It seems everyone that attended AAM’s annual meeting had a great time and the message was clear, AAM is Alive & Well. Young and old, spending time with friends, telling stories and celebrating family farmers. It was great to have several young farmers attending as well as several grandchildren of AAM members. AAM believes that as an organization we need to support our youth that want a future in agriculture because they are the next generation of family farmers. We have lost far too many young farmers because of low prices brought about by failing farm policies.

I want to thank Crystal Carson who is heading up an FFA Alumni Association for the Rural Vista FFA Chapter from Hope and White City, Kansas for bringing two FFA Members to Lubbock, Macy Elliott and Hayleigh VanValkenburg. Macy spoke to our group about the importance of agriculture and what it means in her life. Macy did an excellent job and her words meant so much to those of us that have been fighting for family farmers. We also had Hallie Wettstein from Hugoton, Kansas also an FFA Member told us in her inspiring speech that she changed her major in college from medical to agriculture so she could follow her heart. All I can say is that with youth like these young ladies, family farming has a future. These are our next generation of family farmers and with the current state of crisis in Rural America we must return a profit to producers for them to be successful. We can’t keep selling below the cost of production and survive. Every consumer should know where the food they eat is produced so why is everything labeled except food, we need Country of Origin Labeling. Loan Rates for commodities should be set above the cost of production which would establish a floor price and would provide producers a fair price in the marketplace. If this policy was in place, it would protect farmers from the impact of the current Trade War and stop the loss of family producers that is occurring now. It would also mean that China and other trading partners would be paying a fair price for what they buy instead of getting our production at below the cost of producing it.

Hopefully by the time you get this newsletter the Government will still be open, but who knows. It seems crazy that there is a bipartisan majority that supports funding bills for USDA, and all the other agencies except Homeland Security and in it the only disagreement is border security. Many federal employees were forced to work while not getting paid, even the Coast Guard. They don’t get paid, but Congress does! I don’t think Congress and their staff should get paid if Government is shut down, kind of like the old saying; What’s Good for the Goose is Good for the Gander.

USDA is planning on buying 1.8 million pounds of pork from JBS, which is a company owned by Sao Paulo a Brazilian Company, using money from the Trade Assistance Program that is supposed to be used to offset the impact of the Trade War on US producers. This should not be allowed. On that note, I read where EPA had granted a Hardship Waiver to Exxon Mobil for a refinery which means they don’t have to use ethanol. ExxonMobil an economic Hardship Waiver, give me a break, with low corn prices and some ethanol plants closed because of the drop-in demand, we should be using more not less.

According to the Organization for Competitive Markets, four companies now control 60% of the world seed market. This means that concentration has not been just happening here in the United States, it’s worldwide. Control the seed and you control the food, we need antitrust laws to be enforced and stop all the mega-mergers in agribusinesses. Pretty soon there will be no competition left, I was talking to a farmer in Lubbock who said, ‘if you priced a new combine at a dealer and wanted to see if you could get a better deal and went to another dealer. That dealer would tell you the price is the same as you were quoted at the other dealership’.

Everyone was excited to see the upgrades that were made to the AAM Heritage Exhibit at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture, anyone who has never visited it should make plans to go so you can see it. I also want to encourage anyone who has clippings and pictures, please make plans to send them to the AAM Archive at the Southwest Collections at Texas Tech where every year more of our history is searchable online. Also, if you haven’t done an audio recording of your stories about AAM, please let us know because this is an important part of AAM’s history. Next year we are making plans during our AAM meeting in Lubbock, to set a-side time for those attending to record your stories.

I was honored to be reelected as your AAM President for 2019. I am looking forward to working with AAM’s Leadership team. Arthur Dean Chaney is your new Vice President, John Willis your new Treasurer and Jacqueline Reed your new Recording Secretary. I know they will do a great job. I want to express thanks to Jim Rice, who after 10 years of being Secretary/Treasurer is moving on to other challenges. He worked tirelessly for AAM and helped me out daily and without his support, I would not have been able to do my job as President. Thank You Jim, and good luck moving forward. I look forward to carrying AAM’s message and representing you as issues of importance come up. We are discussing holding farmer meetings in the country again this year. If you have interest in having one, let us know. In addition to the AAM Reporter, we have a Facebook page, it is the American Agriculture Movement page, check it out and follow what AAM is doing and check out AAM’s website aaminc.org

