



ARCLIGHT

SUMMER 2010

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HOT SUMMER, HOT AG RELATIONS COUNCIL

**By Deron Johnson,
ARC President**

When it comes to ARC, the seasonal reference comes naturally: Things are definitely heating up as we continue to rebuild and reposition the organization for a new era.

Nowhere will the “heat” be more evident than at the upcoming Agricultural Media Summit, taking place July 24 – 28 in St. Paul, Minn. ARC will have its greatest presence ever at this year’s event:

- We’ll be announcing winners in the newly resurrected Golden ARC Awards program. The Golden ARCs, once the ag PR industry’s most prestigious award competition, relaunched this spring after several years of dormancy. Response was good and in late July the organization will award winners in 19 categories. We’re thrilled to have this important industry competition back on solid footing. The awards will be Tuesday, July 27, during the 10:15 to 11:45 am PR session: Characteristics of a winning public relations program (see next bullet for more information).
- ARC will sponsor a session during the Summit on the art (and maybe a little bit of the science) behind executing an award-winning public relations campaign. This session will touch on strategy, great ideas and flawless execution—all critical elements to any outstanding PR campaign. This should be a great session packed with real hands-on value.
- For the second year in a row ARC will sponsor a silent auction designed to benefit student participation of AMS, as well as ARC. Auction proceeds will go toward underwriting student registration fees for AMS, ensuring participation by the maximum number of potential industry newcomers. Last year’s auction raised \$2,700 and, based on early word of the great items to be included this year, we’re hopeful to surpass last year’s total.

You can help fan the flames of our success by participating in ARC activities at the Summit, contributing content to our newly launched website (www.agrelationscouncil.org), encouraging others to join the organization and simply spreading the good word about ARC.

With your help, it’s going to be a hot summer indeed.



Deron Johnson

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **ARC welcomes 12 new members**
- **2011 ARC meeting is in Fort Myers, Fla.**
- **The 2009 ARC silent auction raised \$2,700**
- **Volunteers needed: ARC Excellence Scholarship**

SHARE THE STORY OF ARC

**By Mace Thornton,
ARC Membership Director**

As we march toward revival of this organization, it is paramount that we continue to talk to colleagues, associates, acquaintances and industry counterparts about the value and importance of the Agricultural Relations Council (ARC). This organization offers an exclusive platform for dialogue, professional improvement and networking. ARC remains the ONLY organization with a sole focus of serving those of us involved in ag PR.

In spite of efforts to attract new members with a special \$100 discount for new ARC members—a deal that ran through April—our membership list is at 51, nine short of our 2010 goal of 60 members.

That's not too bad, considering where we were early in 2009. However, when you look at the fact that there are many people on a list who did not renew their membership in ARC for 2010, that highlights a challenge. Each of those people was contacted, but for one reason or another, have not yet made a conscious effort to renew their membership. If we can reach those “not yet” renewals, our 2010 membership goal will be met.

This is important for several reasons. First, membership is the lifeblood of any organization. Second, while we certainly value our existing members in ARC, new members typically bring new ideas and fresh energy to any organization. Third, a dues-funded organization's ability to effectively provide quality content and services to its members is determined largely by securing a critical mass of individuals sharing a commitment to a

common goal.

As we rebuild our organization, we realize that our current core group of members is made up of true ARC believers. While each of us values the tangibles and intangibles that ARC offers us, we also have faith there will be even brighter days down the road for ARC. However, we are also making efforts to make ARC even more attractive to those who must be able to justify the value of ARC membership based on cold, hard tangibles.

One example of this value-added mission is a reintroduction of our Golden ARC Awards Program. To be a participant in this respected competition, one must be a member of ARC. In fact, nonmembers who wish to enter pay for membership with their first entry. We envision that Golden ARC will help boost membership and boost ARC's visibility among agricultural PR pros.

As we develop new reasons for our colleagues and counterparts to join ARC, it should not be long before the tangible value of ARC sells itself. Success during our current rebuilding stage, however, relies on a good dose of assertive marketing from all of us.

Keep ARC in mind the next time you are attending a meeting with industry colleagues. Drop a few e-mails to the contacts you make and attach our membership form. Talk about the value you receive through ARC—professional networking, recognition, improvement. Even if the main reason you belong is to share war stories with proven veterans in our field, there is value in driving home the message that when it comes to ag PR, ARC members get it. Share the story.



Mace Thornton

**“ARC remains the
ONLY organization
with a sole focus of
serving those of us
involved in ag PR.”**

ARC LOOKS TO REINSTITUTE ARC OF EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND FOUNDATION

By Den Gardner, Executive Director

The Agricultural Relations Council (ARC) is looking for just a “few good men”—and women, for that matter.

As the organization continues its rebirth with a new logo, new website, new (and revised) Golden ARC awards and more, one area that still needs attention in 2010 is the ARC of Excellence Scholarship Program, an initiative managed through the Agricultural Relations Council Foundation. Yes, ARC does have a foundation.

And the board is looking for a couple of folks to take charge of the foundation and its scholarship program.

For those unfamiliar with this program, it was a scholarship managed for many years through volunteer work, most recently by Sarah Schmidt (then of Woodruff Sweitzer). Schmidt ran the scholarship program from 2004 to 2007. ARC staff believes the scholarship program was instituted in 2003. Since 2007 it has been dormant. During those active years, the scholarship was given to eight students, ranging from \$250 up to \$1,500 depending on the year.

Schmidt now owns a winery and puts all her energies into this new venture. She does some freelancing with Woodruff Sweitzer and has agreed to “advise ARC as it re-establishes the scholarship.”

The foundation has approximately \$4,500 in its coffers, which is a money market

account (for financial safety reasons) with Edward Jones.

