOUR COPY, GO TO **WWW.MACA.ORG** AND CLICK ON EDUCATION.

MACA'S WEBSITE:

Be sure and check out the speaker presentations from the MACA Annual Meeting which have been posted on MACA's website.

Follow MACA on Facebook.

MACA NEW MEMBERS!

OLYMPUS SEED TREATMENT FORMULATOR

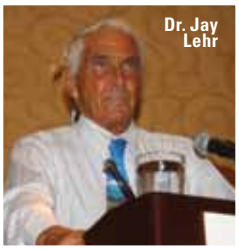
CONTACT: Don Bradley

MICRO MATIC

CONTACT: Jeff Smigiel

ENJOYING THE GOLDEN YEARS

– By Eric Sfiligoj



If you ask him, Dr. Jay Lehr, science director for The Heartland Institute, will tell you that he is never incorrect in his read on the future. "I'm a futurist," said Lehr. "I make a lot of predictions – and I am never wrong!"

Speaking at the annual Mid America CropLife Association meeting, Lehr was asked to discuss what the future of agriculture might look like, given the rough time experienced by many growers during the drought conditions of 2012. But in his mind, agriculture couldn't be healthier.

"We are in a golden age of agriculture right now and it isn't going to end for decades," said Lehr. "People sometimes talk about the light at the end of the tunnel, but right now, I don't see any dark at the end of the tunnel."

According to his read on the situation, agriculture is enjoying such a strong run because "all the stars" of the right market conditions have aligned at just the right times. First is the desire among global consumers to eat more like people do in America. "World food demand is dramatic," said Lehr. "The rest of the world has survived on a fraction of our diet here in the U.S., and, because of the Internet, they now realize this is the case. Since 1950, the average family has increased its animal protein consumption by 50%."

In addition, there are more consumers who currently are, or will soon fall into, the middle class classification. By the end of this decade, it is estimated that the middle class in China will contain 234 million consumers and India's will contain an extra 60 million.

GRAIN PRICES STAY UP

Adding to this mix, Lehr foresees the commodity prices for grain remaining at slightly below their current levels, at worst. "The market may not be able to sustain $8 corn and $17 soybeans, but will we ever see $4 corn again? Hell, no, because then, China would step up and buy absolutely everything we had."

He also predicts that U.S. growers will get younger and jump more fully into using technology to manage their farm operations. "Precision agriculture is so exciting," said Lehr. "That's what is making our growers get younger, and it will keep it that way for decades to come."

Today, estimated Lehr, approximately 40% of the farming operations in the U.S. use some form of precision ag technology. "But by the end of this decade, that number will be 100%," he said.

Furthermore, Lehr predicted that growers will soon not be as impacted by drought years (such as 2012) thanks to the development of new forms of biotech crops. "Fifteen years from now, drought won't have the impact it did this year because the crops will all be drought resistant," he said.

WATER UPDATE – By Steve Taylor, MACA Water Consultant

This past month, I have spent a considerable amount of time focusing on Great Lakes issues. By the time you are reading this, Dale Phenicie (my partner and true Great Lakes expert) and I will have conducted MACA's 'ask-the-expert' event which focused on the Great Lakes. I will just provide a quick overview here.

On September 7th, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and Canada's Peter Kent signed a revised Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. This is the governing document that establishes how the United States and Canada will move forward in developing and administering water quality policy for the Great Lakes. Much of the agreement was left unchanged. However, new language was adopted which increases the emphasis on anticipating future problems and developing accountability for results. The agreement creates a new, powerful governing body called the Great Lakes Executive Committee. The agreement creates a new process whereby non-government organizations can allegedly participate in policy decisions, plans, and programs affecting the Great Lakes. This will most likely be the avenue by which environmental organizations and groups like MACA can directly participate. The agreement provides for a broader emphasis on 'chemicals of mutual concern' and creates a new focus on nutrient runoff from agricultural sources. A time frame has been established by which numeric nutrient criteria will be set for the Great Lakes. I have to wonder if someday the Great Lakes region will find itself in a situation similar to the Chesapeake Bay region where nearly all agriculture interests finds themselves fighting to be profitable under the weight of new proposed nutrient regulations.

From September 11 – 13, I was in Cleveland Ohio where I attended "Great Lakes Week" on behalf of MACA. Many officials from EPA, USDA, U.S. Corps of Engineers, and the Fish and Wildlife Service attended and commented on the new agreement and their agency's current and future activities concerning the Great Lakes. I particularly noted the emphasis these officials gave to words such as 'pollution prevention', 'precautionary approach', and 'ecosystem restoration'.

