



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT CROP CONSULTANTS

A Professional Society Representing the Nation's Crop Production, Research Consultants and Quality Assurance Professionals

IN THIS ISSUE

[From the President](#)

[2023 Annual Meeting & AG PRO EXPO](#)

[Exhibit Hall Extravaganza](#)

[FEAE Silent Auction](#)

[Women in Agriculture](#)

[New Sustaining Member](#)

[FEAE Scholarship Opportunity](#)

[New Member Spotlight](#)

[NAICC Academy Webinar](#)

[Trivia Question - Win a \\$50 VISA Gift Card](#)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We The People...

by Grant McMillan

On July 4th, 1776, something very important occurred in human history. It was the first time that a government was formed with the intention of it working for the people, where the people tell it what to do. Up until that point, the standard

was that the government told the people what to do. As President Reagan once said, “the government is the vehicle, and the people are the driver”.

This time of year, a lot of Ag organizations begin preparing for annual meetings and selecting people to serve on their boards to help guide them through the upcoming year. For an organization to be successful, it needs these positions to be filled with individuals which represents its memberships' diversity and uniqueness-such as geographic, ethnicity, as well as generational demographics. The more diversity that it's able to incorporate into its leadership group, the better its members will be able to drive the “vehicle”, and the better its people will be able to relate to that organization.

A major roadblock that organizations face, is the struggle to transition members to leadership positions. Having spent time on the boards of numerous organizations throughout my career, I cannot begin to sum up the time spent on selecting candidates for elections. And the concerning thing is the low percentage of people that accept to run vs the amount of people asked.

I know that the contributing factors to a “No” response centers around the questions potential candidate ask themselves such as, “Am I qualified to do this?” and “Do I have enough time to commit to this?” The answer to the first question should be “yes.” Sometimes being humble can get in the way of taking ownership in one's accomplishments. Remember that if you were not qualified, you would not be asked. For the second question, the answer should also be “yes,” as the time commitment can be a fluid situation throughout the year as the needs of the organization change, depending on goals or issues at hand. But in the grand picture, the time commitment is not that great.

With any new experience, we are getting outside of our comfort zone and there comes a certain level of fear and anxiety about failing yourself, the people that you look up to or that depend on you. Organizations have various support structures in place to help with the onboarding of new people and realize new board members will need time to get up to speed, to become comfortable in the role and get their feet under them.

One thing that I have realized over the past four years playing with my daughter is that sometimes, it's not all about the physical role of playing, but more about the supportive role of being present and available when needed. This is how it is on boards, you represent the people just be being present and available to support when needed.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Visit with old friends and make new ones as NAICC continues to grow our membership and meeting attendance. Come join our talented ag professionals...our industry's greatest and most influential leaders. [CLICK HERE](#) for registration, schedules and more information.

Looking for a way to increase you Company's brand awareness? We have several sponsorship opportunities to fit any size budget. [CLICK HERE](#) to see a complete list or email allisonjones@naicc.org for more information.



Exhibit Hall Extravaganza

Thursday, January 26th at 5:30 pm we will gather in the AG PRO EXPO exhibit hall to pay tribute to NAICC President Grant McMillan, as he wraps up his Presidential year. There will be plenty of time to catch up with peers, check out the many exhibit booths and meet with key industry representatives. There will be multiple opportunities to drop your business card in various boxes at exhibit booths for a chance to win prizes during the evening.

The FEAE Silent Auction will also be underway where you will have the chance to bid on numerous unique items.

