



What Do You Get For Your NAICCC Dollar?

by Dennis Berglund

Let me make you an offer you can't refuse: how about \$398 worth of goods and services you want for the price of \$195?

That's the bargain NAICCC offers members. In 1993 crop consultants and contract researchers paid \$86,715 in dues but received \$177,140 in education, public relations, representation, certification, and other services.

The difference in dues and expenses is made up through donations, sustaining, associate, student members dues, and in-kind services.

Surveys have shown that NAICCC members want the organization to help provide education, legislative representation, and recognition.

Using that survey information as our focus, the pie chart illustrates how the Executive Board has allocated resources through July 31, 1994.

Education

We spent 38 percent of our NAICCC dollars on the annual

meeting last January in Memphis and the annual meeting was a first rate educational experience for everyone who attended. The program for the 1995 meeting in San Diego looks excellent too.

Legislative Representation

We spent 12.4 percent of our dollars on legislative duties, which helps us both GIVE and GET information in Washington, D. C. This amount is up substantially from 1993 and these dollars

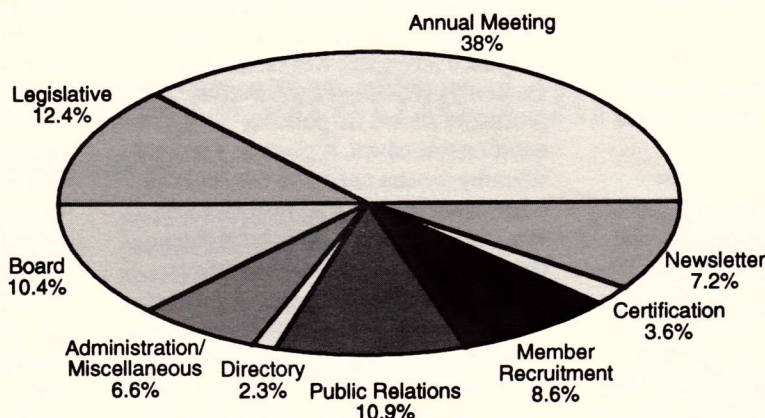
are certainly well spent.

Because of our legislative efforts, I really don't anticipate any more big surprises like we had with WPS and SP-53. The WPS reprieve that we received in 1994 is directly due to NAICCC staff, committee and membership interaction with personnel in Washington. Also, USDA, EPA and other agencies are now asking for our input on issues, which is something that we could only dream of before.

Recognition

We spent 24 percent on certification, directory, newsletter and public relations activities which help promote and define the profession for our peers and public. Even after 14 years of consulting work, I still have a hard time explaining in 10 or 15 seconds what a crop consultant is and what we do. I look forward to

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Reflections of a Former President: Have Times Changed?

by Richard Kinzer

There's an old saying that the more things change, the more they stay the same. I don't believe that for a minute. This is a time of dizzying change in the crop consulting and contract research professions, and there are days that I figure I'm not even smart enough to identify all the changes, much less know how to respond to them.

I live and work in an area where two crop consultants once worked 50,000 acres of cotton and a bunch of vegetable crops. Today cotton acres don't amount to much more than 15,000 acres and

there are 8 or 10 of us competing for what's left. Is that good or bad for the profession? I don't know. I know it's not too good for my pocketbook. I know I'm not in this boat by myself because I run into more and more old friends who say, "There's got to be an easier way to make a living." And mean it.

Then I look at my clients and what they're up against. Profit margins are so tight there's no room for a bad year anymore. And government regulations get tougher all the time. Some days I ask

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President's Message

Let's Talk About Ethics

Maggie Alms, NAICC President

I still remember the ethics seminar at the NAICC Annual Meeting in Kansas City in 1991. I remember it because up to that point I wasn't much interested in ethics. I was interested in building a business and satisfying my clients. Not ethics.

At that meeting, the facilitators from Blanchard Training and Development gave each of us a book, *The Power of Ethical Management*.