David Senter - AAM President
aamincpresident@gmail.com
Hello from Kansas

Depending where you are in the state, we have a variety of weather conditions. The old saying “if you don’t like the weather here, just wait a couple hours” hangs true. Monday, we left home on our way to a Commissioner meeting in Topeka. It was about 40 degrees or so, light wind, sunny to partly cloudy and all was good. As we headed east, the wind picked up, the temp. began to fall and it was quite the ride to the Capital. Once we arrived and stepped out of the car, a frigid blast was proving Topeka to be as always in January, the Arctic. During the night it warmed up, snow had started melting and it seemed all was good? Then it started raining, the temperature dropped, and the rain turned to ice, and by dark, it was like an ice-skating arena. Several folks began canceling their plans to come, and then it began to snow. The Governor delayed the opening of the State House and yep, that’s Topeka in January!!! This morning the sun is shining, temp is 20 with a wind chill that feels like 10. Remember that part...if you don’t like the weather...???. I am currently singing. I wanna go home!!

PS: Guess what, we were within about 30 miles of home and ran into SNOW!!!! Now I am not sure where I want to go???

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Thanks for the Opportunity.

Some ten years ago I began serving as AAM Secretary/Treasurer. Over those ten years many changes have taken place. The one thing that remained constant was the original Goals of AAM.

American Agriculture Movement Goals:

1 100% Parity for all domestic and foreign used and/or consumer agriculture products.
2 All agricultural products produced for national or international food reserve shall be contracted at 100% parity.
3 Creation of an entity or structure composed of agriculture producers to advise and approve policies that affect agriculture.
4 Imports of agriculture products which are domestically produced must be stopped until 100% parity is reached.
5 Thereafter, imports must be limited to the amount that the American producers cannot supply.
6 All announcements pertaining to any agricultural producing cycle shall be made far enough in advance that the producer will have adequate time to make needed adjustments in his operation.

In recent years, things really began to take off it seems when AAM was asked to consider placing a History Exhibit in the Bayer Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock TX. Plans were formed and soon under the direction of then AAM President Larry Matlack, AAM Member and Bayer Museum Bd. Chair, Dan Taylor and Museum Executive Director Lacee Hoelting, those plans began to take shape as real construction began. Gary Warden, Larry Matlack and I, loaded up and headed to Lubbock to begin the process of building the exhibit. Since that time the exhibit has continued to change and improve. When you are in Lubbock, or even close, stop by and check out The Bayer Museum of Agriculture. AAM is so lucky to have our exhibit in this great agriculture museum of history.

Along with the History Exhibit seemed to come a new interest in AAM. Our Annual Convention moved to Lubbock, our membership rolls began to grow, convention crowds grew, a new Facebook page was started, David Senter was elected President and the time it takes to do all the things necessary to maintain the organization increased considerably. Farm meetings in Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota resulted in many new members and the excitement continues today.

After much consideration, I decided it necessary to hand off my Sec./Trea. duties as I have been doing for the last ten years or so. The main reasons for my decision is that I am still serving as County Commissioner for two more years and I am now serving as President of the Kansas Natural Resources Coalition. This is a group or coalition of Kansas Counties that formed a few years ago to protect the natural resources of our member counties. You can find more information about KNRC by going to the knrc.org website.

During the convention Business meeting, John Willis was elected as Treasurer and Jacqueline Reed was appointed as Recording Secretary. Since that time, I have been trying to hand off my duties to each of them.

I still plan to remain involved as I have certainly enjoyed watching AAM grow in membership as well as the many activities. I have really had a great time working on the History Exhibit in Lubbock and hope to continue. Yes, there are further improvements coming.

With that, I say thank you for the opportunity to serve as AAM Sec./Trea the past ten years or so and a special thanks to all of you that continue to be involved. That may be a membership, attending a farm meeting or a simple “like” or comment on our Facebook Posts, or just by reading the Reporter Newsletter. Together we continue making a difference.

Jim Rice

(L-R) Hayliegh VanValkenburg, Macy Elliott, (Rural Vista FFA, KS) & Hallie Wettstein (Hugoton FFA, KS)
Farm Bill Update

Everybody was breathing a sigh of relief when Congress passed the new 2018 Farm Bill. There was concern that the partisan gridlock would spill over and block passage. While the new bill is far from perfect, it is a step in the right direction. Most of the farm and commodity organizations were all united in support of the legislation which helped push it across the finish line. The final vote to approve the Conference Report for the new Farm Bill was 87 to 13 in the Senate and 369 to 47 in the House. This was a huge accomplishment to get that large a bipartisan vote, this is how government should work in Washington.

