

LEAD ON

Newsletter

January 2014
Kacy Atkinson, Editor



CULTIVATING NEW LEADERS FOR AGRICULTURE

From the Director



BY CINDY GARRETSON-WEIBEL
L.E.A.D. Program Director

It is exciting to have another Wyoming L.E.A.D. class underway. In fact, Class 13 just completed its third seminar in Riverton.

Every class is similar in many regards... the uncertainty the class has at the first seminar, then the confidence gained throughout the L.E.A.D. experience. Yet, each class is also very unique. This new group is the youngest class since the inception of the program, with an average age of 30 years old. This fact gives me hope for the future of agriculture because it demonstrates the younger generation still has a strong interest in Wyoming agriculture and wants a part in shaping the future of agriculture in this state. Our goal for the L.E.A.D. program is "Cultivating New Leaders for Agriculture."

Thank you to each of you who recommended potential candidates for the program. Even those individuals who chose not to apply at this time are put on the mailing list to receive the L.E.A.D. newsletter and regular updates. It is never too early, or too late, to recommend a candidate, so when you think of a great candidate, give me a call and we can start getting those potential applicants connected.

I would like to thank the Wyoming Agricultural Leadership Council board members who provide such a valuable service to the Wyoming L.E.A.D. program. At the August membership meeting, Alex Malcolm was elected to the Board of Directors replacing Brenda Williams, who was the past president of the organization. Thank you Brenda for your ongoing contributions, including a regular sponsorship from Farm Credit Services.

The WALC board is very engaged and will be holding a strategic planning session this spring to review priorities and set some goals.

Congratulations to Wyoming L.E.A.D. Class 11 for again winning the membership contest for most dues paid in 2013. They came in with 78 percent renewal rate. They will be listed as a class sponsor for one of the upcoming L.E.A.D. seminars. 2014 dues notices will be out this spring, so keep an eye out and thank you in advance for your contribution to help sustain the L.E.A.D. program.



L.E.A.D. is delighted to welcome Atkinson as the new program manager.

I am delighted to welcome Kacy Atkinson as the new program manager for Wyoming L.E.A.D. She came on board October 1 and grew up near Garrett, Wyo. She taught communication at West Texas A&M and most recently worked for CSU Extension as a 4-H Youth Development/Livestock Production Agent in Arapahoe County near

Denver. We are excited to bring Kacy back home to Wyoming.

We hope to see you at one of our upcoming in-state L.E.A.D. seminars – State Government (Feb. 18-21 in Cheyenne); Economics and Marketing (June 11-13 in Afton); Family Relations (Aug. 10-13 in Douglas); Natural Resources (Sept. 17-19 in Rock Springs); and Graduation (Jan 22-24, 2015 in Saratoga).

From the President

BY AARON CLAUSEN
WALC Board President



I am honored and humbled to have been elected to the office of President of the WALC board. Leif has done an excellent job

over the last few years and has been dedicated to the success of the LEAD program. I would like to congratulate him on his recent wedding, and wish them happiness in this new chapter of their lives.

I am very excited about starting our next LEAD class. I was able to attend the first day of their first seminar, and was once again impressed with the caliber of fellows and their passion for the ag industry in the great State of Wyoming. With leaders like this, Wyoming can do nothing but continue to flourish in years to come. These fellows are in for one of the greatest experiences of their lives and are already making lifelong friends.

As alumni of the LEAD program, I think we all owe the next class the chance to have the great experiences we all had and would like to thank you for paying your dues, as well as participating in fundraising and the raffle so we can pay it forward.

"LIKE" Wyoming L.E.A.D. on Facebook today!

STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH PROGRAM HAPPENINGS

Each seminar, the fellows will provide current updates on what they are learning, and you will have the chance to check out photos of their experience as well!

WYOMING L.E.A.D. WILL ALSO USE THIS FACEBOOK PAGE TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

[facebook.com/WyomingLEAD](https://www.facebook.com/WyomingLEAD)



(Sitting L-R) Saige Albert (Casper), Cody Bainter (Cheyenne), Haley Lockwood (Cheyenne), Becky Tekansik (Pine Bluffs), Summer Schulz (Pinedale); and **(Standing L-R)** Holden Hergert (Thermopolis), Warren Adams (Baggs), Riley Hunter (Gillette), Kacy Atkinson (Program Manager), Tyler Lindholm (Sundance), Pierson Hodgens (Meeteetse), Cindy Garretson-Weibel (Director), Dan Henry Hanson (Lusk), Brian Boner (Douglas), JW Rankin (Shawnee); and Justin Hesser (Cheyenne).