They also taught the Ethics Check, three questions which help a person clarify different aspects involved in making an ethical decision, three questions designed to take the grayness out of difficult decision-making. Those of you who read Will Connell's story in the *NAICC News* in May will remember he talked about this book and the Ethics Check too.

In Blanchard's book it says, "The toughest ethical problems provide the biggest opportunities for growth. If you are always confronted with easy choices, you don't build character. Free will puts us into difficult situations, and working on them stretches us. It's analogous to building up physical strength. Every time you work out, you deal with resistance. If the weights are too light to provide that resistance—and therefore easy for you to lift—you won't increase your strength."

When we face tough situations, those "opportunities for growth," the Ethics Check is nice to know: is it legal, will I be violating either civil law or a professional code of ethics, is it balanced, is my decision fair to all concerned in the short term as well as the long term, how will it make me feel about myself, and how would I feel telling my family or my clients about my decision?

We consultants and researchers need the Ethics Check when: we face situations that may compromise client confidentiality; we are asked for a recommendation for an unlabeled pesticide; we are offered pirated software; we're tempted to exaggerate a pest infestation in order to justify our service; we've made a mistake on a

research plot, or we're asked to show preference for a particular product or supplier.

The Membership Recruitment and Rules Committee (MR&R) has helped us define the standards for determining independence of a consultant. They wrote a definition and several related questions which help clarify the definition. And they made it clear. That is all they can do. No longer will that committee sit in judgment of an individual. They can write standards and ask the questions. The answers must be left to each individual and their own personal ethics.

Meanwhile, the Ethics and Grievance Committee is hard at work to ensure a grievance procedure will be included in the new NAICC By-Laws. Such a procedure allows for policing questionable ethics. It gives us a process whereby we can challenge the ethics of other consultants, a responsibility we must take seriously. I only hope that, before we challenge the ethics of our peers, we challenge our own.

What is ethics, anyway? In the book we received it says, "What good ethical behavior comes down to is soul—where you house your values, your purpose in life, including the picture of the kind of person you want to be. Without your soul, you have nothing to guide you."

Well, we who are good at crop consulting and contract research are not generally good at talking about our souls. Nor are we good at talking about values, or our purpose in life. We'd much rather talk about boll weevils, growing degree days, or soil tests. Anything except ethics.

But remember that afternoon we sat around tables in Kansas City and talked to each other about ethics? Remember the issues we debated, and how something which may be black and white to one consultant is gray or invisible to another? Remember the disagreements, the challenges, the sharing, the support?

I remember. And I think we need more of it. Challenging, sharing, and supporting each other. Is there really anything more important?

NAICC Dollar

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the day when everyone will know what a crop consultant does.

Administrative and Other Expenses

We only spent 6.6 percent of our expenses on administration. NAICC must be run and staffed in a professional manner and we pride ourselves on the efficiency of our operation.

Board Expenses

The 10.4 percent of our budget allocated here reimburses the Executive Board for out-of-pocket expenses. These expenses are mainly travel, rooms, meals for board meetings, telephone calls and postage. Some of this reimbursement is for NAICC work we do from our offices.

Many other board expenses are not submitted for reimbursement. Many long hours go unrewarded except for the feeling of doing something that is good—and the occasional thank you.

The next time you talk to a board member, especially the president, president-elect and past presidents, please give them a pat on the back. They truly are good people who are trying to do the best job possible with the resources they're given.

Member Recruitment Expenses

We need more members, and we need to keep each of you as members, so we allocate 8.6 percent of our budget for recruitment. If each of us would get only one additional member to join, our membership would double but our impact would grow many times that amount.

This short "snapshot" of NAICC's financial picture adds up to 100 percent of our expenses as of July 31 and seems to be representative of where NAICC members place their priorities. If any of these percentages seem amiss or you believe the priorities are misplaced, please let a board member know, give NAICC headquarters in Memphis a call, or contact me.



(Dennis Berglund of Centrol, Inc. in Twin Valley, Minn., is treasurer of NAICC.)

