

Signals

March/April 2008

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ACE Development Fund auction seeks items from members' home states

This year's annual ACE conference takes place in Traverse City, and if it's the place for "Great Lakes, Great Faces, Great Places," what better place for a *great* ACE auction?

The annual ACE auction – featuring both a live auction and a silent auction – is the "Great Place" to shop for gifts and to promote your home state while supporting professional development. However, the auction is only possible through members' generosity in bringing items for sale.

Goods from across the United States and even from around the world will be available for silent and live auctions. Holly Young, Development Fund Committee chair, encourages ACE members to bring sale items that represent their home states.

"Bring specialty items and an open wallet," she said. "Bid early, bid often and get a head start on your year's gift shopping, even if it's for yourself."

Items donated for past auctions include local artwork from your city or state, regional crafts, regional foods, items produced by creative ACE members (remember the delicately embroidered work from Janet Rodekohr and the beautiful wooden bowls hand-crafted by Laura Miller's son?), President-elect Frankie Gould's original artwork, and signature memorabilia from the institution at which you work.

Auction contributions are limited only by your imagination and luggage capacity. We've even auctioned talent before! If you aren't attending, please help your state's representatives by sending items for auction.

We're pleased to announce the return of our two famous auctioneers, Randy Nemitz and Ken Kulka, who will gallantly step up to the microphone again this year. You should just come and watch them for the added

entertainment value – and they promise to keep you on your toes during the bidding!

In 10 years of supporting professional improvement, the ACE Development Fund has made 20 grants of varying amounts to members. SIGs, committees and individuals have benefited from a wide range of studies and activities.

Development funds of up to \$1,500 have facilitated:

- 2008 – Agriculture Oral Communication History; ACE-C.A.T.I.E. Educational Trip; Introduction to Data Mining and Related Software Tools
- 2007 – A Study of the Use and Value of the LSU AgCenter's Web Site; Education & Communication of Rural Mexico
- 2006 – National ACT Scotland Agricultural Communications Study Tour; Mexico Study Tour; ACE Membership Attitudes and Characteristics: An Internet-Based Survey
- 2005 – ACE Membership Trends: A 10-Year Study; Building a Case for Grassroots Support: The Michigan Experience; Syndicating Agriculture News With RSS
- 2004 – Agricultural Communications Summit
- 2003 – Media Relations Made Easy (in the Big Easy); Master of Science in Ag Communications: Making the Vision a Reality; Lighting and Camera Workshop
- 2002 – Leadership: Building Relationships in a Diverse World
- 2001 – Journal of Applied Communications Peer Review Process Evaluation
- 2000 – U.S. Agricultural Communicators' Congress Guest Russian Delegation
- 1999 – A Guide to Common Statistical Tools and Tests Used in Agricultural Communication Research

The 2007 ACE auction in Albuquerque netted almost \$7,000 for the Development Fund. Let's see what we can do this year!

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE



IN AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND LIFE AND HUMAN SCIENCES

From the President



When I'm running between meetings, or checking to see if a student has all the prerequisites for a class, or fielding e-mails out my ears, it's hard to remember that we do vastly important work. We communicate about the food and fiber industry around the world. We help people understand the new findings in human nutrition and give them the information they need to use our natural resources more sustainably. We do all that, and much more.

Sometimes I forget how important our work is. But every now and then, something shakes me up, and I get it. Recently, it was a Washington Post Foreign Service article, "Food Crisis is Depicted as 'Silent Tsunami'" (April 22).

"More than 100 million people are being driven deeper into poverty by a 'silent tsunami' of sharply rising food prices, which have sparked riots around the world and threaten U.N.-backed feeding programs for 20 million children," read the lead of the article by Kevin Sullivan.

My strategic communicator side was struck by the great imagery that the spokesperson used, how well that communicated the severity of the situation. As an agricultural communicator, I was also struck by the complexity of the issue. While hunger is a

moral as well as a trade issue, the situation is made more complex by rising production and transportation costs.

Fuel costs in Kenya, the article stated, had increased 135 percent in four months. The farmers don't have enough money for seed in some cases. Another kink is the element of biofuels and how that is changing production – a complicated issue that on its own compounds the problem.

While I don't mean to spend so much space on an old piece of news, I wanted to note that this is critical information. What is more important subject matter for communications than this? While this specific news sounds dire, I also find it motivational, even inspiring that we are involved in this field.