For purposes of reorganizing the foundation, and hopefully reinstating the scholarship program, ARC leadership needs to:

- Find one or two people to head a committee to get the scholarship program up and running again;
- Create a foundation board, which may be made up of the current ARC Board of Directors or a separate group, or some combination of both, and;
- Begin to replenish the foundation’s funds so the scholarship program can fund itself through dividends and interest earned through the principal investment.

“It’s time in our ‘new’ organization to get the foundation back up and running and start the scholarship program again,” said ARC Board President Deron Johnson. “Like some other ARC programs, this is another area we’re excited to get started again. Now we’re asking for just a couple of folks to step up and get the program underway. We’ll be glad to provide background to you to get the ball rolling again.”

If you are interested in providing some volunteer help with the foundation and scholarship program, please let the ARC staff know at arc@gardnerandgardnercommunications.com or call the office at 952-758-5811.



Den Gardner

ARC aims
to reinstitute
the Excellence
Scholarship
Program.

ARC AND AG MEDIA SUMMIT JOIN FOR SILENT AUCTION

**By Mark Ingbritson,
ARC Board Member**

Great stuff and great prices—all for a great cause. ARC again is planning a silent auction at this year's Ag Media Summit in St. Paul, Minn., July 25 to 27. All proceeds will benefit ARC, as well as offsetting costs for the student attendees of AMS, thus ensuring participation by the maximum number of potential industry newcomers.

The ARC silent auction debuted at last year's AMS in Fort Worth and was a big success, raising a total of \$2,700 that benefitted ARC and the student attendees of AMS. More than 30 items were donated, ranging from autographed books and artwork to western jewelry and other wearables.

Don't miss this chance to support two very worthy organizations—and to get in early on what promises to be an annual highlight of AMS.

Auction donations wanted! ARC members are urged to contribute items to this year's auction. We suggest items with a minimum \$50 value. Donations are due by July 23, and can be sent to ARC offices or hand-delivered to AMS.

Yes, we take cash! If you prefer, we'll gladly accept your cash donations with which we will buy some "local-flavored" items for the auction. Leave the legwork to us, and just send us the request and funding!

Giving credit where credit is due: We will give you and your company full credit for the item, providing paperwork as needed. Remember, your ARC silent auction items are tax-deductible.

For more details and to make a donation, contact Den Gardner (952-758-5811) or Mark Ingbritson (612-869-3079).

Thanks in advance for your generous support—we appreciate it!



Support the ARC Silent Auction at Ag Media Summit, July 25 to 27.

**WANTED:
Donations for
the 2010 ARC
Silent Auction.**

2011 ARC MEETING SET!



Fort Myers, Fla.

Missed out on Memphis? Join us next year in Fort Myers!

The location for next year's annual ARC spring meeting will be Fort Myers, Fla. Mark your calendars for February 24 – 26, 2011. The meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza, 13051 Bell Tower Drive.

Fort Myers is known as the gateway to Southwest Florida. This tourist destination is popular for its beaches, fishing, golfing and shopping. It is also the site of the Thomas Edison and Henry Ford winter estates, in addition to being surrounded by dozens of crops plus large livestock operations and more ag-related businesses.



AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS COUNCIL

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FAX: 952-758-5813

2010 - 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 25 - 27, 2010

ARC Silent Auction at Ag Media Summit
Crowne Plaza St. Paul - Riverfront
St. Paul, Minn.

February 24 - 26, 2011

ARC Annual Meeting
Crowne Plaza
At the Bell Tower Shops
13051 Bell Tower Drive
Fort Myers, Fla. 33907

MEMBER NEWS

ARC Welcomes the Following New Members

Charissa Acree, Peritus PR,
cacree@perituspr.com

Mark Crouser, Center
for Food Integrity,
mark.crouser@foodintegrity.org

Annette Degnan, CHS Inc.,
annette.degnan@chsinc.com

Ellen Dougherty, USDA National
Agriculture Statistics Service,
ellen_dougherty@nass.usda.gov

KayDee Gilkey, Northwest
Farm Credit Services,
kaydee.gilkey@farm-credit.com

Dr. Tracy Irani, Agricultural Education
& Communications Department,
University of Florida, irani@ufl.edu

Lisa Kemp, Kemp Equine,
kempequine@gmail.com

Kim Metcalfe, The National Pork
Board and Weber Shandwick,
kmetcalfe@webershandwick.com

Jeff Morgan, Stoller USA,
lmorgan@stollerusa.com

Benjamin Potter, Rhea + Kaiser
Marketing Communications
bpotter@rkconnect.com

Sam Schill, Innova Ideas and
Services, sam.schill@sigler.com

Scott Stuart, Innova Ideas and
Services, scott.stuart@sigler.com

Welcome!

2010 ARC Board of Directors

Deron Johnson
Rhea + Kaiser Marketing
Communications, board president

Mace Thornton
American Farm Bureau Federation,
first vice president

Katana Ewbank
Alpha Scouts,
second vice president

Bob Giblin
Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal
Health, immediate past president

Mark Ingbritson
Rhea + Kaiser Marketing
Communications

Amy Keith McDonald
McDonald Marketing
Communications

Carroll E. Merry
Countryside Marketing

Janice Person
Monsanto

Mike Opperman
Charleston|Orwig

Feedback, Participation Welcomed

As always, we want your thoughts and especially your suggestions on how ARC can be better. For more information about getting involved in ARC, including memberships, sponsorships, committee work, etc., contact:

Deron Johnson, president at 630-955-6656 or djohnson@rkconnect.com

Den Gardner, executive director or **Barb Ulschmid**, associate director at 952-758-5811 or arc@gardnerandgardnercommunications.com