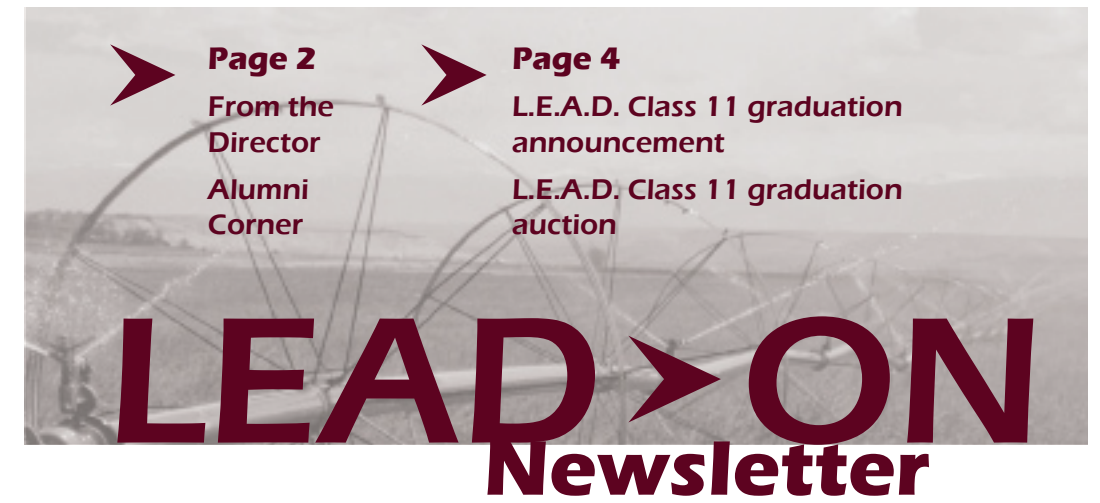


December 2010  
Kim Porter, Editor



Developing leaders who will speak forcefully and articulately for agriculture and Wyoming communities

## Class 11 Graduation Auction

**SUPPORT L.E.A.D....**

Donate an item for the graduation auction.  
Items due by January 1, 2011.

Contact Kim Porter for more information 307.631.2692.

**JOIN US**

**Please join us for the Class 11 graduation**

Jan. 8, 2011  
6:30 p.m.  
Platte Valley Community Center, 210 Elm, Saratoga, Wyo.

**RSVP by December 20, 2010**

### WALC Board Members ~ 2010 - 2011

Brenda Cardwell - President, Casper  
Leif Hanson - Vice President, Kaycee  
Shirley Tschannen - Secretary/Treasurer, Lander  
Brett Moniz - Past President, Laramie  
Cindy Garretson-Weibel - L.E.A.D. Director, Cheyenne

Annette France - Member, Lyman  
Sherry Maston - Member, Wheatland  
Pak Landers - Member, Cheyenne  
Aaron Clausen - Member, Douglas

## From the President



**Brenda Williams**  
WALC Board President

Another year and another L.E.A.D. class has flown by. It feels like just the other day I was welcoming L.E.A.D. Class 11, now I'm getting ready to congratulate them as they graduate from the program next month.

A big thank you goes out to this group of fellows for their time and dedication to the program, thank you to your families as well for their support and encouragement. Of course this program is not possible without the generosity of our sponsors

and I cannot thank them enough. I know the fellows certainly appreciate them as well and without our sponsors, many would not have the opportunity to complete this leadership program.

As we graduate one group we begin our recruitment for the next L.E.A.D. Class, once again I call on our Alumni to help us out. Please spread the word of Wyoming L.E.A.D. and contact us if you know someone who would make a great candidate for the program.

I hope everyone has the chance to spend time with friends and family and celebrate another great year for Wyoming agriculture.

*I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and safe and happy New Year.*

## Class 11 explores, shares Ecuador experience

**Bill Waneka**  
L.E.A.D. Class 11

With much anticipation along with some hesitant thoughts about climate and language the group departed DIA on the 7th of November for the country of Ecuador. After a long day of travel, we arrived at our destination tired and ready to explore. Juan Carolos met us at the airport and many were relieved that we would have a grand time with his expertise as a tour guide.

I don't think many of us would have ever dreamed that we would at one point be standing on the equator. Our travels were sometimes lengthy, because of the distance that the city of Quito stretched out in length, but when we did arrive at our

See **ECUADOR** on page 3



**ABOVE:** Class 11 members learn how bananas are harvested during their trip to Ecuador.

**PAGE 3:** Class 10 on both sides of the equator during their trip to Ecuador. *Photos by Cindy Garretson-Weibel*

# From the Director

## L.E.A.D. Class 11 shares 12-day excursion abroad



**Cindy Garretson-Weibel**  
L.E.A.D. Program Director

Wow! What a fantastic international study tour Wyoming L.E.A.D. Class 11 had to Ecuador. The variety of agriculture and cultural opportunities we saw was outstanding and the camaraderie of the close-knit group made the 12-day adventure go very smoothly.

Prior to announcing the international trip location to the class last January, most of the 18 class members had little knowledge about this Andean country. Five of the class members had never been anywhere outside the United States and only four of the class members had ever been to South America. None had been to Ecuador, which is one of the reasons the country was chosen – to give everyone in the group a new experience.