AAM, is unlike any other farm organization when it comes to policy positions, does not rewrite policy every year because we established those policy goals when AAM was founded. Back in the 1980’s AAM’s position was, if it raised the price of a commodity by 1 cent, AAM supported it, if it lowered the price by 1 cent, AAM opposed it. One of the policy positions is to support Parity Loan Rates for all storable commodities. That means that Loan Rates should be set at a fair level to cover the Full Cost of Production as well as a rate of return on your investment. Basically, that’s what corporations do when they price their products that you must buy. AAM urged that the Agriculture Committees raise Loan Rates in the new Farm Bill. Producers don’t want a subsidy check they want at fair price in the marketplace when they sell their production.

This new Farm Bill does raise Loan Rates which is the first increase in over 20 years. Loan Rates were not raised enough but the increase is a step in the right direction. The increase for wheat is almost 15%; corn nearly 13%; grain sorghum nearly 13%; rice, 7.5% and soybeans 24%. In looking over policy papers from other farm and commodity groups, I did not find any other organization calling for higher Loan Rates. Producers will also have the option to update yields once and the option to switch between the (Price Loss Coverage), PLC program and the (Agriculture Risk Coverage), ARC program.

Those with CRP contracts will be able to better manage those acres on a regular basis to help reduce fire danger and have better forage in the event of a weather disaster. The CRP cap is raised to 27 million acres plus there will be a shorter-term contract such as a 4 or 5 year, plus there is a pilot for a 30-year term.

In 1978 during AAM’s first year working in Washington, AAM supported and got passed a law to require that USDA buy only US produced food for the School Lunch Program. This was a result of finding that Mexican beef was being purchased by USDA and sent to schools. Well, in recent years imported fruit juice, seafood, vegetables and meat are showing up in our schools. Sec 4207 of the Farm Bill says, USDA shall enforce the Buy American requirements for meat, vegetables, fruits and all commodities which are contained in the Richard Russell School Lunch Act.

Because of the deepening Farm Crisis in Rural America, AAM supported mandatory funding for State Mediation programs to assist farmers who are having financial difficulties work out a solution with their lenders. AAM also supported funding for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network, $10,000,000 per year is provided to partner with nonprofits, state and other entities to provide Hot Lines, Counseling Services and Needs for producers in trouble.

Rural Healthcare is in trouble and needs support to better serve Rural Communities. There is mandatory funding to expand telemedicine by improving internet access to Rural Hospitals and Clinics. $82,000,000 is provided to refinance Rural Hospital debt so they can survive and provide care for Rural areas. There is also going to be made available $350,000,000 to roll out Broadband to underserved areas.

The problem is, the government shutdown which lasted over a month, implementation of the Farm Bill was at a standstill. This is a critical time for producers, working out their financing so rents can be paid, and inputs can be purchased. FSA was not able to approve Loans and Loan Guarantees, approve Disaster payments and make the final payments based on the Trade Assistance Program. FSA offices have reopened after weeks of being shut down, we should all thank those hardworking County Office employees who have a huge backlog of work to do. Hopefully by the time you get

Farm Bill Update continued on page 5

Membership Application

Name: ____________________________
Street Address: ______________________________________________________________
City: _______________ State: _______ Zip: __________+_____
Email: _______________________________________________________
Number of Memberships @ $100 ________ Total $ _______

