

# THE COMMUNICATOR

— Canadian Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow —

[www.canact.ca](http://www.canact.ca)

Fall 2010



## What is CanACT?

CanACT is a student-run club at the University of Guelph designed for students interested in agricultural communications.



*CanACT members with Oklahoma State University's Pistol Pete.*

## Members host successful ACT exchange

Six CanACT members participated in an exchange last semester with the ACT chapter at Oklahoma State University (OSU). Members visited OSU to learn about student programs and Oklahoma agriculture and then hosted OSU ACT members in Guelph.

CanACT members met faculty and students from OSU's Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership and also visited a number of tourist attractions and ranching operations while in Oklahoma. OSU offers degree programs in agricultural communications and education and is home to one of the largest ACT chapters in the US.

"I really enjoyed meeting OSU students with similar interests and learning about their ACT chapter events," says CanACT member Elizabeth Boekhorst. "It was an amazing experience and everyone in both clubs had a lot of fun while learning about a new culture."

In addition to an afternoon in Niagara Falls, time spent on campus to celebrate College Royal and a brunch with Ontario Agricultural College faculty, CanACT

members welcomed the Oklahomans to Guelph by showcasing Ontario agriculture on a day of tours. Presentations at Gencor, Woodrill Ltd., a beef feedlot and a family dairy farm were on the agenda. A highlight for the OSU students was learning about soybean farming practices and market opportunities as soybeans are not widely grown in Oklahoma.

"The diversity in production agriculture in Ontario and the southern US was very interesting," says OSU ACT member Krista Anderson.

One CanACT member, Robin Callaghan, enjoyed her exchange experience with OSU so much that she is participating in a semester abroad program in Oklahoma this fall. Robin writes about her adventures at <http://robincallaghan.wordpress.com>.

CanACT exchange participants hope their Oklahoma endeavor will inspire future ACT exchanges and encourage all members to learn about agricultural communications abroad during their academic career.

CanACT strives to enhance the connectivity between students and Canada's agricultural communications sector by providing members with opportunities to develop communication skills and network with professionals in the agriculture industry.



## OSU ACT Exchange Memories



### Brushing up on business etiquette

Along with the ACT exchange, the third annual Etiquette Dinner was one of CanACT's biggest events last semester. Jodie Beach of The Etiquette Advantage in Iowa facilitated the evening and taught club over 30 members and sponsors how to dine professionally over a three course meal at the University Club. Beach reminded students that "nobody was born with an etiquette gene" and shared the following tips:

- Place napkin in your lap immediately after sitting.
- Remove straws from drinks.
- Hold wine glass by the stem.
- Always offer to pay if you invite guests to dine.
- Use the inside utensil first if multiple forks and knives.
- Ties should end at the top of your belt line.
- Long sleeves are the most empowering look for women.



*CanACT members with etiquette professional Jodie Beach.*



**Congratulations to members Carol Moore and Joel Aitken for winning awards in the 2010 ACT Critique and Contest! Carol placed second in the short feature story category and Joel placed fourth in photography.**

# Member Spotlight

## Learning to communicate at the Calgary Stampede

By Rebecca Hannam

While most venture to the Calgary Stampede to watch rodeo and enjoy western hospitality, my reason to head west this past July was every agriculture student's dream – an internship with the Stampede's Agriculture Media Committee.

University of Guelph agricultural communications students have participated in this internship for the past four summers and I was thrilled to have been chosen this year. The Agriculture Media Committee is a talented group of communications professionals who organize and encourage media coverage of the Stampede's agriculture events.

My experience working with the committee included writing, editing and media relations. Almost every day of the Stampede I wrote stories, practiced editing and pitched ideas to local newspapers and magazines.

For me, this internship coupled my passion for agriculture with my interest in communications, giving me an opportunity to showcase my knowledge and learn new skills. Learning directly from professional communicators was truly the opportunity of a lifetime!



