

PDPW MANAGERS memo

February 15, 2008

Watch for these highlights in this edition of the Managers Memo:

- Take a look at the producer panels offered at the Annual Business Conference
- Meet the five members who are vying for a spot on the PDPW Board of Directors
- Learn to better budget your time for a more balanced life and business

Thanks,
PDPW

Featured PDPW Member:

"PDPW has impacted our dairy in several ways, including educational programs for employees as well as the networking opportunities that exist through involvement with PDPW. A wide network of people throughout the industry is important to me to further my education when dealing with cattle and people. PDPW does an excellent job in providing opportunities with both!"

~Rick Schwenck, Lake Breeze Dairy

Rick is the herd manager at Lake Breeze Dairy LLC, a 3,000 cow dairy located in Fond du Lac, Wis. Their dairy has high standards for animal health, production and milk quality. Rick explained, "We have several goals set relating to each area and track performance on a daily basis. Management and daily work activity is broken down into teams." These teams consist of a Health and Reproduction, Transition and Calving, Feeding, and Barn Management team. Rick attributes accomplishing their goals "through our talented teams that work hard every day." Each cow at Lake Breeze Dairy is treated as an individual to make sure she receives the quality treatment she deserves.

After attending the Managers Academy last month in Phoenix, Rick was pleased with the value of this national conference. "It taught me to look at the big picture in the dairy industry in several different ways – from a public perception standpoint to employee management through different learning styles," Rick said. "It opened up my mind and really made me think about my bright future with the dairy industry and what I need to do to sustain and improve within the industry."

For Your Dairy Business:

THINK PANELS WHEN NARROWING THE SPECIALTY SESSIONS at the March 11-12 PDPW Annual Business Conference. Individuals who relocated dairies will openly share their business strategies and considerations, family factors and required steps for a successful move during Tuesday morning's "Where to go, where to grow" specialty session. Panelists include Dr. Gordie Jones, managing partner of Central Sands Dairy and a production consulting specialist for 12 herds with more than 30,000 cows in three states; Matt and Mary Nunes of Scientific Holsteins who went from managing a herd in Michigan to owning a herd in Wisconsin in 2003; and Mike Brown, a milk marketing strategist who will discuss where dairy should grow and businesses should be located. Management practices, investments and ideas that worked and didn't work for two fellow producers—Lloyd Holterman of Watertown and Dan Truttmann of New Glarus—will be the focus of Tuesday afternoon's "Three things they have done right and three things they would do differently" one-hour specialty session. Then why not wrap up the specialty sessions on Wednesday with "Developing middle managers by putting together all the right pieces" presented by Gary Ruegsegger and Doug Block. When this session ends, you'll know how to select, train and grow dependable team leaders who can help advance your program. Visit pdpw.org to view the flyer and to register.

IF YOU WANT TO BETTER UNDERSTAND CHANGING COST STRUCTURES AND EVALUATE YOUR FINANCES, attend Wednesday's Management Accounting session at the PDPW Annual Business Conference, March 11-12, in Madison. Dick Wittman, an Idaho producer and past president of Farm Financial Standards Council, will lead this two-hour morning session. Wittman knows dairy producers and the financial side of business having provided financial management to farmers and agricultural businesses throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Wittman has developed management systems and solutions for business relationship/transition problems and has authored Building Effective Farm Management Systems, a guidebook to help commercial-size family farm businesses define their vision and implement a professional management and transition process that will lead them to that goal. Visit pdpw.org to view the flyer and to register.

TAKE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMAL WELFARE TO THE NEXT LEVEL when the science community, a Washington D.C. insider, an industry communications professional and even activists deliver their perspectives on animal welfare on Tuesday, March 11, at the PDPW Business Conference in Madison. Presenters include activist Gene Bauer, the co-founder and president of the Farm Sanctuary; activist Patti Strand, president of the National Animal Interest Alliance; Dr. Temple Grandin, scientist who specializes in animal behavior and well-being; Kevin Murphy of Food Chain Communications who believes in proactive, strategic communication; and Chandler Goule whose experience in agriculture and trade policy will give us a D.C. take on the issue. You'll walk away from this presentation more well rounded and better informed. Visit pdpw.org to view the flyer and to register.

DID YOU RECEIVE THAT SPECIAL SOMETHING FROM YOUR VALENTINE? If not, no worries! If you receive the Hoard's Dairyman, next week something special will arrive in your mailbox. PDPW is proud to partner with Hoard's Dairyman to offer dairy producers a complete look at all of the dynamic speakers and sessions at this year's Annual Business Conference. Be sure to look for the puzzle pieces and take some time to peruse this special edition.

