

# Iowa Farm Business Association News

August 2000

## New Consultant For Central Iowa

Lonnie Ries of New Hampton, Iowa has joined the Central Iowa Farm Business Association as a farm consultant in the Ames/Ankeny area. Lonnie brings to this position his degree in Ag Business from Iowa State University and a farming background consisting of row crop and dairy experience. As a recent graduate Lonnie said he could achieve his personal goal of helping producers financially improve their farm operations.



**Lonnie Ries**

Lonnie will be starting his consultant position August 15, but already has been getting his joint office ready with Ron Stone in Ankeny. Both Ron Stone (Ankeny) and Steve Vogelzang (Ames) will be working with Lonnie to help make the transition as smooth as possible for both Lonnie and the members he will be serving.

We would like to welcome Lonnie and wish him a long and rewarding career as a farm business association consultant.

## Greetings From The State Office

I would like to take this opportunity to greet all of the Farm Business Association members and to thank my past members from Southwest and Central Iowa for all the cards of congratulations.

I really appreciate the trust and confidence you have shown me in the past and confidence in my abilities for the future of the Farm Business Association State Coordinator.

I have been trying to make as many local board meetings and to meet as many members as possible. I invite any member to stop by the State Office to say "hi" and to share any thoughts you may have about the Iowa Farm Business Association. I look forward to hearing your comments at any time.

Kent Vickre, State Coordinator

## New Face At Murk-N-T

Last fall some members may have noticed a new face at Murk-N-T as Lowell Lewis was put to work immediately on taxes and farm analysis.



**Lowell Lewis**

Lowell brings more than 20 years of experience in assisting Iowa farm families with tax and financial planning plus the practical experience of operating a farm himself. Lowell was a Southwest Iowa Farm Business Association consultant in the Harlan area serving Shelby and Audubon counties from 1980-1992. Lowell then relocated to eastern Iowa where he worked as an Ag lender. He was in Belle Plaine for six years with the Citizen Bank & Trust and in Traer for one year with the Union Planters Bank.

We are happy to have Lowell return to the Iowa Farm Business Association as a consultant with Murk-N-T and value the experience he brings with him.

## Equipment Maintenance - A New Software Coming!

A new Windows based software - Equipment Maintenance - will be released by Iowa Farm Business Accounting, Inc. later this fall.

Designed to track operating, maintenance and ownership costs of equipment (motorized or non-motorized) the software will generate ownership lists for insurance purposes; maintenance records; and annual or to-date costs of ownership by acre, hour or mile - whichever is appropriate.

There will be a limited "down load" capability from PC Mars - provided very specific descriptions, etc. are followed when PC Mars entries are made and modified in the down load procedure.

As the cost of new equipment continues to rise and repairs escalate as well, it is becoming more important than ever that equipment be adequately serviced and maintained. Equipment Maintenance is designed to maintain those servicing records and to assist users in knowing their ownership costs as it pertains to specific pieces of equipment.

Demos will be available - either by mail or on our web page - so watch for the release announcements on our web or in the news media.

## Marketing Expert Lost

Since 1979 Iowa Farm Business Association has sponsored Market Outlook Meetings in various locations throughout Iowa. Recently these have been limited to two or three sites due to attendance.

One of the long-term resource people utilized in these meetings was LeRoy Louwagie of Mankato, Minnesota. Initially a partner in Ag Marketing Services and last as President of Professional Commodity Investors, LeRoy was a favored speaker.

Unfortunately LeRoy passed away June 17th at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota while awaiting a heart/lung transplant. He had suffered from primary pulmonary hypertension for some four years.

He is survived by his wife Toni and sons Grant and Jesse. He will be greatly missed.

## Looking For Long Term Care Insurance?

Planning for one's retirement is an important task - especially for those who question whether Social Security will be a viable system by the time they reach retirement age.

Planning and starting the contributions early in life is typically understood, but often difficult to accomplish. Then the retirement planners toss into the mix the question of whether or not to use Long Term Care Insurance to help preserve your retirement/estate assets!

With the change in tax deductibility of Long Term Care premiums, the use of that type of "planning tool" has increased greatly. And younger families are purchasing it because of the increasing premium costs at higher ages. We also note that in many companies Long Term Care Insurance is also being offered as a fringe benefit.

The Iowa Farm Business Association is always looking for "values" for its membership. One such potential "value" we have come across is in this area of Long Term Care Insurance. Kanawha Insurance Company started in 1958 in Greenville, South Carolina and is currently licensed in 45 states. It is rated "A" by A.M. Best and "BBBq" by Standard and Poor.

Based on our (Duane Bennink) personal search for coverage in this area Kanawha's coverage's and premiums appear to be quite competitive. Plus they do give (like many others) a 10% discount on premiums if both spouses enroll. PLUS they are the only insurer we know of that gives an additional 10% discount to Association members and their close relatives. That extra 10% Association discounts on both husband and wife premiums can be as much as \$80-100/year at age 60. A nice "dividend" on your membership.

