

# PRESIDENT'S *Letter*

By: DAN BELL, *ACGA President*



**A**pril witnessed the legislative process shift from that of debating bills, to working on the state budget. Again the membership did an amazing job of answering the calls-to-action put out by the Association. The emails and calls that many of you placed did indeed have an impact. AC GA led the charge in an effort to make sure that the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension maintained the \$3.5 million that Governor Brewer had requested in her budget. Early on in the legislative budget process \$1 million was stripped from Cooperative Extension. Senator Steve Pierce tried to remedy the situation by offering floor amendments that restored Cooperative Extension funding to the \$3.5 million level and proposed an additional \$4.1 million to fund the establishment of a vet school at the U of A. Unfortunately, these floor measures were defeated in the Senate. Representative Ethan Orr offered the same floor amendments in the house and, after some debate, the package coming out of the house had Extension fully funded at \$3.5 million and the Vet School funded at \$2.5 million. When the house version made its way back to the Senate, the proposed Vet School funding was cut in half to \$1.25 million. Later that day the legislative budget imploded and they went back to the drawing board in the subsequent days. The final budget that was signed by the

Governor did have Extension fully funded but failed to fund the proposed vet school.

The reason I went into the detail on that whole process is to stress how important it is for rural Arizona to be involved in the legislative process. Out of the 30 legislative districts in Arizona, there are only six districts that can truly be considered rural. All the other districts have some sort tie in to the Metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix, mainly Phoenix. Knowing that, many of the votes with regard to the University of Arizona Vet School funding were one vote shy of passing. So my plea to you is to continue to answer the calls to action when AC GA sends out the alerts. In most cases we need to reach out beyond our rural representatives and educate the non-rural folks as to the needs of agriculture in rural Arizona. I also caution you not to assume that your rural legislator will be supportive of every measure that AC GA or you may support.

Even though funding for the proposed vet school did not come through, I define the process as being successful because we brought attention to the needs of agriculture in rural Arizona. Rest assured that Dean Burgess will continue to press forward looking for ways to make the proposed vet school a reality.

I know that the University of Arizona leadership has a deeper appreciation of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association's grassroots efforts. AC GA played an important role in maintaining the UofA's and Governor's funding requests for Cooperative Extension. Now it is imperative that we push for the funding to be used wisely; we need to be making sure that vacant positions like the Area Livestock Agent position in Southeastern Arizona and the Mohave County Agent position are filled, to name a few.

This is also the time of year when the county associations are holding their spring meetings. In Early April, Jim O'Haco attended the Yavapai Cattle Growers' Association Annual Dinner and Meeting where Senator Steve Pierce was the keynote speaker. Congratulations go out to Danny Major and Keith "Bopper" Cannon who were seated as president

and vice president respectively. Danny will be taking over the reins from Gary Mitchell who did a great job representing the Yavapai Cattle Growers' Association and supporting AC GA.

I was present at the Southern Arizona Cattlemen's Protective Association (SACPA) on April 20th, where there was a packed agenda. Dr. Faulkner from the University of Arizona was on hand with a presentation titled, "Sire Selection for Your Environment and Cow Herd." SACPA also was fortunate to have Director Larry Voyles from the Arizona Game and Fish Department on hand, as well as the Commission Chairman John Harris, newly appointed Commissioner Jim Ammons and regional Supervisor Raul Vega. Director Voyles and Chairman Harris expressed how they valued working with stakeholders like AC GA to develop strategies and alternatives that are beneficial to wildlife and ranching. Lisa Haines, also from the University of Arizona, was present with an overview of the Jaguar and Ocelot remote camera survey funded by Department of Homeland Security and administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

As I write this letter Patrick, Jim and I headed to a joint meeting of the Navajo County Cattle Growers and Apache County Cattle Growers at the X-Diamond Ranch in South Fork. Mexican Wolf, Animal ID and Trichomoniasis are a few of the topics that will be discussed at this meeting.