Revising NAICC's Organizational Documents

Changes to the Constitution and By-Laws Will Be Voted on by Mail Ballot This Fall

Getting NAICC's organizational house in order involves voting on changes to make all official documents agree. Passing the changes will make NAICC conform to Internal Revenue Service rules on tax exempt groups.

Still being written are changes to the Ethics and Grievance Committees functions. You will hear more about that in later issues of *NAICC News*.

Members will be mailed ballots to vote on changes to the Constitution and By-Laws on Oct. 31. Those ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 30.

Ballots will be mailed Nov. 30 for the

annual election of officers and must be postmarked by Dec. 13 to be counted.

President-elect Harold Lambert said changes in the organizational documents will be marked so members can find them easily before voting.

The changes involve merging the By-laws and Constitution into one document and filing amendments to the NAICC Articles of Incorporation in Florida.

When NAICC was organized in 1978 the founders wrote a Constitution and By-Laws. In 1984 the organization was incorporated and the Constitution became redundant.

"None of it mattered until 1989 when we discovered NAICC had never filed a tax exempt status report with the IRS," Lambert said. The IRS requires all

organizational documents to be in agreement.

Lambert said, for example, changes were made in the By-Laws in 1990 to allow for expanded membership categories. However, that change is not reflected in the Articles of Incorporation.

All the details of the legal housekeeping, are still being worked out. Lambert said, there may be some changes made in the way NAICC nominates and elects officers.

But again, he said, all proposed changes will be highlighted in material sent to members. Everyone will know what is being voted on.



Happenings on the Hill

by Allison Jones, Executive Director

EPA Petitioned for WPS Change

NAICC was among 14 agricultural groups that banded together to ask EPA

Administrator Carol Browner to revise the Worker Protection Standards (WPS) through the rule-making process.

The formal petition initiated by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) calls for EPA to publish a proposed rule for revising WPS in the Federal Register. Comments would be accepted for a specific length of time and a final rule published — hopefully before Jan. 1, 1995 when the section governing crop consultants and contract researchers goes into effect.

Under the proposed rule change, all crop advisors would be exempted from all WPS requirements as in current law. In the section titled "Crop Advisors," the petition reiterates the intent of Congress that the regulatory definition of crop advisor includes any person who is assessing pest numbers or damage, pesticide distribution, the status or requirements of agricultural plants, and specifically excludes "any person who is

performing hand labor tasks." The petition also says there should be a clear distinction between agricultural workers and crop advisors, so employers can't circumvent protection requirements by claiming workers are performing crop advisor duties.

Other sections of the petition addressed the timing of agricultural workers' training, reduced protection requirements for low contact work, established restricted re-entry intervals based on actual exposure, and eliminated the 30-day decontamination facility requirement. Additional areas of comment discussed in the petition included employee responsibility regarding personal protective equipment, exceptions from WPS on a case-by-case basis, bilingual requirements and employee/owner liability.

If you would like a copy of the petition, please contact the NAICC office.

Food Quality Legislation Passes Inspection

The Subcommittee on Department Operations and Nutrition passed the Food Quality Protection Act (H.R. 1627) by voice vote in late July.

This piece of legislation reforms and updates pesticide regulations under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA).

The final version adopted by the subcommittee incorporated several proposals that were first introduced by Congressmen Richard Lehman, D-Calif., and Thomas Bliley, R-Va., and co-sponsored by 220 House members.

Key provisions in the approved version include:

- Replace the current process for EPA cancellation of a pesticide registration with formal rule-making and deadlines,
- Require EPA and USDA to research, develop, and disseminate IPM techniques that would help reduce the use of pesticides that pose adverse effects,
- Expedite registration of "reduced risk" and "minor use" pesticides, and
- Repeal the Delaney Clause which prohibits pesticide residues on unprocessed food if the chemical is shown to cause cancer at any dosage, and replace it with a single, science-based negligible risk standard that takes into account health, nutritional, and consumer benefits.

Changing Times *Continued from page 1*

myself if we'll have any tools left to grow a crop in five years.

Times seemed tough back in 1978 too. It seemed there were dog fights with some group or another everywhere we turned. Very few organizations welcomed or understood the relatively new profession of crop consulting and contract research. We felt excluded and out on our own.