FEAE SILENT AUCTION

The mission of the Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education (FEAE) is to catalyze innovative education and training for current and future professional crop management practitioners, including both researchers and crop consultants. They are able to do this through the generous donations of a large variety of items from NAICC members to The Foundation's Silent Auction held during the Thursday evening Outgoing NAICC President's Reception in the Exhibit Hall. Wooden bowls, handwoven table runners, vintage jewelry, one of a kind artwork, handmade knives and unique food items are great examples of items "fought over" in previous years. A tax-deductible receipt will be provided upon request. The Foundation will also be selling raffle tickets for a few high value items. Please contact Michelle Hoffman via email at michelle.hoffman@indepthagronomy.com with a description of the item that you will donate to the Silent Auction or as a Raffle item.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

***Women in Agriculture** is a new series in the NAICC News, spotlighting female NAICC members who have contributed to NAICC and US agriculture. Our fifth article focuses on Melissa Nelson.*

The Land Down Under Leads to Ag Research

by Ronda Payne



The direct results of Melissa Nelson's work are seen close to home. Very close to home.

Sometimes opportunity knocks, and when it did for Melissa Nelson, she couldn't turn it down. She was offered the chance to spend seven months in Australia to explore the country's agriculture through research and she knew this was exactly the career accelerator she needed.

Although she'd just moved in with her now husband, Aaron – a fourth generation farmer in Great Bend, Kansas – the pair knew she had to take advantage of the learning she would gain.

"I just told him, 'I can't walk away from this. I promise I'll come back'," she says.

For those seven months, she was exposed to a wide range of both familiar and unique crops on the island continent as well as the research involved with them. Aaron even visited for two weeks. It was the ideal way for him to also learn more about their common interest in agriculture.

"He loves ag," she says. "I learned about rice and grapes and almonds and a lot of diversity we don't see here as well as some of the crops you do see here. That was the turning point for me."

That trip and the learning experience gave Melissa the experiential learning needed to see that agriculture research was her future. She recognized the need for additional schooling, so she earned her master's degree at Colorado State University. Then, in 2018, she started Performance Crop Research after having worked in crop research for about six years.

"I was looking for a different challenge, I love entrepreneurship, I love the research industry," she explains. "It's something I wanted to pursue and chase after."

She's been able to chase those dreams quite effectively by making use of Aaron and his brother's family farm. Corn, soybeans, milo, winter wheat and industrial hemp are the family's key crops and they are also primarily where her trials focus.

It was something of a personal awakening when she began to see the connections throughout the crops, the land and what her family did; to

commercial product development, product labelling and the trials that informed those elements.

“I love seeing the direct correlation to the data that I am securing,” she says. “I genuinely love what I do.”

Her clients also love what she does. She can scale a trial to meet client needs because the farm has the space necessary for just about anything they requested.

“We can pretty much figure out how to make that happen. Space isn’t an issue for me,” she explains. “I started silage trials last year. I got a silage chopper. That was something I’d never done before.”

Aaron is handy so can lend a helping hand with machinery if needed. Her team provides additional expertise and support. Melissa isn’t one to shy away from challenges, but, one area that challenges her is insect trials. It isn’t fighting the insects off, she reveals. It’s making sure they show up.

“Insecticide trials are always a little out of my comfort zone,” she says. “You have to count on the insects to show up. They’re the ones that have to come in and get to the thresholds.”

Stretching her comfort zone is something she does regularly. Melissa often tours people around the industrial hemp portion of the family business in addition to delivering discussions about research.

“I’m seeing a trend more and more,” she says. “You start to see more and more females [interested in agriculture]. I think a shift is happening.”

She credits Laurie and Dave Bennett of Bennett Ag Research – whom she met at her first NAICC meeting – for mentoring her into the industry.

“NAICC is so important to my success.”

NEW SUSTAINING MEMBER

SoilOptix® Digital Top Soil Mapping Solution

SoilOptix® is a Canadian-based digital top soil mapping technology company that produces the highest definition soil map products on the market today. Gamma based field sensor data coupled with strategically located physical soil samples, the SoilOptix® system can model out over 25 different soil property map layers, including macro and micro nutrients, pH, organic matter, texture, and plant available water.

As part of our recent developments, SoilOptix® is proud to offer our Soil Health Suite - a collection of soil organic carbon layers that provide users with a baseline dataset to assist with their soil carbon sequestration and overall soil health goals.