Send to:
John Willis
437 Preston Dr.
Brownsville, TN 38012
Jhwillis62@gmail.com

See us on Facebook
The Future of Agriculture

At first glance to most people, rice fields, feedlots, soybeans, cotton, orchards or wheat wouldn’t appear to have much in common? However, to a much smaller group, an American farmer can be seen. One, like many others that prays to break even at the end of the day. The dream to not only attain parity but to invest profits into a stable future for the next generation of agriculturists. Recently there was one such place where this melting pot of American farmers could be seen. For two days, Jan. 4th and 5th, approx. 75 Ag producers plus their families converged into Lubbock TX for the National American Agriculture Movement Convention. Just as AAM members made themselves a voice 40 some years ago they are still politically involved today. This organization lobbies for ag industry equality and growth, and for protecting and increasing conservation and natural resources to name just a few. This year’s meeting would also move for a committee to develop and line out stipulations that may allow youth ag organizations interested in representing AAM to receive resources and financial aid. It was an exciting reveal welcomed by all! AAM sees the need to invest in the future of agriculture. Always jumping at the chance to involve youth it wasn’t surprising that three FFA members were slated to present at this year’s annual convention. What was a thrill for us native Kansans was that all 3 girls boasted KANSAS on the back of their corduroy blues! Macy Elliott and Hayleigh Vanvalkenburg of the Rural Vista FFA Chapter and Hallie Wettstein of the Hugoton FFA Chapter all prepared to advocate for their future. Contacted in August by AAM President, David Senter, Rural Vista members geared up for a leadership opportunity of a lifetime! Crystal Carson, Former FFA Advisor, escorted these two members, along with Gavin Carson of the Willing Workers 4-H Club, and lifetime AAM member Donna Riffel, the 560 miles to the convention! The trip wouldn’t be easy as an hour before arriving in Lubbock sickness would strike, member Hayleigh was laid up over that evening and the whole next day! She would make a grand appearance in official dress however on Saturday to lead the opening meeting ceremony as well she would help work the entire A.A.M auction. AAM members enjoyed her enthusiasm and Hayleigh found herself on the receiving end of numerous auction items! Macy Elliott would fly solo Friday night (due to Hayleigh's sickness) with a presentation that was intended for two! Macy would give her 15-minute presentation after having worked the R.V. artifact booth where Donna Riffel’s ‘79 tractorcades scrap book collection was also on display. Macy would become genuinely overwhelmed by the “amazing job” gestures she would receive throughout the rest of the convention. This crew of Kansans would find the business meetings and guest speakers very enlightening. One such speaker, Leslie D. Bissell (PSY.D.,LP), of the Southwest Guidance Center (Liberal, KS) gave a suicide awareness presentation that would hit deep within their hearts. It was apparent that this topic was of value across our rural country. According to her speech there has been a 20% increase in rural suicides from 2004-2013. While the number of rural area call ins to receive help have decreased. Also, statistically shown was that male farmers and ranchers are committing suicide at a 50% higher rate today than farmers and ranchers of the 80’s. Economic and natural disaster similarities then and now are all too eerie. The alarming stats have caused additions to the farm bill that will aid rural health care facilities. A small start, centers like Southwest Guidance Center are doing their part to reach out and make people aware that they are not alone and that they can make a difference. However serious the meetings may have become at times there was no doubt that most of the trip was filled with much laughter, learning, tons of amazing food and new friendships. On the agenda for the weekend was a tour through Texas Tech University’s Southwest Collection, Buster’s Cotton Gin and Cotton Museum owned by Dan Taylor of Wolfforth TX, a tour of the WWI Silent Wings Museum, and an outstanding visit through the Bayer Museum of Agriculture! The Rural Vista group would also sneak in appearances to the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in Amarillo and the Prairie Dog Town Reserve in Lubbock! Each evening the 3rd – 5th would end with a relaxing and laid-back visit to AAM’s hospitality room. A highlight for many, upon entering, one immediately understands why! Conversations were bubbling in every corner, food on every table, and there were drinks for anyone’s taste. One would never have imagined these folks having any stress factor or care in the world. Laughter busting seams from 40 years gone tractorcade and political victory stories kept the air light. Experiences from the youngsters about their trials and operations gave much light at the end of the tunnel, when considering the current agricultural times. Typically seen rallying until the end of each hospitality evening were Donna Riffel along with current AAM President David Senter, past President Larry Matlock, Exec. Vice President Arthur Cheney and past Nebraska AAM spokesman Corky Jones! Donna stated she hadn’t had that much fun in ions! Donna, at 85 years young had not been able to attend a meeting in 40 years. After her husband, Leon Riffel (KS AAM spokesman) passed away in '86, Donna found it hard to stay in touch with the organization while still trying to farm and raise kids and cattle. Donna had been forced to sell the family farm and most of the livestock after Leon’s passing. She relocated to a neighboring area to continue farming on a smaller scale. Many old timers can recall similar accounts during this farming crisis of the 80’s. If one thing jumped out at you during this convention, it would be that the AAM is still very much alive and active across our United States! AAM has seen an increase in memberships in the past couple years and to keep up with the times they are in the process of updating their “dino” webpage to meet today's standards. They also maintain a Facebook page as well. To learn more about how you can be involved, stay in the know, obtain merchandise or to become a member please go to www. aaminnc.org or stay in touch via the Facebook page, American Agriculture Movement Inc. On a final note from the author, speaking on behalf of our small Kansas group, we would like to thank the A.A.M and all affiliates for the big Texas hospitality we received on our trip! As well at the conclusion of our trip I asked the kids, Macy, Hayleigh and Gavin to write a report about their experiences and how it impacted them. What I would receive gave me great hope for the future of Agriculture! I am so very proud of these kids for taking out on this venture!