So a bunch of us banded together to form NAICC. Our idea was pretty simple: there's strength in numbers, plus environmental activists and consumer groups would listen to us when they understood there were professional experts giving technical advice to farmers—experts who had nothing to gain from the use of chemical inputs. So independence was a big deal from the beginning. That's what we always hung our hats on.

It's still a good idea. I believe that. I believe it so strongly that when one of my lifelong friends, co-founder and past president of NAICC, Reed Green, went to work for a big outfit that offers consulting services, I supported withdrawing his membership in the Texas Association of Agricultural Consultants (TAAC).

He's still my friend, he's still a top-notch professional crop advisor, but he doesn't meet our original criteria for independence.

All that was pretty much on my mind when I went to the funeral of another long-time friend and co-founder of NAICC, John Vahalik, who died this summer very suddenly and at far too young an age. John was a legend in Texas and his death left a big hole. Looking around that church, seeing so many old friends really set me to thinking. It seemed odd for us to be together without John.

Then I thought about Reed, and wondered how he was feeling. I imagine he was pretty mad and hurt and I wondered if he had a right to be. We didn't have any choice about what happened to John, and we felt like we didn't have any choice about what happened to Reed. But did we?

Some music started in the church before I found the answer to that question, but I've thought about it a lot since. The closest I've come to an answer is this: we need to be sure we're not acting like an exclusive club, barring from membership anyone who's not just

like us. In other words, we can't afford to treat other people the way we were being treated when NAICC was formed. But that "answer" still leaves me with a lot of hard questions.

Were we barking up the wrong tree with the notion of an organization for professional independents?

No, I don't think so. But we've always had a hard time defining the term. We've always had a hard time defending it from people who say a contract researcher can't be independent because he or she works for industry.

We've managed to offend a lot of good folks along the way with the implication that we are more ethical or whatever than the rest of the world. We've been like an exclusive country club—and we've been treating people the way we were treated before NAICC was formed.

And we've had a tough time making our dream for NAICC come true. There just haven't been enough of us who shared the vision and were willing to devote our time, money and energy to get it done. We have a great story to tell, but our voice hasn't been loud enough to tell it. What's the problem? What should we do next?

I decided the best way to search for the truth was to get involved with NAICC again. I sent in my dues and got rewarded with the opportunity to write this article. That meant getting up to date on the current issues in a hurry. Boy, did I ever get an earful.

I found out that NAICC has been "discovered." Everybody in Washington seems to want our opinion these days, which is great.

But we don't have enough money to send people to meetings and we don't have the resources to prepare all the papers and other resource material solicited by Congress, EPA, USDA, etc.

I found out that we have more members than ever before in our history, but 400 people still don't make a big splash inside the Beltway.

I found out that the newer members' needs don't always jive with the vision of the handful of us who founded NAICC. We still have some lessons to learn about listening to each other and forging consensus.

I found out we're not a regional group anymore—NAICC has members in 37 states and a few foreign countries. I found out that while all these people represent different crops, cultures, and ways of

thinking, we still have a lot in common. And a lot to learn from each other.

I found out that our certification program is still struggling to get established, but a lot of progress is being made.

Finally, I found out the Membership Recruitment and Rules Committee (MR&R) has spent the last several months investigating our standards for membership, including the definition of independence. They apparently wrestled hard with the questions I've been asking myself. They agreed we need to be as inclusive as possible without sacrificing our common bond of independence.

And they came up with a set of standards which was endorsed by the Executive Board and will be submitted to the membership by mail ballot next month. These standards include the question, "Do you currently receive any compensation from a client's purchase of products based on your recommendation or data?" My old friend Reed Green would answer "no" to that question and all the others, so under this plan he would still be considered independent, still qualified for membership.

As members privileged to cast a vote in that election, you and I are going to have to ask ourselves some hard questions. These are the ones I've been asking myself so far.