As you know, Iowa Farm Business Association does not officially "endorse" products, but we do try to find beneficial products and services for our members. We think this is one of those. Be assured Iowa Farm Business Association does not receive any benefit from this other than the satisfaction of having members receive a good service or product for a reasonable price.

So - if you are interested in such a product, we will be doing a mailing (by Association area) in the near future. You will receive some information in the mailing and a postcard you can use to request more information or a representative visit. All your choice as we do not release member lists to anyone. If you would like to contact the Kanawha Insurance Company prior to the mailing, they can be reached at 1-800-290-9925.

Review the material, compare and if it's helpful - great! We've helped our members. That's what we're here for!!



## Congratulations Duane Plaque Presented At NAFBAS Convention

At the annual NAFBAS convention held in Steamboat Springs, Colorado this year, a plaque was presented to Duane Bennink for his years of service. NAFBAS (National Association of Farm Business Analysis Specialists) was organized in 1973 with Duane's assistance. Today the organization consists of eight different states that prepare a farm analysis for their members. NAFBAS thanks Duane for his work in helping make this organization possible.

## Reflections Of A FBA Consultant

Well, it's official. I'm retired - no longer State Coordinator, consultant or whatever. Thirty-two years of working for a farmer member board. (And prior to that 4 years under a school board of farmers and 5 years under a State Soil Committee composed of farmers). So, I like to work with farmers. I guess I admit it. In general they are great people. Honorable, appreciative and family oriented.

There have been many benefits from being a consultant - satisfaction from helping farm families prosper and achieve goals; building a strong consultant area and association; and getting to know some fine people. Many times after several years in an area the consultant is treated almost like a member of the family.

You end up involved in lots of areas that I haven't seen in the job description. Goal setting, partner or family member mediations, convincing some to go to college rather than jump right into farming, debt negotiations, bankruptcies and planning career changes. Some gratifying - others not so.

One benefit most consultants will agree on - enjoying some great home cooked meals! And refreshments at almost every stop! (Often requiring a hasty roadside stop between farms!) I'm still amazed that I didn't double my weight in those 11 years in Northwest Iowa.

And consultants do have some flexibility in their scheduling - although in recent years there has been less flexibility as work loads increased. But if you need personal time - especially at the year-end holidays - it's not in this job. Most consultants will tell you that from about Thanksgiving until April 15th that a normal week is 12 hours or more a day, 6 days a week. Often totaling 1200-1500 hours in that period. So you don't become a consultant if you wish to work 40-hour weeks.

Or the top salary and benefits in the area. Certainly if we'd wanted to be rewarded financially we'd have found a different profession. But we wanted to work in agriculture and be somewhat independent.

In another business structure we'd call the farm families we work with "clients", but here they are "members". In a great many cases, the term "friend" is more appropriate. This, in a way, explains why some of us stay in consulting so many years.

But the longer you work with your members, the more difficult some situations become. Recently one long-term consultant confided that he had considered changing jobs if the farm economy continued to slide. "He wasn't going through another "80's". When members were forced out of farming, "it takes a piece out of you" and he couldn't go through that again.

This is a side of the consultant job that I doubt association directors understand or realize. It's an aspect that money can't compensate.

But neither can you "buy" that sincerity nor the loyalty most consultants have to the farm business association program. They believe in it and the services and support it provides to association members.

So, as I "phase out", I still believe in the farm business association program and services. And I hope I can call those I've served and worked for - either as members or directors - "friends".

## Retirement Plan Seminars Held

Two seminars were held August 22nd and August 23 at Swisher, Iowa and Ames, Iowa respectively by the Kidder Benefits Consultants, Inc. of Des Moines. Both of these meetings were open to Farm Business Association members and specifically designed for the corporate owner/employee.

If you attended either of these meetings or would like to attend a future meeting, please let us know your thoughts on this type of meeting. We are always interested in your thoughts and ideas for this type of meeting.

## Retirement Open House Held At Reiman Gardens

The Reiman Gardens in Ames, Iowa was the setting for the retirement open house held for Duane Bennink on Sunday, July 23rd. This was an opportunity for many of Duane's peers and colleagues to show their appreciation for the vision and commitment he has given to the Farm Business Association over the past 32 years.

In attendance were guests from various ag organizations across the state of Iowa, past and present board members, consultants, and many friends. Ron Stone (Central Iowa consultant presented a plaque to Duane in appreciation for the dedication and service he has given the Iowa Farm Business Association.

Duane has been the State Coordinator for the past 21 years and prior to that was a consultant in the Sheldon area for 11 years. Duane commented on the changes that he has seen over the past 32 years. He said his most rewarding experience was not just working with colleagues and members, but with people he considered as friends.