Like a lot of us, I didn't plan on working in agricultural communications. I sort of happened into it. A farm and ranch kid from West Texas, I was loathe to work in agriculture, which I mostly associated with working cattle in summer heat and the seeming endlessness of plowing heavy clay soils.

But I had a scholarship – a big one (thank you, 4-H and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo). So I studied agricultural communications, thinking I would ditch it after college and head to livelier fields.

Like many folks, though, I fell in love with the field and felt called to the work. I'm not one of those "wrap yourself up in the 'ag-is-great' flag" kind of folks, but when I really think about the importance of food systems, natural resources and human capital development, I know I'm in the right place.

As we all prepare for the ACE annual meeting in Traverse City, we should carry with us this enthusiasm for the field. I always leave our ACE meetings feeling more strongly committed to our work. I think if I walk in with that excitement, I'll leave even more prepared for our challenges.

So, as you complete your registration and look through all the terrific sessions being offered at this year's ACE meeting, remember how important your work is to your institution and to the world. Let's keep doing great things.

Kris Boone

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris M. Boone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ACE President
kboone@ksu.edu

In Brief

Diversity SIG launches new Web site

The diversity SIG Web site has a new look! We have been hard at work on our new wiki site, making changes and updates, and now it's ready to share with you. The new site links to diversity resources and SIG newsletters, and SIG leaders plan to post materials from diversity-related breakout sessions at the annual meetings.

Please visit us at <http://collaborate.extension.org/wiki/ACE-Diversity-SIG>.

Rebecca L. McGovney-Ingram
Diversity SIG Chair
RMcGovney-Ingram@aged.tamu.edu

A note of thanks

I would like to thank all those who sent me cards and letters regarding my recent hospitalizations and surgery. I am doing well but will undergo chemotherapy for a few weeks this spring. Thanks so much for your thoughts and prayers.

Larry Whiting
Life Member
whiting.2@osu.edu

ACE retirees to host session at annual meeting

So far, at least eight "Old Timers" have said they plan to be at the Traverse City meeting in June. They and, we hope, more will sit down with some active ACE members in the "Search for Common Interests: Retired and Active Members" breakout session.

We also plan to talk about a possible retirees' reunion as part of the 2009 conference in Des Moines. Please join us.

Bob Kern
Retirees' Director-elect
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ACE@ifas.ufl.edu

ACE is a non-profit association representing professional communicators and information officers generally within the land-grant university system, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state agricultural agencies, similar institutions in other countries and those with professional interests in agricultural communication.

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Amanda Aubuchon

Graphics:
Michele Linette

ACE develops professional skills of education, government, and research communicators and information technologists to extend knowledge about agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences to people worldwide.

Stop by the ACE Web site
www.aceweb.org.

ACE Editing Workshop

Instruction for Those Who Make Others Look Good

- Monday, June 9, 2008 — 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Hosted by Publishing and Writing SIGs
- \$75 - limited to 40 participants
- Sign up at the ACE '08 Web site:
www.ace08.com

Door
prizes!

Instructors

- Susan E. Allan, University of Chicago's
Graham School of General Studies
- Peter Sokolowski, Merriam-Webster
editor-at-large

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ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE



IN AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND LIFE AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Travel early...learn a lot • Travel early...learn a lot • Travel early...learn a lot • Travel early...learn a lot •

Our History

I applaud Dr. John Brien for his note in the last issue of Signals about agricultural journalism hitting its hundredth birthday at the University of Wisconsin. In fact, I have my own ties back to that university as a doctoral student, but not that long ago – just the 1950s.

To add another footnote to history, the first class in agricultural journalism at Iowa State College – the first anywhere – in the fall of 1905 attracted more than a dozen students. Taught by the bulletin editor, the course was funded by a Chicago livestock market commission office, John Clay. Months earlier

Clay himself had, in a conversation at the Old Stock Yards Inn, challenged the Iowa State agriculture dean to offer such a course. The dean said, essentially, you put up the money and we will. He did; they did. By 1911 they had developed several courses, introduced home economics journalism, and created majors in 1914.

No, I didn't live this history. It was set down within a review of Iowa agriculture written in the 1930s by Ken Marvin, who headed the technical journalism department at that time and was my major professor for master's

work in TJL. Time does fly: I got to Iowa State 45 years after that first journalism course – and that's already 58 years ago. Wow!