Class 13 participants include:

- **Warren Adams of Baggs, Wyo.**, is a ranch hand and owner of Adams Livestock. He has worked as an outfitter and briefly as a ranch hand in Australia.
- **Saige Albert of Casper, Wyo.**, is the managing editor of the Wyoming Livestock Roundup. She is currently the vice chair of the Natrona County 4-H Foundation, chairman of the Casper Chamber Ag Committee, and is a member of the Casper FFA Alumni Association.
- **Cody Bainter of Cheyenne, Wyo.**, is the agricultural marketing specialist at the Wyoming Business Council. She grew up on a commercial cattle operation in Montana and is still involved. She has had various ag marketing jobs and been heavily involved in Beefmaster Breeder's United.
- **Brian Boner of Douglas, Wyo.**, is a former U.S. Air Force officer who recently transitioned to manager of his family's ranch in Converse County. He is a member of the American Legion, Knights of Columbus and Moose Club.
- **Dan Henry Hanson of Lusk, Wyo.**, is vice president of Hanson Livestock and is on the Niobrara County Board of Directors for the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.
- **Holden Hergert of Thermopolis, Wyo.**, is a soil conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. He is currently involved in the Western Society of Weed Science and the Soil Science Society of America.
- **Justin Hesser of Cheyenne, Wyo.**, is an associate attorney at Dray, Dyekman, Reed & Healey P.C. in Cheyenne and a former law clerk to Judge Thomas Campbell, First Judicial District Court. Hesser grew up on a family farm in western Nebraska.
- **Pierson Hodgens of Meeteetse, Wyo.**, has spent his career in agricultural production and is the ranch manager for Wood River Ranch. He is a member of the Johnson County Cattlemen's Association.
- **Riley Hunter of Gillette, Wyo.**, is an associate broker with Prudential Preferred Properties. He grew up in Wheatland, and is a sixth generation rancher. For the past six years, Hunter has been in Gillette working for Prudential Preferred Properties.
- **Tyler Lindholm of Sundance, Wyo.**, is a lead substation electrician for Basin Electric Power Cooperative. He is also a ranch hand and shareholder of his family's ranch, Jackpot Ranch Corp. He has twice received both the Naval and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and Humanitarian Aid Medal; as well as a Meritorious Unit Commendation all from the U.S. Navy.
- **Haley Lockwood of Cheyenne, Wyo.**, graduated from the University of Wyoming in May 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural communication. She is the communication and publications director at the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.
- **JW Rankin of Shawnee, Wyo.**, is the co-owner of JS Rankin Ranches, Inc. Rankin is a third generation rancher on a commercial Black Angus ranch in Converse and Niobrara Counties. He previously worked for Baker Hughes as the Northern Rockies Station manager, while also staying involved in the family operation.
- **Summer Schulz of Pinedale, Wyo.**, is self-employed as a land/conservation consultant and real estate agent for Dusty Spur Consulting, LLC and Real Estate of Wyoming, LLC.
- **Karley Shepperson of Casper, Wyo.**, is one of the managers at KS Ranch, a Black Angus beef cattle operation with cows located on several ranches around the Casper area. She is also a storm water drainage inspector for Rangeland Consulting.
- **Becky Tekansik of Pine Bluffs, Wyo.**, works for Muddy Creek Ranch and has spent her life working in cattle production. She is a member of the Red Angus Association of America and the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation.

Alumni News

Congratulations to **Leif Hanson** (Class 6) who married Summer Jackson on July 27. The couple makes their home on the Red Canyon Ranch near Kaycee.

Class 10 member **Andrea Sun** married Chris Zink on Sept. 7. The couple makes their home in Casper, where Andrea continues to work at the Wyoming Livestock Round-up.

Our L.E.A.D. family had two babies born on October 8. **Ashlea Bassett** (Class 12) and husband, Pete from Buffalo, had baby Tate on October 8. He joins an older sister.

And **Kem Nicolaysen** (Class 11), and wife, Shelly from Casper, had their second daughter, Jane, on Oct. 8. Jane joins her older sister Gwendolyn.

Class 11 member **Paul Bauder** from Glendo, and his wife, Jackie, had their second child on Nov. 18. Baby Kendra joins older brother Tra.