Duane will continue on a part-time basis at the State Office to share his experience and wisdom with Kent Vickre (new State Coordinator) for the following year. Duane plans to enjoy his retirement with travel and visiting the grandkids.

We wish Duane the best in the future and appreciate the commitment and loyalty shown to the Iowa Farm Business Association and its membership. We also would like to thank Duane for the friendship and encouragement he has given to the consultants. Thanks Duane and good luck in your future years.



**Ron Stone, Central Iowa Senior Consultant, presents Duane Bennink with a plaque in gratitude for his service and dedication to the Iowa Farm Business Association as a consultant and then State Coordinator.**

## Agricultural Women's Conference

An agricultural women's conference is scheduled for September 7, 2000 at the Amana Colonies Convention Center in Amana and is being hosted by the Murk-N-T office of the Iowa Farm Business Association. The registration for this conference is \$30.00 with guest speakers Karen Schulte from WMT Radio; Phil Hufferd, retired ISU Extension Specialist; Terry Brase, Kirkwood Community College Agribusiness; and Andy Thompson from Murk-N-T.

Registration is at 9:00 a.m. with break out sessions to include Agri-Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Records/PCMars for Windows, and Investment Clubs.

For further information contact Murk-N-T at 319-857-4648 or Iowa Farm Business Association at 515-233-5802.

## Northeast Iowa Association Annual Meeting

Northeast Iowa Farm Business Association held their annual meeting on July 12th at the Bradford House Restaurant at Nashua, Iowa.

Guest speakers Steve Moline and Steve Reno, Assistant Attorney Generals, discussed the growth of production contracting in Iowa and the pros and cons to the producer. The various types of contracts were discussed and can also be found on their web site. (See article in this newsletter on "Iowa Ag Office Posts Contract Samples").

Following the meeting, members toured the Iowa State Research Farm to learn about production methods being implemented.

## First Recipient of Duane Murken Scholarship Named

Kristin Ellefson, a fall 2000 Animal Science ISU freshman from Waterville, Iowa has been named the first recipient of the Duane Murken FBA Scholarship.

The youngest daughter of Northeast Iowa FBA members Roger and Lynn Ellefson, Kristin will receive a \$500 check to help with her 2000/2001 expenses at ISU.



**Kristin Ellefson**

During her years at Waukon High School, Kristin was active in golf, volleyball and FFA. She was editor of the school year book as well as editor and writer for the school newspaper. She held offices in her 4-H club, the church youth group and has taught vacation bible school since 1996.

The scholarship is available to students enrolled at ISU in an agriculture curriculum and whose parents are Iowa Farm Business Association members.

Iowa Farm Business Association members, consultants and the Murken family have established this scholarship to honor Duane Murken of Ely, Iowa, a long time Farm Business Association consultant who passed away in 1999. It is anticipated that it will be an annual event.

## Iowa Ag Office Posts Contract Samples

Iowa's Attorney Generals farm division has been an important asset and resource for Iowa agriculture over the years.

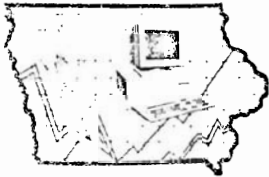
As the trend towards contract production increases, the need to be aware of the various contracts being utilized can be very important in the decision making process. In an attempt to assist in this area, the AG's farm division has posted more than thirty (30) farm production and marketing contracts on their internet web site.

These contracts can be viewed by going to [www.IowaAttorneyGeneral.org](http://www.IowaAttorneyGeneral.org) then selecting "farm advocacy". If you have a contract that you'd like to post, (without your name, etc.) call 515-281-5351.



Past and former consultants attended a retirement open house for Duane Bennink on July 23rd to express their gratitude for his many years of service. Pictured are: Seated (L to R) Pete Tallman-retired Southwest; Doug Meline-retired Central Iowa; Larry McAlexander-Southwest; George Moriarty-Northwest; Dennis Donovan-Northeast; Daryl Kruse-Southwest; (Second Row): Phil Bengé-Mississippi Valley; Lowell Lewis-Murk-N-T; Duane Bennink-State Coordinator; Bill Sloan-Cedar Valley; Dave Stensland-Central Iowa; Bob McEntee-Mississippi Valley; Mike McKee-Northeast; Marv Myers-Central Iowa; Kent Vickre-New State Coordinator; (Third Row): Ron Stone-Central Iowa; Tim Gradert-Mississippi Valley; Lyle Stewart-Murk-N-T; Doug Streeper-Murk-N-T; Bob McHugh-Southwest; Dean Phelps-Mississippi Valley; Jerry Conley-retired Northwest.

Visit the Iowa Farm Business Association web site. Our address is:  
“[www.iowafarmbusiness.org](http://www.iowafarmbusiness.org)” or email us at: [iafmbus@netins.net](mailto:iafmbus@netins.net).



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