Bob Kern
Retirees' Director-elect
bob_kern@prodigy.net



2008 Critique and Awards Program

Number of entries by category and class

I. Writing	71	IV. Publishing	101	VII. Marketing and Media	
Class 1	9	Class 18	5	Relations	28
Class 2	22	Class 19	10	Class 35a	1
Class 3	22	Class 20	10	Class 35b	9
Class 4	4	Class 21a	5	Class 36	6
Class 5	8	Class 21b	23	Class 37	12
Class 6	6	Class 22	8		
		Class 23	15	IX. Information Technology	15
II. Photography	44	Class 24	13	Class 38	1
Class 7a	15	Class 25	5	Class 39	3
Class 7b	13			Class 40	11
Class 8a	8	V. Electronic Media, Audio	8	Class 41	0
Class 8b	4	Class 27	3		
Class 9	3	Class 28	5	X. Diversity	9
Class 10	1			Class 42	1
		VI. Electronic Media, Video	44	Class 43	8
III. Graphic Design	72	Class 29	11	Class 44	0
Class 11a	3	Class 30	7	Class 45	0
Class 11b	17	Class 31	4	Class 46	0
Class 11c	3	Class 32	14	Class 26	7
Class 12	5	Class 33	8		
Class 13	3				
Class 14	15	VII. Distance Education and			
Class 15	7	Instructional Design	7		
Class 16	13	Class 34a	1		
Class 17	6	Class 34b	6		
				Total number of entries:	399

Note: For specific class descriptions, please visit the ACE Web site at <http://www.aceweb.org/award/descriptions.html>.

ACE Leadership Institute class meets for midyear session

Nestled on 38 wooded acres south of Atlanta, the Dolce Atlanta-Peachtree Conference Center was the site of the ACE Leadership Institute's midyear session.

The class of 2007-08 gathered at Dolce from Feb. 6-9 for three days of intensive training and interaction. Leadership training presentations alternated with small group processing time, helping class members understand how leadership and management principles apply to practical situations.

While the institute's opening session in Albuquerque last June focused on self-assessments and leadership styles, the midyear session concentrated on skills and tools that leaders use in achieving organizational goals.

The institute's sessions are conducted by a team from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications (AgLEC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. With many years of experience in leadership development, the team delivered sessions about:

- Formation of teams
- Motivation
- Leader-member exchange in teams
- Running effective meetings
- Managing conflict in teams
- Decision-making

- Strategic planning
- Budgeting
- Project evaluation
- Problem-solving and collaboration

Class members had ample time to discuss the leadership projects they are conducting at their home institutions, seeking advice from peers to help carry those projects to successful conclusions. (The projects were described in the July/August 2007 issue of *Signals*.)

Although skill-building is at the heart of the institute program, developing a sense of community among participants is important, too. Participants in leadership programs often form lifelong friendships that are helpful throughout their careers.

Informal conversations during breaks, over meals in the lakeside dining room, and in the evening around the fireplace helped class members get to know one other. Future interaction will be fostered by a new Facebook page created for members to share information online.

As class members left for the airport Saturday, they were already looking



ALI class of 2007-08 members enjoy a lakeside break. From left, Becky Goetz, Melanie Eirich, Deb Pryor, Steve Dodrill, Linda Sleichter, Bob Ratliff, Ashwani Srivastava, Rob Stout, Tobie Blanchard, Leighton Spann, Emily Eubanks, Mark Crossler, Faith Peppers, Linda Breazeale, Maria Bowie, and AgLec team members Drs. Dan Wheeler, Jason Ellis, and Kelly Phipps. Not pictured: Larry Jackson (home in Kansas with flu), and Gina Matkin, AgLEC.

forward to their final institute session, to be held immediately before the ACE 2008 meeting in Traverse City, Mich. The class of 2007-08 will take part in a graduation ceremony during the ACE meeting and will present posters and exhibits showcasing their learning projects.

For information about the ACE Leadership Institute, visit <http://www.aceweb.org/institute> or email leadme@ext.msstate.edu.

Tom Knecht
Executive Director
ACE Leadership Institute
tomk@tomknecht.com

Alabama Agriculture Hall of Honor inducts ACE life member

Longtime ACE member R. Eugene (Gene) Stevenson was inducted into the Alabama Agriculture Hall of Honor in February for his contributions to Alabama agriculture and agribusiness.

Stevenson graduated from Auburn in 1951 with a self-designed degree in agricultural journalism. He then went to work for Farm and Ranch Magazine in Nashville, Tenn. After serving with the U.S. Navy during the Korean conflict, Stevenson returned to Auburn as an assistant editor with the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station's (AAES) Department of Research

Information. He became the department's head and editor in 1982, and was also assistant director of the AAES from 1990 until he retired in 1991.