One of the benefits of the international study tour is to stretch the minds of the participants and get them out of their comfort zone. Roaming around a country the size of Colorado, with a population of over 14 million people, who don't speak the same language you do, can certainly do some stretching.

## Alumni Corner

### Fifth-generation rancher parlays L.E.A.D experience into ag success

Leif Hanson's commercial cow/calf/yearling operation outside of Kaycee is rich in history and agriculture. He is a fifth generation rancher on part of the family ranch that he continues to operate with his parents. The Hanson family is continually trying new ideas on their ranch to be better land and cattle managers. They strive to be low cost producers with their Angus herd. Just this year they harvested some of their hay meadows and creek bottom with pairs and left the machinery off of it. Hanson deemed this a success, but does admit they have some kinks yet to work out. Another move they made was to May calving, which helped the bottom line with hay not fed, and also provided a huge savings in labor.

"I've always said that I love everything I do, but I know I won't miss riding for cold calves in March and April snow storms."

However, I think even those participants who felt a bit of uncertainty when we left home were pleasantly surprised how easy we got along in the country. Armed with only the knowledge of a few Spanish phrases and an English/Spanish dictionary, we successfully bartered for hand-made wares at the Otavalo market, ordered goat stew at a restaurant, retrieved our clean laundry, and purchased calling card minutes.

No doubt, this was a once in a lifetime experience that this group of Wyomingites will never forget. Oh, what a difference a year makes, and oh, what a difference the L.E.A.D. program makes.

### Alumni Happenings:

Congratulations to Class 11 member Paul Bauder, who married Jackie Jensen on October 16. The couple makes their home in Glendo.

*A rash of babies has been born to L.E.A.D. Class 10 members this fall, including:*

- Don and Samantha Edelman welcomed Teague Ryan on Oct. 14th.
- Milo joined Monte and Megan Lerwick on Aug. 30th.
- Dalin and Hannah Winters welcomed baby number four on Sept. 22nd. Kellem, joins his three brothers.



Hanson's great-great-grandfather came to Wyoming in 1884 and wrote back to the family that "there was more wood on the mountain than they could chop and more fish in the streams than they could catch." His two brothers and sister followed him out West and their family ranches were born. Hanson's family has many stories to tell about growing up around Kaycee.

His great-great-aunt Gene was a favorite of bank and train robber Flat Nose George and he often stopped by the post office and brought her gifts. Ranger Jones, the brother in law of Hanson's great-great-aunt Annie, was shot just before

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### ECUADOR from page 1

destination, we were always met with a great tour. Who would have thought that a group of people from Wyoming would be looking at potato harvesting, coffee plantations, banana plantations, cocoa plantations, and sugar cane farms. Some were modern, others operated in a rustic fashion, and all of them were interesting.



We were interested in the culture of the country and saw many sights of third world living along with modern products, newer housing and preservation of old historic buildings, churches, government buildings and several businesses that had remodeled old historic structures. We had a great experience in having a bus driver who could maneuver the heavy traffic with ease, traffic that many of us luckily don't have to experience every day. Sure beats the lonely Wyoming roads.

Our tour of the Galapagos Islands was another experience we will never forget. Landing on one island, traveling through an old WWII military base and driving through desert that turned to lush green tropical surroundings was a big surprise. The sight of the big tortoise moving around and sleeping was awesome. None of us will forget the two hour boat ride, bouncing over the waves, getting splashed constantly and having nothing to do but hang on and enjoy the ride from island to island.

I must say that the time spent on the mainland of Ecuador was enjoyable; the restaurants we went to were unique and had good food, with the constant change of types of fruit juices a pleasure to consume. We ate a lot of chicken (which got old), but the beef was often tough and hard to cut and chew. Guess we all managed to enjoy the fare though and enjoyed the times together. I must say that the roasted Guinea pig will be remembered by all.

In all aspects, the trip was a great success and experience for the entire group. Several went on to more experiences in other countries before returning home, but those of us who traveled together home to Wyoming were tired, happy and thinking that just maybe we would return someday on another sightseeing trip to Ecuador.

### CORNER from page 2

the Johnson County Invasion because he knew too much. In fact he was bringing home floor boards from Buffalo for the cabin that is still used today for hunters and fishermen.

Hanson says he knew about the L.E.A.D. Program, but wasn't very interested because this would take him out of his comfort zone. However, as fate would have it, he had finished reading a book only a few days before being contacted about applying for the program that said in short, "fear is the number one factor holding us back from greatness." He decided he needed to take the bull by the horns and get out of his comfort zone and this is a decision for which he has always been thankful. Hanson has gained the confidence to lead a discussion, met a great network of people he can call for information and help, and he has more of a willingness to get involved.

He became a WALC board member because he believes the L.E.A.D. Program is a great program and he wanted to give back. As a L.E.A.D. fellow he vowed to someday repay his entire debt to the program. Whether it is by paying WALC membership dues, helping with fundraising, or donating his time and money he is well on his way. As we start recruiting for another class, Hanson says, "Don't let your fear hold you back. The program is very rewarding and you need to look past all the reasons not to do it and look at all the reasons to do it."

**The Wyoming L.E.A.D. Program staff and the Wyoming Agricultural Leadership Council join together to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!**