From SoilOptix®'s customer portal, users can download and export their individual soil property maps in a variety of formats including shp, csv, and PDF, or can seamlessly transfer the data through a number of direct API links, including Climate Fieldview and John Deere Operation Centre. With a resolution of 335 data points per acre, crop consultants and growers have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the variability in nutrients and textural-based properties across their field, enabling them to make the most informed on-farm decisions and resulting in better optimization of input placement for economic and environmental gain.

SoilOptix® is proud and honoured to be the newest Sustaining Member of the NAICC, and our team is very excited to connect with you all! We're thrilled to be participating in the upcoming NAICC Annual Meeting & Ag Pro Expo as an Exhibiting Company. Be sure to stop by Booth #323, we can't wait to meet you!

If you have any questions, or would like to learn more about how digital top soil mapping can benefit you and your customers, visit www.soiloptix.com or reach out to us at info@soiloptix.com



NAICC Mourns the Loss of Member W.H. "Butch" Palmer

Butch Palmer was a long-time member of NAICC and our thoughts are with the Palmer family during this time. Butch was an asset to NAICC and the contract research industry. His smile was infectious, and he will be greatly missed.

Angel Best with Eurofins EAG Laboratories, LLC, has a special place in her heart for Butch Palmer. She explained in an email to Allison Jones, "I really had great mentors. These two men (Butch Palmer and Jeff Alicandro who passed away last month) are the reason I ended up in this crazy world of GLP. When I was 19, Jeff hired me to scout orchards for him and teamed up with Butch to offer me something full time. One thing led to the next and a career

was born. Jeff, Butch, Grant (Jordan) and Harry (Humphrey) gave me the keys to a very happy life."

[Obituary for W.H. "Butch" Palmer | Young Funeral Home \(youngfuneralhomeny.com\)](https://youngfuneralhomeny.com/obituary/w.h.-butch-palmer)

FEAE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Foundation for Environmental Agriculture Education (The FEAE) is on a mission to support the next generation of Ag professionals. The FEAE provides five scholarships each year to students (graduate and undergraduate) who major in Crop Production or an allied subject. To find out more on these scholarships and how to apply, all interested students should visit our Foundation website below. The deadline for application for next year's scholarships for the 2023 school year is **December 1, 2022**.

Learn more [click here](#).

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

NAICC New Member Profile Jesus Urquides

by Hope Jones

NAICC is excited to welcome Jesus Urquides as a new member! He resides in Yuma, Arizona and works for Research Designed for Ag (RD4AG). Jesus has been in the agriculture business since he was in high school. He was given the opportunity to work in the field through family members where he learned the trade. Jesus has experience with harvesting lettuce, melons, watermelon, and other produce that grows in his region. He attended the University of Arizona, received an internship with Steve West at RD4AG where he has worked ever since.

Jesus is very passionate about his occupation. He emphasized that this industry and job are not easy. He believes that you have to be not only physically involved, but mentally too. He encourages those who are interested in joining the industry to get involved as soon as you can. Experience is key. He explained that the most challenging aspect of his job is working with

ARM/Excel when doing calculations. One piece of technology he would not want to live without in the business is an iPad with cellular data and Office 365.

When asked what his favorite quote was Jesus explained that it is in Spanish. “Alejate del mal y haz el bien, busca la paz y siguela.’ Which translates to “Avoid the bad & do the good, find peace & follow it.” When not in the field and doing research Jesus enjoys watching sports. He calls himself a “sports freak.” We asked what he would do and where he would go if he could take time off during her busiest time of the year. He stated that he would not want to take off during the busiest time of the year but rather take time off during Arizona’s monsoon season to go to the beach in the Caribbean.

While Jesus is a new member to this organization, he presented a very insightful presentation during the Efficacy Research Workshop at this past year’s annual meeting that was held in Orlando. He explained that this was his first time presenting in front of a room full of fellow professionals which was very nerve racking for him. He said it was a very cool experience. We cannot wait to see what the future holds with Jesus as a member of NAICC. We look forward to potentially seeing him do more presentations at the annual meetings to come!