During his tenure at Auburn, Stevenson was known for his series of columns, "Research You Can Use," which appeared for nearly 30 years in *Progressive Farmer* magazine, and for his role in developing *Highlights of Agricultural Research*, which for many years was one of the most widely read and respected quarterly research magazines in the United States.

He also devoted much time to ACE, serving as editor of *ACE Quarterly* and as a member of the board of directors.

In retirement, Stevenson co-authored "Inside Ag Hill," a book that documents the people and events that shaped Auburn's agricultural history.

Stevenson still lives in Auburn, where he is an active member of the community.

Katie Lamar Jackson
Auburn University
smithcl@auburn.edu

A case to suit everyone: What to pack for the ACE meeting in Traverse City

Whether or not you've already registered or made a hotel reservation for the ACE international meeting June 10-13 in Traverse City, Mich. (What are you waiting for, anyway?!), it's not too early to think about what you'll want to pack.

Don't forget your camera. Our conference will be on the waterfront of spectacular Grand Traverse Bay, and you'll want to capture images to share your experiences with your family when you return home (if you don't bring them along for a few days of sun and fun, that is).

Bring comfortable walking shoes. Even if you don't take part in Wednesday morning's fun run, you'll want to take advantage

of our proximity to dozens of unique shops in downtown Traverse City and fabulous restaurants for those nights on the town.

Stuff your wallet with spending money to buy souvenirs during one of the optional tours on Thursday afternoon (June 12) or to support our organization during the silent and live auctions set for Wednesday before the ACE awards banquet.

You won't need an evening gown or tuxedo for Thursday night at the Traverse City Opera House. Plan to wear casual attire while you enjoy good food and entertainment at this recently

restored historic landmark. In addition to our own X-tension Chords Unplugged, Judy Harrison and Swing Shift will keep the joint jumpin'.

You can find out more about all of the activities planned for this year's conference on the Web by visiting www.ace08.com. We hope to see you there!

Laura Probyn
Host Committee Chair
probyn@anr.msu.edu

ACE session to address media framing

Unless you've been living under a rock, you know that we in the United States are having a presidential election this year. And the leading contenders are the presumptive Republican candidate, John McCain, and the Democratic challengers Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

McCain might be "old," but you don't hear politicians, the media or the public asking if we're "ready for another old white man" to lead our country. But we do hear these same people ask whether the United States is ready for a black or female president. Why?

The issue, we contend, is "framing" – or the theory that says the media not only tell us what to think about but also how to think about it.

For example, if you think Hillary Clinton is basically a left-wing opportunist, then the fact that she teared up during the New Hampshire primary is evidence that she can cry on demand if she thinks it will win her votes. However, if you see her as a caring, hard-working leader, then those same tears reflect her humanity and love of this country.

Which version is correct? It depends upon your frame. As the folks at FrameWorks say, "If the facts don't fit the frame, it's the facts that are rejected, not the frame."

If you'd like to learn more about media framing and how it affects what you do every day, then come join us at the "Recognizing Media Frames: Understanding White Privilege (Part II)" session at the ACE annual meeting in Traverse City, Mich.

Here's the rub: The first half of our session on Wednesday, June 11, is scheduled at the same time as the publishing and photography SIG meetings, while the second half conflicts with the writing and international SIG meetings. Talk about bad timing!

We hope you choose to come to all of our session, which runs from 1:15-3:15 p.m. However, we invite you to drop in for at least part of our session if you decide to go to one of the SIG meetings as well.



We'll be doing hands-on exercises, checking out YouTube and comic strips, and engaging in lots of discussion about the framing of race – not just as it relates to the presidential election but also to what we do every day in our jobs...such as what we choose to write about and the photos and words we use to tell our stories.

So please come join us – at least for part of the time – at the "Recognizing Media Frames" session from 1:15-3:15 p.m., Wednesday, June 11, in Traverse City.

LaRae Donnellan
Florita Montgomery
Rebecca McGovney-Ingram

ACE to sponsor book drive benefiting Grand Traverse Area Literacy Council

Join ACE as we fight illiteracy with a book drive benefiting the Grand Traverse Area Literacy Council (GTALC).

For more than 30 years, GTALC has been promoting literacy in a four-county area around Grand Traverse, Mich., with programs targeting youth, adults, individuals with dyslexia and those for whom English is a second language.

The book drive developed as part of the Social Responsibilities Roundtable dinner and discussion held at last year's meeting in San Antonio. Attendees brainstormed service activities and ways members' presence could benefit the host city.