So, what lies ahead for the Great Lakes? That's hard to answer in detail at this point. However, it is not hard to see that water quality policy related to the Great Lakes has the potential to impact MACA members for years to come. MACA will continue to engage in the Great Lakes issues and keep you up to date. And if you would like even more information, Dale plans to join me at MACA's November Committee and Board meeting where we will provide an in-depth, comprehensive discussion of latest information regarding water quality and the Great Lakes.

MACA UPDATE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ EDITOR
Bonnie McCarvel

INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
Doug Mertens

2011-2012 MACA RECAP

"It's been a busy and productive year," stated MACA President Matt Wagner. "Over the year, MACA provided information to members on the new container rules and regulations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency."

We continue to provide information and direct access to the experts. One of the things he was excited about is the "Ask-the-Expert" conference call planned for late September to discuss the Great Lake Agreement between the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently signed a new agreement with Canada which increases focus on protecting the Great Lakes ecosystem. The EPA is forming a new powerful governing body called the Great Lakes Executive Committee. This new Executive Committee will be developing new 'accountability' protocols and thus it is very important to Midwest agriculture. Providing new and current information to the membership is extremely valuable and this conference call is designed to reach the entire membership.

The "Seed Warehouse & Distribution Center Audit" which was developed by the Distribution & Environment Committee is another tool for the members' to use. It was developed by the committee after the need was identified. The document will provide assistance in evaluating public (3rd party) warehouses' qualifications to receive, store, inventory and ship seed products and identify any areas for improving procedures and safety at any such public warehouses.

Company visits are an important way to stay in contact with the membership. We met with four during the year and shared ideas as well as provided input on what MACA was doing that would benefit their business. For me, it was time well spent talking with the members and exchanging information.

There's no doubt that one of the highlights for me during my year was the tour of Busch Stadium in St. Louis followed by a reception and dinner at the stadium after the June committee meetings. I love baseball and to be on the track, so close to the field, plus see behind the scenes was amazing. I think all of the attendees enjoyed and provided an opportunity to network and build relationships that will be beneficial in the future.

Finally, we're working to reach out and communicate with all the members in different ways including Facebook. Our work is not done, but it is an ongoing effort to reach members as well as welcome new members.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Bonnie McCarvel
Executive Director

The stakes in agriculture are high, but after the 2012 MACA Annual Meeting it appears that there are some great opportunities in the future. No matter the opportunity, each person has to take time to evaluate the risks and benefits. As one person told me after the meeting, all of the speakers were using similar numbers for the presentations and all had similar predictions, so it appears the golden era of agriculture will continue. That's good news for all of us in agriculture! For those who attended the meeting, I hope the information presented made you think. And for those of you who were not at the meeting, I hope that you make plans to attend the 2013 meeting in Colorado. There's no reason the speakers won't be as good as they were this year and as one attendee said, I can't believe my boss isn't here. This information is current and up to date.

As I reported at the annual meeting, two new members have joined MACA plus there were five non-members attending the meeting and 25 first time attendees. This means they have an interest and so now our job is to convince them to become a member and be actively involved. They will benefit personally and professionally.

We've also experienced two transitions this year as Steve Taylor, MO-AG, became the MACA Water Consultant and Diane Orf became the CropLife Ambassador Network Program Manager. They are building on the groundwork that has been laid plus bringing new ideas and enthusiasm to their respective programs. Both programs are unique in the information and assistance that they offer to MACA members and so I encourage you to take time to follow what they are doing.

MACA leaders have worked hard to make sure that we have some fun at the meetings. If you haven't been to a meeting recently, make plans to attend and see how you can contribute to MACA and the industry while still benefitting professionally.

The programs and services that MACA provide are made possible because of the respective committees who work together on issues of mutual concern. To those committee members and the respective committee chairs and vice chairs, thank you for all you do to help strengthen MACA. We couldn't do it without you.

Finally, if you have any issues that concern you or suggestions for speakers for the 2013 MACA annual meeting, give me a call or email me. The 2013 membership invoices will be mailed out the end of October, please look for them along with the 2011-2012 Year in Review. Here's to a great year ahead!

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SEPTEMBER 3-4-5, 2013
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