What do we give up if we pass this new membership plan and give voting privileges to some people who wouldn't have been accepted by the original group? It seems to me we may give up some credibility, particularly with the environmental community. On the other hand, I'm not sure how much they're listening to us anyway, or how concerned they will be if we include people like Reed.

Some people are concerned that we will be overwhelmed and outvoted by the new group, but the definition is pretty narrow, so that doesn't concern me very much. For example, they must be able to answer "no" to the question, "If you are employed by a company, is your compensation supplemented or subsidized by income derived from the sale of products?" I doubt that we'll get a huge influx of members as a result of the change. Anyway, we may very well learn that these people think pretty much the way we do.

We give up the ability to be a small,

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Annual Meeting

San Diego—There's More Than A Zoo To Do

Ask anyone about San Diego and the first thing you'll probably hear about is the zoo.

In this case the zoo does not refer to the NAICC annual meeting that will be at the U.S. Grant Hotel Jan.25-28.

Instead, most people immediately think of the San Diego Zoo. The city's zoo is world famous and is the area's most popular visitor attraction. With 800 species of animals on display over 100 tropical acres, the zoo is absolutely not to be missed. In addition to its rare and

exotic animals, the zoo is noted for its lush botanical collection. If you're too tired from NAICC meetings to walk, the zoo features a three-mile guided bus tour.

The zoo is located in the heart of Balboa Park, more than 1,200 acres that includes museums, art galleries, the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theatre, the Simon Edison Centre for the Performing Arts (which incorporates the Cassius Carter Centre Stage, the Old Globe Theatre, and the Lowell Davis Festival Theatre) as well as sports facilities, the historic Spreckels Organ Pavilion and the California Tower where a 100-bell carillon chimes each quarter hour.

In case you'd like to see more rare animals—and this time in their natural setting—you can travel 30 miles outside the city to the 2,150-acre San Diego Wild Animal Park. At the park 3,000 wild animals roam free over vast expanses as they would in their native Africa or Asia. The park offers a walking tour, but most

people take a guide-narrated monorail tour.

Sea World, a 150-acre park located on Mission Bay, features exhibits and underwater life from around the globe. You can pet dolphins, touch and feed bat rays, pick up starfish for closer inspection, visit the largest waterfowl collection in America, or take in San Diego's breathtaking panorama from Sea World Skytower or Mission Bay Skyride.

Those who want to be a part of the water world will enjoy the 4,600-acre Mission Bay, the largest facility of its kind in the world. More than 27 miles of beaches offer swimming in six areas as well as boating, fishing, skiing, board sailing and picnic spots. Bicycling and jogging along the paths around Mission Bay are popular too.

Sails and stacks dot San Diego Bay, one of the busiest harbors in the world. The bay serves as home port for navy ships, a large sportfishing fleet, thousands of pleasure craft and sailboats, and an increasing number of commercial and cruise ships.

One of the best ways to see the harbor is on the water. Scheduled tours are available to take you around the bay. At the Maritime Museum you can see the stately century-old windjammer, the *Star of India*, the steam ferry *Berkeley*, and the 1904 steam yacht *Medea*.



San Diego's Balboa Park

The cultural heart of San Diego is undeniably Balboa Park. Visitors to the park find more than 1,000 acres of museums, art galleries, theaters, rich Spanish architecture, colorful gardens and, of course, the San Diego Zoo. (Photo Courtesy of Bob Yarbrough/San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau).

Changing Times *Continued from page 4*

tight, closely knit group, but that's happening anyway as we grow. If NAICC is going to be a national organization, a force in national events, we're going to have to adjust to that kind of change.

We give up the right to draw a distinction between those of us who are small, private practitioners and those who enjoy the security of a regular paycheck, a company truck, and an expense account.

As a matter of fact, we already have members who fit that description, and the ones I know are good members and darned good professionals. As long as their compensation is derived directly from fees billed to clients and not from product sales they fit our current definition of independence.

What do we gain? We gain a clearly definable, and legally defensible standard

of membership that can be evenly applied to every applicant. We gain a new stature in national circles as a group which works together, makes solid decisions, and stands behind them. We give up our old image as a bunch of cowboys who shoot from the hip.