For Your Business Mind:

VOTE AND HELP DETERMINE PDPW LEADERSHIP. Marion Barlass, Janesville; Mark Diederichs, Malone; Patty Endres, Lodi; Roger Erickson, Neillsville; and Dan Siemers, Newton are on the election slate for the PDPW Board, with voting taking place at the Annual Business Conference, March 11-12. Newly elected Board Members will be announced on Wednesday afternoon during the Annual Business Meeting. Candidate's backgrounds: Barlass, husband Bill and son Brian have a 400-cow registered Jersey dairy and are heavily involved in the state and national Jersey organizations. Diederichs has been in the dairy business for 25 years and is part owner and general manager of Lake Breeze Dairy, a 3,000 cow dairy. Endres and husband Dave own and operate Endres Jazzy Jerseys which consists of 750 milking Jerseys and about 600 head of young stock. Erickson, wife June and three sons run a family-owned corporation with a 700-cow dairy. Siemers owns and operates a 2,500-cow dairy and enjoys merchandising and showing cattle. Each farm has one vote, with all votes weighted equally.

DAIRY PRODUCERS AND NUTRITIONISTS WEREN'T STOPPED BY A MAJOR SNOWSTORM. They braved the weather and the roads to attend the 2008 Nutrition Innovation Seminars, packing the seminars to the brim at both Green Bay on Feb. 6 and in Madison on Feb. 7. Attendees such as these three found the seminars well worth their time and investment: 1) "The most valuable part of the conference is all of the people that come together to share knowledge and innovation with the dairy industry."—Alyssa Embretson; 2) "I enjoyed the research-based information, professional development and time to interact with dairy professionals."—Dwight Swenson; and 3) "At the Nutrition Innovation Seminar, I learned about new technologies and strategies in the nutrition world. I will use this to help my customers be as profitable as possible."—Katie Martin.

NINE WMMB DIRECTOR POSITIONS ARE UP FOR ELECTION, and nominations are being accepted until March 1 for new-comers and incumbents in Districts 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22 and 25. Nominees must be engaged in the production and sales of milk in their district. A director spends about 200 hours each year on WMMB business, attends an average of two committee meetings and five board meetings annually and may represent the organization at national, state and local industry meetings and events. Although directors are not salaried, meeting time is compensated with per diem payments. To qualify as a candidate, nominees must get at least five signatures from active dairy producers in their district and complete an Affidavit of Eligibility form and a nomination form. A mail-in ballot election is set for later in the spring, with results announced in June. For more information or to obtain a nomination form, call 608-224-5140. PDPW salutes the WMMB Directors and encourages our members to take this opportunity to serve our industry.

MARCH 31 IS THE DEADLINE FOR VALUE-ADDED PRODUCER GRANTS being awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2008 by the USDA and Rural Business-Cooperative Service. Up to 30 grants will be given to help independent agricultural producers, producer groups, farmer and rancher cooperatives and majority-controlled, producer-based business ventures enter into value-added activities. Maximum grant amount for a planning grant is \$100,000 while the maximum grant amount for a working capital grant is \$300,000. There is no restriction on the minimum grant size. In FY 2007, 35 percent of awards were \$50,000 or less. Application guide and other materials may be obtained at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm> or by contacting Wisconsin's USDA Rural Development State Office at 715.345.7610.

THE HEART OF THE FARM CONFERENCES PLANNED FOR NEXT MONTH. The *Heart of the Farm — Women in Agriculture Conference* addresses the needs of farm women by providing education on pertinent topics, connecting them with agricultural resources, and creating support networks. Two, one-day conferences will be held Thursday, March 6 at Florian Gardens in Eau Claire and Friday, March 7 at LaSure's Hall in Oshkosh. For more information, visit <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/heartofthefarm/>.

BOOK REVIEW: WHO MOVED MY CHEESE? is a timeless allegory that uses mice, cheese, a maze and numerous situations to reveal profound truths and give us easy-to-swallow “aha” moments. Written by Dr. Spencer Johnson, this 97-page, easy-to-read book is a #1 international bestseller that shows us how to take a changing situation seriously without taking ourselves so seriously. It’s not what’s in the story that is so eye-opening; it’s how we apply the story to our lives—career, relationships, wealth, spiritual path, etc.—that can result in less stress and more joy.

WE CAN BETTER BUDGET OUR TIME when we guess long. One of the most common mistakes we make is underestimating the length of time a project will take. When a task or project runs over time, we often become frustrated and subsequent tasks may not get completed. Before starting a task, consider what is involved in getting the task completed, then add 25 percent for the unforeseen. If your task is completed before you had planned, you’ll find yourself smiling and ready to tackle the next job.

WALK WITH COMFORT BY SELECTING THE RIGHT WALKING SHOE. Walking experts suggest purchasing a lightweight, breathable walking shoe with a low, supportive heel that rounds or bevels in. A walker’s foot hits heel first then rolls gradually from heel-to-toe, so a flexible sole and more bend in the toe than in a running shoe is a must. Your foot should have sufficient room in the toe box, with a thumbnail’s width—about a half inch—between your toes and the end of the shoe. The shoe should be wide enough that your toes can move freely. Your heel should not slip, and the shoe should not pinch or bind, particularly across the arch or ball of your foot. Never be in a hurry when shopping, shop at the end of the day when your feet may be slightly swollen and wear the same socks you will be wearing during your walks. Lastly, wear your shoes in the house for a few days and don’t venture outdoors until you are sure the shoes are going to work for you.

PDPW Educational Calendar:

March 11-12, 2008: Annual Business Conference, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, Wis.

March 18: Dairy Connect

April 9 & 10, 2008: Dairy Herdsman Training

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