"A book drive was one of our top choices because literacy is a nationwide problem, and as communicators, we felt it should be one of our concerns," said Rebecca McGovney-Ingram, roundtable member and book drive co-coordinator.

Kathleen Parker has been a volunteer, tutor and board member with GTALC over the last seven years.

"I think the greatest experience working with GTALC is to see a student progress and to know that the person has been able to improve their lifestyle – to know that our organization is able to do this – one person at a time," Parker said.

Books of any type are welcomed, either new or slightly used, and can be donated at the boxes provided at the annual meeting registration desk.

For more information, visit <http://www.gtalc.org/index.html>.

Rebecca L. McGovney-Ingram
Texas A&M University
RMcGovney-Ingram@aged.tamu.edu

X-tension Chords' North American tour

Great news! Music legends the X-tension Chords have chosen Traverse City, Mich., as the next stop in their North American tour, a string of performances that is now stretching into its fifth year. As luck would have it, their visit coincides once again with the ACE international conference's meeting dates. Not surprising, really, when you consider that all of the band members are also members of ACE. Chords fans will have at least two opportunities to enjoy their music at this year's conference.

ACE 2008 organizers have reserved Shimmers – one of Traverse City's hottest night-club and dance venues – for a private party

one night during the conference. The dance floor will be open and the dancing will be powered by the Chords' trademark blend of classic rock, R and B, and eclectic oddities. The club's small stage will limit the size of the band to a core group for that performance, but they guarantee to pump out enough energy to keep dancers out of their chairs and spinning across the floor into the wee hours.

One or more "unplugged" sessions are also planned, where Chords regulars and drop-ins can share tunes in a more informal setting, recalling the spontaneity of the 2004 sessions at Lake Tahoe.

So make sure to include your dancing shoes when you pack for ACE 2008. And if you want to share in the music-making, pack your favorite instrument, too, or just be ready to join in and sing.

Please check x-tensionchords.blogspot.com for further updates.

Jim Coats
University of California, Davis
wjcoats@ucdavis.edu

In Memoriam

William B. Ward, a past ACE president and life member of the organization, passed away April 27, 2008. He was 90 and, although in failing health the past year, remained active until his death.

A graduate of Utah State University, Bill went on to earn his master's degree in agricultural journalism from the University of Wisconsin in 1941. He then worked as an information specialist and chief of a press section for the USDA and its War Food

Administration in Washington, D.C. In 1945, he started his job as professor and head of the agricultural communications unit at Cornell University. During his tenure, the unit became one of the largest and most emulated agricultural communication programs in the country. Bill retired in 1971, but continued teaching a writing course into his early 80s.

In addition to his leadership in developing the agricultural communications program

at Cornell, Bill was especially active in international extension communications. In 1998, ACE presented him with the International Award of Excellence.

Memorials can be sent to the William B. Ward Scholarship Fund, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Personal remembrances can be sent to the family at williamswardtribute@gmail.com.



Association for Communication Excellence

Membership Application

If you are joining ACE for the first time, please complete this form and return it to:
 ACE Headquarters, University of Florida, P.O. Box 110811, Gainesville, FL 32611; Fax: 352/392-8583

Name: _____ Title: _____

University/Agency/Firm: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Select your membership type. For help in determining which membership is right for you, please visit www.aceweb.org. With the exception of student/recent graduate memberships, all first-year memberships are \$50.

- Active (Any person whose duties relate to communicating about agriculture, natural resources, life sciences, or human sciences or who has a professional interest in communications related to those areas)
- Institutional (For active memberships paid by an institution)
- Student/Recent Graduate (For full-time undergraduate or graduate students and those who have graduated within the last two years. Dues for full-time students and persons in their first year after graduation are \$25. Dues in the second year after graduation are \$50. In the third year after graduation, members are considered active members and pay full dues.) Year in which you graduated or will graduate _____
- Charter (For the designated representative of a charter country; all persons in that country who qualify for membership receive affiliate member status.) Name of country applying for charter status: _____

Special Interest Group (SIG) Choices

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technologies | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Education and Instructional Design | <input type="checkbox"/> International | <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Media Relations | |

Publications

- To receive Signals, ACE's bimonthly newsletter, in printed form, check here. Please note that current and past issues of Signals are available online at <http://www.aceweb.org/pubs/signals.html>.
- To receive the Journal of Applied Communications (JAC) in printed form, check here. Please note that the JAC is currently not available in electronic format.

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