These are tough questions, and I'm not close to answering them yet. I keep wishing John were here to talk it through with me.

I still haven't decided how I'm going to vote, and I probably won't until the day I mark the ballot Oct. 31 and put it in the mail.

One image keeps popping into my mind: I went to a meeting once where a speaker was making the case that agriculture must pull together. He drew a big, fat circle on a flip chart and said, "Let's say this is the American population."

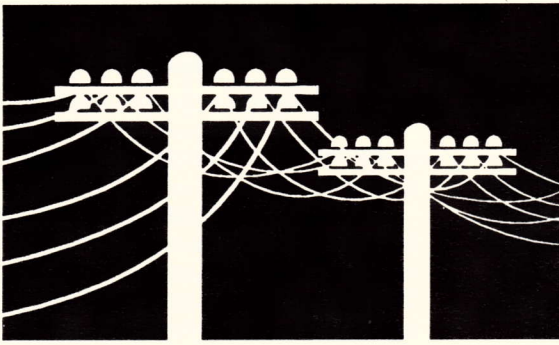
He drew a mark that looked like a circle with a fine-tipped pen and said, "This is the agricultural sector. It's hard for that number of people to have a large voice. It's impossible if they waste all their energy on infighting."

One thing hasn't changed for me over the years. I still have confidence that the members of NAICC will make the right decisions, and I'm willing to live with whatever that decision is.

And I'm glad I got involved again.



(Dick Kinzer of Winter Garden Ag Consulting Service in Uvalde, Tex., is a voting member and past president of NAICC.)



Working with Private Industry and Public Utilities

by David Ricke

The whole business makes for strange bedfellows: an expert whose entire training and experience is in the agricultural sector ventures into environmental consulting to work with individuals who haven't been to the farm since they were children playing in Grandpa's barnyard.

Somehow necessity brings them together and the mismatched pair enter a whole new arena of activity that is challenging, frustrating, exciting, aggravating—and sometimes just plain funny.

As the activities of agriculture become more intertwined with the events in private industry and public works, we as consultants find ourselves becoming more and more involved in areas we didn't even consider a few years ago.

There are regulatory agencies scrutinizing the effects of agriculture on ground water, erosion, pesticide/herbicide residue, a livestock facility's location, air quality and so on. Based on my experience, I'm not sure this is all going to be enjoyable.

The processes of dealing with private industry and public utilities require the same communication skills that were developed by all of us to deal with agriculture.

However, there are some other things to keep in mind when working in this area.

Even though your client is a large corporation with many employees, you still generally deal with one person. AND, if that one person you are dealing

with gets promoted, changes jobs, gets fired or retires, you stand an excellent chance of being shown the door.

At times like this, keep in mind it has nothing to do with your ability to do what you were hired to do. It could simply mean that the new guy thinks that the guy he replaced was an idiot and therefore everyone he hired must be an idiot too.

Perhaps the new guy is not nearly as impressed with your dazzling wit and stunning grasp of the facts as the last guy. Maybe the new guy feels your services are no longer needed.

Whatever it is, go on down the road to the next prospect and don't let that event destroy your day. It had nothing to do with you or your ability. I have been involved in several changes of the palace guard and only survived the inevitable re-organization once.

In the private/public utilities sector, documentation of activities, meetings, testing, chain of custody of samples, memos, on-site inspection and written notes of any dealings with clients or regulatory people is critical to your success.

You will never know how important something can become until you can't find it or document that it happened. This is especially important if there are any public meetings involved.

When, or if, you become involved with a public meeting or hearing, your client is almost always the bad guy—otherwise they wouldn't need you.

A public meeting is generally called by elected or appointed public officials

who are sensitive to public opinion.

Therefore, when they conduct one of these meetings and you are called upon to explain why your client wants this zoning variance or building permit or why your client made such a mess down by the creek, keep in mind that the best you can hope for is a continuance of the topic until the next monthly meeting.

A continuance is loosely translated to mean: "We are inclined to rule in your favor, but we're not going to do that in front of all these people."