For the past several weeks there has been a great deal of media coverage with regards to the BLM cattle gather on the Bundy Ranch in Nevada. The Arizona Cattlemen's Association prepared a statement with regard to the situation and it has been printed in this issue of the *Cattlelog*. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

In closing, the past couple months have been difficult for some of our members and staff; we have lost some great industry leaders and pioneers. I express my condolences to those who have lost a loved one and send my prayers to those that are battling illness.

*DB*

## AC GA LEADERSHIP

**Dan Bell**  
President

**Jim O'Haco**  
1st Vice President

**Gary Thrasher**  
2nd Vice President

**Andy Groseta**  
Immediate Past President

**Grant Boice**  
Treasurer

**Clay Overson**  
Member-At-Large

**Jay Whetten**  
Member-At-Large

**County Directors**  
**Lance Knight**  
Apache

**Brandon Atkin**  
AZ Strip

**Sonia Gasho**  
Cochise

By: PATRICK BRAY, ACGA Executive Vice President

It sure is a good feeling to see all those calves on the ground. The market is going crazy and all we need is that next rain to keep growing some feed. While most things are looking good from the back of a horse or through the window of the pickup, we still have our challenges.

However, with ACGA at the wheel, it may not seem like such a large task as gathering and branding cattle this spring. That is exactly why we exist, so you can focus on the business that provides you the means to live and we focus our time and resources on those issues that threaten your business. Our issues are getting more difficult and demand more time and resources and that is why everyone really should belong to the organization that is over 100 years old and still fighting.

While the budget did not turn out exactly how we would have liked, we managed to get \$3.5 million for Cooperative Extension. Lately we have had some critical positions vacated within Extension and we need to make sure we get them filled. This program has been instrumental in assisting producers all over the state, from cow/bull selection, to monitoring, and even drafting alternatives in the NEPA process. We certainly appreciate what Extension has done and continues to do. We have not forgotten about the vet school and understand the importance it has for the membership and opportunity for Arizona students. ACGA continues to work closely with the University and others to make sure it is a priority for the next legislative session. The budget is complete and now we head into the last remaining days of session - tracking and working bills about the wolf, ESA and animal cruelty. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have adjourned from session and will have more time to focus on our other issues.

Speaking of other issues - ACGA has been working quite extensively on the wolf issue which is of no surprise to many of you. Just to refresh your memory, we completed comments on the De-list/Re-list of the Gray and Mexican wolf, along

with scoping comments on a new EIS and also completed comments on the proposed 10j rule. ACGA worked to grow a large coalition that included counties, sportsman, state agencies and others. The New Mexico Cattle Growers', National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and Public Lands Council (PLC) have also assisted in the efforts with comments. Additionally, we have submitted comments after the peer review process about the De-list/Re-list. After all of that was finished we have worked with stakeholders to develop an alternative for the 10j and EIS. ACGA submitted that with a number of stakeholders in April. We are anxiously waiting to hear their response and have a meeting with them but after 15 years of a disastrous program we won't hold our breath. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission will vote on the alternative in April as well.

Earlier this month some of the membership participated in the fly-in to Washington, D.C. with PLC and NCBA. Arizona had some very productive meetings including a visit with Under Secretary Robert Bonnie and Under Secretary Edward Avalos. With Mr. Bonnie we discussed a multitude of forest issues. We focused on the inability to appeal any Annual Operating Instructions. We explained how Region 3 was unique and how we needed that ability and how it would impact our operations. We are still in discussion with the Secretary's office and USFS on this issue. We also discussed the importance to have a Director of Range for Region 3, we are the only region left with this position and feel it is important to continue to fund and operate that position as is. We discussed the Douglas cattle crossing with Mr. Avalos and how we needed to open that as quickly as possible with as few obstructions. Unfortunately, at the time of publication, the port is not open and problems still exist. We are continuing to work with USDA and the congressional delegation to get the port open.

Well, that is news from headquarters. It sure has been busy. Until next time, here is to fat cattle and keep those prices

mooving higher!

AC



Patrick Bray (left) and David Cook (right) meeting with USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Ed Avalos.