Amber (Wallingford) Armajo (Class 9) and husband Kyle welcomed their first child this month. Daughter Scotlyn Marie was born on Jan. 22.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to **Brenda Younkin** (Class 12) for the loss of her father, Harry Younkin, this fall. Harry was in the Nebraska L.E.A.D. Program in 1991 and 1992. Brenda's mother, Jean, still makes her home near Afton.

Sympathy is also extended to **Larry Steinle** (Class 9) for the loss of his mother, Darlene Jeanne (Torggrimson) Steinle. Her husband, Carl, still makes his home near Bill.

Catching Up with LEAD Class I

Irv Petsch



Donna and I still ranch in Meriden and celebrated our 45th wedding anniversary in June. We stay busy keeping up with the activities of our four children, nephew and 13 grandchildren all within a 60 mile radius of the ranch. We still farm and run a 6000 head feedlot on the ranch. We currently do specialized natural programs, fattening, backgrounding and developing heifers, along with feeding cows and bulls.

Over the past few years, I have been a member of the Wyoming Beef Council and have served as a NCBA Federation of State Beef Councils Director. I currently serve as one of the 10 members chosen to represent the Federation on the Operating Committee and help decide how to spend approximately \$40 million in check-off funds.

My favorite memories of L.E.A.D. Class I are all the wonderful people who were a part of that class. They are all exceptional people, and I cherish their friendship. I can still remember the trips to Washington D.C., California and the Orient. I remember most how we all cried our eyes out at our graduation in Jackson Hole after the song "Friends" was played for us.

Ronald Cunningham

I am still working for the University of Wyoming Extension Service as an area Extension Educator based in Lander.

Probably the most memorable thing I remember was traveling to the Great Wall in China, walking on it, and going to the Ming Tombs and realizing how old those countries are. Knowing the communists locked up that country for 50 years, it is fascinating to see how far they have progressed in the last 27 years.

LEAD helped me to see first-hand how much of the world's population lives in poverty, and how few people have the things we take for granted and enjoy every day.

Syliva Moore



After one "failed" retirement in 2008, I am trying retirement again, and so far have only accepted part-time work this time. Some full-time positions continue to tempt me so I may fail at retirement

once again! Members of the first L.E.A.D. class truly enjoyed one another. We had tremendous diversity of opinion, but we put aside our biases to learn from one another and from the many excellent seminars. For me, the trip to China, Taiwan and Japan really opened my eyes to the need to be globally aware, and I was impressed some of our class members were already connected internationally.

Larry Earhart



I am still involved in production agriculture; however, I sold the farm machinery and leased out the crop land but retained the pastures. I still own and manage a registered Angus cow herd.

We all felt honored to be members of the first class and have enjoyed watching the program develop to its present superior status. My favorite L.E.A.D. memories include the trip to China and observing the scenery, culture, cuisine and the country's agriculture. The friendships developed during those two years were and are still wonderful. It has been rewarding to see members of our class serve their communities and State of Wyoming in so many ways over the years.

One of the best things we learned in L.E.A.D. was to work with a very diverse group of people and to develop policies or programs that could be supported by the whole group. That experience has served me very well in the organizations I have been involved with since completing the program.

From the Treasurer



BY **LISA DALY**
WALC Board Treasurer

I hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday and was able to spend quality time with their loved ones. Dues notices will be sent out shortly, and I would like to thank those who paid their dues last year. The L.E.A.D. program depends on your support for its continued success. The WALC board and staff work hard to keep the program going, and we couldn't do it without the support of our alumni.

Thank you to all who participated in the rifle raffle. Congratulations to Deanna Crofts from Riverton, who was drawn the winner at the L.E.A.D. Banquet in Cody. We raised approximately \$5000, which will be a great help toward supporting L.E.A.D. Class XIII. Participating in fundraising events such as the raffle is a great way to show your support of this worthwhile program.

I wish you good fortune in 2014!

WALC Board Members 2013 - 2014

- AARON CLAUSEN**, President
- PAK LANDERS**, Vice President
- LISA DALY**, Treasurer
- ALEX MALCOLM**, Secretary
- SCOTT GOETZ**, Member
- BILL WANEGA**, Member
- AMBER ARMAJO**, Member
- CINDY GARRETSON-WEIBEL**, Member
- LEIF HANSON**, Past President