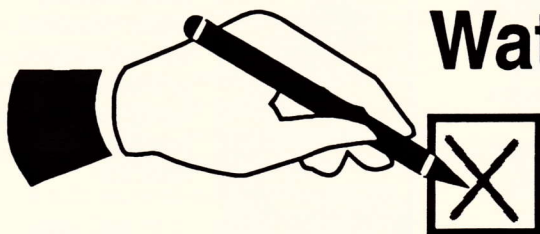
This type of work in partnership with the public/private sector, along with communicating with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, will teach you patience.

The time I have devoted to environmental consulting has yielded challenges and rewards that are very different from agricultural consulting. In this field we are not attempting to grow something, merely comply with someone else's wishes. That alone allows for interpretation of just what those wishes are—and therefore, they need a consultant.

As I said before, it is challenging, frustrating and sometimes very profitable.

But it's never, never dull.

(David L. Ricke of Environmental & Agricultural Consulting Services in Greensburg, Ind. is a voting member of NAICC).



Watch for:

Ballot on Constitutional changes Oct. 31

Ballot on Officers and Directors Nov. 30

How to Execute Your Civic Duty

A letter or a phone call is all it takes to let your representatives in Washington know how you feel about pending legislation that affects your livelihood.

by Allison Jones, Executive Director

Did you know that it is your civic duty to tell Washington what you think?

By just being a member of your community, you have a direct link to the officials in the nation's capitol who make our laws. Why not use this influence and let your Congressional representatives or Senators know just how you feel?

You may not have voted for them, or you may not vote for them again, but the men and women from your district depend on you to let them know how they are doing.

A phone call or a letter is all it takes to be heard. Every representative has a staff assigned to monitor constituents' concerns and update them on important issues affecting their district or state.

Also, if your member of Congress is a high ranking member of a committee, he or she probably has staffers assigned to that specific committee. As calls and letters come in they are directed to the staffer in charge of that subject matter. The staffer then updates the member of Congress about your concerns. Weekly and sometimes daily tabulations are recorded on specific issues that are hot topics.

Here are a few tips when writing your member of Congress:

■ Address the letter in the following manner:

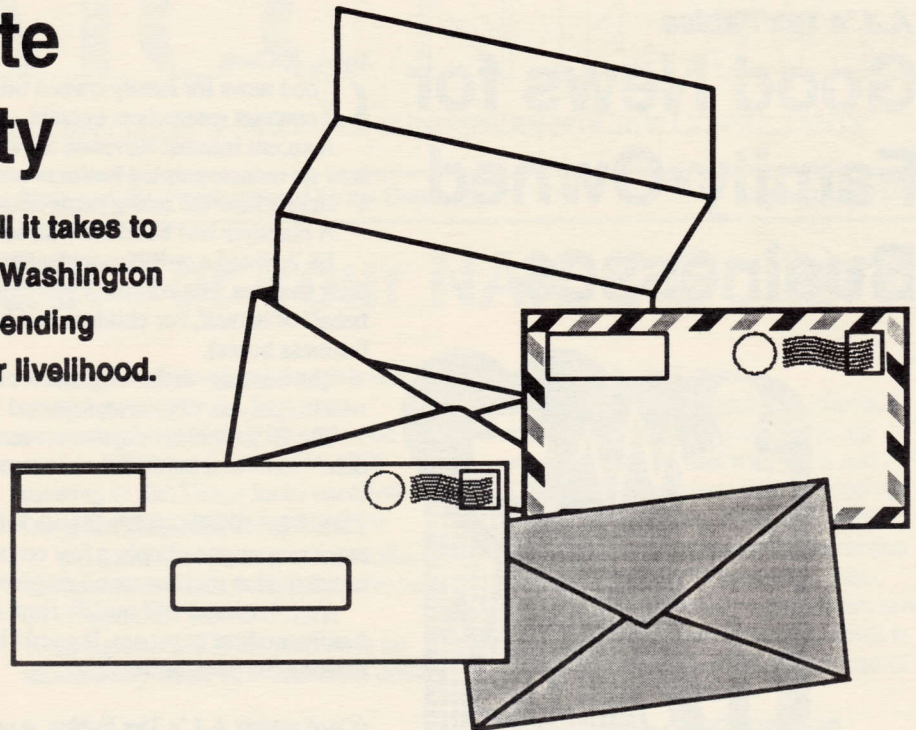
The Honorable John Doe
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

or

The Honorable John Doe
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

If you know the room number and building of your representative, you may add that as the third line. However, it is not necessary.