Representative Ann Kirkpatrick with National/Arizona Beef Ambassador, Tori Summey.



Representative Paul Gosar with part of the Arizona delegation, Therese Hicks and David Cook, both from Globe. Not pictured are Sue & Jim Chilton of Arivaca.

## ACGA LEADERSHIP

**Duane Coleman**  
Coconino

**Therese Hicks**  
Gila

**Jesse Hooker Davis**  
Graham

**Eric Schwennesen**  
Greenlee

**Trever Hall**  
Maricopa

**Mike Gross**  
Mohave

**Ethan Ellsworth**  
Navajo

**Joe King**  
Pima

**Bill Dunn**  
Pinal

**Jim Chilton**  
Santa Cruz

**Gary Mitchell**  
Yavapai

**Vacant**  
Yuma

## RESPONSE FROM UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESIDENT ANN WEAVER HART REGARDING THE FY2015 STATE BUDGET

On behalf of the University of Arizona, we'd like to thank our friends at the State Capitol—especially Representative Ethan Orr and Senator Steve Pierce—who fought so hard for the university and the critical funding request that was integral to our mission. While we are very appreciative of the \$3.5 million we will receive to support our valuable Cooperative Extension program, it is disheartening and concerning that we received essentially no support for our mission critical research and innovation efforts or the much-needed veterinary medicine program. Both are critical to the university carrying out its research mission and continuing to have a positive impact on the state's economy, workforce and job creation. Our ability to be a key economic driver for Arizona—\$8.6 billion in 2013 alone—will be affected by the state's significantly diminished support for the future.

"The additional, limited funding we will receive outside of Cooperative Extension,

approximately \$1 million for building renewal and \$2 million in discretionary funds, will be applied to areas of critical need at the university. There are many; our main campus has not received significant state funding support for more than six years. I will meet with my leadership team, as well as the deans of our colleges and schools, to determine where best to allocate this funding.

"We have an aggressive strategic academic and business plan that we introduced to the Regents and launched in November. It is called "Never Settle" and it is just the type of focus and vision that will propel the UA forward. While the significantly lower allocation of state funds for the UA is certainly a set back, it will not deter us from our Never Settle mission. We mean it when we say 'Never Settle.' It captures the spirit of our future that we believe is strong."

*AC*



## ARIZONA'S FY15 BUDGET AND LACK OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EDUCATION FUNDING

By: SHANE C. BURGESS, *Vice Provost and Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences*

As you know by now the FY15 Arizona budget signed by Governor Brewer did not include funding requested by the UA for our veterinary medical and surgical program to train DVMs for Arizona. This was despite the best efforts of UA's President Hart and Provost Comrie and others at UA, the support from the Arizona Board of Regents and a few of our senior legislative leaders and the overwhelming support of our stakeholders and alumni.

For almost a decade and a half, I have been listening to many in academic leadership positions within our profession wring their hands about the non-sustainable way we educate veterinarians – costing our economy and almost all of our citizens too much money, competing with private industry and not providing the skills needed in graduates – and then continuing with the status quo.

I have been constantly reminded of Harry S. Truman's quote:

"In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better."

Under the new and exciting leadership of President Hart, we have been reminded that the UA is about solving big challenges with bold solutions. She has encouraged us to never settle for the

status quo and to be innovative, entrepreneurial and to play our part to foster positive change in our society. Our novel plan, which will change the paradigms of public veterinary education in the USA, does exactly this.

Our commitment to lead the changes that are so overdue in our professional education has not diminished. We are steadfastly committed to do our job, as Arizona's land-grant university, to be a central component of Arizona's economic vitality.

I have returned to our plan to establish DVM training at the UA and am working with UA Provost Comrie to make it a reality on the same timeline. The legislature has certainly made this much harder on us and on Arizona's hardworking families and business owners, but we will provide a world class DVM education, that is less expensive, faster and works with our state's veterinary practitioners not against them.

We will do this through foundational philanthropic contributions and a new revenue business plan that works without state funding in the context of the university's budget process.

We said that we were serious and we are.

*AC*