## Putting CanACT skills to work

By Jillian Craig

I was given the opportunity to work for the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA) in Guelph this past summer. This job was a great experience since I grew up on a sheep farm and hope to continue in the industry when I graduate. Some of my duties at OSMA included writing for the Ontario Sheep Magazine, producing factsheets and putting together website content. The highlight of my position at OSMA was writing magazine articles about my personal experiences when attending the All Canadian Sheep Classic in Richmond, Quebec. Other articles I enjoyed writing about focused on giving guidance to shepherds on topics such as extending the grazing season, fencing and livestock guardian animals. As a fourth year Animal Science student I have benefited from my experience within CanACT. Skills which have assisted me with my career path include the ability to become a better communicator, improved writing skills, as well as portfolio building. These qualities have helped me to communicate sheep knowledge to producers through the magazine.

CanACT has helped me professionally and has given me exciting job opportunities in the agricultural industry. From my mentors at CanACT I have grown to become a better communicator and have gained confidence in my abilities.



## Growing optimism at the International Livestock Congress

By Amanda Brodhagen

This summer I was selected as one of 20 students from around the world to receive the International Stockmen's Educational Foundation Travel Fellowship. This award invited students to attend the 2010 International Livestock Congress, themed Raising Optimism and Global Strategies.

During the Congress I had the opportunity to network with industry leaders and tour a variety of facilities such as plants, feedlots and ranches. One of the most integral parts of the Congress was participating in a student forum discussion. This was an excellent opportunity for me to use the skills that I have learned through the agricultural communications courses I have taken and my involvement with CanACT.

Participating in the Congress instilled a sense of optimism within me, being surrounded by other individuals who share my passionate about the future of the beef industry. I feel fortunate to have been part of the dialogue in helping to develop global strategies for the prosperity of Canadian beef.



## JFAO exchange trip to Ireland

By Kim McCaw

As a representative of the Junior Farmers Association of Ontario (JFAO) I participated in an international exchange program this past August. I traveled to Ireland to learn more about farming practices, environmental issues and agricultural economics while staying with farm families.

The partnership between JFAO and Macra na Feirme provides an excellent opportunity for interaction, sharing of ideas and experiences, as well as the establishment of vital interpersonal connections amongst tomorrow's agricultural industry leaders. I had the opportunity to meet young farmers who are active in their communities and eager to operate their own farming practices.

I had the privilege of being involved in daily activities on many Irish farms including milking cows, processing sheep, swine farm chores, livestock auction markets, viewing a feed mill and grain processing facility, touring a meat processing plant and seeing some tourist attractions.

I encourage all CanACT members to apply for exchange opportunities and make the time to travel abroad to learn about agriculture. Like me, you will gain valuable insight by sharing ideas.



## President's Message



Welcome back CanACT members!

It's that time of year again when we're back at school and clubs are gearing up to organize this semester's events. The CanACT executive team has been working very hard to provide you with a line up of activities this year which will include workshops, social events, and tours. Our club has an excellent track record and is widely recognized on campus as being one of the most active clubs in OAC. We pride ourselves on being able

to provide our members with unique opportunities. In the past this has included exchange programs with other agricultural communications chapters from across the United States, professional development conferences and helping our members make contacts with industry leaders. As you will notice, in our "Member Spotlight" section our newsletter, our members are leaders in the agricultural industry. I am very proud of the accomplishments of our members and I hope to continue the legacy of helping equip our members with the communication skills necessary to continue to be leaders in the agricultural industry.

Proudly serving you,

**Amanda Brodhagen**  
**CanACT President**  
canact@uoguelph.ca

## Upcoming Meetings

**September 27**

*Intro to CanACT meeting at  
5:30 p.m. in ROZH 107.*

**Visit [www.canact.ca](http://www.canact.ca) for  
future event dates!**

## Officers

**Amanda Brodhagen** – *President*  
**Jillian Craig** – *Vice-President*  
**Elizabeth Boekhorst** –  
*Secretary/Treasurer*  
**Kim McCaw** – *Director*  
**Victoria Arthur** – *Director*  
**Rebecca Hannam** – *Director*  
**Owen Roberts** – *Advisor*

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