NAICC ACADEMY WEBINARS

Click on the links below or go to <https://naicc.org/naicc-academy> to sign up!

2022 On-Demand Webinars

Basic GLP Training – \$125

Carbon Markets 101 – \$75

Inside Out – What Goes on Inside the Mind of an Auditor? – \$75

New Technologies in Agriculture – \$75

Free Videos

Worker Protection Standards:

How to Comply

WPS Training Videos

2021 On-Demand Webinars

2021 Hot Topics in Midsouth Ag – \$25

2021 Hot Topics in Midwest Ag - \$25

Efficacy Research Workshop – \$100

GAIAC Presents: Fall Armyworm/Precision Ag/Business Management– \$75

Nutrient and Carbon Trading – \$25

Virtual Auditing – Sponsor and CRO Perspective – \$50

What's the Deal with GLP Equipment? – \$50

Sponsorship Information



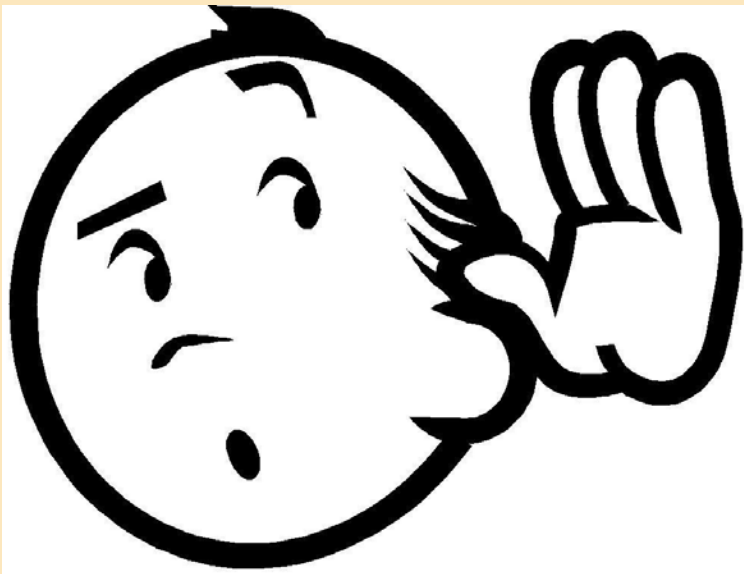
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



TRIVIA QUESTION

Answer the following question for a chance to win a \$50 Visa Gift Card:

What is the loudest animal on earth?



Last Month's Answer:

Chickens



Congratulations
Jessica Dutton

Submit your answer [HERE](#)

You are the winner of a
\$50 VISA Gift Card!

Click the [AmazonSmile](#) image for a direct link to support the FEAE from your mobile device or computer.

FEAE provides five scholarships each year to deserving students with a major in Agriculture. To learn more and to apply, visit the [FEAE Scholarship page](#).

Support
Foundation for Environmental
Agriculture Education.

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](#),
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](#)

amazon
smile

FEAE



Buy and Sell Equipment on the NAICC Website

Have something to sell? Looking for a specific piece of equipment? Check out the [NAICC Member Marketplace](#). Log in to [Members Only](#) portal on the NAICC website and scroll down to the NAICC Member Marketplace. Choose **Items for Sale** or **Items Wanted**. It is just that easy.

Thank you to the Newsletter Committee for putting this issue together:

Rachel Lightfoot, *Chair*, Amalia Easton, *Co-Chair*,

Laurie Bennett, Jo Gillilan, Karla Jensen, Renee Minion

If you would like to submit an article or have a suggestion for the *NAICC News*, please contact [Rachel Lightfoot](#) or [Allison Jones](#).

[NAICC](#)

Your professional society representing the nation's crop production,
research consultants and quality assurance professionals.

National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants
700 Wood Duck Drive, Vonore, TN 37885
Phone: 423-884-3580 Email: AllisonJones@naicc.org

[Unsubscribe](#)