Crystal Carson
AAM Convention
The 2018 AAM convention was a great success. Thanks to everyone who helped to make it that way. Always enjoy visiting with old friends and making new ones. If you missed it plan to attend next year in Lubbock. A lot of Texas had a bad year in farming in 2018. It was dry last summer in a lot of places. Then it started raining and has not stopped yet. A lot of cotton still in field and mostly ruined. Waiting on insurance. Hope 2019 will be better. Arthur Chaney

Michigan News
Saturday, January 19. A good day to write. Snowing with about 6 inches on the ground. We went to town about 6 miles away this morning, so we’re not snowbound. Bruce was going to plow, but decided to wait until snow stops so doesn’t have to do it twice. Our daughter is starting work in northern Wisconsin. She left yesterday morning and had good roads all the way. Good timing!

What a great time we had in Lubbock. It was great to see all our friends from AAM. Wish we could have had more time with each of our friends and listen to all the stories of the TRACTORCADE. Enjoyed visiting Dan’s Museum. Thanks for the hospitality Dan and Linda. Auction was awesome as usual. Our trip home was uneventful, but we were tired. It took a few days to get rested up.

If any of our friends are in our area, please stop in and see us. We have a cabin on a pond that we can set around and visit, fish or take a ride on the Mule - the Kawasaki one! We would love to have you visit.

Christine Miller

Report from west Tennessee
In my area we had a very mixed bag of a crop in 2018. The harvest is probably 99% through, but can’t get enough sunny days strung together to finish harvest. The biggest problem this past fall was the harvesting of soybeans. The majority of the soybeans were harvested with some moisture and damaged beans due to the excess rain. This will obviously cause dockage that is hard to take on top of an already depressed market. For those with soybeans still in the field, they will incur a very heavy dock if they can be sold at all. On the positive side, yields were very good in cotton and soybeans due to timely rains during the growing season. Our corn crop was still pretty good, but not as good as the previous year or what farmers were looking for. Hopefully 2019 will bring a better market and an improving tariff and trade situation.

John Willis

Farm Bill Update
continued from page 3
this newsletter government will still be open because there is the threat of another government shutdown in February. You might want to write this down, if you want to call your Senators, the Senate Switchboard number is 202-224-3121 and just ask for your Senator or Member of Congress by name and they will transfer your call to their office and for House Members the number is 202-225-3121. Be sure and follow AAM’s Facebook page to keep updated on what’s happening in Washington as well as around the country.

AAM President David Senter; Secretary/Treasurer Jim Rice; Macy Elliott & Hayliegh VanValkenburg, Rural Vista FFA; Vice President John Willis; Hallie Wettstein, Hugoton FFA; Executive Vice President Arthur Chaney

AAM members participated in 1979 Tractorcade with the AAM Flag flown on Gerald McCathern’s Wagon Master Tractor
(L-R) EG & Barbara Reed, Darrel & Karen Miller, Joyce Jobgen, Gary Boldt, Donna Rifle, David Senter, Bruce Miller, John Lapp, Danny Skinner, Gene Schroder, Dan Taylor, Curtis Schroder, Laurie Schroder, Arthur Chaney, Corky Jones, TG Caraway, Jim Rice, Larry Matlack's hand & Gary Warden.
AAM stands for food producer and commodity PARITY. Parity is a term that denotes a fair commodity price adjusted for inflation to the commodity prices brought in 1910-1914 when producer-middlemen-consumer had a balanced income. Today, 15 commodities average less than 50 percent of PARITY. Meanwhile costs of trucks, implements, tractors, fuel, fertilizer and help rose many times. AAM still demands a parity price increase for commodities.

Some past members and supporters have already been in contact with David, possibly other members are wanting to get back on the mailing lists. If you have an address update or know of someone we need to reconnect with, please let me know. There are over 6500 contacts in our database, many still receive a newsletter but nowhere near are 6500 newsletters mailed out. I want to reconnect with the other members/supporters to let them know:

American Agriculture Movement
IS Alive and Well!!!
Jacqueline Reed
AAM Recording Secretary
aamsect19@gmail.com

Please send any contributions for the newsletter to:
David L. Senter
We appreciate and encourage info or pictures that we can use.

Lunch at Dan Taylor’s Farm

Business Meeting

AAM Heritage Exhibit at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture, Lubbock Texas (L-R) T.G. Caraway, David Senter & Museum President Dan Taylor