■ Identify yourself in the first paragraph as a constituent, but don't ever threaten not to vote for him/her, or claim to have



lots of political influence. Threats, whether stated openly or implied, will tend to close the recipient's mind to your point of view.

■ Identify the subject you wish to address. Don't worry about a specific bill number, but if you know it, you can include it.

■ Explain how this issue affects you positively or negatively. Letters should be sent to report the good things that are happening, as well as those that adversely affect you. Offer personal experiences and observations. This will remind the representative that these things are real and affect his/her people. Just be yourself and use your own words.

■ Write while the item is hot. Don't wait until it is too late. It doesn't matter if the bill has been introduced or not. Write about pending and potential legislation.

If you don't know who your member of Congress is, just call your local county voter registrar. Or call the Memphis office for help.

What? You don't have time to write? Well, just call. Here are a few reminders:

■ If you don't know the number, then call the U.S. Capitol operator at 202/224-2131.

■ Ask to speak to your Senator or Congressional representative. Chances are that unless you know him/her personally, he/she will be "unavailable." If this is the case, ask to speak to the person handling your specific issue. Speaking with a staffer often will enable you to learn the Congressional member's

position on the issue.

Why not practice right now? Just write one letter to your Congressman/woman, change the address and send an identical letter to your Senator. It's easy.

First tell your representative how grateful you are that Congress passed HR 3969 and/or S. 1913, which delayed implementation of Worker Protection Standards for crop consultants and contract researchers until January 1, 1995. Even if they didn't vote in favor of these bills they'll know better next time. If the subject comes up again in Congress, he/she will have one vote for it on file.

Be sure to tell your member of Congress how WPS will adversely affect you, your business, and IPM programs in general. You might want to mention the goal of having 75 percent of the nation's cropland under IPM by the year 2000 could be jeopardized if WPS restrictions are placed on crop consultants and contract researchers.

Tell them about the meetings NAICC, EPA and USDA have had over the past months. Ask them to contact EPA and encourage them to resolve the differences and problems we have with WPS.

Don't put it off any longer.

Remember, it is your civic duty.

Good News for Family-Owned Businesses



by A. J. Cook

Good news for family owned businesses such as many crop consultants and contract researchers operate.

A recent Internal Revenue Service just issued a ruling that gives guidance on how an unincorporated business can deduct family medical expenses.

Here's how the ruling came about.

A taxpayer had hired his wife to work for his consulting business.

He adopted a written accident and health plan that cover all employees and their families. His company reimbursed his wife for medical expenses she paid on behalf of herself, her children and her husband (who was also her boss during business hours).

The business deducted these medical costs and her salary as expenses. The wife/employee, of course, reported her salary as income.

The IRS ruled his payments were deductible as a business expense and she didn't have to report them as income.

THE PLANNING TIP: If your wife or other family member is your only employee or one of only a few employees, consider adopting a written health and accident plan that covers all employees.

Your business will qualify for a deduction for premiums or reimbursement of family medical expenses. It would be wise to consult a professional before drafting the plan, however.

(Cook writes A.J.'s Tax Fables, a copyrighted weekly column, for "The Commercial Appeal" in Memphis. He is a tax lawyer and CPA with the firm of Harris, Shelton, Dunlap & Cobb. As with all tax and financial matters, Cook suggests consulting an attorney or CPA about individual situations.)

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Crops: Tomatoes, corn, soybeans, wheat and legumes.

Services: Soil fertility, nutrition and environmental monitoring.

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Services: Soil fertility recommendations, soil sampling, farm mapping and monitoring.

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